

Bolton Council

Local Authority

Lockdown Policy

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Contents

		Page Nos
1.	Introduction	4
	Purpose	4
	Lockdown Scenarios	4
	Lockdown Status	5
	Activation Procedures	5
	Initiating lockdown	5
	Contacting the emergency services	6
	Suggested lockdown arrangements	6
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partial Lockdown • Full Lockdown 	
	Communication between parents and the school	7
	Emergency Services	8
	Council Corporate Press Office	8
	Generic advice & considerations	8
	Training & exercising	9
	Implementation & review	9
	Appendix A - Invacuation Procedure	10
	Appendix B - Useful Contact Numbers	

Introduction

1. Our lockdown procedure will be 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 learners in the school. Procedures aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all learners and staff.

Purpose

2. To regularly consider the need for robust and tested school lockdown procedures.
3. To ensure all members of the Senior Leadership Team, school administrators, teaching staff, non-teaching staff and the governing board are familiar with the lockdown procedures. To achieve this, a lockdown drill will be undertaken at least once a year. Learners will be aware of the plan; practising the procedures will increase their familiarity and reduce possible fears and anxiety if it is ever activated. Parents and carers will also be informed that the school has lockdown procedures in place.
4. Lockdown procedures may be activated in response to any number of situations.
5. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with Bolton Council's 'Critical Incidents in Schools' policy.

LOCKDOWN SCENARIOS

Typical scenarios

6. Our school may consider activating school lockdown procedures in the following circumstances:
 - A major fire in the vicinity of the school creating a toxic smoke plume;
 - A major fire or explosion at industrial premises downwind of the school creating a toxic smoke plume, air pollution or gas cloud etc.;
 - The close proximity of a dangerous dog roaming loose;
 - A serious transport accident outside or within the school perimeter e.g.
 - Schools near railway stations;
 - Schools near motorways;
 - Close to major roads and junctions.

Less Typical Scenarios

7. A reported incident or civil disturbance close to the school with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the school.
8. An intruder on the school site (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and learners).
9. A disgruntled parent or carer who feels they have issues with a particular member of staff or 'the school'.

Lockdown Status

10. In response to LA guidance we will adopt two formal levels of Lockdown - 'Partial Lockdown' and 'Full Lockdown'.

Partial Lockdown

11. The type of situation where there is no direct risk or threat to the health and safety of staff and learners may be dealt with by activating a 'Partial Lockdown', which will require all external activities to cease immediately whereby learners and staff return to classrooms and all external doors will be locked and windows must be securely closed. Normal levels of security will remain in place to maintain, as far as is possible, 'business as usual'.

Full Lockdown

12. Situations that pose a direct or perceived threat to the health, safety or wellbeing of any member of staff, learner or visitor, will result in a full lockdown being implemented.
 - A full lockdown requires an immediate cessation of any external activities, via the activation of the invacuation procedure (**Appendix A**), with staff and learners outside quickly returning to classrooms
13. The focus will be to secure all external windows and doors and all lockable doors and pathways to:

- Prevent any intruders from gaining access to the site;
- If access is already gained; to stop any intruders from progressing further through the building, or to restrict and slow their progress where it cannot be stopped.

Activation Procedures

14. Both types of lockdown procedure have pre-agreed activation protocols and both are tested at least once a year. Testing is linked to fire test evacuation timelines.
15. An agreed activation procedure is employed. A Partial or Full Lockdown Alert will be sent via NetSupport Notify to all staff immediately. If learners and members of staff are outside the invacuation procedure will be evoked.
16. It may not always be possible to be pre-warned of a risk, especially where an intruder is already on the premises or a visitor may suddenly become violent. For such situations, it may be necessary for those aware of the threat to shout to colleagues for help. All other forms of communication should also be employed if and as necessary e.g. Microsoft Teams (chat) and internal telephones.

Initiating Lockdown

17. Whatever means is available will be used to notify the Head Teacher or office staff of the danger to enable them to activate lockdown notifications. A Partial or Full Lockdown Alert will be sent via NetSupport Notify to all staff immediately.
18. Once aware of a lockdown being activated, staff must ensure they are logged in to Microsoft Teams (chat) and await further instruction via this or NetSupport Notify.

Contacting the Emergency Services

19. Any member of staff aware of a direct threat within the school should contact 999 and provide the police with whatever information they have at that time and ensure that the Head Teacher and office staff are made aware. See 'Full Lockdown' arrangements at paragraph 25 below for guidance on further action to be taken in situations where there is a direct or perceived threat to the health, safety or wellbeing of any member of staff, learner or visitor.

