

Critical Incident / Lockdown Procedure

Devoran School



Approved by:	The Headteacher	Date: 30 September 2025
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What is a Lockdown Procedure?

Although most people use the term 'lockdown' to refer to getting everyone into a safe place and sealing the exits, it's actually one element of a wider practice known as 'invacuation'. Invacuation is the process of getting everybody inside and safe, and securing the building. In most cases, pupils will be able to stay in their classroom during an invacuation, and the school day can continue as normal, just with everyone staying indoors.

Lockdown goes a step further, in that everyone on the premises – staff, pupils and visitors – are moved away from the potential danger to a place where they can't be seen from outside the building.

Lockdown would only be used in more extreme circumstances where there is a serious and current threat to the safety of those in the building.

Introduction

On very rare occasions it may be necessary to quickly restrict access and egress to a site or building (or part of) through physical measures in response to a threat, either external or internal. 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 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.

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
- A bomb threat

The threat

The most likely threat to the School is from someone with a desire to disrupt the running of the School rather than from a terrorist organisation wishing to cause an outrage by exploding a bomb on the premises. **Unfortunately this cannot be assumed and all threats, however outlandish they may appear, must and will be taken seriously.**

Sources of threat

Telephone calls

The most common form of notification of a bomb is that of a telephone call from the organisation concerned. If the School receives such a call then the **Immediate Actions** listed below should be carried out.

Packages

Causes for concern could be packages delivered to the School. See **Annex A for Aids to Detection**. Equally unidentified packages left on the premises may give cause of concern. In all cases staff should not hesitate to question why the package is there and should equally not hesitate to carry out the **Immediate Actions** if their concerns are not **IMMEDIATELY** allayed.

Vehicle bombs

It is highly unlikely that a car or other vehicle bomb would be used against a target such as a primary school, but in such an event the Police should be notified immediately. Details required by the Police will include the registration number and description of the vehicle.

Intruder on the School Premises

An intruder on the school site during school opening times may pose a threat to the safety of the pupils and staff. Their safety will be the overriding priority in such a situation. There are coded-padlocked gates at the front and back of the school which are re-locked at the start of the school day and opened again at the end of the school day. There is constant access to the front of the school via the pedestrian side gates - the car park is guarded by CCTV cameras and a key coded main entrance into the school.

Immediate actions in school hours

The following actions will be taken in the event of a bomb threat occurring during the school day:

- 1) Evacuate the School using the fire evacuation procedure. Any evacuation route should avoid passing the location of the suspect package. As soon as the roll call is complete, move the children to Devoran Church and use the building to shield the children.
- 2) If the roll call is incomplete, one or two volunteer members of staff will search for the missing pupils or adults, whilst other staff will move the remainder of the children to the Church.
- 3) Ensure that no packages, bags or other possible bombs are removed during the evacuation **unless** staff are **positive** that the item has been in their **personal possession** since leaving home that morning.
- 4) Call the Police by dialling 999. Give as many details as possible, using the aide memoir below.
- 5) Under no circumstances are children or staff to re-enter the school once everyone has been accounted for until the Police confirm that it is safe to do so.

The following actions will be taken in the event of an intruder on the school site occurring during the school day.

- 1) If the intruder does not appear to show any visible signs of physically endangering anyone, he or she (at a distance) should be asked to leave by the Headteacher or Senior Teacher left in charge and contact with the police should be made immediately. If he or she refuses, again contact with the police should be made immediately.
- 2) If an intruder presents any physical danger, or there is any slight concern, he or she should not be approached by staff unless it is in direct protection of a pupil. The police will be contacted immediately.
- 3) In both cases, all children should immediately be removed to the interior of the school where they should remain until safe to be outside again. The teacher in charge will give five short bursts on the air horn and all children will go immediately inside to their classrooms with the class teacher being the last person in and then all doors and windows will be closed – including outside doors.

Immediate actions out of school hours

If a key holder is made aware of a bomb threat then they must inform the Police immediately. Equally, if the Police are made aware of a possible threat to the school, they will inform one of the key holders. Under no circumstances should a key holder or staff member carry out a search.

Critical Incident / Lockdown Plan

Plan	
Staff responsibilities	
Headteacher	Make contact with emergency services Sound the alarm
Other staff members	- Deputy headteacher: communicate with parents when necessary - Teachers and support staff: stay with pupils - Office staff: ensure all access points are secured
Signals	
Lockdown signal(s)	- Dedicated 'lockdown' air horn (5 short bursts of the air horn) - Public address (school phone intercom) system if appropriate - Internal message systems via email or staff whats app group - Word of mouth
All clear signal	For example: 3 short bursts of the school bell - PA system - Internal message systems
Evacuation signal	Continuous sounding of the school bell or the fire alarm going off
Lockdown	
Assembly points	School classrooms The School Hall will be used as an alternative if needed
Entrance and exit points	School front door and internal magna-lock door should already be locked. Office staff to check. Ensure that outside green gates are secure Staff to shut windows and blinds and lock doors (not in practice drills)
Bringing pupils inside	When the air horn sounds, children to stop what they are doing and walk silently and calmly into their lines. They will then be brought into their classrooms class at a time to reduce bottleneck at door entrances.

