

Compassion

Courage

Cooperation



# Wittersham Church of England Lockdown Procedure 2025/2026

*We strive to cooperate and work alongside all members of our community to feel valued, nurtured, and empowered as they embark upon their journey to become the very best that God intended. Throughout their voyage of discovery with us, we ensure all children are provided with a rich curriculum and experiences that promote courage and a strong moral purpose underpinned by our Christian values, preparing them to become compassionate citizens within our rural community and the wider world.*

*'On a voyage of discovery; learning and growing together in the light of God.'*

## Wittersham Church of England Primary School Lockdown Procedure

### Purpose

This procedure outlines the actions that will be taken at Wittersham Church of England Primary School should a situation arise where it is safer for pupils, staff and visitors to remain inside the building rather than evacuate the site. Lockdown procedures form part of the school's wider safeguarding and emergency planning arrangements and are designed to ensure that the school community can respond quickly, calmly and effectively to serious incidents.

The safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff will always remain the school's highest priority. Lockdown procedures are designed to protect the school community from risks occurring either within the school grounds or in the immediate local area.

### When a Lockdown May Be Required

A lockdown may be implemented if there is a serious risk to the school community. Situations that could lead to a lockdown include an intruder entering the school site, a violent incident in the local community, police activity nearby, a credible threat made to the school, an attempted abduction, or the presence of a dangerous animal on site. A lockdown may also be required in response to environmental hazards such as a smoke plume, gas leak or chemical spill in the vicinity of the school.

In these circumstances, it may be safer to secure the buildings and keep pupils indoors until the risk has passed. The decision to initiate lockdown will normally be made by the Headteacher or the most senior member of staff present. However, any member of staff should contact emergency services immediately if there is a threat to life or a serious safety concern.

### Types of Lockdown

Two levels of lockdown may be used depending on the nature of the risk.

#### Partial Lockdown

A partial lockdown is used as a precautionary measure when there is a potential risk in the local area but no immediate danger within the school grounds. This may occur if police activity is taking place in the village, if a suspicious individual has been reported nearby, or if there is an environmental issue such as smoke or poor air quality.

During a partial lockdown all pupils, staff and visitors will return inside the building

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immediately. External gates and entrances will be secured and movement between outdoor areas will cease. Teaching and learning may continue as normal once everyone is safely indoors, but staff will remain alert and await further instruction from senior leaders.

Senior leaders will monitor the situation closely and liaise with relevant authorities if required.

### **Full Lockdown**

A full lockdown is implemented where there is a direct and immediate threat to the school community. This may include an intruder on the site, intelligence of a violent threat, or instruction from police to secure the school.

During a full lockdown staff must immediately secure the nearest safe room or classroom. Doors must be locked and windows secured where possible. Pupils should be moved away from doors and windows and kept out of sight. Blinds should be closed where available. Pupils should remain calm and quiet until further instructions are provided.

No member of staff or pupil should leave a secure room unless directed by senior leaders or emergency services.

### **Immediate Staff Actions**

When a lockdown is announced, staff must act immediately to ensure the safety of pupils.

If pupils are outside on the playground, field or in the outdoor learning areas they must be brought inside immediately using the nearest safe entrance. This may include classroom doors, hall entrances or the Orchard nurture space.

Classroom doors must be closed and locked where possible. Windows should be secured and blinds closed if appropriate. Pupils should be moved away from doors and windows and kept low and quiet. Staff should take a register where it is safe to do so and reassure pupils to maintain a calm environment.

Mobile phones should be silenced and unnecessary communication with the school office should be avoided to ensure lines remain available for emergency services.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

The Headteacher, Stella Coulson, will normally coordinate the school's response in the event of a lockdown. The Headteacher is responsible for assessing the situation, initiating the lockdown where necessary, and ensuring that appropriate safeguarding measures are implemented to protect pupils, staff and visitors. This includes contacting the emergency services where required, communicating instructions clearly to staff, and overseeing the overall management of the incident.

In the absence of the Headteacher, the Assistant Headteacher, Lynsey Scott, will assume responsibility for coordinating the school's response. The Assistant Headteacher will support communication across the school, ensure that lockdown procedures are followed correctly, and maintain contact with the Headteacher and emergency services where appropriate.

The SENCo, Carly Catt, will support the coordination of provision for pupils with additional needs. This includes ensuring that pupils with SEND or specific medical needs are supported appropriately during a lockdown and that any Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans are considered where relevant.

The Office Manager, Caroline Penn, will support communication with emergency services and ensure that key information is relayed to senior leaders. The office team will assist with internal communication across the school and will support the recording of key events and timelines during the incident.

The Finance Manager, Lynda Crabtree, will support operational coordination where required and assist the office team with communication and administrative support during the incident.

