



Wadham School

A Church of England Community School

"Life in all its fullness" John 10:10



Wednesday 01st May 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

RE: Wadham School – Lockdown Practice Tuesday 7th May

I am writing to update families on additional security measures we have introduced at Wadham School to safeguard our community. If you have visited the school recently, you will have seen that we have installed additional electronic locks in Reception, creating a further controlled access point that restricts entry to the school site. This is an enhanced level of security to strengthen systems already in place.

In so doing, we now have even greater control of who can (and cannot) gain entry to and from the site. This means that at busier times visitors will be required to wait in a smaller space before being allowed into the main school building. I am grateful for your patience and understanding in this regard and hope you agree that it is a reasonable adjustment in working to minimise the potential risk of harm to members of our community.

Although this action is not prompted by a perceived or actual threat in our community, it is made in response to the very troubling increase of incidents involving knives and knife crime nationally – the horrific attack in Amman Valley School last week and another in Hainault, East London, yesterday both being very recent examples.

Our thoughts and prayers go in particular to the families of these victims, as well as to everyone affected by these attacks in their communities.

As a school we are not complacent that such incidents 'won't happen here' and it is important that everyone has a clear understanding of the process and expectations to be followed in the event that a school lockdown is triggered.

For this reason, I am informing parents and carers that we will conduct a lockdown practice on Tuesday 7th May. This practice will take place before morning break, and involve all members of our school community.

Once the alarm is triggered, the practice will have 2 phases:

1. Physical lock down of the site (Everyone stays where they are and secures the space they are in)
2. Fire and Evacuation drill (Everyone evacuates to the field, before being returned to lessons)

The date and time is being openly communicated so that we can reduce any anxiety typically expected in situations like this and so we can complete a thorough walk-through of our procedures. The process will also help familiarise students with how they need to conduct themselves to help safeguard their well-being in the event that a genuine lockdown is triggered.

Tutors will brief students this week ahead of Tuesday's practice. The same briefing slides will be displayed in classrooms during the lockdown event to remind everyone of how we work together to secure our spaces and remain calm during any lockdown period.

I am sure you will want to discuss the seriousness of a lockdown with your child and you may find the following information useful to support conversations taking place at home:



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Website : www.wadhamschool.co.uk E-Mail : office@wadhamschool.co.uk

Headteacher: Mr R Burgas
Chair of Governors: Mr C Chapman



How will lockdown be triggered?

- Bells will sound as seven, intermittent rings, followed by a pause, then a repeat of these 7 rings.
- The school remains in lockdown until the bells change to a continuous sound, triggering evacuation to the field, which we are well practised in.
- If the bells fall silent before the continuous sound – **we still remain in lockdown!**
- Class teachers and support staff will email confirmation that areas are locked down.
- Senior Staff and the Site Team will communicate using school radios to confirm the whole school is locked down.
- Our website will be updated with a pop-up notification that we are in lockdown.
- *NOTE: parents must not call the school or their child at this time as this may undermine and hinder our safeguarding processes.*

How will we know lockdown has ended?

- Lockdown will always end with an evacuation to the school field.
- This is triggered using the existing (well-known) process.
- Bells will ring continuously, and everyone will evacuate to the field, lining up in silence and in tutor groups as we currently do. (Students are really good at this!)
- Registers will be taken and everyone will be notified that lockdown has ended, any further instructions given, followed by dismissal back to lessons.

What do we do when we hear the lockdown alarm?

- Staff and students must secure the spaces they are in.
- Students on the field (PE) should move quickly to the new sports hall.
- Students not currently in lessons should move quickly back to their classroom.
- Teachers and support staff will lock the doors and windows of the rooms they are in.
- They may also barricade the door with a table, and instruct the children to move to a specific location within the area to further reduce risk if appropriate. (For example, everyone sits under their table.)
- Senior Staff and the Site Team to lock the main buildings down.
- Students should stop what they are doing, place pens down, and wait silently to follow instructions from staff present.
- On Tuesday, students will go through an expectations presentation while we are locked down.
- During lockdown, all staff will monitor emails where updates will be given.
- Lockdown ends when bells ring continuously, triggering the evacuation process.

In essence, our lockdown policy and process can be distilled into 3 clear actions should the alarm be triggered:

- 1. Secure the space you are in**
- 2. Keep noise to an absolute minimum**
- 3. Remain calm and follow instructions**

Tuesday's practice is a timely opportunity for everyone to complete a walkthrough in a safe and controlled way. I will be monitoring both the time taken to lock the school down once the alarm has been triggered as well as people's responses to the expectations we have set.

I will of course share feedback with parents and carers following the event and am grateful of your support as we work to prepare everyone for the practice on Tuesday.

Yours sincerely,



Richard Burgas
Headteacher