	Office staff will alert staff in the staffroom to the air horn Staff will take a register of their class immediately Alert office immediately if a child is missing
Steps to increase protection from danger	• Lock and screen doors • Position children away from sightlines from external doors and windows, for example in the cloakrooms • Turn off lights and monitors • Ensure mobiles phones and electronic devices are on silent, or turned off
Internal communication	School Email School Whats App group
Communication with parents	ONLY WHEN INSTRUCTED TO DO SO Class Dojo is accessible quickly. We may choose to ask parents not to call the school, as this will tie up lines that would be used to contact emergency services. We will also ensure that parents or any visitors do not to come to the school.
Additional notes	Children with SEND will be supported and reassured by staff members

Bomb threat aide memoir

Telephone calls

Start the evacuation during the call if there is another person present to do this.

Think about the call:

- Did the caller use a codeword – the Police have access to the current list and can verify if it is a genuine codeword or a hoax
- Content of the call – location of bomb, time of detonation
- Was the caller male or female
- Did they have a pronounced accent
- Background noises
- Reason for the call

Time permitting, try 1471 and see what number is returned.

Packages and vehicles

If you are suspicious - DO NOT TOUCH OR HANDLE THE PACKAGE IN ANY WAY.

Unfortunately, it is often the touch or feel of the package that gives rise to suspicion. If you have inadvertently picked up the package, place it gently onto a firm surface where it can be clearly seen by Bomb Disposal Officers and LEAVE THE ROOM IMMEDIATELY.

When contacting the Police tell them:

- Who you are and your job title
- Where you are calling from and the phone number
- Why you are calling

Telephone threat

Give all the information you have gleaned from the call

Packages and vehicles

- Where the package is (details of location) and why you are suspicious of it
- Package size/bulk, appearance, smell and greasy marks, visible features (wires etc), address to ?, postmark
- Is recipient a likely target
- When was the package found, and was any warning given
- Who found it
- What precautions are being taken

Remember where the package is because the Police will want to examine the package, even if only from a distance. When moving the children to safe areas, try to minimise exposure by moving along a route which does not go past the package.

Any bomb involving a vehicle would cause a large explosion and the only safe distance from such a device is the maximum that can be obtained. If the suspect car is in the front of the school then the children are best moved out **to the top field** as if necessary, access can be obtained to the fields at the back of the school.

Highly detailed procedures could hinder the speed and success of dealing with such a situation but the outlined plans and procedures contained in this policy will ensure appropriate action is taken to safeguard

pupils and staff should any emergency situation arise. In all occasions, the Headteacher or most senior member of staff on site in their absence, is responsible for managing info exchange between staff, pupils, governors, parents, carers and the Local Authority. When communicating with the children about any situation, it will be done in an age appropriate was as different families will deal with situations in different ways.

Annex A – Aids to Detection

A list of pointers to look for in determining whether a package or letter is suspect include:

- a) **Excessive wrapping:** the bomber will want to ensure that the device arrives at its intended destination intact and undamaged. Excessive sticky tape, string and padding may be used to achieve this.
- b) **Gummed Flap Completely Stuck Down:** To ensure that the package does not open accidentally in transit, the gummed flap on the envelope, usually only partially stuck down, may be completely stuck down so that there is no un-gummed gap at the sides.
- c) **Stiffness:** A letter device requires a solid (i.e. stiff) base on which to mount the components (i.e. battery, detonator, circuitry etc.) Note: items must not be rattled or flexed if thought suspicious.
- d) **A Second Envelope:** Attempts to bypass the screening system may be made by the use of a second envelope, which is lightly taped or tied with string, and addressed personally to the intended victim.
- e) **Heavy/Lopsided:** The components of devices (e.g. batteries, explosive) are often quite unexpectedly heavy. They can be unevenly distributed which can make the package lopsided.
- f) **Un-typed Address:** It is unusual for envelopes or packages containing official or business mail to be un-typed, particularly if block capitals are used.
- g) **Foreign Style or Layout:** Some foreigners write with a distinctive style, particularly if their native language, such as Arabic, does not use the Roman alphabet. In some countries it is the practice to write addresses in a different order – e.g. the name of the town is put above the street name and the number of the house or flat appears at the end of the line.
- h) **“Letraset” or “Unistencil”:** People who cannot type or do not have access to a typewriter and wish to conceal their identity sometimes use these.
- i) **Excessive Postage:** A bomber will want to ensure that a device sent by post will not be held up by the Royal Mail or, worse still, rejected by the recipient because insufficient postage has been used. Therefore, to avoid going to the Post Office to obtain the correct postage (an action which might subsequently result in his being identified), they may use an excessive amount of postage. Extravagance of this sort is unusual with Government Departments and commercial organisations.
- j) **Errors in Address:** Bombers often do not have accurate details of the names, titles, appointments, honours and addresses of their targets. Bad spelling is also common.
- k) **Unusual Postmark:** Devices are often sent from foreign countries and places in the UK, which fall outside the areas from which mail is normally received.
- l) **Franking and Stamp Incompatible:** Sometimes packages with stamps from other parts of the UK or even foreign countries are posted in England and therefore bear franking which does not correspond to the stamp’s place of origin.
- m) **Protruding Wire or Tinfoil:** It is possible that a piece of protruding electric wire or tinfoil from an Improvised Explosive Device will have pierced the wrapping in transit and is visible.
- n) **Grease Marks:** If not properly wrapped in greaseproof wrapping, some types of explosive exude a liquid or vapour which can appear as a grease mark on the outside of the package.
- o) **Pinhole in the Wrapping:** Some devices are armed after the package has been sealed. This can leave a small hole in the wrapping through which the arming wire has been pulled.
- p) **Strange Odour:** Some explosives give off an unusual odour, which can often be smelt by sniffing the outer wrapping of the package. Some explosives smell like almonds or marzipan.