

# Lockdown and Bomb Procedures



St. Joseph's Catholic Academy,  
Norton

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## Lockdown Procedures

### Introduction

Siege and hostage situations are two of the most significant emergencies or critical incidents that a school may encounter. They often develop with unpredictability, speed and lethality. These events may involve armed or unarmed people, using a carefully planned or completely unplanned method. Many of these situations are over within several minutes. It is essential that, if the safety of students or staff is at immediate risk, decisive actions are taken to reduce access to additional victims. This includes immediate notification to the Police by dialling 999.

Before the arrival of emergency services, the decision to instigate lockdown or to evacuate all or part of the school premises is a decision to be taken by the Headteacher or their Deputy. Where time permits this decision should be made in consultation with the Police.

Large scale evacuation will always be a last resort. The decision will need to balance the risks as to whether students and staff are afforded better protection by remaining where they are or by evacuation. If a decision to evacuate is made, the aim will be to evacuate the optimum number of people expeditiously and safely.

Parents and other persons who arrive on a school site during a siege or hostage situation should be mustered to a safe location.

The preservation of life will take precedence. Perpetrators should not be approached or challenged.

Lockdown procedures should be seen as a sensible and proportionate response to any external or internal incident which has the potential to pose a threat to the safety of staff and students in the school.

Procedures should aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all students and staff.

### Lockdown

Lockdown procedures may be activated in response to any number of situations, but some of the more typical might be:

- A reported incident / civil disturbance in the local community (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and students in the school)
- An intruder on the school site (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and students)
- A warning being received regarding a risk locally, of air pollution (smoke plume, Gas cloud etc)
- A major fire in the vicinity of the school
- The close proximity of a dangerous dog roaming loose

The following basic principles are to be followed in the case of 'Lockdown':

#### Immediate action:

- Staff to be alerted to the activation of the lockdown by the sounding of the **5 long intermittent rings from the alarm located in the Main Office.**
- Pupils who are outside of the school buildings are brought inside as quickly as possible (using a whistle to get immediate attention) and returned to their classroom. Those inside the school should remain in their classrooms.
- All doors and windows are to be closed/locked. Staff should not leave their classroom unless it has been indicated that it is safe to do so. The teacher or adult in the room closes the blinds and reassures pupils, explaining that they need to listen and follow instructions carefully and sensibly.

- Pupils to be positioned/asked to sit down underneath the windows or away from the windows ensuring they are out of sight or behind upturned tables. Staff to support or model with turning the tables on their sides (especially for the younger students). Once these steps have been followed the adults must ensure they too are out of sight. Children must remain quiet and mobile phones switched to silent mode and vibrate turned-off.
- Once in lockdown mode, staff should take the register and notify the office via telephone of any students not accounted for (and instigate an immediate search for any missing).
- The school should establish communication with the Emergency Services as soon as possible. If it's safe and out of ear shot staff can give information regarding an intruder(s) whereabouts or movements (if they have such information) to the police / Senior Staff. Ensure phone is silent and vibrate turned off.
- If necessary, parents should be notified as soon as it is practicable to do so via the school's App messaging service.
- Students will not be released to parents during a lockdown.
- If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the fire alarm will be sounded, evacuation is to the designated Fire Assembly Point A (KS1 & KS2 playgrounds) or if directed by senior staff to Assembly Point B, the far end of the KS2 field.
- Staff should await further instructions.

It is of vital importance that the school's lockdown procedures are familiar to members of the senior management team, school administrators, teaching staff and non-teaching staff. To achieve this, a lockdown drill should be undertaken at least once a year.

### **Emergency Services**

It is important to keep lines of communication open with Emergency Services as they are best placed to offer advice as a situation unfolds. The school site may or may not be cordoned off by Emergency Services depending on the severity of the incident that has triggered the Lockdown. Emergency Services will support the decision of the Headteacher with regarding the timing of communication to parents.

## **REMEMBER IN THE RARE EVENT OF A FIREARMS OR WEAPONS ATTACK**

**RUN** to a place of safety. This is a far better option than to surrender or negotiate. If there's nowhere to go, then...

**HIDE** It's better to hide than to confront. Remember to turn your phone to silent and turn off vibrate. Barricade yourself in if you can. Then finally and only when it is safe to do so...