SUGGESTED LOCKDOWN ARRANGEMENTS

Partial Lockdown

Alert to staff: 'Partial Lockdown'

20. The following immediate action should be taken:
 - All outside activity to cease immediately, learners and staff return to building;
 - Note: Staff on duty at break times or those undertaking other playground activities (e.g. football practice in place) will be alerted in line with the invacuation procedure (air horn). This communication capability will be robust and tested at least once each term;
 - All staff and learners must return to their classrooms and remain in the school building and all external doors will be locked and windows must be closed;
 - Staff inside school will be notified of the partial lockdown by an alert sent via NetSupport Notify;
 - Staff must log into Microsoft Teams (chat) to receive further instructions about whether free movement within the building is permitted, this will be dependent upon risk;
 - If free movement is allowed learners and staff members must not go to the school office area unless asked to do so
21. All situations are different, once all staff and learners are safely inside, senior staff will conduct an ongoing and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the emergency services. This can then be communicated to staff and learners via Microsoft Teams (chat).
22. 'Partial Lockdown' is a precautionary measure but puts the school in a state of readiness (whilst retaining a degree of normality) should the situation escalate. Where the risk or threat escalates, be prepared to go to 'Full Lockdown'.

23. In the event of an air pollution issue, air vents should be closed (where possible) and where fitted, air conditioning systems turned off. Emergency services will advise as to the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

FULL LOCKDOWN

Alert to staff: 'Full Lockdown'

24. The following immediate action should be taken:

- All outside activity to cease immediately, learners and staff return to building;
- Note: Staff on duty at break times or those undertaking other playground activities (e.g. football practice in place) will be alerted in line with the evacuation procedure (air horn). This communication capability will be robust and tested at least once each term;
- Staff inside school will be notified of the full lockdown by an alert sent via NetSupport Notify;
- **Senior staff will contact the Crisis Line (01204 332240 office hours or 01204 336900 outside office hours), and the relevant emergency services (Police, Fire or Ambulance) will be summoned as quickly as possible by dialling 999 ensuring they have the following information readily available, if possible:**
 - i. **Nature of the incident**
 - ii. **Emergency service(s) required**
 - iii. **Exact location of the incident**
 - iv. **Numbers of casualties (if possible) and nature of injuries**
 - v. **Location and telephone number where call is being made from**
 - vi. **Hazards which may be encountered by the emergency services at the site**
- Immediately, there is no need to call for assistance from any other agency (e.g. hospital), as the emergency services will arrange this. All the telephone numbers likely to be needed throughout the incident are included at **Appendix B** - please refer to this section for details.
- The overall response to an emergency in Bolton will be managed and co-ordinated through the Gold, Silver or Bronze command structure. Full details of these procedures are included in the 'Critical Incidents in Schools' policy
- All staff and learners must return to their classrooms and remain in the school building and all external doors and windows will be locked
- All external doors and windows locked and dependant on nature of threat, all window blinds closed and learners kept away from windows;
- Staff log into the Microsoft Teams (chat) to receive further instructions
- Learners asked to sit quietly until told it is safe to remove the full lockdown;
- Registers taken; the office will contact each class in turn for an attendance report;
- Staff must not post reports on social media platforms as this may create additional concern to parents and carers or incorrect and conflicting information being released.

25. Staff and learners will remain in lockdown until it has been lifted by a senior member of staff or the emergency services. At any point during the lockdown, the fire alarm may sound which is a cue to evacuate the building.

26. During the lockdown, staff will keep agreed lines of communication open and should not make unnecessary calls to the central office as this could delay more important internal or external communications.

Parent & Carer Communication

27. School lockdown procedures, especially arrangements for communicating with parents, are routinely shared with parents and carers either by newsletter or via the school website. In the event of an actual lockdown, it is strongly advised that any incident or development is communicated to parents and carers as soon as is practicable. The council press office may be able to assist the school with appropriate and agreed information updates.

28. Information provided should:

- Provide reassurance that the school understands parents or carers' concerns and that it is doing everything possible to ensure learner (and staff) safety;
- Explain parents and carers should be encouraged not to contact the school during a lockdown to ensure staff are free to deal with emergency services and other council senior management support;
- Advise parents and carers not to come to the school site until the emergency declared closed as their presence may interfere with emergency services work and may even put themselves and others in danger;
- Explain the school will inform parents and carers when it is safe to pick up the learners.

Emergency Services

29. It is important to keep lines of communication open with Emergency Services as they are best placed to offer advice as the situation unfolds. The school site may or may not be cordoned off by Emergency Services depending on the risk or threat posed by the incident that has triggered the lockdown. Emergency Services will support the decision of the Head Teacher with regarding the timing of communication to parents and carers.

Council Press Office

30. In the event of a prolonged lockdown or a more severe scenario, the Bolton Council Press Office may assist in the dissemination of information to parents and carers and the media.

Generic Advice & Considerations

- Staff should encourage learners to keep calm and offer continuous reassurance;
- As appropriate, the school should establish communication with the Emergency Services as soon as possible;
- Bolton Council should be notified via the People Services 'Crisis Line' phone number on 01204 332240 (Office Hours) or 01204 336900 (Outside Office Hours);
- If necessary, parents and carers should be notified as soon as it is practicable to do so via the school's established communications system or with the assistance of the council Press Office;
- Learners will not be released to parents and carers during a lockdown under any circumstances;
- If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the fire alarm will be sounded and an immediate assessment made by the school senior management team of whether an off-site evacuation is appropriate.

