



Oakfield Short Stay Primary Critical Incident and Lockdown Procedure

Oakfield Short Stay School (North)	
Published	November 2025
Review Date	November 2026

Critical Incidents

Rationale

As part of our Health and Safety policies and procedures, Oakfield Short Stay Primary School has a Critical Incident and Lock Down Policy.

It is not known when a school will experience a crisis or tragedy. Whatever the size of the incident, the distress caused to one or more individuals can be devastating. The forward planning identified below is designed to help the school deal with any such event and, therefore, to reduce the stress experienced by pupils, staff and parents.

It is impossible to predict when a crisis begins. There will be either one devastating event or there is an initial phase when it is patent that something has gone badly wrong.

The initial phase is often characterised by disorder and confusion, together with incomplete and/or inaccurate information.

Oakfield Short Stay Primary will endeavour to establish the facts as soon as possible.

If a statement has to be made before all the facts are clearly established, we will make this clear. Do not speculate or make guesses. If you do not know the answer to a question, say so; detail can be made available later.

Do not attempt to `understand` the incident. This takes time and will only become clear (if at all) with time.

The Executive Headteacher, Victoria Edwards, or the most senior SLT member in the absence of the Executive Headteacher (Lewis Pegg at Oakfield North and Craig Collins at Oakfield South) will bring together a crisis management team.

Oakfield Short Stay Primary will ensure that whoever leads the team is relieved of all other responsibilities and is located in one place where they can be contacted and can contact others (in an office with a telephone). A mobile phone will be nominated for this purpose if other lines are jammed.

Find out quickly who needs what, information, facilities, practical help, etc.

There may be the need to decide:

- If the school should be evacuated or closed temporarily.
- When will it re-open and to who.
- Which rooms might be needed for emergency use, for isolation purposes, etc.
- Which support services will be needed.
- Which telephones can be made available and who will staff them.
- What letters will have to be written and to whom.
- Will a press statement be needed; who will help draft it and approve it etc

The Contingency Plan

Any number of events could result in a crisis or tragedy. Such events might include:

- Death of a pupil or member of staff
- Serious violence or assault in school or on a school visit/journey
- Destruction of part or all of the school
- Pupil or teacher being taken hostage
- Road, sea, air or traffic accident involving pupils or staff.
- A disaster in the community
- Civil disturbance or act of terrorism

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 students, staff and visitors are safe in situations where there is a hazard in the school grounds or outside the school in the near vicinity.

A lockdown is implemented when there are serious security risks for the premises due to, for example, nearby chemical spillage, proximity of dangerous animals, serious weather conditions or attempted access by unauthorised persons intent on causing harm/damage. It is impossible to predict when a crisis begins. There will be either one devastating event or there is an initial phase when it is obvious that something has gone badly wrong.

Partial Lockdown

Alert to staff: 'Partial lockdown' – runner to inform office and most senior member staff on site e.g. Executive Headteacher. Business Support and Executive Headteacher to communicate to classes via walkie talkies and visiting learning spaces to communicate verbally.

In a partial lockdown, staff and pupils should remain in the school building and all doors leading outside should be locked. No one should be allowed to enter or leave the building. This may be as a result of a reported incident / civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the school. It may also be because of a warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution, etc.

Immediate Action

- All outside activity to cease immediately, pupils and staff return to building.
- All pupils to go to their own Classes or learning areas.
- Business Support to take registers around to classes and will collect them.
- All staff and pupils remain in building and external doors and windows locked.
- Free movement may be permitted within the building dependent upon circumstances.
- Staff should await further instructions.
- All situations are different. Once all staff and pupils are safely inside, senior staff will
- conduct a risk assessment and identify the next actions to take based on advice from the Emergency Services. Inform Head of Service for Education and/or Assistant Director at Leicestershire County Council.
- Pupils must not be released to parents during a lockdown.

- Family support workers will text parents to inform them, if appropriate, not to enter the school grounds.
- Staff will be informed of the termination of the lockdown by direct communication with a senior leader.

Staff should encourage the pupils to keep calm and quiet

A 'partial lockdown' may also be 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.

NB. If a situation occurs before or after children are on site, the above procedures should be followed and the most senior member of school staff on site will take the lead. Any member of staff if required can contact the emergency services.

Full Lockdown

Alert to staff: 'Full Lockdown' – runner to inform office and most senior member staff on site e.g. Headteacher. Business Support and Executive Headteacher to communicate to classes via walkie talkies and visiting learning spaces to communicate verbally.

