



Downlands Community School

Lockdown Policy and Procedure

Ratified: July 2026

Expires: July 2027

Parents and carers trust Downlands Community School to keep their children safe. Nevertheless, the school cannot eliminate the risk of being involved in an emergency situation. The Department for Education has recommended that all schools consider how they would deal with such an emergency situation in order to mitigate risk.

The advice from the Department of Education reminds schools that:

'...planning for emergencies can save lives. It can prevent an incident from getting worse, provide confidence to staff, governors, parents, carers and pupils and enhance your school's reputation as a safe place to learn and work. Plans which deal with the consequences of large scale also help staff to deal with the smaller (but nevertheless potentially distressing) incidents that schools can experience on a regular basis'.

What is a Lockdown?

The purpose of a lockdown is to prevent an intruder or other threat outside the school from causing harm to pupils and staff. Entrances to the school must be secured to prevent any threat entering the building and staff and pupils must find a suitable place to protect themselves.

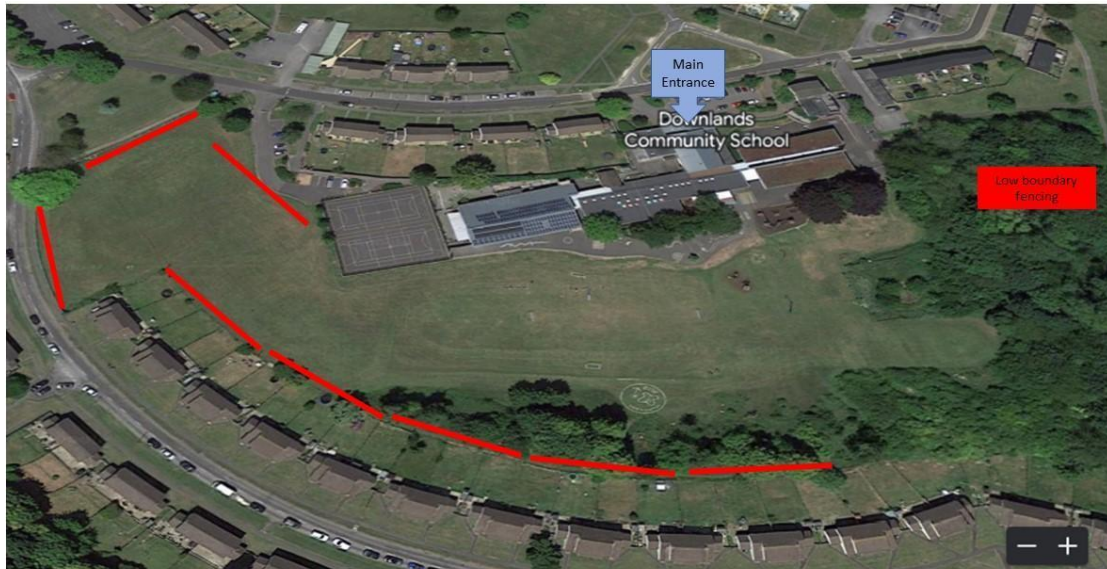
Fire evacuation drills inform the school community of how to leave the building as quietly and safely as possible, but in a lockdown situation the opposite is true: children and adults need to learn how to get into the building and allocated safe spaces as quickly and safely as possible and stay there until the threat is removed.

[Useful video clip to be shared](#)

Threat risk at Downlands Community School

The school is located on a military base where access is carefully controlled, creating a level of security almost unique in the UK. Conversely, within camp, some military personnel have access to firearms and ordnance which represents a heightened risk for this school.

The school has a relatively large footprint and is on two levels. Authorised entrance to the building is via the main entrance (see map) which can only be unlocked from the inside, making the building quite secure. The school grounds are entirely enclosed by fencing and gates which are locked when not in use. Nevertheless, some of the fencing is scalable to someone with intent, particularly from lower fencing to residential properties adjoining the school field (see map). The greatest risk for unauthorised access is via the school field for these reasons.



Reasons for Lockdown Procedure to be initiated

The following represents a non-exhaustive list of why a lockdown would be initiated:

- An unknown intruder accesses the school site;
- A person on the school site is thought to be in possession of an offensive weapon;
- A person on the school site is out of control and threatens the safety of pupils, staff and/or themselves;
- Hazardous chemicals or pollutants outside the building;
- An extreme weather related event;
- Other non-specific threat relevant to the school, conveyed by BGSU personnel;
- Non-scheduled sounding of Garrison Air Raid Warning.

Priorities for Lockdown Procedure

1. Safeguard those on site
2. Alert emergency services (Police have primacy)
3. Alert BGSU
4. Inform Local Authority
5. Inform parents/carers and request to stay away from the school until further notice (Use Seesaw and Parent Coms)

Prepare

Upon identification of a situation which could develop into a threat, a senior leader could bring the school into a pre-lockdown state, allowing staff to ensure that all children are in safe spaces prior to full lock down alert. It is not a compulsory step prior to full lockdown and should only be used if time allows.