**TELL** the police by calling 999.

**Pupils should be made routinely aware of this advice.**

## **Bomb Evacuation Procedures**

### **Principles**

The overriding consideration must always be the safety of staff, students, visitors and the general public. The purpose of this guidance is to ensure any emergency situation can be dealt with in a pre-planned and organised manner to maintain the safety of all persons and co-ordinate an evacuation in conjunction with the emergency services.

All staff and students must be aware of evacuation procedures (see the Fire Plan). All persons on site (visitors, contractors etc.) must be instructed on the procedures for evacuation of the building.

A bomb threat can be communicated in a number of different ways. The threat is likely to be made in person over the telephone; however, it may also be a recorded message, communicated in written form, delivered face-to-face or, increasingly, sent by email or social media (e.g. Twitter or Instagram, etc.). A threat may be communicated via a third-party, i.e. a person or organisation unrelated to the intended victim and identified only to pass the message.

### **Procedures**

#### **Immediate steps if you receive a bomb threat communication**

Any member of staff with a direct telephone line, mobile phone, computer or tablet etc., could conceivably receive a bomb threat. Such staff should, therefore, understand the actions required of them as the potential first response to a threat message.

#### **If you receive a telephone threat you should:**

- stay calm and listen carefully
- have immediate access to a checklist on key information that should be recorded (see Appendix 2)
- if practical, keep the caller talking and alert a colleague to dial 999
- if displayed on your phone, note the number of the caller, otherwise, dial 1471 to obtain the number once the call has ended
- if the threat is a recorded message write down as much detail as possible
- If the threat is received via text message do not reply to, forward or delete the message. Note the number of the sender and follow police advice
- know who to contact in your organisation upon receipt of the threat, e.g. building security/senior manager. They will need to make an assessment of the threat

#### **If the threat is delivered face-to-face:**

- try to remember as many distinguishing characteristics of the threat-maker as possible

#### **If discovered in a written note, letter or as graffiti:**

- treat as police evidence and stop other people touching the item

#### **If the threat is received via email or social media application:**

- do not reply to, forward or delete the message

- note the sender's email address or username/user ID for social media applications
- preserve all web log files for your organisation to help the police investigation (as a guide, 7 days prior to the threat message and 48 hours after)
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**REMEMBER Dial 999 and follow police advice. Seek advice from the venue Fire Manager as soon as possible.**

### **Assessing the credibility of bomb threats**

Evaluating the credibility of a threat is a critical task, particularly if the attack being threatened is imminent. This is a tactic used to place additional pressure on decision makers. Police will assess the threat at the earliest opportunity. When specific intelligence is known to police, advice will be issued accordingly; however, in the absence of detailed information, it will be necessary to consider a number of factors:-

- Is the threat part of a series? If so, what has happened elsewhere or previously?
- Can the location of the claimed bomb(s) be known with precision? If so, is a bomb visible at the location identified?
- Considering the hoaxer's desire to influence behaviour, is there any reason to believe their words?
- if the threat is imprecise, could an external evacuation inadvertently move people closer to the hazard?
- is a suspicious device visible?

### **Checking your venue for suspicious items - Search considerations**

Regular searches of your establishment, proportionate to the risks faced, will enhance a good security culture and reduce the risk of a suspicious item being placed or remaining unnoticed for long periods. Additionally, if you receive a bomb threat and depending upon how credible it is, you may decide to conduct a 'search' for suspicious items. To that end:

- ensure plans are in place to carry out an effective search in response to a bomb threat (Appendix 6)
- identify who in your venue will coordinate and take responsibility for conducting searches
- initiate a search by messaging over telephone cascade
- divide your venue into areas of a manageable size for 1 or 2 searchers. Ideally staff should follow a search plan and search in pairs to ensure nothing is missed
- ensure those conducting searches are familiar with their areas of responsibility. Those who regularly work in an area are best placed to spot unusual or suspicious items
- focus on areas that are open to the public; enclosed areas (e.g. cloakrooms, stairs, corridors, lifts etc.) evacuation routes and assembly points, car parks, other external areas such as goods or loading bays
- develop appropriate techniques for staff to be able to routinely search public areas without alarming any visitors or customers present
- under no circumstances should any suspicious item be touched or moved in any way. Immediately start evacuation and dial 999
- ensure all visitors know who to report a suspicious item to and have the confidence to report suspicious behaviour

Remember: it is vital that regular drills are carried out to ensure all are familiar with bomb threat procedures, routes and rendezvous points. Disabled staff should have personal evacuation plans and be individually briefed on their evacuation procedures. Similarly, all visitors should be briefed on evacuation procedures and quickly identified and assisted in the event of a threat.

