

Invacuation Policy

Blakehill Primary School



Together We Can

SCHOOL

3

BFS

Headteacher	Chair of Governors	Review Dates
		Last Review: January 2023
Lisa Keighley	Philip Cavalier-Lumley	Next Review: January 2026

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Invacuation & Lockdown Procedure

Statement of Intent

The safety of pupils, staff members and visitors on the premises of Blakehill Primary School is paramount. Blakehill Primary takes its duty to protect the wellbeing and welfare of everyone very seriously.

The main priority is to prevent an emergency from occurring in the settings; however, this is sometimes out of the hands of the school/site. In an emergency, staff members of Blakehill Primary will endeavour to take all reasonable actions in order to ensure the safety of pupils, staff members and visitors to its schools/premises.

1. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

This policy has due regard to official guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (DfE (2014) 'Health and safety: advice on legal duties and powers')
- DfE (2015) 'Emergency planning and response'

This policy will be applied in conjunction with the following school policies and procedures:

- Health and Safety

- Critical Incident Policy

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher will:

Lead and promote discussion with colleagues and all school stakeholders on the subject of risks to the school premises and school community.

Discuss and consider the key threats to their premises.

Use the information above to develop an invacuation procedure and communicate and practice these procedures.

This procedure will include:

- The identification of likely risks
- ways of raising the alarm,
- invacuation and lockdown procedures.
- How plans will be communicated and to whom.
- A commitment to practice and review these regularly.

Encourage everyone in the school community to take responsibility for security, and, promote the “right to be suspicious” – a challenge culture and to report any suspicious or unusual behaviour.

Ensure that all staff can take responsibility and act in any situation if they feel there is a threat. Staff should feel secure in making a decision to implement any part of the plan in the absence of senior staff/school leaders.

3 Invacuation & Lockdown Procedure

Headteacher will ensure that premises have in place sensible and proportionate responses to situations which pose a threat to the safety and security of staff and pupils. Threats to premises may come from international terrorism, domestic terrorism and/or localised threats to the school and the community such as:

- Local individuals with a grudge/violent behaviour/extreme anti-social activities which may threaten the school, pupils or staff.
- Dangerous dogs.
- Environmental threats such as smoke, gas/fumes or major fire in the vicinity.
- Internal threats from pupils, staff or members of the school community.
- Impacts from a nearby attack or major incident at a ‘high risk’ prestigious neighbouring premises (e.g. due to emergency services response / road closures).
- Threats by association with high profile individuals, the location of the premises, the school’s activities, visitors, sponsors, contractors and staff.

Invacuation & lockdown procedures will be a sensible and proportionate planned response to any incidents which pose a threat to the safety and security of colleagues and service users.

There may be occasions when it is safer to remain inside the building or call people back into the building if the risk of harm is outside.

In some situations, bringing everyone inside will be sufficient. In others a full security lockdown may be required. For example, if there is an aggressive dog outside the school grounds/playground, the school will implement an invacuation procedure (to get all staff and pupils inside). This may be sufficient in the circumstances. However, should the dog then get into the school buildings, a lockdown procedure may need to be instigated. This may be a precautionary measure but puts the school in a state of readiness, (whilst retaining a degree of normality), should the situation escalate.

Raising the alarm

Headteachers will decide how to communicate the message that invacuation is required. This **will be different** from the usual fire alarm evacuation sound.

An “alarm” does not have to be an automatic signal using bells or an audio message throughout the premises. A number of different methods of raising the alarm could be considered:

- Radio/walkie-talkie communications.
- Interactive whiteboard messages.
- Pagers.
- Hand bell / air horn/ whistle
- Use of coded word.

Raising the alarm should raise into consideration how the emergency services will be contacted. All situations are different, and it will be necessary to review and react to a situation as well as to follow advice from the emergency services.

Where do people go in invacuation?

- During the development of these plans headteachers will review the site and highlight areas where people can stay safely during an invacuation or lockdown. This does not have to be classrooms or the school hall, it can be anywhere within the school building which does not pose a physical risk such as machinery/chemicals. **A plan may have to include more fluid instructions such as telling pupils and staff to go to ANY classroom or safe area.**
- An emergency security situation may lead to staff and pupils being displaced across the site and people may react in unpredictable ways. It is important that a plan has flexibility in order to cope with these types of events. For example, creating a plan for invacuation which suggests returning to designated classrooms may not be possible; the plan will need to allow staff and pupils to think dynamically about where they can go to.
- Invacuation /Lockdown procedures (locking doors / covering windows and securing access points) are intended to frustrate or delay anybody who may be a

threat, in trying to access the building. These are the next step procedures which you may wish to instigate once an evacuation has taken place. A lockdown can reduce the potential number of casualties in the case of weapons/violent attacks. These procedures will be written, communicated and tested.

