Lockdown (Invacuation) Procedure Policy

St Vincent's School for Sensory Impairment and Other Needs

Approved by:	Mr. L. Green	**Date:** 05/05/26
Last reviewed on:	05/2026	
Next review due by:	09/2028	

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1. Introduction and Purpose

1.1 Our Commitment to Safety

St Vincent's School is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all pupils, staff, and visitors. This policy sets out our procedures for responding to emergency situations that may require us to either:

- **Secure the building and keep everyone inside (lockdown/invacuation), or**
- **Evacuate the building quickly and safely (evacuation)**

1.2 Legislative Context

This policy has been developed in recognition of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn's Law, which is new legislation that requires every school (unless it's very small) to be prepared for a terrorist attack. We're not legally required to comply with Martyn's Law until April 2027. The Key Leaders

However, we are implementing robust procedures now to ensure the safety of our school community.

1.3 Our Specialist Context

St Vincent's School is a non-maintained special school (NMISS) catering for 43 pupils who have visual and/or hearing impairments. All pupils have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

This policy recognises that:

- All our pupils have sensory impairments that require adapted emergency procedures
- Communication methods must be individualised and accessible
- Additional time and support may be needed during emergency situations
- Staff are trained in specialist communication methods

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All pupils at St Vincent's School
- All staff (teaching, support, administrative, premises, catering, and any other staff)
- Governors
- Volunteers
- Visitors to the school
- Contractors working on site

3. Legal Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law)
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE guidance: 'Protective security and preparedness for education settings' (2024)

4. Definitions

4.1 Lockdown (Invacuation)

A lockdown is an emergency procedure where we **secure the building and keep everyone inside** to protect them from an immediate external threat.

Examples of situations requiring lockdown:

- An intruder on or near the school site
- A dangerous animal in the vicinity
- A nearby criminal incident (e.g., police pursuit, armed incident)
- Civil disturbance or riot nearby
- Any other external threat where it is safer to remain inside

Key principle: Stay inside, secure all entry points, stay hidden and quiet.

4.2 Evacuation

An evacuation is an emergency procedure where we **leave the building quickly and safely** because there is a threat inside the building.

Examples of situations requiring evacuation:

- Fire
- Gas leak
- Bomb threat
- Structural damage to the building
- Any other internal threat where it is safer to leave

Key principle: Leave the building immediately via the nearest safe exit, go to the assembly point.

4.3 Invacuation vs Evacuation Decision

The decision to lockdown or evacuate depends on **where the threat is:**

- **Threat OUTSIDE** = Lockdown (invacuation) - stay inside
- **Threat INSIDE** = Evacuation - leave the building

In some rare situations, we may need to **evacuate first, then lockdown** (e.g., evacuate due to fire, then lockdown in the assembly area if there is an external threat).

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for:

- Approving this policy and ensuring it is reviewed annually
- Ensuring adequate resources are allocated for emergency preparedness
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy through reports from the Headteacher
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate training

5.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Overall implementation of this policy
- Assessing emergency situations and deciding whether to initiate lockdown or evacuation
- Acting as Incident Commander during emergencies
- Contacting emergency services when required
- Communicating with staff, pupils, parents/carers, and external agencies
- Deciding when it is safe to end a lockdown or return to the building after evacuation
- Ensuring regular drills are conducted
- Reporting incidents and drills to governors
- Reviewing and updating this policy

In the absence of the Headteacher, the designated deputy is: Mr. Lee Green (Assistant Headteacher)

5.3 Senior Leadership Team

Senior leaders are responsible for:

- Supporting the Headteacher in managing emergency situations
- Taking designated roles during emergencies
- Leading staff briefings and training
- Evaluating drills and incidents
- Updating procedures as needed

5.4 All Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Reading and understanding this policy
- Knowing their role during lockdown and evacuation
- Following procedures calmly and efficiently
- Keeping pupils safe and calm
- Accounting for pupils in their care
- Using appropriate communication methods for pupils with sensory impairments
- Attending training and participating in drills
- Reporting any concerns about emergency procedures

5.5 Site Manager/Premises Staff

The Site Manager and premises staff are responsible for:

- Maintaining security of the building and grounds
- Ensuring all locks, alarms, and emergency systems are working
- Securing external doors and gates during lockdown (where safe to do so)
- Supporting evacuation procedures
- Conducting regular checks of emergency equipment
- Assisting emergency services when they arrive
- Monitoring CCTV

5.6 Office/Administrative Staff

Office and administrative staff are responsible for:

- Securing reception and main entrance during lockdown
- Supporting communication with emergency services
- Maintaining visitor logs
- Supporting communication with parents/carers
- Maintaining emergency contact details

5.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Listen to and follow staff instructions
- Stay calm
- Help keep others calm
- Practice procedures during drills

We recognise that our pupils' ability to understand and follow instructions varies according to their age, developmental stage, and complexity of needs. Staff will provide appropriate support and adaptations.

5.8 Parents/Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Read and understand the information provided about emergency procedures
- Discuss procedures with their child if appropriate
- Inform school of any specific needs their child may have
- Follow instructions during an actual emergency (see Section 9)
- Keep emergency contact details up to date

Security lockdown (Invacuation) procedure

Staff responsibilities

STAFF MEMBER	RESPONSIBILITIES	EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER
Security lead	• Determine and lead the initial response • Liaise with the police • Make fast, clear decisions to get people to safety • Help secure the building where safe to do so (e.g. lock doors and windows).	David Swanston 07706243697
Headteacher	• Help co-ordinate the response, managing and delegating actions as needed • Help secure the building where safe to do so (e.g. lock doors and windows) • Record actions taken • Communicate with parents/carers	David Swanston 07706243697
Deputy headteacher	• Escort visitors to agreed safe • Help secure the building where safe to do so (e.g. lock doors and windows)	Lee Green 07983577838
Teachers and support staff	• Bring pupils to classroom or other place of safety as directed • Help secure the building where safe to do so (e.g. lock doors and windows) • Ensure everyone stays away from sightlines (e.g. doors and windows).	All Staff – via all staff email.
Site manager	• Make sure all access points are secured	John Bishop 07941743806

Security lockdown signals

ALARM OR SIGNAL FOR LOCKDOWN	SIGNAL FOR ALL CLEAR
• Dedicated 'lockdown' alarm tone via computer system • Internal message systems • Word of mouth	• 'Lockdown' alarm tone will end • Internal message systems

Rooms most suitable for lockdown

LOCATION	CAPACITY – NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO CAN SAFELY INVACUATE THERE
Assembly Hall	100
Gymnasium changing rooms	40
Caulfield Residential Unit	100
English and Humanities rooms	20 - 20
P1 and P2 Classrooms	20 - 20
Laundry room	30
Middle floor – bolt room	100

Security lockdown plan

Bring pupils inside	• The lockdown alarm will signal that all students must enter the building and find a safe location to hide. This will be under the supervision of the staff members on duty. • If the lockdown announcement sounds during social times, Duty Staff must assume responsibility for the students who are outside and muster them to a safe place via the nearest entrance. Students on the yard nearest the MUGA or on the MUGA should attempt to find a safe space in the Assembly Hall. Students on the swings or near the primary play area should make their way to Caulfield Residential unit. • Students who are inside at social times should quickly also make their way to Caulfield Residential unit.
Secure entrance and exit points	• Reception Staff to ensure that the main doors are secured and seek safety on the admin corridor • All teachers to close windows and doors • Caretakers to ensure that all external gates are locked and to visually check that all external entrances are secure and seek safety via the nearest entrance to the building once all gates are locked.
Steps to increase protection	• Lock and screen doors if possible • Position children away from sightlines from doors and windows – for example, under a desk • Turn off lights and monitors • Make sure mobile phones and electronic devices are silent, or turned off • Barricade doors if required. If you are in a room with no locks, then try to barricade the doors with tables or chairs • Use posters from walls or other items available to covers windows
Internal communication during a lockdown	• Where possible staff can communicate via their school iPad or email.

Communication with parents/carers during a lockdown	• Where possible a text message will be sent to all parents informing them about the incident, providing reassurance • Parents will be asked not to call the school, as this will tie up lines that would be used to contact emergency services, and not to come to the school.
Lockdown duration	The school will remain in a state of lockdown until a senior member of staff or the emergency services confirm that it has been lifted.