The Site Manager, Dean Hawkins, will support the securing of the school site. This includes checking that entrances and gates are secured where it is safe to do so, assisting with communication via walkie-talkies where appropriate, and supporting senior leaders in ensuring that the school premises are secure.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring the immediate safety of pupils in their care. This includes securing the classroom or nearest safe space, ensuring pupils remain calm and quiet, taking a register where possible, and following instructions from senior leaders.

Support staff will assist in securing entrances where it is safe to do so and will support the supervision and reassurance of pupils during the lockdown. All staff must remain in their secure location until further instructions are given by senior leaders or emergency

services.

All staff share responsibility for maintaining a calm environment, following the school's procedures, and prioritising the safety and wellbeing of pupils throughout the incident.

### **Specific Site Guidance for Wittersham**

During a lockdown the following site areas must be secured as quickly and safely as possible to ensure that all pupils, staff and visitors remain protected within the school buildings.

The main school entrance and office entrance should be locked immediately by office staff or a member of the senior leadership team. External doors leading into the main school building should also be checked and secured where this can be done safely.

Playground gates and other access points to the site should be secured where it is safe to do so. Pupils using the playground, field or outdoor learning spaces should enter the nearest building immediately using the closest safe entrance.

If pupils are on the playground, they should be brought into their nearest classroom or internal space. If pupils are on the school field they should return to the main school building using the nearest entrance.

The school hall may be used as a secure space if pupils are nearby when lockdown is announced. Staff supervising lunch, assemblies or other hall-based activities should immediately secure the hall doors and move pupils away from windows and external doors while maintaining a calm and quiet environment.

The Orchard nurture provision should secure its internal doors and follow the same lockdown procedures as the main school building. Pupils should be kept away from windows and external doors until the all-clear is given.

The mobile classroom and the Oast provision should follow the same lockdown procedures as the main building. Staff working in these areas should secure doors and windows immediately and ensure pupils remain inside the classroom space. If pupils are outside near these buildings, they should enter the nearest safe room immediately.

Staff supervising Forest School or outdoor learning activities must assess the situation immediately and return pupils to the main school building as quickly and safely as possible using the nearest safe route. If returning to the main building would increase risk, staff should move pupils to the nearest secure building or safe enclosed space and await further instructions from senior leaders.

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Kitchen staff must secure the kitchen area by closing and locking any external doors where possible. The kitchen hatch should be closed and secured immediately to prevent access between the hall and kitchen areas. Kitchen staff should remain inside the kitchen area or move into the nearest secure internal space depending on the nature of the incident.

Walkie-talkies will be used by senior leaders and support staff to communicate key updates during a lockdown. Internal telephones may also be used where appropriate. Staff should avoid unnecessary communication with the school office so that lines remain available for emergency services.

### **Pupils with Additional Needs**

Staff must ensure that pupils with SEND, medical needs or mobility difficulties are supported appropriately during a lockdown. The safety and wellbeing of these pupils must remain a priority and staff should ensure that they remain supervised and reassured throughout the incident.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) and individual care plans should be followed where relevant to ensure that pupils receive the appropriate support they require. Staff working directly with these pupils should use their professional judgement to determine the safest location within the classroom or building and ensure that pupils are positioned away from doors and windows where possible.

The SENCo, Carly Catt, will support the coordination of provision for pupils with additional needs during a lockdown where possible. This may include advising staff on individual pupil needs, ensuring that pupils with SEND or medical requirements are supported appropriately, and assisting with communication between staff where necessary.

Teaching assistants and support staff working with pupils who have additional needs must remain with those pupils throughout the lockdown and ensure that they feel safe and supported. Where pupils may find the situation distressing or confusing, staff should use calm reassurance and familiar strategies to help regulate and support them.

Following a lockdown, the SENCo will support staff in identifying any pupils who may require additional emotional support or reassurance as a result of the incident and will work with staff to ensure appropriate follow-up support is provided.

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**Communication with Parents**

Parents and carers will be informed as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so following the initiation of a lockdown. Communication with families will take place through the school's Class Dojo communication platform, which is the school's primary platform for sharing urgent updates with parents and carers.

During a lockdown, parents and carers should not come to the school site, as this may interfere with emergency services or place additional people at risk. It is important that access routes to the school remain clear and that staff are able to focus on ensuring the safety of pupils and responding appropriately to the situation.

Updates will be shared through Class Dojo by the Headteacher, Stella Coulson, or a designated member of the senior leadership team once accurate information is available and it is safe to do so. Messages will aim to reassure families, provide clear instructions where necessary, and confirm when the situation has been resolved.

Parents will also be informed through Class Dojo when lockdown drills are planned or have taken place so that families are aware that the school regularly practises its emergency procedures. In the event of an actual lockdown, parents will be updated through Class Dojo as soon as it is safe to do so and once accurate information can be shared.

