



Riversdale Primary School

A nurturing, ambitious and values led school.

INVACUATION & LOCKDOWN POLICY

DATE: 1st June 2026

REVIEW DATE: 30th May 2029

PURPOSE

Riversdale Primary School is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for pupils, staff, visitors and the wider school community.

There may be rare occasions when it is safer for everyone to remain inside the school, restrict movement around the site or secure themselves within particular areas of the building. This policy sets out the school's approach to invacuation, partial lockdown and full lockdown, ensuring that any response is proportionate to the nature and location of the threat.

The overriding principle in any emergency is to protect life. Staff should follow the agreed procedure while remaining responsive to the circumstances of the incident and any instructions from the emergency services.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Business Continuity Plan and other relevant emergency, safeguarding, health and safety and fire procedures.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND GUIDANCE

This policy has regard to relevant legislation and national guidance, including:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025
- DfE, School and college security guidance, updated July 2026
- DfE, Emergency planning and response for education, childcare and children's social care settings
- DfE, Protective security and preparedness for education settings
- Home Office, Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025: Statutory Guidance

The substantive requirements of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, commonly known as Martyn's Law, have not yet commenced. The school will continue to review its arrangements during the implementation period and will make any further changes required before commencement.

Current DfE guidance emphasises proportionate risk assessment, effective emergency planning, staff awareness, testing of security plans and working with local police and other partners where appropriate.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy:

Invacuation means moving people from outside into the school, or into a safer part of the school, because remaining outside would increase the risk of harm. This would normally be used for an environmental or external hazard, such as smoke, a chemical incident or significant air pollution.

Partial lockdown is a precautionary security response to a potential threat outside the school buildings or in the surrounding area. External access to the school is restricted and pupils are brought inside where it is safe to do so, but controlled movement within the building may continue.

Full lockdown is used where there is an immediate or serious threat within the school site, within a building or in sufficiently close proximity to present an immediate danger. Staff and pupils secure themselves in the safest available location and minimise movement, noise and visibility.

The precise response will always depend upon the circumstances. The location and nature of the threat must be considered before moving pupils.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governing Board

The Governing Board will:

ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to manage foreseeable security and emergency risks
provide appropriate oversight and challenge
ensure sufficient resources are available to implement reasonable security measures

review the effectiveness of the school's arrangements through appropriate monitoring.

Headteacher / Security and Incident Lead

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for security and emergency preparedness and will:

- ensure appropriate risk assessments, procedures and plans are in place
- ensure staff understand their responsibilities
- ensure procedures are tested and reviewed
- liaise with the emergency services and Local Authority where appropriate
- determine, where circumstances permit, which emergency response should be initiated
- lead the school's response and recovery following an incident.

Where the Headteacher is unavailable, another member of the School Emergency Management Team (SEMT) will assume responsibility.

School Emergency Management Team

SEMT will:

- support the management of the incident
- maintain communication across the site
- gather information and maintain situational awareness
- coordinate accountability for pupils, staff and visitors
- liaise with emergency services
- undertake dynamic risk assessment as circumstances develop.

School Office

Office staff will, where it is safe to do so:

- contact the relevant emergency services
- provide information requested by them
- maintain access to pupil, staff and visitor information
- support communication with staff and families
- avoid unnecessary communication which could obstruct the emergency response.

All Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- understanding the procedures contained within Appendix 1
- responding promptly to emergency instructions
- prioritising the immediate safety of pupils
- accounting for the pupils and adults in their care
- reporting missing or additional people without leaving a secure area to search for them
- supporting pupils to remain as calm as possible
- following instructions from SEMT and the emergency services.

SELECTING THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE

The following provides the general framework:

SITUATION	USUAL RESPONSE
Environmental hazard outside, such as smoke, chemical release or significant air pollution	Invacuation
Police incident, civil disturbance, suspicious activity, dangerous animal or other potential threat outside the school	Partial lockdown
Intruder, weapon or other immediate serious threat on the school site or within/close to a building	Full lockdown

This is not exhaustive.

The school will adopt a dynamic approach. For example, pupils who are already outside should not automatically be brought into a building if doing so would move them towards the threat.