Familiarising through testing and exercising will increase the likelihood of an effective response to an evacuation and aid the decision-making process when not to evacuate/invacuate.

## Planning for Evacuation

Responsibility for the initial decision making remains with the management of the location being threatened. Do not delay your decision making process waiting for the arrival of police. Police will assess the credibility of the threat at the earliest opportunity. All bomb threats should be reported to the police and their subsequent advice followed accordingly. It is essential that appropriate plans exist, they should be event and location specific.

## Bomb Evacuation Procedure

The bomb evacuation procedure is activated via the Fire Alarm Bell which is located in the Main Office. Evacuation to the Fire Assembly point initially where senior staff will direct to the Bomb Assembly Point (far end of the KS2 field). If for any reason the bomb assembly point area is compromised, then the Fire Wardens will designate another area for assembly and inform staff as soon as feasibly possible and before evacuation proceeds.

Care should be taken to ensure that an alternative assembly points are of a suitable distance away from buildings and car parks taking into account the possible spread of blast, glass and debris damage. The assembly point should be:

- More than 100m away from a small item (hand luggage size)
- More than 200m away from a large item or car
- More than 400m away from a large vehicle (load carrying vehicles) – In such an eventuality pupils will be walked to Norton Green.

**Unlike a fire evacuation, during bomb threat evacuations windows and internal doors should be left open, and disabled persons may use the lifts. Lights should be left on. If it does not require a detour or significant delay coats and personal belongings such as bags should be removed from the building.**

## Designated Staff

- The Fire Manager will act as the focal point for all communication and will co-ordinate the evacuation procedure.
- Fire Wardens are the staff with area responsibilities.

## Actions to be taken

The Fire Manager will:

1. Notify the police by dialling 999
2. Isolate the area - the minimum distance should exceed 50 metres
3. Ensure nothing is touched
4. Evacuate the building/s and assemble at the designated area or alternative if necessary
5. Detail staff to entrances to prevent re-entry to the building
6. Liaise with Police and provide assistance to carry out a search of the building
7. If the main telephone line received a threat, ensure that the bomb threat detail sheet (**Appendix 2**) is completed and made available to the police on their arrival.
8. Inform the Chair of Directors/ Local Management Board of events

## Fire Wardens

In common with fire evacuations Fire Wardens will carry out a check of their search area to ensure everyone has vacated the premises and will direct students, staff and visitors to the designated assembly point. Fire Wardens should check their designated area to ensure that it is evacuated. The all clear for evacuation of the area should be reported to the Fire Manager.

### **Operating the Incident/Bomb Alarm**

1. Sound alarm, follow Fire Plan arrangements for evacuation
2. Telephone the Fire & Rescue Service to advise of your actions. Use the standard message below:

“We are ringing to inform you that a bomb threat has been received and we are activating the bomb alarm in order to evacuate the building(s). The information that we have received indicates that the bomb is set to explode at .....am/pm

The Police have been informed and an Incident Control Point has been set up at

“.....”

### **Bomb Threat Detail Sheet (see Appendix 2)**

1. It is important to record the actual words used wherever possible
2. Get a colleague to listen to the call with you
3. Listen carefully – stay calm, if possible do not interrupt
4. Keep the caller talking and keep the line open – do not clear it until you are told to do so.

### **Reoccupation of the Building**

Following evacuation and after search of the building, confirmation that the building may be reoccupied should be sought from the police attending the incident. The police will establish cordons depending upon the size of an identified suspect device. Always follow police directions and avoid assembly close to a police cordon.

### **Further Guidance to staff**

Further guidance to staff on package bombs/incendiary devices and suspect devices is enclosed at **Appendix 3** and **Appendix 4**.

