



# WENSLEYDALE SCHOOL LEYBURN

## Partial / Full Lockdown policy

The aim of this plan is to enable an appropriate response to an emergency at Wensleydale Schools premises and to return to normal following an incident

This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, and revision if required.

After each policy activation event an incident debrief will occur and any revision found necessary will be documented and implemented.

A formal full review of the policy will be conducted every two years. An annual test event will be carried out during each academic year.

The Head teacher or, in their absence, the nominated deputy is responsible for implementing this policy. ("The responsible person")

Date	Review Type	Person carrying out review	Change authorised by (SLT)	Date to Governors (if appropriate)
02 <sup>nd</sup> September 2024	Rewrite	MH	JPO	Jan 2025
01 <sup>st</sup> September 2025	Formal review			


## Background

North Yorkshire County Council Emergency Response Guide for Schools states that “in the current climate, it is critically important that schools have lockdown procedures established”

Lockdown is the term given to protecting students, staff and visitors by providing a physical barrier on site between them and any intruder.

Intruders can generally be classified in two ways.

Unknown risk.

The intruder is not exhibiting any obvious risks for example by using aggressive behaviour and/or obviously carrying a knife beyond being in or on the premises.

High Risk.

Where the intruder is exhibiting behaviour or carrying an item which demonstrates a high risk of harm to themselves or other persons in their vicinity.

It should be noted that persons of an unknown risk are just that, in other words they may still be of a high risk of offending/causing injury.

It is important for all members of the school and wider community to understand that decisions will need to be taken quickly, dependant on the nature and proximity of the threat. It is unlikely that decision makers will be able to confer with all those affected. This policy should always be followed.

According to police guidance, children hiding in the classroom are as much a potential target as children escaping across the school site. Therefore, in the event the responsible person considers the safest option is for students/staff to evacuate the school site altogether, students/staff/visitors will be directed to the exit furthest from the aggressor.

Police advice is that there has to be a simple and common-sense approach to lockdown in order to increase survivability. Guidance states: -

**AVOID** – avoid the aggressor. If at all possible, get out of the building and don’t stop until you are sure you are safe. If you are forced to stay in the building, get inside the room and barricade yourself in and prepare to ...

**DENY** – deny the aggressor access. Take everything inside the room and barricade yourself and prepare to ...

**DEFEND** – in every room there are improvised weapons that could be used to defend yourself. You may need to fight for your life and those around you.

## Action

**Nothing in this plan will prevent any person from taking immediate action, as appropriate, for the purposes of the preservation of life. A dynamic risk assessment must be carried out in these limited circumstances.**

In the event of a lockdown the tannoy will signal the unique lockdown sound throughout the school. All staff recognise this sound and are aware that this indicates the commencement of a full lockdown.

- All outside activity to cease with immediate effect, children will be taken to a safe location, if possible, within the school premises. If this is not possible then children should be evacuated to a safe point, away from danger.
- All staff who are not supervising children will attend the nearest safe location (i.e. classroom) with any escorts they may have (visiting parents, contractors etc)
- All external doors and windows are to be locked until further notice.
- All occupied spaces, classrooms etc should have their doors/windows securely locked immediately and lights extinguished.
- All door / window blinds must be drawn to ensure that intruders cannot identify if there are occupants within the room.
- Complete silence should be maintained by all occupants with students sitting on the floor under desks.
- Whilst in an occupied space internal radios should be switched off for the same reason.
- Children / staff and visitor register will be taken – the office will contact each area in turn for an attendance report. This will be done via email.
- Staff should monitor email and be prepared to report staff/student details as well as those absent and reason (i.e. having left to go to the toilet)
- Staff should consider what items are available within the room to reinforce physical barriers or indeed arm themselves in preparation for an imminent attack.
- At the discretion of the responsible person, restricted movement within the building may be permitted dependent upon the known information or continued reporting of the incident / circumstances.

## SLT Guidance

Each situation is unique and presents ongoing operational challenges. Where appropriate, early contact with external agencies (ie the police, council etc) is of paramount importance.

Every incident will require positive decision making which weighs all available information with the overarching safeguarding aims of the school. The following guidance is available and is used widely by the emergency services and others.

### Decision Making Model



The responsible person must, at all times, be in a position to weigh risks dynamically and fully document their rationale for actions taken, or indeed the reason for not taking specific actions. This is to inform any review of the incident both internally or by any other official body. All decisions should be recorded contemporaneously in an incident management log unless the circumstances at that time will not facilitate it. The reasons for this should be subsequently recorded.

### Actions

- Where an intruder of unknown/high risk has been identified within the confines of the site the responsible person will, if appropriate, declare a lockdown and ensure that the lockdown sounder is immediately activated.
- In order that the admin unit can carry out its functions, where possible deploy additional staff to this unit.
- Cause a tannoy message to be made confirming lockdown reinforcing the need to fully lock down all individuals on site and that this will remain in force until the all clear is declared.
- Immediately liaise with the relevant emergency services.