- Depending on the nature of the building and its use, a plan might include partial and full lockdown elements.

Partial lockdown

This might be used on large sites with larger numbers of occupants where there is an incident in one area of the site. This may mean that, occupants are aware and alerted to the security situation elsewhere, points of entry to the building are secured to prevent any threat entering the building and individuals are prevented from leaving. In these cases, movement may continue in the building depending on the threat.

Full lockdown

May develop from partial lockdown situation or may be the result of a threat inside or outside the building such as a weapons attack. In these situations, occupants will alert emergency services, communicate with building occupants and secure access to the building.

Those inside the building will:

- Move away from windows.
- Lock internal doors if possible either by use of security system or manual locks.
- Close blinds/curtains.
- Remain quiet and out of sight.
- Turn off room lights.
- Turn off smartboards and computer monitors.
- Silence personal devices.
- Move towards the inner core of building/safe areas if possible. In a potential gunfire situation, stay in a location that would protect people from this threat; consider locations behind substantial brickwork or heavy reinforced walls.

Additionally, staff and pupils should be aware of the potential impact on their ability to “run, hide” if using automatic door locking systems in a lockdown situation.

When a plan has been developed it is necessary to practice and communicate the plan. All occupants of a building should be involved in practising the procedure which can be practiced at desk top level, in slow time and developing to real time practice.

2. Communication

Where possible during the lockdown, staff can use discreet lines of communication. Examples of discreet communication channels might be:

Where staff have access to an internal e-mail system accessing their account through a variety of means e.g. laptop, smartphone or tablet.

Group communication through “user groups” via text message/ WhatsApp.

Communication Between Parents/Carers and the School

Arrangements for communicating with parents/carers in the event of a lockdown will be routinely shared by letter, text or the school website. It may be useful to reinforce the message that if the school is in a lockdown situation, phone lines and entrances will be un-manned, external doors locked and nobody will be allowed in or out.

In the event of an actual lockdown, it is strongly advised that any incident or development is communicated to parents/carers as soon as is practicable using pre-planned messages. Key information provided will be:

- The school has an ongoing security situation.
- Their child’s welfare is important and that the school has followed lockdown procedures.
- Request that they not to contact the school. (*Calling the school could tie up telephone lines and being unable to get through can cause further anxiety*).
- Request that they do not come to the school as this will interfere with emergency services access to the site and may even put themselves and others in danger.
- How they may get information about when it is safe to collect their children, and where this will be from (e.g. parent text/police).
- What will happen if the lockdown continues beyond school hours.

Should parents/carers present at the school during a lockdown, under no circumstances will members of staff leave the building to communicate directly with them.

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.

Hostage Situation

In the event of someone being taken hostage on the premises, the **headteacher/designated senior leader** will seek further advice from the emergency services. It may be necessary to evacuate the rest of the site. Staff and pupils may be asked to hide or disperse if this will improve their safety. If armed police attend the site, staff will observe the following advice-:

Follow police officers' instructions;
Remain calm;
Avoid sudden movements that may be considered a threat;
Keep hands in view.
ARMED POLICE OFFICERS MAY:
Point guns;
Treat staff firmly;
Question staff;
Be unable to distinguish staff from the threat.

3. Critical Incident Policy

Business continuity is the ability of the school to maintain essential functions after a critical incident has occurred. Headteachers will be aware that if the school is deemed to be a crime scene by the emergency services, access to the school building will not be allowed until the investigations have been completed. This could be for a considerable amount of time. The Headteacher therefore, will ensure that they have adequate and effective arrangements and contingencies within their Plan to enable them to provide a teaching and learning environment/function at alternative locations and not within their own school premises or grounds. This will require collaboration with community groups/venues, transport and catering organisations and other schools.

4. Monitoring and Review

Following an occurrence necessitating the lockdown procedure, the following actions will be taken: -

A full review will be conducted by the **headteacher** in collaboration with the emergency services (where their involvement was required),

The headteacher and staff will carry out a review with all pupils. Those pupils identified as requiring additional support will be offered help; this could be from external providers.

The headteacher will keep parents/carers and other stakeholders informed and involved where appropriate. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or sooner, if statutory guidance changes.