### **Internal or inwards evacuation ('invacuation') – See Lockdown Guidance**

There are occasions when it is safer to remain inside, **alarm is 5 intermittent rings**. Staying in your venue and moving people away from external windows/walls is relevant when it is known that a bomb is not within or immediately adjacent to your building.

If the suspect device is outside your venue, people may be exposed to greater danger if the evacuation route inadvertently takes them past the device. A safer alternative may be the use of internal protected spaces.

If the location of the device threatened is unknown, evacuation represents a credible and justifiable course of action.

### **Decision not to evacuate or inwardly evacuate**

This will be reasonable and proportionate if, after an evaluation by the relevant manager(s), the threat is deemed implausible (e.g. a deliberate hoax). In such circumstances police may provide additional advice and guidance relating to other risk management options. It may be considered desirable to ask staff familiar with the venue to check their immediate surroundings to identify anything out of place, see search considerations below.



# Appendix 1



## Appendix 2

# ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN ON RECEIPT OF A BOMB THREAT

1. Remain calm and talk to the caller
2. Note the caller's number if displayed on your phone
3. If the threat has been sent via email or social media see appropriate section below
4. If you are able to, record the call
5. Write down the exact wording of the threat:

When Where What How Who Why Time

**ASK THESE QUESTIONS & RECORD ANSWERS AS ACCURATELY AS POSSIBLE:**

Where exactly is the bomb right now?	
When is it going to explode?	
What does it look like?	
What does the bomb contain?	
How will it be detonated?	
Did you place the bomb? If not, who did?	
What is your name?	
What is your address?	
What is your telephone number?	
Do you represent a group or are you acting alone?	
Why have you placed the bomb?	

Record time call completed:	
Name and telephone number of person informed:	

## INFORM THE FIRE MANAGER – Mrs Gill Dowson

Name and telephone number of person informed:

## DIAL 999 AND INFORM POLICE

Time informed:

This part should be completed once the caller has hung up and police/ Fire Manager have all been informed

Date and time of call:

Duration of call:

The telephone number that received the call:

**ABOUT THE CALLER:**

Male

Female

Nationality?

Age?

**THREAT LANGUAGE:**

Well-spoken

Irrational

Taped

Foul

Incoherent

**CALLER'S VOICE:**

Calm

Crying

Clearing throat

Angry

Nasal

Slurred

Excited

Stutter

Disguised

Slow

Lisp

\*Accent

Rapid

Deep

Familiar

Laughter

Hoarse

Other (please specify)

\*What accent?

If the voice sounded familiar, who did it sound like?

**BACKGROUND SOUNDS:**

Street noises

House noises

Animal noises

Crockery

Motor

Clear

Voice

Static

PA system

Booth

Music

Factory machinery

Office machinery

Other (please specify)

**REMARKS:**

**ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

Signature: ..... Print Name: ..... Date: .....

## **ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN ON RECEIPT OF A BOMB THREAT SENT VIA EMAIL OR SOCIAL MEDIA**

- 1 DO NOT reply to, forward or delete the message
- 2 If sent via email note the address
- 3 If sent via social media what application has been used and what is the username/ID?
  
- 4 Dial 999 and follow police guidance
- 5 Preserve all web log files for your organisations to help the police investigation (as a guide, 7 days prior to the threat message and 48 hours after)

Signature: ..... Print Name: ..... Date: .....

**SAVE AND PRINT – HAND COPY TO POLICE AND FIRE MANAGER**

Retention Period: 7 years

## **GENERAL ADVICE FOR STAFF CONCERNING PACKAGE BOMBS/INCENDIARY DEVICES**

The instructions below should be followed when dealing with package bombs / incendiary devices.

This procedure should be read carefully by all staff.

### **PACKAGE BOMBS/INCENDIARY DEVICES/POWDERS**

Postal bombs are not likely to be in large parcels but rather in flat letters weighing up to four ounces, or in packets the size of a book. Bombs can however be of any shape or size and anything suspicious should be reported.

