

28th June 2019

**Parents/Guardians of
TQEA Students**

Dear Parents/Guardians

TQEA Emergency Lockdown Procedure

At TQEA we take safeguarding and the safety of students, staff and visitors very seriously. It is important that we continue to review all our procedures, taking into account even those events that are highly unlikely to occur. As part of this process, we have in place a procedure called "lockdown".

What is a lockdown and when would we carry it out?

A lockdown procedure is similar to a fire drill, which all schools and businesses around the country implement as a standard health & safety procedure.

Our lockdown procedure would be used when there is a threat to the safety of students, staff and others in the school, and only when it is safer for everyone to remain in school than to evacuate. The aim is to keep individuals safe by minimizing movement and maintaining a calm approach.

Situations where our lockdown procedure may be used might 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 (i.e. a nearby chemical incident or other risk of air pollution)
- Any other incident which could be described as a major threat.

Our lockdown procedure

Should there be a direct threat to the school and/or a person or persons, the following will occur:

- The Principal or Deputy Principal will contact the emergency services and assemble our designated team
- The designated team will sound a continuous siren for 10 seconds on all floors
- The caretaker will set the student entrance to exit only and the receptionist will ensure both front doors are set to exit only.
- All students will remain in their classrooms or return immediately to their classroom or a safe place
- All teaching/support staff will remain with students and admin/caretaking staff will remain in their offices
- Teaching staff will retake the register to ensure all students are accounted for and help students remain calm
- Students taking part in PE will be led into the building by their teacher to the main school hall

- If there is an exam underway, students will be led from the sports hall to the dance studio by the invigilators (during this time, students must not communicate with each other)
- Once PE students and/or exam students are in the building, the caretaker will lock the side entrance.
- Once the building is in lockdown, the designated team and the Principal/Deputy Principal will remain on the corridors
- All persons in the building will remain in their room, away from windows (blinds closed) and with door shut, until further instructions are given
- If the school needs to evacuate we will go directly to Racemeadow Primary School
- During lock-down, there should be no unauthorised communication with any persons outside of the building as this could cause confusion and obstruct the response of the emergency services. Teaching staff will collect in students' mobile phones until the end of lock-down when they will be returned to students.
- The School Emergency Response Team will communicate directly with the Emergency Services and will, in a timely and appropriate way, message parents and carers about the incident and give reassurance that the lockdown procedure has been deployed
- Restricting external communication will help to reduce alarm among students, parents and the community. The physical and mental welfare of students and staff is of the utmost importance in the event of an incident.

Instructions for parents in the event of a lockdown

- The school will inform parents and carers that the school is in lockdown via the school's website and/or message/ text at the earliest possible opportunity
- We would ask that parents do not attempt to call or come to the school, as this may interrupt the school's efforts to work with the Emergency Services
- We would ask that parents do not post anything on any form of social media so as to avoid incorrect information being shared
- Students will be asked not to use their mobile phones during a lockdown
- If the lockdown continues beyond school hours, parents and carers will be advised accordingly and revised arrangements regarding collection and travel home will be communicated as soon as possible

I must stress again these procedures are precautionary, in the unlikely event of such a situation arising. They ensure that our students and staff are fully prepared and are part of sensible contingency planning by the school. The procedure and any practices are not in response to any specific threat or intelligence that the school has received but are in place in line with central advice to all schools and businesses.

If you or your child have any further concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via the school office. You might find the attached Frequently Asked Questions helpful.

Yours sincerely



Mr Dan Watts
Principal
The Queen Elizabeth Academy

Lockdown - Frequently Asked Questions

How will I know if my child's school is on lockdown?

Once a lockdown is put into place, police and school senior leaders will work together to first ensure the safety of everyone on the school site. Once the situation has been stabilised, a text/message will be sent to parents to inform them that the school was placed on a lockdown, the nature of the incident, and about how long the lockdown was, or might be, in place.

Can I come to the school and take my child home?

During a lockdown, the school is a secure area. School staff and the local emergency services will work together to keep everyone safe, and no one is allowed to enter or exit the school. To ensure everyone's safety we ask that parents please refrain from coming to school during a lockdown. Once the all-clear is given, students and staff will be permitted to enter or exit the school again.

Why didn't I receive a phone message?

Each situation differs in the level of severity and how it impacts the school day and families. For instance, if a lockdown is put into place but is lifted after just a few minutes with minimal impact to the school day, the school may decide to send a message or letter home for information purposes. In other cases, the school may decide to send both an emergency message and a paper letter home. In a more severe lockdown, parents will receive multiple forms of communication. This could include multiple phone messages, as well as written letters after the fact. During a lockdown, parents are also encouraged to watch or listen to local media for updates. Parents: please ensure the school has your most up-to-date emergency contact information on hand. In the event of a lockdown or other emergency, school staff will use that contact information to contact you.