- Identify, via the office, any unaccounted persons on site and their last known location if possible.
- Prepare to brief to the emergency services on their attendance. This would likely be a delegated task to another member of the senior team.
- In this briefing the senior manager should include reference to the following if they are known: -
  - ♣ What is happening and where
  - ♣ What do the subjects look like (i.e. description of clothing)
  - ♣ Where are the subjects now or going
  - ♣ How many casualties and/or subject(s)
  - ♣ What weapons are they carrying, what are their actions
  - ♣ Any other pertinent information (i.e. children unaccounted for)
- Prepare for further action i.e. full or partial evacuation in advance of it being required. This would likely be a delegated task to another member of the senior leadership team.

During lockdown the responsible person will continue to dynamically risk assess the situation. Whilst it is desirable to take advice from the police before taking any action clearly there may be times where for a variety of reasons (i.e. police not yet attended) and/or as a result of a changing threat (i.e. knife to firearm to explosives) the responsible person will need to take further action. This should be communicated to the emergency services as quickly as possible. It is noted that the responsibility for the safety of those on the site remains with the responsible person and therefore they will be prepared to make any appropriate decision.

It is vital that the communication lines remain open to the Emergency Services at all times, they are best placed to offer advice / assistance to the responsible person as a situation develops. Should a prolonged lockdown incident occur, North Yorkshire County Council and its partners have the capacity to provide humanitarian assistance by establishing a Reception Centre for friends and family outside of the cordoned area and other pre-determined facilities.

There will be a need to liaise with police to ensure that any potential crime scene is identified and preserved prior to the release of staff/children from lockdown. A decision may be taken to cordon off the premises partially or as a whole by the Emergency Services. This will be dependent on the severity of the incident that has led to a Lockdown procedure taking effect.

At the conclusion of the event the responsible person will declare the removal of lockdown and the resumption of school life (or other action such as school closure).

- A tannoy announcement will be made by the responsible person cancelling the lockdown and providing further information on the return to normality. Teachers should be reminded to turn their radios back on and wait for more specific instructions if appropriate.

## Admin Unit guidance

The role of the admin unit on the instigation of a lockdown can be summarised as follows.

- Identify the location of all persons currently on site.
- Monitor CCTV in an attempt to identify the intruder and track him through the school estate.
- Prepare external comms to keep parents updated and request that they do not attend school whilst the incident is live.

In order to do this staff should.

- Ensure that they are behind a secured locked door/shutters. These should be secured as immediately on the alarm being raised.
- Prepare/Submit internal communication to each teacher/staff member requesting confirmation of the location of their charges. These will be by email only as the radio system will not be used during lockdown.
- Compare each email return to identify location of all staff members / pupils, and those not accounted for.
- Report to designated lead (the responsible person) any individual that has not been accounted for as quickly as possible together with their potential location (i.e. toilets) if known.
- Update school website in the 'latest News' section with information authorised by the responsible person who is working in consultation with the emergency services and North Yorkshire County Council.

The leadership team will, if available, deploy staff to this unit to facilitate the above.

Parents will naturally be concerned; anxious and all accurate information releases will assist to alleviate undue anxiety. Parents / guardians should be given enough information to enable them to understand the potential outcome and when possible, time frames so that they:

- ♣ Are reassured that the site / emergency services understand their concern for their child's welfare, and that everything possible is being completed to ensure their safety.
- ♣ Parents / guardians must be made aware to refrain from directly calling the site's office. Calling the site will tie up telephone lines that will be required to be used by the responsible person and the emergency services.
- ♣ Parents / guardians must refrain from initially attending the site. This may interfere with the emergency provider's access / investigation and may put themselves and others in danger.
- ♣ Parent / guardians must wait patiently until a safe and satisfactory outcome has been achieved and agreed by all parties, where a designated safe area will be identified for the safe handing over of the children to their parents / guardians.

During the initial phase of the incident, it is vital that all parents are reassured regarding the welfare and safety to their children is paramount and that the matter is being dealt with by the emergency services and NYCC jointly to resolve the matter as soon as possible with little impact to the children and the wider community. However, it must also be stressed that at this time “the site is in a full lockdown procedure”. During this period the switchboard and entrances will be un-manned, external doors will be locked and no person is allowed in or out of the premises until further notice.



## Urgent recommendations

- In order to ensure that there is a safe route from the playing fields at the rear of the school to facilitate an evacuation where there is a 'marauding' intruder whose location is presently unknown it is essential that there is an escape route away from the school.  
At the moment classes might find themselves trapped within the fencing at the school boundary. This is mitigated slightly with the ability to use the wooden structure for a small class as a barricade. To this end urgent consideration should be given to creating an emergency exit into the road/pathway running to the side of the school grounds leading to Maythorne farm. This should be wide enough to ensure that the whole school (for example on sports days) can be evacuated quickly.
- Where practicably, an acceleration of the classroom blind buying process.
- A permanent wide screen monitor should be located within the admin office together with camera selection controls to facilitate the tracking of suspects on premises.
- A review of the camera system in order to update the facility