



# Gosford Park Primary School

## EMERGENCY LOCKDOWN POLICY

### **Introduction**

Parents and carers trust our school to keep their children safe. Thanks to the efforts of staff and Governors, schools in the UK normally remain a safe haven for children; but as tragic events both overseas and at home have shown, they can become involved in an emergency at any time.

The Department for Education recommends that schools create and maintain an emergency plan. Gosford Park Primary School also want to go one step further and be ready to deal with the sort of emergencies that no one really wants to think about – the situation where the children and staff are endangered by the threat of deliberate harm. In emergency planning terms this is called lockdown, a description that will be used throughout this document.

This is a policy that every prepared school needs, every member of staff needs to understand and no one ever wants to use.

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 (hazardous chemicals; smoke plume, gas cloud etc)
- A major fire in the vicinity of the school
- The close proximity of a dangerous dog roaming loose

It is of vital importance that the school's lockdown procedures are familiar to all members of the school community. To achieve this, a lockdown drill will be undertaken at least once a year and recorded in the Fire Drill manual. Depending on their age, some pupils may be made aware of the plan.

### **Communication between parents and the school**

School lockdown procedures, especially arrangements for communicating with parents, will be routinely shared with parents either by newsletter or via the school website.

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

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 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 them to come to school to collect their children, and where this will be from.

**The school's lockdown plan is as follows:**

- All staff and visitors will wear identity lanyards.
- Staff will be alerted to the activation of the plan via an air horn being discharged throughout the school. One will be placed in Early Years, KS1 and KS2
- Pupils who are outside of the school building will be brought inside as quickly as possible, unless this endangers them and others, and await instructions.

PE – If a lockdown becomes necessary when a PE lesson or sports group is happening on the playground and/or field the staff member in charge will need to make the decision as to whether it is safe to return to the school building. If it is safe then children should return quickly and quietly using their nearest safe entrance and then go to their class. If it is deemed not safe then the class should ensure that they remain out of sight, make their way quickly and very quietly off the field, ensuring the class are far enough away from any dangers and should then shelter in the trees.

- Those inside the school should remain in, or go immediately to their classrooms.
- All doors and windows to be shut and locked, blinds closed and lights switched off.
- Classroom staff to take attendance using fire registers (stored in the classroom). Once in lockdown mode, staff should notify the office immediately of any pupils not accounted for.
- Staff should remain calm and encourage the pupils to remain calm.
- Absolute silence, including mobile phones, must be maintained at all times, in order to hear instructions.
- As appropriate, the school office will establish communication with the Emergency Services.
- If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the fire alarm will be sounded. On hearing the continuous bell, staff and children to leave the building and run scattering to the far trees on the left hand side of the field.
- Coventry City Council should be advised of the situation as soon as possible. Emergency Services should be advised when the circumstances are up scaled.

**Dealing with concerned Parents**

- Parents will be notified as soon as it is practicable to do so.
- Parents will not be allowed access to the building.
- Pupils will not be released to parents during a lockdown.

If the lock down occurs near the end of the school day, parents will be contacted via the office online system to warn them of any hazards and asking them not to approach school at this time. This message will only be sent out if it is safe for the Office Staff to do so, no unnecessary risks should be taken.

**Parents will be told**

'The school is in a full lockdown situation. During this period the phones and entrances will be un-staffed, external doors locked and nobody allowed in or out...'

**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.

The Emergency Services will support the decision of the Headteacher with regard to the timing of communications to parents.

**School recovery following a lockdown**

On the ending of a lockdown procedure, staff will be verbally informed of the end of lockdown. Bear in mind the staff, visitor and children anxiety levels and adrenaline levels following an incident.

A full debriefing will occur in all situations following a lockdown. In all cases, communication with parents is also vital.