The Meadows School



Invacuation and Lockdown Policy

Updated: September 2026
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Ratified by Governors: November 2026

1. PURPOSE

The safety and wellbeing of students, staff, visitors and contractors is the school's highest priority.

This policy sets out arrangements for responding to incidents that may require an invacuation or lockdown of the school premises. It should be read alongside the school's Fire Emergency Plan, Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety Policy and Business Continuity Plan.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the school can respond quickly, proportionately and effectively to any situation that presents a threat to the safety of those on site.

2. PROTECTIVE SECURITY AND MARTYN'S LAW

The school recognises the importance of maintaining effective protective security arrangements to safeguard all people on site.

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law) places increased emphasis upon preparedness, protective security and emergency planning within publicly accessible premises. Whilst legal obligations may vary depending upon the size and nature of individual premises, all schools have a responsibility to take reasonable and proportionate steps to protect students, staff and visitors from foreseeable threats.

The school will:

- Maintain appropriate emergency response plans.
- Conduct regular security risk assessments.
- Ensure effective communication systems are available.
- Test emergency arrangements regularly.
- Provide staff with appropriate training and awareness.
- Review security arrangements following exercises, incidents or significant changes to the site.
- Work collaboratively with emergency services and relevant partner agencies.

3. INVACUATION AND LOCKDOWN

Invacuation and lockdown are separate emergency responses.

Invacuation

An invacuation is used when a threat exists outside the school building but there is no immediate threat within the school itself.

Examples may include:

- Dangerous dogs or animals.
- Severe weather events.
- Nearby police incidents.
- Suspicious activity in the local area.
- Hazardous substances or smoke in the vicinity.

During an invacuation, students, staff and visitors are brought safely inside the building and external access points are secured while normal activities may continue where appropriate.

Lockdown

A lockdown is a more restrictive emergency response used when there is an immediate threat to the school community or where a threat could enter the premises.

Examples may include:

- Violent or aggressive individuals.
- Serious criminal incidents.
- Terrorist-related incidents.
- Weapons-related incidents.
- Significant public disorder.
- Any situation where remaining visible or moving around the site increases risk.

During a lockdown, movement is restricted and additional security measures are implemented to protect those on site.

4. PRINCIPLES OF RESPONSE

The school adopts the following principles during any emergency:

- Protect life above all other considerations.
- Act quickly and decisively.
- Remain calm and reassuring.
- Communicate clearly.
- Use professional judgement.
- Support vulnerable students and staff.
- Cooperate fully with emergency services.

No written procedure can predict every possible scenario. Staff are therefore expected to make dynamic risk assessments and take reasonable actions to preserve life and prevent harm.

5. SITE SECURITY

The effectiveness of any invacuation or lockdown response depends upon robust site security arrangements.

The school will undertake regular site security reviews which may include:

- Perimeter fencing and boundaries.
- Gates and access points.
- Visitor management procedures.
- Door and window security.
- Classroom refuge locations.
- Communication systems.
- CCTV coverage.
- Lighting.
- Emergency equipment.
- Signage.

• Contractor and visitor arrangements.

Any identified vulnerabilities will be risk assessed and addressed wherever reasonably practicable.

6. STAFF TRAINING AND EMPOWERMENT

The school recognises that emergency plans are only effective when staff understand them and feel confident implementing them.

The school will provide regular training and exercises to ensure staff understand:

• Their roles and responsibilities.

• Emergency communication procedures.

• Invacuation and lockdown arrangements.

• In security procedures

The school encourages staff to use professional judgement and make informed decisions where circumstances require flexibility.

Staff should feel supported and empowered to take immediate action where necessary to protect themselves, colleagues, visitors and children.

7. ACTIVATION OF AN INVACUATION OR LOCKDOWN

An invacuation or lockdown may be initiated by:

• The Headteacher.

• A member of the Senior Leadership Team.

• Any member of staff who identifies an immediate threat.

Where time permits, the Senior Leadership Team should be informed immediately.

The signal used for invacuation and lockdown must be clearly distinguishable from the fire evacuation alarm and understood by all staff. Staff will be notified of a lockdown via the Tannoy, Walkie talkie or paging system.

8. INVACUATION PROCEDURE

Upon activation of an invacuation:

• All students, staff and visitors must move indoors immediately.

• Staff should use the nearest safe entrance.

• External doors and gates should be secured.

• Registers should be checked.

• Visitors should be accounted for.

• Normal activities may continue if considered safe.

• Staff should remain alert for further instructions.

9. LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE

Upon activation of a lockdown:

• All students, staff and visitors should move immediately to the nearest place of safety.

• External doors and access points should be secured where safe to do so.

• Classroom doors should be locked where possible.

• Blinds or curtains should be closed where appropriate.

• Students should remain calm and follow staff instructions.

• Staff should conduct a register check when safe.

• Mobile phones should be silenced where appropriate.

• Staff should avoid drawing attention to occupied areas.

• No one should leave a place of safety unless directed by emergency services or the Senior Leadership Team.

10. RESPONSIBILITIES

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Coordinate the response.
- Liaise with emergency services.
- Monitor the welfare of students and staff.
- Provide information and reassurance.
- Make strategic decisions based upon available information.

Teaching Staff

Teaching staff will:

- Ensure the immediate safety of students.
- Conduct registers when safe.
- Reassure students.
- Follow instructions from the Senior Leadership Team.
- Make dynamic risk assessments where required.

Support Staff

Support staff will:

- Assist with securing areas.
- Support students and visitors.
- Carry out assigned responsibilities.
- Communicate concerns immediately.

Office Staff

Office staff will:

- Contact emergency services if required.
- Account for visitors.

• Support communication arrangements.

• Assist the Senior Leadership Team.

Visitors and Contractors

Visitors and contractors must follow instructions immediately and remain under the supervision of staff.

11. COMMUNICATION

The school will maintain appropriate communication arrangements to support emergency management.

Communication methods may include:

• Internal Tannoy system.

• Telephones - paging system.

• Mobile phones.

• Radios.

• Email systems.

• Parent communication platforms.

Information shared externally must be authorised by the Headteacher or nominated representative.

12. ENDING AN INVACUATION OR LOCKDOWN

Only the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team or emergency services may authorise the end of an invacuation or lockdown.

Once the incident has concluded:

• An all-clear message will be communicated.

• Students and staff will return to normal activities when safe.

• Appropriate welfare support will be provided.

• Parents will be informed where appropriate.

• A debrief will be conducted.

You will use a code word to end the invacuation: "**Mr Blue** says the evacuation has ended". This allows all staff to know its safe to end the invacuation.

13. POST-INCIDENT REVIEW

Following any invacuation, lockdown or exercise, the school will review:

- Response times.
- Communication effectiveness.
- Staff confidence and understanding.
- Any procedural issues.
- Site security considerations.
- Training requirements.

Recommendations will be implemented as soon as reasonably practicable.

14. TESTING AND EXERCISES

The school will undertake at least two invacuation, or lockdown exercises each academic year.

Where possible, exercises should take place in different circumstances, including:

- Lesson times.
- Break times.
- Lunchtimes.
- Arrival or departure periods.

Following each exercise, a review will be completed and any lessons identified will be incorporated into future planning and training.

15. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner following:

- A significant incident.
- Legislative changes.
- Changes to site layout.
- Updated national guidance.
- Recommendations arising from exercises or security reviews.