Training & Exercising

31. We are very fortunate in the UK and rarely witness situations requiring a school lockdown to be activated. Similar to fire safety, we do not expect a fire to occur in school but must be prepared to react expeditiously and effectively should the fire alarm sound; and as for fire safety, we must be familiar and confident with the actions required during lockdown procedure activation.

32. To ensure the required level of confidence and familiarity in the lockdown arrangements, a training and exercise regime has been developed, which includes:

- Training and exercise regime in place;
- Table-top exercises with the Senior Leadership Team to test the procedures against various scenarios;
- Rehearsing lockdown arrangements with all staff and learners;
- Displaying lockdown drill information in every classroom alongside information relating to fire-drills;
- Testing communication systems.

Implementation & review

33. The policy will be stored and accessible to all staff on the Bolton Council Extranet site and printed copies will be made available for school staff where there is limited access to IT.

34. The policy will be reviewed annually by the named policy author.

Links to Other Documents

- Bolton Council Critical Incidents in Schools Policy

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Appendix A

Invacuation Procedure

In order to get everyone inside the building as quickly and safely as possible the following procedure must be followed:

1. On hearing the air horn all learners must quickly and calmly enter the school via the nearest entrance under the direction of the class teacher, support staff member or PE coach supervising break time or teaching PE.
2. A nominated member of staff will search the outside toilets.
3. At the same time the office staff member must immediately contact staff members in school to notify them of the invacuation using NetSupport Notify and additionally by telephone to each floor.
4. Senior staff will support the invacuation of the learners outside, giving special consideration to those with PEEPs, until their nominated staff member arrives
5. As soon as possible, after becoming aware of the activation of the invacuation procedure, support staff members must report to their allocated places on the stairs, or to collect learners with PEEPs from the main office, and teaching staff will prepare to receive the learners in the classrooms
6. Learners must make their way to their classroom using the shortest and safest route without removing their coats or using the toilets.
7. Teaching staff will complete a head count and take the register to ensure all learners are present and correct.
8. Information regarding any missing learners or adults must be reported immediately to the member of the Senior Leadership Team in the office. A thorough search of the indoor areas will be made. Outdoor areas will be searched only if senior staff decide it is safe to do so, otherwise emergency services will be contacted.
9. Once the member of the Senior Leadership Team is confident that all learners and staff are in the building, external doors will be closed.
10. The designated office staff member will ensure that all exterior doors are closed and locked.
11. The office staff member will contact the emergency services if deemed necessary as soon as is appropriate.
12. The fire wardens will search their allocated areas throughout school.
13. All learners and staff must remain in their classrooms until given the all clear.

It is important that this procedure takes place in a quiet, orderly manner so that a speedy invacuation of the building is made.

No one must leave the building until told to do so.

**A Holmes
February 2026**

PTO

An invacuation may be necessary when conditions outside the school are deemed to be unsafe. This could be during break times, outdoor play, PE lessons, outdoor learning activities or before and after school. Invacuation may be necessary for several reasons, e.g. a hazard in the playground (e.g. chemicals, an animal, an intruder etc.) or because of an incident outside the school grounds.

It is important that this procedure takes place in a quiet, orderly manner so that a speedy invacuation of the building is made.

No one must leave the building until told to do so.

When in classrooms, following an invacuation and partial lockdown, teachers should:

- remain calm
- encourage learners to remain calm
- resume normal classroom activities and await further instruction, ensuring all lines of communication remain open
- not allow any children to go to the main office area or leave the school building (for PE or playtimes etc.)

When in classrooms, following an invacuation and full lockdown, teachers should:

- remain calm
- encourage learners to remain calm
- ask all learners to stay seated
- prevent all learners from leaving the classroom until given the all clear
- keep learners away from all windows and doors
- close window blinds, if advised (dependent on the nature of the threat)
- await further instruction and ensure all lines of communication remain open

Following an Incident

- The Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teachers will notify staff of the all clear, attend each class and provide information to learners and staff on what has occurred;
- The Head Teacher will provide written information to parents and carers on what has occurred as soon as possible after the event;
- Further actions may be necessary after the event e.g. counselling, reviewing procedures etc., and this should be considered on a case by case basis.

Useful Contact Numbers

Emergency Services	999
Local Police Station	*
Authority Crisis Line	01204 332240 office hours 01204 336900 outside office hours
Bolton Council 24 Hours Emergency Number	01204 336900
Bolton Civil Contingencies Team	01204 336995
Corporate Property Services	01204 331234 office hours 01203 336900 outside office hours
Occupational Safety and Health Unit	01204 336968
Asset Management and Planning Unit	01204 332080
Press Office	01204 332064/3582/1015
Environmental Health	01204 336500/1
CISS (Educational Psychologists)	01204 338060
Education Social Workers	01204 334315
School Doctor/Community Medical Officer	*
School Nurse	*
Emergency Department of Local Hospital	01204390300
Local Religious Groups	*
Chair of Governors	*07483840683
Tradespersons (e.g. electrician, plumber)	*
Others	*