**REMEMBER** – You must not move them. They may explode on opening, so look out for:-

- The postmark and any name and address of sender
- The writing, which may be stencilled
- The balance, which, if uneven, is suspect
- The weight, if it seems excessive for the size treat as suspect
- Any protruding wires, (even the best-prepared devices can be come undone in transit) treat as suspect
- Any hole, (like pinholes) in wrapping or envelope
- Greasy marks, on wrapping or envelope, which could be from 'sweating' explosives
- The smell, some explosives have an aroma of marzipan or almonds
- The 'booby' trap, could be one envelope tightly taped or tied with string inside another, examine both for indications listed above

You must remember the following:

- Keep calm
- Don't move it
- Don't open it
- Don't let anyone else interfere with it
- Don't place in a container
- Don't place on the floor or in a corner
- Do put it on a flat surface
- Ensure that it is easily identifiable to Emergency services
- Evacuate adjacent rooms
- Call the Fire Manager
- Check all mail carefully; this includes local mail and any delivered by messenger, as there is always the possibility that Terrorist Groups, or other extreme political groups and subversive organisations could adopt this type of terrorism.

**IF IN DOUBT – CALL THE FIRE MANAGER**

## GENERAL ADVICE FOR STAFF CONCERNING SUSPECT DEVICES

The instructions below should be followed when dealing with suspect packages. This procedure should be read carefully by all staff.

### Suspect Devices

Bombs placed within sports bags, holdalls, rucksacks or litterbins are usually designed to cause personal injury and disruption. They can be of varying size and weight, but they all have the potential to be fatal.

On discovery of a possible suspect device notify the Fire Manager. You will need to give as much information as possible on the container and the location (see below). The Fire Manager will then contact the Police.

You must remember the following:

- DO NOT attempt to open the device
- DO NOT move it
- DO NOT place it within a vehicle or other container
- DO NOT tamper with it in any way
- DO NOT allow anyone else to interfere with it
- Clear people from the immediate area

You will need to give as much information as possible when reporting a suspect device.

Make a note of the following (if it appears safe to do so) –

- Type of container
- Size of container
- Does the container appear full/bulging?
- Identifying mark on container
- Its exact location
- Nearest property
- Are there any similar items nearby?
- A description of the person placing the device

### Personal Safety:

- If you think you are dealing with an obvious bomb or a confirmed suspicious item, move yourself and anyone nearby to an area which is:
  - Not in the direct line of sight of the item
  - More than 100m away from a small item (hand luggage size)
  - More than 200m away from a large item or car
  - More than 400m away from a large vehicle (load carrying vehicles)
  - Away from glass and parked cars
  - Away from secondary hazards (gas, electricity etc.)
  - Behind hard cover
- **IF IN DOUBT – CALL THE FIRE MANAGER**

**Lockdown Checklist**

HEADTEACHER	
Actions (to activate, and during, a lockdown)	Completed
Liaise with the Police in considering a lockdown	
Activate lockdown using a predetermined activation signal	
Advise the Police and other appropriate emergency service agencies	
Establish the School Incident Management Team (to plan further actions and enact the response plan)	
Allocate specific responsibilities	
Guide visitors to safety	
Divert parents and returning groups from the school	
Ensure a telephone line is kept free	
If in place or in use stop the school bell from sounding during period changes or break times	
Secure external doors and entrances	
Keep main entrance as the only school entry point. This entrance must be constantly monitored and no unauthorised people have access	
Have a delegated staff member wait at the main entry to the College to guide emergency services personnel, if safe to do so	

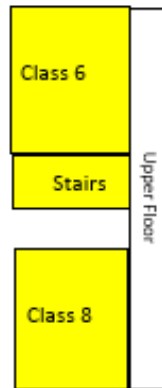


Conducting Searches

St. Joseph's, Conducting Search Area

- ◆ Admin Team including site manager to check outdoor front entrance
- ◆ EY Team including EY outdoor area
- ◆ KS1 Team including KS1 outdoor area
- ◆ DHT/Well-being Lead including stable yard & KS1 field
- ◆ Class 7 & 9 staff, including sensory garden & KS2 field
- ◆ Class 6 & 8 staff, including veranda & KS2 playground
- ◆ Class 10 & 11 staff, including outdoor path from stable yard to sensory garden

PE  
Shed



Assembly  
Point A

KS2  
Playground

