

8 October 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Lockdown Procedure

At Stour Valley Community School, it is important that we put emergency procedures in place and plan even for those events that are very unlikely to occur. As part of this, we have our safety procedure in the event of it being necessary to lockdown the school.

I am writing to let you know that we will be practicing this procedure on Friday 17 October 2025.

A lockdown procedure is a standard health and safety procedure, similar to a fire drill. Our lockdown procedure would be used when there is a threat to the safety of our students, staff and others in the school, and when it is safer for everyone to remain in school rather than evacuate. The aim is to keep people safe by confining them to a secure place of safety.

Situations where our lockdown procedure may be used include:

- A potentially dangerous person or animal on the school site
- A disturbance or dangerous situation in the local community that could affect the school
- A nearby chemical incident or other risk of air pollution
- An incident related to terrorism

In the event of an emergency lockdown in school, the emergency services will be immediately contacted. Students need to be aware of the following process:

- Students will be notified of an emergency lockdown via a sound alert, this is a specific alarm sound that differs from a fire alarm sound
- Students will remain in their classroom during lesson time. If a lockdown takes place during break or lunch then students will be sent to their registration class with their form tutor. Staff will secure the classroom and carry out safety checks
- Students will hide by sitting on the floor under desks away from windows, they will be supported by their teacher and any other members of staff in the room such as Learning Support Assistants. They will need to remain calm and silent so as not to attract attention to the class
- We will make sure all students are safe and the room is secure, e.g. securing doors or windows and drawing blinds

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will declare the end of the lockdown and will inform staff. Students will then be directed to their form room to be registered by their form tutor.

Instructions for parents and carers in the event of a security lockdown

A lockdown procedure is only successful when all parties are clear on the steps to follow. As parents and carers if you could reinforce with your child(ren) the importance of following procedures in these very rare circumstances that would be beneficial. Equally it is very important that you are clear on how to support as best as possible in the emergency event:

- Parents and carers will be informed that the school is in lockdown, via our communication platforms including EduLink, school website and our social media platforms
- Parents and carers should not attempt to call or come to the school site at this time, this may hinder our efforts to contact and work with the emergency services. It will also take resources away from being able to deal with students and staff on site
- Parents and carers should not discuss the event on social media, as this may spread false information and create panic which we do not want to create. We want to avoid any speculation being created
- Students will be instructed not to use mobile phones during a lockdown, therefore, parents and carers should not be alarmed if their child does not answer their phone
- In the event that a lockdown continues beyond school hours, then you will be informed about any changes to collection arrangements via the same communication methods of EduLink, school website and our social media platforms

About our upcoming security lockdown drill

Prior to practising this procedure with students, each year group will have a dedicated lockdown procedures information assembly with time taken to talk to all the children about what will happen during the drill on the 17 October. We aim to reassure students that they are safe and will emphasise that practising procedures will reassure them on clear actions in the unlikely event of a real emergency. Your child will also have a morning registration to discuss the safety plan with their form tutor. They will hear the alarm sound and have the opportunity to ask any questions directly to their tutor.

I must emphasise again that this is simply a drill, so that in the very unlikely event of such a situation in the future, our students and staff are fully prepared.

If you or your child have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact their form tutor or relevant year leader.

Yours faithfully

Mrs A Jamieson
Assistant Headteacher and Safeguarding Lead