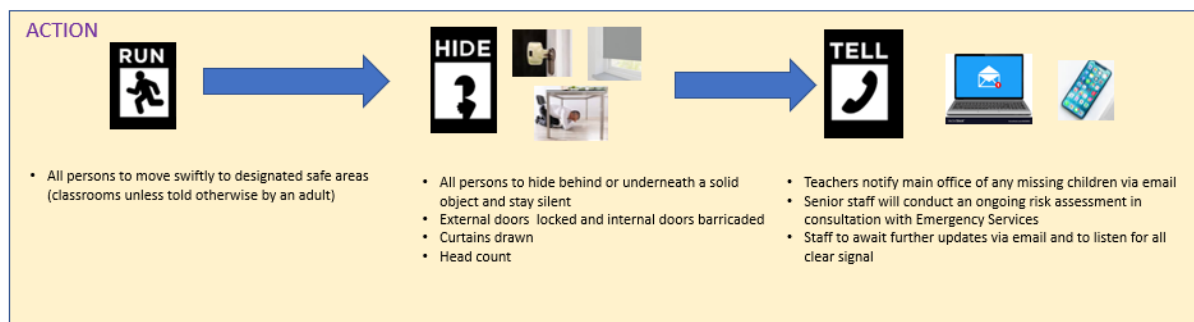
- Trigger phrase is conveyed to all school staff via two-way radio: **"Amber Alert - Safe Space x 2"**

Alert

Depending on the immediacy and obvious nature of the threat, the decision to lockdown should be made by a senior leader. Nevertheless, in emergency situations, it can be initiated by the person who identifies an imminent threat. There should be no hesitation in the following procedure:

- Trigger phrase is conveyed to all school staff via two-way radio: **“Lockdown! Lockdown! Lockdown!”**
- An email subject header will also be sent if possible using the subject header. **‘Lockdown. Lockdown. Lockdown.’**

Lockdown Actions



All classrooms, after school club room, sensory room, main office and HT's office and hall storeroom are designated as **'safe areas'**. All persons should move swiftly to the nearest safe area upon hearing the lockdown alarm. If the lockdown alarm occurs at breaktime, children should be ushered to their normal classrooms by staff. If the lockdown alarm occurs at lunchtime, those eating in the hall should move to the after school room and take cover there, with adult support. Furthermore:

- Staff and pupils should stay away from windows and doors;
- Curtains drawn lights turned off;
- External doors to be locked;
- Nearest unmanned door to be locked, if safe to do so, as follows:

Door	Who
Y5/6 link	Sycamore/Willow staff
Music room	Sycamore/Willow staff
Pine Classroom	Beech/Cedar staff
Y3/4 link	Beech/Cedar staff
Rainbow Room	Beech/Cedar staff
Sensory room	TBH staff
Y1/2 link	EYFS staff
Staffroom/KS1 door	KS1 staff
KS1/hall door	KS1 staff
Kitchen door	SLT/Office staff
Front main door	SLT/Office staff

- Internal doors to be locked with thumb turns available or Doorjammer as required
- Classroom external exit doors to be locked
- Take cover behind or underneath a solid object if possible (for example under tables and desks);
- Remain absolutely quiet;
- Staff to silently note attendance and consider pupils who may be in toilets (see below);

- Await situation change signal via two-way radio
 - **“Amber Alert - Safe Space x 2” - threat minimised but stay in safe space**
 - **“All clear! All clear! All clear!” - threat eliminated**

Toilets

- The closest member of staff to evacuate children from the toilets and get them to a safe area if possible;
- If a child is unable to leave the toilets they should climb on top of the toilet if possible.

Terminating lockdown

- A senior member of staff should remain in contact with emergency services throughout duration of lockdown;
- A senior member of staff should decide, in conjunction with emergency services, when it is safe to terminate lockdown;
- A senior member of staff should use the following lockdown de-escalation signals:
 - **“Amber Alert - Safe Space x 2” - threat minimised but stay in safe space**
 - **“All clear! All clear! All clear!” - threat eliminated**

Communication

- During lockdown, SLT and admin will establish a command room in the HT’s office
- They will issue a message to parents via Seesaw and group email advising that:
 - The school is currently in full lock down
 - Emergency services have been informed and are attending
 - Please refrain from attending the school site or contacting the school until further notice
- When the school lockdown has de-escalated to amber alert the following message will be sent to parents via Seesaw and group email advising:
 - The school is no longer in full lockdown and has moved to amber alert
 - The situation is under control and the threat level has receded
 - Please refrain from attending the school site or contacting the school until further notice
- When the school lockdown has de-escalated fully, the following message will be sent to parents via Seesaw and group email advising:
 - The school is no longer in ‘amber alert’ status and the situation is normal
 - More details will be provided in due course
 - Every effort is now being made to calm and support children so that they are able to remain in school for normal pick up arrangements
 - Please refrain from attending the school site or contacting the school unless absolutely necessary

School Recovery

- Members of the Governing Body will meet (virtually if necessary) with the Headteacher and key staff for an emergency debriefing, shortly after a Lockdown Incident;
- This procedure will be reviewed and updated as required, providing feedback to staff soon afterwards;
- All necessary contact with the media will be through the Headteacher, Governing Body and Local Authority.

Lockdown Drill

- It is important to have regular drill practice (twice per school year) to ensure that all staff and pupils are confident in what to do;
- Parents and carers must be informed beforehand to ensure that they fully understand the reasons for the drills and are able to reassure their own children if required;
- Drills should be logged and reviewed to ensure that they are effective.