Where possible, the Headteacher/SEMT will seek advice from the emergency services. However, immediate action will not be delayed where there is an obvious risk to life.

COMMUNICATION AND ALARMS

The primary method of initiating an evacuation or lockdown will be the school's telephone announcement system.

Announcements must be:

- immediately recognisable to staff
- distinct from routine school announcements
- clear about the response required.

The precise wording is contained within Appendix 1.

Two-way radios will be the primary method of communication between SEMT members during an incident. School telephones and mobile communication systems may be used as secondary methods where safe and appropriate.

Staff should minimise non-essential communications during an emergency.

A failure of the principal communication system will not prevent staff from acting where they become aware of an immediate danger.

ACCOUNTING FOR PUPILS, STAFF AND VISITORS

As soon as it is safe to do so:

staff will account for all pupils in their care
staff will identify any additional pupils or adults sheltering with them
the office/SEMT will account for staff and visitors
missing or additional people will be reported using the agreed communication system.

Staff must not leave a secure location to search for a missing pupil or adult during a full lockdown unless specifically directed to do so by SEMT or the emergency services.

Information about missing individuals will be passed to those managing the incident so that the safest response can be determined.

PUPILS AND ADULTS OUTSIDE THE BUILDING

The response of groups outside the building will depend upon the location of the threat.

Where the danger is outside the school and entering the building is safe, pupils and adults will move quickly and calmly through the nearest safe entrance.

Where the threat is within or immediately around a school building, staff outside will not automatically return to the building. They should move pupils away from the danger to the designated place of safety or another safe location, depending upon the circumstances.

Staff should never knowingly move pupils towards a threat simply in order to follow the normal procedure.

Designated alternative safety locations are recorded within the school's restricted emergency information.

PUPILS WITH SEND, MEDICAL NEEDS OR ADDITIONAL VULNERABILITIES

The school recognises that emergency procedures may present additional challenges for some pupils, particularly those who:

- find unexpected changes or transitions difficult
- have communication or sensory needs
- have mobility difficulties
- rely upon medical equipment or medication
- may find remaining still or quiet particularly difficult.

Reasonable adjustments will therefore form part of the school's emergency planning.

Where appropriate, individual or class arrangements will identify:

- communication strategies
- adult support
- suitable secure locations
- mobility requirements
- access to essential medication
- sensory or regulation resources
- any other reasonable adjustment needed to support the pupil safely.

During a full lockdown, immediate physical safety takes priority. Strategies used ordinarily for regulation, including music or other sound, should only continue where they do not compromise the safety of those sheltering.

VISITORS, CONTRACTORS AND TEMPORARY STAFF

Visitors, contractors, supply staff, agency staff and other adults working on site must be able to respond appropriately to an emergency.

Relevant information will therefore be incorporated into visitor and staff induction arrangements.

During an incident, visitors should follow the instructions of school staff and remain with their host or move to the nearest safe location.

WRAPAROUND PROVISION, CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE NORMAL SCHOOL HOURS

Emergency arrangements apply whenever pupils or other users are on the school site, including:

- breakfast provision
- after-school provision
- extracurricular clubs
- school events
- lettings
- holiday provision.

The most senior school-authorised adult present must be able to initiate the relevant procedure and contact the emergency services.

Registers, emergency contacts and appropriate communication systems must remain accessible during these periods.

This reflects DfE expectations that emergency planning considers incidents both during and outside normal operating hours and specifically includes wraparound and out-of-school provision.

PARENTS AND CARERS

During an extended incident, the school will communicate with parents and carers as soon as it is safe and practicable to do so.

Parents and carers will be asked to:

- not come to the school site unless instructed to do so
- avoid telephoning the school unless essential
- not contact pupils directly during a lockdown, as ringing or vibrating devices may compromise safety
- monitor the school's normal communication systems
- follow instructions regarding collection or reunification.

Pupils will not be released during a lockdown.

If normal collection arrangements cannot take place, the school will implement its emergency reunification arrangements and communicate the location and process to parents when it is safe to do so.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION DURING A LOCKDOWN

A lockdown does not remove the need to respond to other immediate threats, such as fire.

Staff must not automatically leave a secure area simply because another alarm sounds where doing so could expose pupils to a greater danger.

