

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



School Lockdown Policy

2025 - 2026

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

On very rare occasions it may be necessary to seal off the school so that it cannot be entered from the outside. This will ensure that students, staff and visitors are safe in situations where there is a hazard in the school grounds or outside the school in the near vicinity. A lockdown is implemented when there are serious security risks for the premises due to, for example, near-by chemical spillage, proximity of dangerous dogs, serious weather conditions or attempted access by unauthorised persons' intent in causing harm/damage.

Students will be made aware of the detailed procedures, via class information, assemblies and via drills. The school will conduct a lockdown drill at least once a year.

Lockdown Arrangements: There are two types of lockdown; partial and full.

Partial Lockdown - This may be as the result of a reported incident/civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to staff and students in the school.

It may also be as a result of a warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution, etc. Staff and students should remain in the school building and all doors leading outside should be locked.

No one should be allowed to enter or leave the building.

Full Lockdown - This signifies an immediate threat to the school and may be an escalation of a partial lockdown. Staff and students should remain in the school building and all doors leading outside should be locked.

No one should be **allowed to enter or leave the building. A Full Lockdown requires immediate action.**

Communication between parents and the school

In the event of an actual lockdown, any incident or development will be communicated to parents as soon as is practicable. Parents will be given enough information about what will happen so that they:

- Are reassured that the school understand their concern for their child's welfare, and that it is doing everything possible to ensure his/her safety.
- Do not need to contact the school. Calling the school could tie up telephone lines that are needed for contacting emergency providers.

- Do not come to the school. They could interfere with emergency provider's access to the school and may even put themselves and others in danger.
- Wait for the school to contact them about when it is safe for you to come and collect their children, and where this will be from.

Parents will be told:

"...the school is in a full lockdown situation. During this period the office and entrances will be un-manned, external doors locked and nobody allowed in or out..."

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.

In the event of a prolonged lockdown or more severe scenario, Durham County Council has the capacity to provide humanitarian assistance by establishing a Reception Centre for family and friends outside of the cordoned area.