



Exeter Pre-Prep School

Ready for Anything Policy

Source (author):	DEA
Last review date:	January 2026
Next review date:	January 2027

Introduction

The government requires all schools to consider the need for robust and tested lockdown procedures. Full and partial 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, pupils, parents or visitors.

Procedures should aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all pupils and staff. This may include where there is a need to restrict the movement of pupils around the school environment.

Upon hearing the alert for a lockdown, the procedures for a full lockdown will be implemented. As soon as possible, staff will be informed if it can be de-escalated to a partial lockdown if a full lockdown is not required.

Rationale

There are a wide variety of scenarios which may trigger a school's lockdown procedures. Some examples may include:

- A reported incident, e.g. 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 cause risk to staff and pupils)
- A warning received regarding a risk locally of air pollution (smoke plume, gas cloud, etc.)
- A major fire in the vicinity of the school
- The close proximity of a dangerous animal roaming loose

School security

In developing a viable and robust 'ready for anything' procedure for Exeter Pre-Prep School, we have in place a number of physical systems to improve security.

These include:

- Perimeter fencing around the entire site making it difficult to access the school grounds when it is locked.
- Access to the site is via the front gates only, which are closed for most of the day and can only be opened by a member of staff remotely or by using a staff access card.
- External doors to the building are also access controlled or PIN coded.
- Most internal doors can be locked quickly and efficiently from inside.
- An intercom is used on the external gate for visitors to identify themselves prior to entering the school grounds.
- Car parking for visitors is not on the main school site.

To ensure the school's lockdown procedures are effective the school will:

- Conduct a number of tabletop exercises with the leadership team to test the procedure against various scenarios.
- Rehearse lockdown arrangements with staff and pupils – done in a suitable way that does not upset the children – e.g. with the use of a story such as 'wild horse in the area'.
- Display lockdown information alongside fire and evacuation information in our safeguarding leaflet given to all visitors on arrival to the school.

School Lockdown arrangements

The school has two levels of lockdown – partial and full.

Partial lockdown may be as a result of a reported incident/civil disturbance in the local area with the potential to pose a risk to staff and pupils in the school. It may also be as a result of a warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution, etc. Partial lockdown is a precautionary measure which ensures that the school is in a state of readiness should a situation escalate, whilst enabling a degree of normality to continue.

Full lockdown signifies an immediate threat to the school and may be an escalation of a partial lockdown. There is no attempt to continue the normal business inside the school building and no movement around the school unless absolutely necessary and in response to changing circumstances.

PARTIAL LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

Alert to staff

Once the Head or Deputy Head has decided to instigate a partial lockdown, they will:

1. Sound the air raid siren located in the red fire safety cabinet in the front entrance hall.
2. Contact the Exeter School operations team, the Local Authority and Emergency Services.
3. Send a short, internal email to all staff advising of the situation; all teachers during partial lockdown should be logged into their email system as this will be a discrete tool for circulating non urgent information.

Immediate action

- All outside activity should cease immediately, while pupils and staff return to the main building, closing doors behind them.
- The Head or Deputy Head will walk around the outside perimeter of the school and ensure that any staff and pupils working outside are alerted to the partial lockdown status.
- If it is break time, the school will firstly decide if the instigation of partial lockdown can be delayed until the end of break; this will help to avoid confusion. However, if it must be instigated during break time, the siren can be used outside, and school leaders will move quickly through the playground instructing all staff and pupils to move indoors.
- All staff and pupils remain in the main building and external doors and windows closed.

- The Head or Deputy Head and school administrator will walk through the school and ensure that all external doors are closed and locked. All doors, once locked, cannot be opened from the outside.
- Free movement will be permitted within the building unless circumstances are such that this is not possible.
- All situations are different; once all staff and pupils are safely inside, school leaders will conduct an ongoing and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the Local Authority and Emergency Services and changing circumstances.
- Emergency Services will advise as to the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

FULL LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

Alert to staff

Once the Head or Deputy Head has decided to instigate a full lockdown, they will:

1. Sound the air raid siren located in the red fire safety cabinet in the front entrance hall.
2. Contact the Emergency Services, the Local Authority and Exeter School operations team.

Immediate action

- Office staff will ensure they are in a safe space which will allow for communication (this could be the Head's office or other rooms as appropriate).
- All pupils and staff gather immediately on the stage area at the front of the school hall where there are no overlooking windows or external doors.
- The Head and identified staff will walk through the school and ensure that all external doors are closed and locked. All of the doors, once locked, cannot be opened from the outside. The front gates will also be closed to prevent access to the school site.
- Classroom windows and doors will be closed, any blinds drawn and lights turned off.
- Pupils will sit together with staff, quietly and out of sight as much as possible.
- Teachers will do a head count of the pupils in their class. If this suggests that not all are accounted for, take a register. The Head and Emergency Services should be made aware of any pupil not accounted for. Staff should not search for a missing pupil unless it is certain where the pupil is, the location is nearby and there is no apparent risk in that vicinity.
- Staff should avoid making unnecessary calls to the office as this could delay more vital communication.
- School remains in full lockdown until it is lifted or downgraded to a partial lockdown by a member of the leadership team.
- At any point during the lockdown, the fire alarm may sound, which is a cue to evacuate the building. All staff and pupils must make their way to the normal evacuation point on the tennis court.

Communication between parents and school

- This policy will be on the school website and parents will be signposted to this information periodically in routine communication such as newsletters.

- In the event of a full lockdown, the incident or development will be communicated to parents as soon as is practicable. Parents will no doubt be concerned but regular communication of accurate information will help to alleviate undue anxiety.
- Office staff, once secure themselves and all other procedures outlined above complete, will send an email via iSAMS to parents stating:
The school has gone into full lockdown. This is because... Every effort is being taken to keep the children safe. During this period, the telephone system and entrances will be unmanned, external doors locked, and nobody allowed in or out of the school. Do not contact the school as this will tie up emergency telephone communications. Do not come to the school as your child cannot be released to you. Wait for the school to contact you when it is safe to come and collect your children.
- The school site may or may not be cordoned off by Emergency Services depending on the severity of the incident that has triggered the lockdown.