The school will maintain a site-specific procedure for managing conflicting emergency signals and will seek appropriate fire, security and emergency-service advice when reviewing these arrangements.

Where evacuation is required, staff will follow instructions from SEMT or the emergency services and use the safest available route, which may differ from the normal fire evacuation route.

TRAINING, PRACTICE AND TESTING

All staff will be made aware of the school's invacuation and lockdown arrangements.

Procedures will be practised or exercised at least annually. This may include practical drills, staff briefings and tabletop exercises.

Exercises involving pupils will:

- be appropriate to their age and needs
- be explained sensitively
- focus on practising routines rather than recreating threatening scenarios
- make appropriate adjustments for pupils with SEND or other vulnerabilities.

Following each exercise, SEMT will evaluate:

- speed and effectiveness of communication
- accountability
- staff understanding
- accessibility and SEND considerations
- communication systems
- any premises or procedural issues.

Actions will be recorded, allocated and reviewed.

Current DfE security guidance specifically recommends testing security plans and using the results to identify and address weaknesses.

RECOVERY FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT

Following an actual invacuation or lockdown, the school will consider:

- the physical and emotional wellbeing of pupils and staff
- age-appropriate opportunities for pupils to discuss what has happened
- communication with parents and carers
- additional pastoral or professional support
- safeguarding implications
- liaison with the Local Authority, emergency services and other agencies
- debriefing staff
- lessons learned
- amendments required to procedures, risk assessments or the Business Continuity Plan.

The school's Business Continuity Plan will be activated where appropriate. This develops the recovery arrangements already contained within the existing policy.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually, and earlier where:

- an actual invacuation or lockdown takes place
- a drill identifies an area requiring change
- significant changes are made to the school site
- relevant legislation or national/local guidance changes
- advice is received from the police, Local Authority or other competent body.

The policy will specifically be reviewed again before the substantive requirements of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 come into force.

APPENDIX 1: INVACUATION AND LOCKDOWN OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE

STAFF/INTERNAL USE

This appendix contains the actions staff should take during an incident. Detailed site maps, external safety locations, emergency contact information and the authenticated all-clear arrangement should be held within the school's restricted emergency information and should not be published on the school website.

Key Principle

Do not move people towards a known or suspected threat.

The procedure provides the default response, but staff may need to adapt their actions where following the normal route would clearly increase the immediate risk to pupils.

If a direct threat develops and the planned secure location is no longer safe, staff should move pupils away from danger where there is a safe opportunity to do so, or seek the safest available place of concealment/protection and contact the emergency services when safe.

Invacuation

When will it be used?

Invacuation is normally used where the danger is outside the school and remaining inside provides greater protection, for example:

smoke or an external fire

- chemical or hazardous substance release
- significant air pollution
- another environmental hazard.

Announcement

The announcement will be made twice using the school telephone announcement system:

"Attention staff: invacuation. Please bring everyone inside and follow the invacuation procedure."

Staff Actions

On hearing the announcement:

- Bring pupils inside through the nearest safe entrance.
- Encourage pupils to move quickly, quietly and calmly.
- Close external doors and windows.
- Remain inside the building.
- If instructed, turn off ventilation or air-circulation systems.
- Account for all pupils and adults.
- Report missing or additional people through the agreed communication channel.
- Follow further instructions from SEMT.
- Reassure pupils and continue calm, appropriate activities where circumstances allow.

If a pupil or group is in another part of the site when the invacuation begins, the adult supervising them should use the nearest safe entrance, rather than necessarily returning to their usual classroom.

SEMT / Office Actions

SEMT will:

- determine the nature and location of the risk
- ensure external gates/doors are secured where appropriate
- contact emergency services or other relevant agencies
- confirm whether ventilation systems should be switched off
- establish whether everyone is accounted for
- maintain communication with staff
- determine whether further protective action is needed.

Ending An Invacuation

Staff and pupils should remain inside until the Headteacher/SEMT or emergency services confirm that the danger has passed.

The Headteacher/SEMT will issue a clear all-clear before normal arrangements resume.

Partial Lockdown

When will it be used?

Partial lockdown is normally used where there is a potential security threat outside the school buildings, but there is no immediate threat within them.

