



Tower House School

Lockdown Policy

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Intent

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that pupils and staff are safe in situations where there is a hazard on the School grounds or outside the School that require pupils and staff to be locked within buildings for their own safety.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, parents & carers as well as pupils and any visitors to the School site. It covers the procedures and personnel responsibilities when the School is required to go into lockdown. This will usually occur if there is a dangerous intruder on school grounds, but may also occur in some circumstances in the event of a hazardous situation such as a chemical spill or extreme weather event, which makes it dangerous for pupils, staff and visitors to be outside.

Guidelines

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, pupils, parents or visitors.

The procedures aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all pupils and staff. This may also include where there is a need to restrict the movement of pupils around the School environment.

Upon hearing the alert for a lockdown the procedures herein this policy will always be implemented.

Copies of this policy will be disseminated via the school website and available on the Engage staff portal.

The Head, in conjunction with the SMT, will schedule at least two practice Shelter Drills per year at differing times and the Deputy Head will be responsible for ensuring all staff members are clear about the procedure before the practice drill takes place. Staff will remind pupils of the Shelter Drill procedure during tutor time and assemblies each term.

Procedure

1. In the event of a lock-down, the lockdown alarm can be activated by any member of staff by depressing one of the multiple Wireless Lockdown buttons situated around the school site. The office will also send all staff an SMS via the School's Clarion Call system with this notification - **Lockdown in Progress** *Turn off all lights, lock doors and windows, then find cover and wait quietly until given you the all-clear via a further SMS.*
2. It is mandatory that all pupils and adults remain in the building / classroom / office they are in at the time – but see also table in paragraph 4. Pupils must be closely accompanied by staff at all times. Staff members who are not teaching at the start of lock-down should go to the nearest classroom.
3. Allocated staff will check common areas (including lavatories, library and music rehearsal rooms) for pupils and direct them to the nearest classroom; this also applies to visitors not matching any intruder description.
4. Where children / staff / visitors are not in a classroom, they must be directed by staff as follows:

Area/Time	Refuge
Break Time - outdoors	Closest classroom / building as directed by duty staff
Dining Room	Stay put
Bank of England Sports Ground	Stay put
190 (Staff Room)	Stay put

5. Catering staff should make their way from the kitchen to the main dining room immediately.
6. On hearing the Lockdown alarm the secretary should secure the doors to the senior school before taking refuge in the Headmaster's office (Control Centre).
7. On hearing the Lockdown alarm the Head of Junior School (or delegated adult) will secure the door leading to the covered walkway then return to his/her class.
8. Windows and blinds, fire exit doors should be closed in the classroom / office and the room door locked, wherever possible. Where the door is not lockable, staff to place a rubber wedge under the door to hinder access.
9. Upon notification of lockdown, staff will ensure that pupils remain in classrooms and position them away from possible sightlines from external windows/doors & lights turned off. Once a classroom is secure, staff should take cover themselves and switch their mobile phone to silent. Pupils and staff should, if possible, be positioned seated against the door wall in the most non-visible corner.
10. Pupils are not allowed to use any electronic devices.
11. Pupils and adults are to remain quiet at all times.
12. The office will also contact staff off site for trips or sporting activities to inform them of the situation.
12. Where practicable, staff should contact the Head by email head@thsboys.org.uk to confirm which pupils and staff are present, stating which area of the school they are in.
13. Pupils and adults should remain in this position until "all clear" SMS is sent via the School's Clarion Call system by a member of the Senior Management Team.
14. Parents should be contacted about the time and place to pick up their child, if appropriate, (see below) using the School's Clarion Call system.

Communication between parents and the school:

- The School's lockdown procedures will be published on the school website and routine practices communicated with parents via Clarion Call or by the weekly newsletter with information regarding the effectiveness of the procedure.
- In the event of a lockdown incident developments will be communicated to parents as soon as is practicable along the lines of:

**Tower House School is in a lockdown situation.
During this period the phones, office and entrances will be un-manned,
external doors locked. Please do not attempt to visit or phone the School.
Please wait for further instructions and information.**

- Parents will be given enough information about what will happen/is happening or has happened so that they are reassured that the school understands their concern for their child's welfare, and that it is doing everything possible to ensure their safety.
- Parents will be reassured that any measures needed to ensure the incident does not re-occur are put into place;
- Parents are asked not to contact the school during a lockdown or immediately afterwards. Calling the school could put pupils safety at risk as lines of communication are needed for contacting emergency providers, outside agencies, or parents as required;
- Parents are asked not come to the school. This could interfere with emergency provider's access to the school and may even put themselves and others in danger;
- Parents need to wait for the school to contact them about what happens next and when it is safe for them to collect their children, and where this will be from (if this is deemed necessary). Parents need to be aware that their child's day may be extended beyond any normal collection times.
- Parents will be informed when the all-clear has been given.

Emergency Services

- It is important to keep lines of communication open with outside agencies and the 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 Head regarding the timing of communication to parents;
- In the event of a prolonged lockdown or more severe scenario, the Local Authority has the capacity to provide humanitarian assistance by establishing a Reception Centre for friends and family outside of the cordoned area;
- It is of vital importance that the School's lockdown procedures are familiar to all members of the School staff. To achieve this, a Shelter Drill should be undertaken at least twice a year.
- Depending on their age pupils should also be aware of the plan. Regular practices similar to Fire Evacuation Practices will increase their familiarity.