This signifies an immediate threat to the school and may be an escalation of a partial lockdown. The aim of a full lockdown is for the school and its rooms to appear empty.

Immediate Action

- Emergency Services to be called by Business Support
- All pupils/staff stay in their classroom or move to the nearest classroom or safe place.
- Exterior doors are all locked and all windows closed.
- Staff/ visitors/volunteers/peripatetic staff who do not have a regular office or classroom will move to the nearest safe place (The Meeting Room)
- Classroom doors are closed.
- Blinds drawn, internal door windows covered (so an intruder cannot see in).
- Pupils/staff sit quietly out of sight and where possible in a location that would protect them from gunfire (away from windows). If pupils are in their classrooms, they should be encouraged to sit under their desk below a window line from being seen.
- Inform Head of Service for Education and/or Assistant Director at Leicestershire County Council.
- Lights, white boards, turned off and laptops moved out of visibility (but kept on for communication purposes).
- Mobile phones should be on silent as stated in the mobile phone policy, so they cannot give away your position.
- Staff should await further instructions.
- Staff and pupils remain in lockdown until it has been lifted by a senior member of staff/emergency services. At any point during the lockdown, the fire alarm may sound. As the

cause of the alarm will be unknown, await instructions via email/from emergency services. Do not leave the building until you are advised to.

- Pupils must not be released to parents during a lockdown.
- If appropriate, the staff and children can be moved into the meeting room (room with the least windows with the partition closed if threat was on the playground).
- Staff will be informed of the termination of the lockdown by direct communication with a senior leader.
- Family Support Workers will text parents to inform them not to enter the school grounds.

In the event of a fire alarm during a lockdown

In the event the school is in lockdown and the fire alarm sounds. The Senior Business Support Officer or SLT will ensure that they have a mobile phone to communicate, should go to the fire alarm panel to establish what zone has been activated. Once the zone has been identified, the alarm should be silenced and a SLT member of staff sent to the area to investigate. They will need to approach with caution as there may be a fire or an intruder may have activated the alarm. If a fire is discovered, this information should be communicated back to the person at the fire alarm panel, who should resound the alarm, update the emergency services and evacuate the school.

To minimise the risk of this happening during a lockdown:

- Ensure that all cooking processes are stopped.
- Isolate any high risk activities- this could be Science, Art, ongoing maintenance works etc.
- Increase staff vigilance. Ensuring that all fire doors are closed – reducing any likelihood of the spread of fire. Also ensuring that all available exit routes are un-obstructed and immediately available.
- Good communications – Should the Fire Alarm activate then an initial investigation to be carried out. If this proves to be a false alarm and there is no risk from fire, then and only whilst the building is in Lockdown, you may not need the occupants to evacuate.
- If however there is a fire, then the risk of staying within the building would be too great and an evacuation would need to be carried out. Partial evacuation may be better than
- total evacuation, especially if a fire is located in an outbuilding etc. and therefore does not immediately pose a risk to the occupants. This must be completed with a robust risk assessment process.
- Should a fire be confirmed, the emergency services will be contacted immediately, with school passing on that the school is on “lockdown”.
- Advice from the fire service states that any incident of this nature will be “dynamic” and procedures cannot be written for all contingencies. An evacuation or the continuation of the lockdown would be decided based on the biggest risk, and what additional resources are available at the time.

Communication between parents and the school

Arrangements for communicating with parents in the event of a lockdown will be routinely shared via text by Family Support Workers.

In the event of a lockdown, the incident or development will be communicated to parents as soon as is practicable. Parents will be concerned but regular communication of accurate information will help to alleviate undue anxiety. This information will be communicated through text message.

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

- Are reassured that the school understands 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 required for contacting emergency support providers.
- Do not come to the school. They could interfere with emergency support 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 to collect their children and where this will be from.
- Are aware of what will happen if the lockdown continues beyond school hours.

Oakfield Short Stay School understands that parents will be concerned for their children's welfare and that everything that can possibly be done to ensure children's safety will be done. However, during a lockdown, school will reinforce the message that '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...'

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

Emergency Services

Oakfield Short Stay School will 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 Headteacher with regarding the timing of communication to parents.

In the event of a prolonged lockdown or more severe scenario, emergency services, local authorities and voluntary sector organisations will work together to co-ordinate practical and emotional support to those affected by any emergency, also referred to as humanitarian assistance.

Oakfield Short Stay School will hold regular partial and full lockdown drill practices.

NB. If a situation occurs after the children have gone home, the above procedures should be followed, and the most senior member of school staff will take the lead. The emergency services can be contacted by any member of staff, if required.