

Bude Park Primary School



Critical Incident Policy (Including Lockdown Procedures)

To be updated: October 2025

This policy was approved by the governing board –
Oct 2023

..... Chair of [Governors]

1. Introduction

Handling crises is not a normal part of school life, but they do sometimes occur. A critical incident can be described as an event or events outside the range of normal human experience, of significant personal distress to a level which potentially overwhelms normal responses, procedures and coping strategies and which is likely to have emotional and organisational consequences.

2. Examples of critical incidents

Critical incidents may be:

- The sudden death of a pupil or member of staff
- A serious accident involving pupils and/or school personnel on or off the premises
- A violent act on school premises by malicious persons, either in person or by means such as arson, bomb, vandalism etc.
- The school building becoming unsafe as a result of fire, flood or other incident
- A more widespread emergency in the community, for example the release of hazardous substances, severe weather, flooding etc.
- Severe power loss
- Public health threats (e.g. meningitis)

3. Other events also deemed to be emergencies

These include:

- An incident in the community which is seen or experienced by pupils or staff
- An incident affecting relatives of pupils which is known about in the school
- An incident affecting a nearby school or other HET school
- Civil disturbances or terrorism

4. Important factors

These include:

- The suddenness of the occurrence
- The shock effect
- The apparent uniqueness of the occurrence
- The need for any support to be available very rapidly
- The publicity and attention which sometimes follow
- The need to communicate with a number of people quickly
- The need for support for those directly affected, and for the large number who might be indirectly affected (pupils, teachers and parents).

5. Lockdown Procedures

All schools should consider the need for robust and tested school lockdown procedures. 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 and pupils in the school. Procedures should aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all pupils and staff.

On very rare occasions it may be necessary to seal off the school so that it cannot be entered from the outside. This will ensure that pupils, staff and visitors are safe in situations where there is a hazard in the school grounds or outside the school in the near vicinity. Lockdown procedures may be activated in response to any number of situations, but some of the more typical might be:

- A reported incident/ civil disturbance in the local community (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the school)
- An intruder on the school site (with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils)
- A warning being received regarding a risk locally of air pollution (smoke plume, gas cloud etc)
- A major fire in the vicinity of the school
- The close proximity of a dangerous dog/animal roaming loose

On the sound of the Lockdown alarm, the school must initially go into full lockdown, once the threat has been established school leaders may reduce to a partial lockdown, this will be communicated verbally and/or by email.

5.1 Block 6 – Training and development room and Block 2 – Humber Education Trust office must follow the procedures stipulated in this policy

5.2 Block 4 – Lemon Tree nursery will act upon the Lockdown alarm but will follow their own policy.

6. Full Lockdown

Alert to staff: “Full lockdown”

This signifies an immediate threat to the school and may be an escalation of a partial lockdown.

Immediate action:

- All pupils to return to their classrooms with the teachers. Pupils who are outside of the school buildings are to be brought inside as quickly as possible, unless this endangers them or others. If children remain outside they will be moved to the nearest place of safety on or off site.
- Staff to take mobile phones with them.
- Non-classroom staff to move to the Heads office taking with them lockdown pack and mobile phones
- Those inside the school should remain in their classrooms.
- External doors locked. Classroom doors locked (depending on the circumstances, internal classroom doors may also need to be blocked using classroom furniture)
- Windows locked, blinds drawn, pupils sit quietly out of sight under desks.
- During a full lockdown, no one can leave the classroom under any circumstances.
- Follow the **CLOSE** procedure:
 - Close all windows and doors
 - Lock up
 - Out of sight and minimise movement
 - Stay silent and avoid drawing attention
 - Endure. Be aware you may be in lockdown for some time

- Once in lockdown mode, staff should notify the office immediately of any pupils or adults not accounted for via telephone (mobiles to be used if an internal line not available) and instigate an immediate search for anyone missing if safe to do so.
- Staff will (as best they can) keep a calm atmosphere in the classroom. The children could be engaged in a quiet activity or read a story. All adults must keep alert to the emotional needs of the pupils.
- Staff and pupils remain in lock down in the classroom until it has been lifted by a senior member of staff / emergency services.
- **Catering Staff to close the shutter to kitchen, lock doors, close blinds and turn off lights.**
- If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the fire alarm will be sounded and everyone should leave the building via the nearest exit and assemble on the school playground or move to:
 - Northcott School
Dulverton Close
Hull, HU7 4EL
Tel: 01482 825311
- During lockdown, staff will keep agreed lines of communication open, via telephone and e-mail, but will not make unnecessary calls to the central office as this could delay more important communication
- As appropriate, communication with the Emergency Services will be established and Hull City Council/Humber Education Trust notified.

Ensure people take action to increase protection from attack:

- Block access points (e.g. move furniture to obstruct doorways)
- Sit on the floor, under tables or against a wall
- Keep out of site
- Draw curtains/blinds
- Turn off lights
- Stay away from windows and doors

It is of vital importance that the school's lockdown procedures are familiar to all members of the school staff. To achieve this, the lockdown procedures will be reviewed and discussed in 'Whole School' staff meetings each year.

7. Partial Lockdown

Alert to staff: "Partial lockdown"

This may be as a result of a reported incident or civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the school. It may also be as a result of a warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution, etc.

Immediate action:

- All outside activity to cease immediately, pupil and staff to return to the building. (Staff will be alerted via the lockdown alarm)
- All staff and pupils remain in the building and external doors and windows locked
- Movement may be permitted within the building dependent upon circumstances but this must be supervised by a member of staff

All situations are different, once all staff and pupils are safely inside, senior staff will conduct an on-going any dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the Emergency Services. This can then be communicated to staff and pupils.

“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.

Emergency Services will advise as to the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

8. Signal for ‘all clear’

The signal for ‘all clear’ will be given via mobile phone, email and verbal confirmation from a member of the senior leadership team in the main block.

The signal for ‘all clear’ will be given via telephone (mobile) to the EYFS block including the hub.

The signal for ‘all clear’ will be given via telephone (mobile) to HET central offices, Lemon Tree and the Training and Development room.

9. Communication between parents and the school

In the event of an actual lockdown, any incident or development will be communicated to parents as soon as is practicable.

Parents will be told

“...the school is in a full lockdown situation. During this period the switchboard and entrances will be un-manned, external doors locked and nobody is allowed in or out...”

Parents will be given enough information about what will happen so that they:

- Are reassured that the school understand their concern for their child’s welfare, and that it is doing everything possible to ensure his/her safety
- Do not need to contact the school. Calling the school could tie up telephone lines that are needed for contacting emergency providers
- Do not come to the school. They could interfere with emergency provider’s access to the school and may even put themselves and others in danger
- Wait for the school to contact them about when it is safe for you to come and collect their children, and where this will be from.
- Pupils will not be released to parents during a lockdown
- A letter to parents will be sent home on the nearest possible day following any serious incident to inform parents of the context of the lockdown and to encourage parents to reinforce with their children the importance of following procedures in these very rare circumstances.

10. 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.

Emergency Services will support the decision of the Executive Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher with regarding the timing of communication to parents

11. Review

The governing body reviews this policy every two years. The governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

Appendix 1. Site Map – Block names