Examples may include:

- a police incident nearby
- civil disturbance
- suspicious activity close to the school
- a person of concern in the surrounding area
- a dangerous animal on or close to the site
- another external incident which could potentially develop.

Announcement

The announcement will be made twice:

“Attention staff: partial lockdown. Secure the building and follow the partial lockdown procedure.”

Staff actions

- Pupils who are outside should be brought inside where this is the safest action.
- Close and secure external doors and windows.
- Account for pupils and adults.
- Report missing or additional people.
- External movement around the site should stop.
- Internal movement may continue only where permitted by SEMT.
- Staff should monitor internal communication systems for further instructions.
- Normal teaching may continue where appropriate, while maintaining readiness to move to full lockdown.

SEMT / Office Actions

SEMT will:

- establish the nature and location of the threat
- secure entrances to the school
- contact the emergency services where appropriate
- monitor developments
- maintain communication with staff
- consider whether the response should be escalated to full lockdown or reduced to invacuation/normal operation.

Full Lockdown

When will it be used?

Full lockdown is used where there is an immediate or serious threat to people on the school site, for example:

- an intruder on the school premises
- a person with a weapon
- a serious violent incident
- an immediate hostile threat within or in very close proximity to the school.

Announcement

The announcement will be made twice:

“Attention staff: full lockdown. Secure immediately and follow the full lockdown procedure.”

Staff should act immediately. They should not telephone the office to confirm whether the announcement is genuine.

If you are inside a building

Immediately:

- Secure the room.
- Lock or secure doors and windows where possible.
- Close blinds or curtains where appropriate.
- Move pupils away from doors and windows.
- Keep pupils out of sight where possible.
- Turn off lights where appropriate.
- Keep noise to an absolute minimum.
- Silence mobile phones and electronic devices.
- Account for everyone in the room.
- Report missing or additional pupils/adults only when it is safe to communicate.
- Do not leave the room to find a missing pupil.
- Do not open the door unless directed by a verified member of SEMT or the emergency services.
- Remain in the safest available position until instructed otherwise.

Where additional protection is necessary and can be achieved safely, staff may use available furniture to make entry more difficult.

Staff should not undertake actions which expose them or pupils to greater danger simply in order to secure furniture or another part of the room.

If You Are Outside A Building

Do not automatically return inside.

Consider where the threat is located.

If there is a clearly safe route into a secure building away from the threat, move pupils inside quickly.

If the threat is within or immediately around the building, move away from the danger towards:

Designated external place of safety:

1. Sheringdale Primary School
2. Southfields Academy

If that location cannot be reached safely, move to the safest alternative location available.

Keep the group together where possible, maintain supervision and contact the school/emergency services when safe to do so.

If you are in a corridor, toilet, hall or other shared area

Move to the nearest appropriate secure room, provided doing so does not take you towards the threat.

Do not attempt to return to your normal classroom simply to join your usual group.

Staff within secure rooms should admit pupils or adults where it is clearly safe to do so, but should not compromise the security of the room where there is an immediate threat nearby.

Accounting For Pupils and Adults

During any response, staff should establish:

- who is present
- who is expected but missing
- whether there are additional pupils or adults with the group
- whether anyone requires immediate medical support.

Report this information through the agreed communication system.

Important

A report that someone is missing does not mean that staff should leave their secure location to search.

SEMT will collate the information and determine the appropriate action in consultation with emergency services.

SEND and Resource Base Arrangements

Staff supporting pupils with SEND should follow the same overriding safety principles while using agreed reasonable adjustments.

Depending upon the pupil, these may include:

- clear visual instructions
- familiar communication systems
- reduced verbal language
- support from a familiar adult
- sensory or regulation resources
- ear defenders
- positioning within a secure space to reduce distress
- access to essential medical equipment or medication.

Where remaining completely silent forms part of the protective response, ordinarily helpful strategies which generate sound, including music, must stop.

Where individual pupils are known to require significantly different support during an emergency, this should be planned in advance and recorded within their individual emergency arrangements.

Medical Emergency During Lockdown

If a pupil or adult becomes ill or injured:

- Provide immediate first aid within the secure location where possible.
- Inform SEMT/emergency services when safe to do so.
- Do not leave the secure area to obtain equipment unless the risk of remaining without it clearly outweighs the security risk.
- Follow instructions from the emergency services.

