

**CITY OF ROCHESTER SCHOOL**  
**School Lock Down Policy**

*This policy, which applies to the whole school, and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office.*

**Applies to:**

Trustees, staff, volunteers, agencies, organisations, and other stakeholders that the City of Rochester School work with, so they are aware of the procedures we follow to minimise the risk of harm to pupils and staff in a situation where hazards make it necessary to place the school into a state of lock down.

**Related documents:**

- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

**Monitoring and Review:**

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headteacher or nominated senior leadership representative in accordance with their responsibilities within the school. Amendments will be approved in the first instance by the headteacher before review and sanction by the trustees.

Signed:

Date Reviewed: November 2023  
Date of Next Review: November 2024  
Version No. 2



Alicja Emmett  
Headteacher

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## 1 Introduction:

As part of our Safeguarding and Health & Safety policies and procedures the school has implemented a lock down procedure.

On the rare occasions it may be necessary to seal off the school so that it is not possible to enter the interior of the school. This will ensure that pupils, staff and visitors are safe in situations where there is a hazard in the school grounds or outside the school in the near vicinity.

A lock down is executed when there is a serious safety risk for the premises, for example a chemical spillage, proximity of dangerous animals or attempted access by unauthorised person's intent in causing harm/damage.

## 2 Notification of Lock Down

Staff will be notified that lock down procedures are to be taken immediately- by the codeword "Soteria" being announced three times over the radio on channels 4, 5, 6 and 16. All staff must then turn their radios to channel 7 for any further instructions.

## 3 Procedure

Follow the CLOSE procedure

- Close all windows and doors
- Lock up
- Out of sight & minimise movement
- Stay silent and avoid drawing attention
- Endure - Be aware you may be in lock down for some time.

The process will be activated and the children will be ushered into the school building as quickly as possible and the outer doors locked. Gates will be locked if it is possible to remain safe.

Depending on the nature of the lock down, the children will remain in the room they are in and the staff will ensure the windows and doors are locked and blinds are closed. The children need to be positioned away from possible sightlines from external windows/doors. Lights, smart boards and computer monitors to be turned off where ever safe to do so.

Classrooms and offices will have a "lockdown box" which will need to be grabbed and actioned in the event of a lockdown, in which will be kept:

- Radio earpiece for silent running of radios
- Door wedges to secure doors if required
- Activities for pupils
- Social story
- Spare paper and blutack to cover door glass

Mobile phones are to be put on silent mode.

Radios to be tuned to channel 7 and either volume turned down low or an earpiece to be used. Any additional radios to be turned off.

Children or staff not in class for any reason will proceed back to the class as soon as possible if safe to do so. All visitors must enter a classroom and must not remain in intervention rooms or corridors. If practicable staff should notify the Admin team if any children are not accounted for.

### **NO ONE SHOULD MOVE ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Staff need to support the children to keep them calm and quiet. It may be appropriate to read stories to the children or for them to silently read to themselves. The concept of 'get down and read' will be adopted so that children sit on the floor and remain silent.

Staff will remain in lock down until informed by key staff in person that there is an all clear by using the phrase "Soteria Iterum". If a member of staff announces "All clear" this is to be taken as there being an imminent threat and the all clear is being given by coercion.

#### **4 Staff Roles:**

1. School Business and Front Office Staff need to ensure blinds are closed and where safe to do so that the front door is shut, preferably locked if safe to do so, office doors are shut, preferably locked, gates are locked electronically, close the doors to reception so that the electronic locks engage and police called if necessary. Staff should follow the CLOSE procedure and find a space in the office out of sight to remain.
2. Headteacher makes announcement over the radios on channels 4, 5, 6 and 16 using code word "Soteria" (Office Manager in her absence) before vacating the headteachers office and moving to the reception or SLT offices if safe to do so.
3. Deputy Head (Phase Leaders in her absences) ensure back door is shut and locked if safe to do so before following the CLOSE procedure and finding a space in the offices or classrooms out of sight to remain. The deputy head (or Phase Leaders) will ensure those offsite are aware that the school has entered lockdown procedures and when it is safe to return.
4. Caretaker or assistants (GL, SB, BO) to ensure back door in primary corridor locked as long as safe to do so before heading to the nearest classroom or office and following the CLOSE procedure.
5. Individual teachers/ LSS, please lock/close classroom doors and windows. Nearest adult to check exit doors. In classrooms and offices the radio earpiece should be given to the most senior staff member or appointed person and plugged into the radio on channel 7, all other radios to be switched off so as not to give away the position of staff or pupils.
6. If you are not in your classroom or designated office, please head towards the nearest classroom or office before following the CLOSE procedure. On route please close all doors behind you where safe to do so. DO NOT try to get back to your own class or office.  
If the room you are trying to enter is already secured please use the repeated phrase "Soteria, Soteria, Soteria" to let people know that you wish to enter and that it is safe to do so, alternatively find the next available room to secure within.
7. All classrooms and pupil areas have now been fitted with the new door and thumb locks to make locking down even simpler. All level 1 key holders will be able to open any level 1 door in the building, level 2 holders will be able to open both level 1 and level 2 doors and level 3 keyholders will be able to open/lock all doors. Please ensure that your keys are not left lying around during a lockdown as this could potentially provide trespassers with a way to enter locked down areas.