Lockdown action check list

Step	Time	Signed
Sound alarm/signal and begin lockdown procedure		
Dial 999 and alert emergency services		
Direct all children, staff, parents/carers and visitors to the nearest safe place (this may be dependent on what and where the risk is)		
Account for pupils, staff and visitors using registers		
Secure rooms by locking doors and windows, and take action to increase protection as set out in the plan		
Close blinds and curtains		
Turn off the lights, fans and/or mobile air conditioning units		
Direct all children, staff, parents/carers and visitors to hide, including under desks and away from windows		
Stay as silent as possible – put any mobile phones on silent		
Make sure everyone is aware of an exit point in case an intruder gains access		
If possible, check and search for missing or injured pupils, staff or visitors		
Keep doors and windows locked shut and remain inside until the all clear has been given, or until you're told to evacuate by the emergency services		

7. Communication with Pupils

We will talk to pupils both before and after a drill, scheduling our lockdown drill to take place soon after we or our staff have spoken to pupils, and reinforcing learning by holding drills regularly. Before the drill, we will carefully explain what's going to happen and answer questions pupils may have, including what the procedure is step by step, how we expect them to behave, and that this is just a drill and they aren't in any real danger.

7.1 Age-Appropriate Communication

For younger children, we will focus on "plans to keep us all safe" and "what to do in an emergency" – avoiding using the word 'lockdown', as it might confuse pupils who associate it with COVID-19 precautions. We will tell pupils that "It's very unlikely we'll need to do this, but we have to practise just in case" and treat it like a fire drill, explaining that these are things the adults need to do to keep pupils safe, and this is how pupils can help.

For older pupils, we will be honest about what the lockdown is for, saying "This is in case someone comes into our school who shouldn't be here. This is how we'll keep everyone safe, and it's important that we all know what to do." We will not shy away from the fact that an incident could happen, but will emphasise that it's very unlikely, comparing it to a fire drill. The Key Leaders

7.2 After Drills

After the drill, we will praise pupils and explain how their good behaviour kept them safe and out of harm, remind them that it was a drill and there's nothing for them to worry about, ask about how they felt and take time to answer any questions they may have, and then go straight back to 'work as usual'. The Key Leaders

8. Communication with Parents/Carers

8.1 Before Drills

We will use a template letter to tell parents/carers about our school's security lockdown procedure and that we will be practising it soon. The letter will explain what 'security lockdown' means, explain that it's a standard health and safety procedure, emphasise that the school has a duty to keep pupils safe, give examples of incidents that could trigger the procedure, and direct parent/carer concerns to the right channel.

Our approach:

- Send letter home at least 2 weeks before first drill (see Appendix A for template)
- Publish policy on school website
- Provide information in accessible formats (large print, audio, translation if needed)

8.2 During an Actual Emergency

Parents/carers MUST:

- NOT come to the school - this could put them and others at risk and hinder emergency services
- NOT call the school - phone lines must be kept clear for emergency services
- NOT post on social media - this could alert perpetrators or spread misinformation
- Monitor school website and social media for official updates
- Wait for official communication from the school

The school will:

- Update parents/carers as soon as it is safe to do so
- Use our communication system: text message service, email, phone call
- Post updates on school website and official social media accounts
- Provide clear information about:
    - What has happened (without compromising safety)

- Whether pupils are safe
- When and how parents can collect pupils
- Any support available

Reunification procedure:

- Parents will be directed to a specific location: Main car park
- Pupils will be released in a controlled manner
- Parents must show ID

9. Lockdown Drills

We will schedule lockdown drills to take place soon after we or our staff have spoken to pupils, and reinforce learning by holding drills regularly.

Frequency: Once per academic year.

Process:

- Staff briefing before the drill
- Pupil preparation
- Drill conducted
- Debrief with pupils
- Staff debrief and evaluation
- Report to governors
- Policy and procedures updated if needed

10. Evaluation and Review

After each drill or actual lockdown, we will:

- Evaluate what went well and what could be improved
- Gather feedback from staff and pupils
- Update procedures as necessary
- Report to governors
- Review this policy annually or after any significant incident

11. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Emergency and Critical Incident Plan
- Fire Safety Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- SEND Policy