Immediate preservation of life takes priority.

Communication During An Incident

Primary Communication

SEMT: two-way radios.

Secondary Communication

Where appropriate:

- school telephone system
- approved staff mobile/internal messaging system
- other communication directed by SEMT.

Email should not be relied upon as the primary method of emergency communication.

Staff should avoid unnecessary messages or calls so that essential communications remain clear.

Emergency Services

The school office/SEMT will normally contact the emergency services.

However, any member of staff should call 999 where they are directly aware of an immediate threat to life and it is safe to do so.

Staff should provide, where known:

- the school's name and address
- the nature of the incident
- the location of the threat
- known injuries
- information about missing people
- the safest known access point for emergency services.

Staff should then follow emergency-service instructions.

Parent Communication

Parents will be contacted through the school's usual messaging system as soon as this can be done safely.

A typical message will make clear that:

- the school is managing an incident
- pupils are being kept safe
- parents must not come to the site
- parents should not telephone the school unless essential
- parents should not contact their child directly
- further information will follow.

No pupil will be released while lockdown remains in place.

If alternative collection arrangements are required, parents will receive specific instructions once agreed with the emergency services.

All-Clear

Staff must not assume that the incident has ended because the site becomes quiet.

A full lockdown or evacuation remains in force until an authorised all-clear has been received.

The all-clear will normally be communicated through:

- the school announcement system; and
- confirmation through SEMT/internal communication.

The school will maintain an authenticated staff-only all-clear phrase or process within its restricted emergency information.

Do not respond to an unverified instruction to unlock or leave a secure area.

Emergency-service instructions take precedence.

Fire Or Another Emergency During Lockdown

A second emergency may occur while a lockdown is underway.

Staff should not automatically move pupils into corridors or outside if doing so could take them towards a known security threat.

Where there is an immediate fire or another direct threat within the room/building, staff should move pupils away from that danger using the safest available route.

Where circumstances permit, SEMT or the emergency services will provide instructions.

The school's site-specific fire/lockdown interface arrangements must be familiar to staff and reviewed as part of emergency exercises.

End Of The Incident

Once the all-clear has been verified:

- staff should remain with their pupils
- registers/headcounts should be confirmed again
- injuries or welfare concerns should be reported
- pupils should receive calm, age-appropriate reassurance
- pupils should not be released until the school's normal or emergency collection arrangements have been confirmed.

SEMT will determine whether:

- normal school activity can resume
- pupils need to be relocated
- the school needs to close
- emergency reunification arrangements are required
- the Business Continuity Plan should be activated.

Post-Incident Response

Following an actual incident, the Headteacher/SEMT will coordinate:

- communication with parents and carers
- communication with governors, the Local Authority and relevant agencies
- support for affected pupils and staff
- safeguarding follow-up
- staff debriefing
- evaluation of the response
- recording of lessons learned
- changes to procedures or risk assessments.

A written record should identify:

REVIEW AREA	QUESTIONS
Alarm	Did everyone hear and understand it?
Response	Did staff know what to do?
Accountability	Were pupils, adults and visitors accounted for?
Communication	Did systems work effectively?
SEND/accessibility	Were reasonable adjustments effective?
Premises	Did doors, locks, blinds and other measures work as expected?
Learning	What needs to change?
Action	Who will make the change and by when?

APPENDIX 2 – STAFF QUICK REFERENCE

INVACUATION	PARTIAL LOCKDOWN	FULL LOCKDOWN
Danger normally outside/ environmental	Potential security threat outside	Immediate serious threat on/within the site
Bring everyone inside if safe	Bring pupils inside if safe	Secure immediately
Close doors/windows	Secure external doors/windows	Lock/secure doors and windows
Ventilation off if instructed	Stop external movement	Out of sight
Account for everyone	Account for everyone	Quiet
Report missing/additional people	Await SEMT instructions	Phones silent
Remain inside	Be ready to escalate	Account for everyone
Await all-clear	Await all-clear	Do not search for missing pupils
		Do not open the door without verified instruction
		Await verified all-clear