Villa Real School

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Lock Down Policy

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Jill Bowe, Headteacher

Date to be reviewed: January November 2026

(Or earlier in light of any changes in legislation and/or guidance.)

INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly complex safeguarding landscape, schools must be prepared to respond swiftly and proportionately to a range of security threats — from local incidents to national emergencies. The safety and wellbeing of children, staff, and visitors is paramount, and this policy sets out the procedures for initiating, managing, and recovering from a lockdown situation within our school setting.

This policy is underpinned by statutory safeguarding duties and reflects the requirements of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 — commonly known as Martyn's Law. As a Standard Tier premises, our school is required to implement proportionate security measures that reduce risk and enhance preparedness for potential terrorist threats. This includes having a documented lockdown plan, clear communication protocols, and regular staff training.

PURPOSE AND AIM

Lockdown procedures are not solely about counterterrorism; they are a vital part of school safeguarding expectations. They support school's ability to respond to a range of scenarios including intruders, nearby violent incidents, environmental hazards, or any situation where it is safer to remain inside and restrict movement. The policy ensures that all staff understand their roles, that children are kept calm and safe, and that communication with emergency services and families is timely and effective.
By embedding these procedures into our safeguarding culture — through practice drills, training, and regular review a secure and resilient school environment will be created. This policy is designed to be practical, proportionate, and aligned with best practice,

This Policy applies to all staff, children, Governors, volunteers, and visitors (including parents/ carers) on site. The school falls under the Standard Tier of Martyn's Law, requiring proportionate measures for premises where 200-800 people may be present.

Triggers for Lockdown

A lockdown may be initiated in response to a wide range of internal or external threats. These triggers are not exhaustive but provide a framework for recognising situations where the safety of children, staff, and visitors may be compromised. All staff should remain vigilant and report any concerns immediately to the designated safeguarding lead or senior leadership team.

Unauthorised Intruder or Suspicious Person on Site:

- An individual attempting to gain unauthorised access to the school premises
- A person behaving erratically, aggressively, or in a manner that causes concern
- Reports from staff, children, or visitors of someone hiding or loitering inappropriately near entrances or within the grounds

Nearby Incident Involving Violence or Weapons:

- Police activity or armed response in the immediate vicinity of the school
- Reports of a violent altercation, stabbing, or shooting near the school boundary
- Intelligence from local authorities or community networks indicating a

credible threat

Terrorism-Related Threat or Suspicious Package:

- Discovery of an unattended bag, parcel, or item that appears suspicious or out of place
- Receipt of a bomb threat or other malicious communication
- Notification from police or counter-terrorism services of a credible threat in the area

Airborne or Environmental Hazard

- Chemical spill, gas leak, or smoke from a nearby industrial site or road traffic incident
- Hazardous weather event (e.g. storm, high winds, or lightning) that makes it unsafe to evacuate
- External contamination risk requiring pupils and staff to remain indoors

Behaviour or Internal Threat:

- A child, staff member, or visitor exhibiting behaviour that poses a serious risk to others
- Medical emergency involving a person with violent or unpredictable behaviour
- Escalation of a safeguarding concern that requires containment of movement
- Community or National Security Alert
- Activation of a local or national alert system (e.g. Counter Terrorism Policing alert)
- Intelligence shared via Prevent, local safeguarding partnerships, or emergency planning teams
- Civil unrest, protest activity, or public disorder in the vicinity of the school

Types of Lockdown

	Description	Action
Full Lockdown	Threat inside or very close to school	Secure all rooms, stop movement, silence phones
Partial Lockdown	Threat nearby but not immediate	Limit movement, secure external doors
Dynamic Lockdown	Rapid response to unfolding threat	Staff use discretion to secure areas immediately

Communication Protocols

Internal Alerts
In school the following internal alert will be made by the office staff ringing each class and saying 'Run, Hide, Tell'.

Staff will then implement the evacuation or invacuation procedure.

External Communication
In school the Senior Leaders will liaise with emergency services as soon as possible and follow all instructions informing staff as soon as possible.

Parents/ carers will be informed via school media channels as soon as it is safe to do so and should not attempt to contact their child whilst awaiting further information. All media enquiries will be handled by the Headteacher.

Evacuation in School
Evacuation is used when it's safer to leave the building than remain inside for example, in the case of fire, gas leak, or a threat inside the school.

The following procedures are in place in school:
- Everyone will leave via reception and assemble in car park
- Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for sweeping the premises, monitoring the gates for clearance and head counting all children - Headteacher and Deputy Head will complete head counts, Assistant Heads will sweep and School Business Manager will ensure gate clearance.

To support these procedures:
- Evacuation practice drills will be conducted at least termly, with scenario variation (e.g. blocked exits, weather).
- Grab bags will be held at reception containing registers, first aid kits, emergency contact info, and high-visibility jackets.
- Plans will consider pupils'/ students' mobility needs and supervision ratios.

Evacuation procedures are part of the school's documented security plan.

Invacuation in School
Invacuation is used when there is a threat outside the school — such as a nearby violent incident, protest, or environmental hazard — and it's safer to bring everyone inside and secure the building.

The following procedures are in place in school:
- Senior leadership will ensure swift movement of children and staff indoors, including those in playgrounds, field trips, or external classrooms.
- All staff secure external doors and windows, while maintaining visibility and calm.
- Head counts and welfare checks will be taken once inside.
- Senior Leadership will communicate with emergency services to monitor external threats and receive updates.
- Staff will be trained to distinguish invacuation from lockdown and act

accordingly.
- Pupils with a PEEP follow their plan.
- Staggered entry can be used via reception, back of main corridor, allotment door.

Invacuation procedures are part of the school's documented security plan.

Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Leadership will be responsible for the following:

- Initiating the lockdown
- Coordinating the response and communication with all staff and parents/ carers (when safe to do so)
- Liaising with emergency services

All Staff will be responsible for the following:

- Securing classrooms
- Keeping pupils/ students calm and quiet
- Responding to communication where appropriate

All pupils/ students will be responsible for the following:

- Following adult instructions
- Remaining as silent and still as possible

Documentation and Training

Plans and Records

This school lockdown plan will be reviewed annually, and amendments will be made in relation to any changes required following practice drills in school or as a result of expectations from the Government in relation to lockdown procedures.

School will hold an incident log for all lockdowns that occur in school, and a record of the school's response will be held on school site.

School will update school premises and individual risk assessments following any additional actions required from the lockdown incident.

Training

School will ensure that there are regular annual lockdown drills (alongside termly evacuation drills e.g. fire drills, for staff and pupils). It is an expectation that all staff raise any concerns or issues that arise to Senior Leadership immediately following any drills.

All new members of staff will receive training regarding the school's evacuation and invacuation procedures at induction.

School will also discuss - at least annually - in staff meetings scenario-based lock down incidents and the impact of these on school responses (This could be following the annual lockdown drill).

Debrief and Support

In the event that the lock down procedures are implemented then all staff and

pupils/ students will be debriefed within 24 hours. Staff and pupils/ students will be offered any pastoral or counselling support they require to support them following the incident. Additional information will also be shared with parents and governors. The school will then review the procedures and any lessons learnt from the incident that will then lead to the update of this policy.

Further Policies

Fire Policy and Emergency Plan
Business Continuity Plan