

Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College

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Edith Stein Catholic Academy Trust

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Dear Parents and Carers

Emergency Lockdown Procedures

As part of our commitment to keeping all members of our school community safe, we regularly review and practise our emergency procedures. While most parents are familiar with our fire evacuation drills, schools are also expected to maintain robust arrangements for situations where it may be safer for pupils and staff to remain inside a secure building.

In line with national safeguarding expectations and the principles underpinning Martyn's Law, we have reviewed our emergency lockdown arrangements and would like to make you aware of our procedures. These measures form part of our wider emergency planning and are designed to ensure that staff and students can respond quickly and safely to a range of potential incidents.

A lockdown may be initiated in response to a number of situations, including:

- A serious incident or disturbance in the local community.
- An intruder or unauthorised person on the school site.
- Intelligence or advice received from the Police regarding a security threat.
- A warning regarding a local environmental hazard, such as a smoke plume or gas leak.
- A major fire in the vicinity of the school.
- The presence of a dangerous animal near the school site.
- Any other situation where remaining indoors is assessed as the safest course of action.

In most circumstances, any decision to lock down the school will be made following advice from the Police or emergency services. However, the school may initiate its procedures immediately if there is an identified risk to pupils, staff or visitors.

What happens during a lockdown?

To alert staff and students that a lockdown is required, a signal of **ten intermittent bells** will be sounded. When this happens:

- Staff will immediately direct students to the nearest safe indoor location.
- External doors, gates and accessible windows will be secured where appropriate.
- Students and staff will remain inside classrooms or designated safe areas.
- Registers will be taken to account for all students and staff.
- Senior leaders will coordinate the response and will liaise directly with emergency services where necessary.



Community Unity Opportunity



- Internal communication systems will be used to provide updates and instructions to staff.
- Staff and students will remain calm, quiet and focused on instructions from school leaders.
- No one will enter or leave the building unless authorised by the emergency services or the school's Senior Leadership Team.

When it is safe to do so, the all-clear signal will be given by a continuous bell and staff will receive confirmation through the school's communication systems before normal activities resume.

Communication with Parents and Carers

In the event of a lockdown, we will communicate with parents and carers as soon as it is safe and practical to do so. Updates will normally be provided through our established communication systems and, where appropriate, information will also be posted on the school website.

We respectfully ask parents and carers not to telephone the school during a lockdown unless there is an urgent emergency. It is essential that telephone lines remain available for communication with the emergency services and other agencies supporting the school's response.

Students will not be permitted to use mobile phones to contact parents or others during a lockdown. This helps ensure that accurate information is communicated, prevents unnecessary alarm and supports the effective management of the situation by emergency responders.

End of the School Day

Should a lockdown remain in place at the end of the school day, students will only be dismissed when it is safe to do so and, where relevant, following guidance from the Police and emergency services. Parents and carers will be informed of any alternative arrangements through the school's communication channels.

Training and Practice

As with our fire evacuation procedures, it is important that lockdown arrangements are rehearsed periodically so that staff and students understand what to do in an emergency and procedures can be tested and refined where necessary. At the end of last year students received guidance through assemblies and our new Year 7 and 12 have been advised this term of our school process.

We are therefore going to have a planned lockdown drill on **Friday 9th October between 12.45 and 13.45pm**. We are using this to ensure that our processes and procedures are fit for purpose which is why we are making staff, students and you aware in advance. Please note that during this time you will not be able to access the school site, so if your child has a pre-booked appointment on that day, they will need to be collected and returned outside of these times.

While we hope that these arrangements will never need to be used in a real situation, practising them helps ensure that all members of our school community are prepared and can respond confidently and safely should the need arise.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

Yours sincerely



Mrs A Bonnington
Head of School