#### **5 Contacting the Police**

Kent Police – Operation Chalkboard: (for school trespass incidents)

The School Business Manager and front office staff are responsible for contacting the police if required. They should contact Kent police on 999 and quote Op Chalkboard in the following circumstances:

- There are trespasses on school grounds who are posing a serious threat to pupils, staff, or parents.
- There are visitors to the school who are or are perceived to be posing a threat to pupils, staff, or parents.
- Any other incident occurs whereby there is an immediate risk to the physical safety of any person legitimately on school premises.

The school should provide the following information wherever possible:

- Descriptions of offenders and identities if known.
- Details of any weapons being carried.
- Details of the location of the suspects or direction of travel.
- Details of any person requiring medical attention.

If the above criteria are not met and it is not an emergency, the school are still encouraged to report the matter to Kent police using 101. Kent police take all matters seriously and, want to work closely with partners to tackle issues being experienced.

## **6 Communicating with Parents/carers:**

Should a Lockdown occur, it is advised that developments are communicated to parents / carers as soon as is practicable and in some cases in agreement with the emergency services and the most senior member of City of Rochester School staff overseeing the incident.

Parents will be naturally be concerned, anxious and all accurate information releases will assist to alleviate undue anxiety. The school's main priority is the safety and welfare of its pupils, and dealing with the immediate situation. However, we will endeavour to ensure that parents / carers are given enough information to enable them to understand the potential outcome and when possible time frames so that they:

- Are reassured that the school / emergency services understands their concern for their child's welfare, and that everything possible is being completed to ensure their safety
- Refrain from directly calling the school's office. Calling the school will tie up telephone lines that will be required to be used by the responsible person and the emergency services.
- DO NOT initially attend the school. This may interfere with the emergency provider's access / investigation and may put themselves and others in danger.
- Wait patiently until a safe and satisfactory outcome has been achieved and agreed by all parties, where a designated safe area will be identified for the safe handing over of the pupils to their parents / carers.

During the initial "breaking news" of the incident it is vital that all parents/carers are reassured regarding the welfare and safety to their children is paramount and that the matter is being dealt with by the emergency services and City of Rochester School jointly to resolve the matter as soon as possible with little impact to the pupils and the wider community. However it must also be stressed that at this time "the school is in a full lockdown procedure. During this period the switchboard and entrances will be un-manned, external doors will be locked and no person is allowed in or out of the premises until further notice."

A letter to parents/carers will be sent home on the nearest possible day following any serious incident to inform parents/carers of the context of the lock down and to encourage parents/carers to reinforce with their children the importance of following procedures in these very rare circumstances.

## **7 Lock Down Drills:**

Lock Down practices will take place at least three times a year but potentially even more regularly depending on when new pupils join the school, to ensure everyone know exactly what to do in such a situation. Monitoring of practices will take place and staff debriefed for positive reinforcement or to identify required improvements.

## **8 Monitoring:**

Compliance with the policies and procedures laid down in this document will be monitored by the Company Secretary reporting to the trustees. The trustees are responsible for the monitoring, revision and updating of this document on an annual basis or sooner if the need arises.

## **9 Equality Impact Assessment:**

This document forms part of City of Rochester School's commitment to create a positive culture of respect for all staff and service users. The intention is to identify, remove or minimise discriminatory practice in relation to the protected characteristics, as well as to promote positive practice and value the diversity of all individuals and communities. As part of its development this document and its impact on equality has been analysed and no detriment identified.