**Ending a Lockdown**

A lockdown will only be lifted once it has been confirmed that the threat has passed. This decision will normally be made in consultation with emergency services where they are involved.

When it is safe to do so the message:

**"Lockdown Ended – All Clear"**

will be communicated to staff.

Registers will then be checked to ensure all pupils and staff are accounted for. Following the incident, staff will meet to review the response and identify any lessons learned.

**Conclusion and Review**

Wittersham Church of England Primary School is committed to maintaining a safe, secure and nurturing environment for all pupils, staff and visitors. While situations requiring a lockdown are extremely rare, it is important that clear procedures are in place so that the school community can respond calmly, quickly and effectively should the need arise. Through clear communication, staff training and regular practice, the school aims to ensure that all members of staff understand their roles and responsibilities in maintaining the safety of pupils.

The lockdown procedure forms part of the school's wider safeguarding, health and safety and emergency planning arrangements. All staff are expected to familiarise themselves with this policy and follow the guidance set out within it. Pupils will be supported to understand lockdown procedures in an age-appropriate manner so that they are able to respond safely and calmly during drills or real incidents.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, Stella Coulson, in consultation with the senior leadership team and site management team. The policy may also be reviewed earlier if there are significant changes to guidance, staffing, school procedures or the physical layout of the school site.

Lockdown procedures will be practised periodically with staff and pupils to ensure familiarity and confidence in responding to an emergency. Following any drill or actual lockdown event, the school will reflect on the effectiveness of the response and make any necessary improvements to procedures.

The governing body will receive oversight of the policy as part of the school's safeguarding and health and safety responsibilities to ensure that procedures remain robust, appropriate and in line with current guidance.

## **Wittersham Church of England Primary School**

### **Staff Lockdown Guidance (Quick Reference)**

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#### **Purpose**

A lockdown may be used when it is safer for pupils, staff and visitors to remain inside the building rather than evacuate the site. The priority during any lockdown situation is the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff.

#### **Lockdown Signal**

The lockdown signal will be announced as:

**LOCKDOWN, LOCKDOWN, LOCKDOWN**

This may be communicated via:

- internal phone system
- walkie-talkies
- direct verbal instruction

The lockdown will only end when the message is given:

**LOCKDOWN ENDED – ALL CLEAR**

#### **Immediate Staff Actions**

If a lockdown is announced:

- Bring pupils inside immediately if they are on the playground, field or outdoor learning areas
- Enter the nearest safe room or classroom
- Close and lock doors immediately
- Close windows and blinds where available
- Move pupils away from doors and windows
- Keep pupils low, calm and quiet
- Take a register if it is safe to do so

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- Silence mobile phones
- Await further instructions from SLT or emergency services

Do not open the door for anyone unless instructed by SLT or police.

**If You Are Outside**

If you are supervising pupils outside:

- Bring pupils inside immediately using the nearest safe entrance
- This may include classroom doors, hall entrances or the Orchard building
- If returning to the main building is not safe, move pupils to the nearest secure space and await instructions

**Site-Specific Guidance**

The following areas must be secured during a lockdown:

**Main Entrance**

Office staff or SLT will secure the main school entrance and office doors.

**Playground and Field**

Pupils should enter the nearest building immediately.

**Hall**

If pupils are in the hall during assemblies or lunch, staff must secure doors and move pupils away from windows.

**Orchard Provision**

Orchard staff follow the same lockdown procedures as the main school building.

**Mobile Classroom and Oast**

Doors and windows must be secured immediately and pupils remain inside.

**Forest School / Outdoor Learning**

Staff should return pupils to the main building using the safest route possible.

**Kitchen Area**

Kitchen staff must close and secure the kitchen hatch and lock external kitchen doors where possible.

**Communication**

Senior leaders and support staff will use walkie-talkies and internal phones to

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communicate updates.

### **Leadership and Coordination**

Headteacher – Stella Coulson

Coordinates the school response and contacts emergency services if required.

Assistant Headteacher – Lynsey Scott

Supports coordination and communication across the school.

SENCo – Carly Catt

Ensures pupils with SEND or additional needs are supported.

Office Manager – Caroline Penn

Supports communication and emergency service contact.

Finance Manager – Lynda Crabtree

Supports operational coordination where required.

Site Manager – Dean Hawkins

Supports securing entrances and gates and maintaining site safety.

### **Supporting Pupils**

- Keep pupils calm and reassured
- Follow PEEPs or care plans where relevant
- Ensure pupils with SEND remain supported and supervised

### **Communication with Parents**

Parents will be informed through Class Dojo once it is safe to do so.

Parents should not come to the school during a lockdown as this may interfere with emergency services.

### **After a Lockdown**

Once the all-clear has been given:

- Registers will be checked
- Staff will follow instructions from SLT
- Pupils will be reassured and supported

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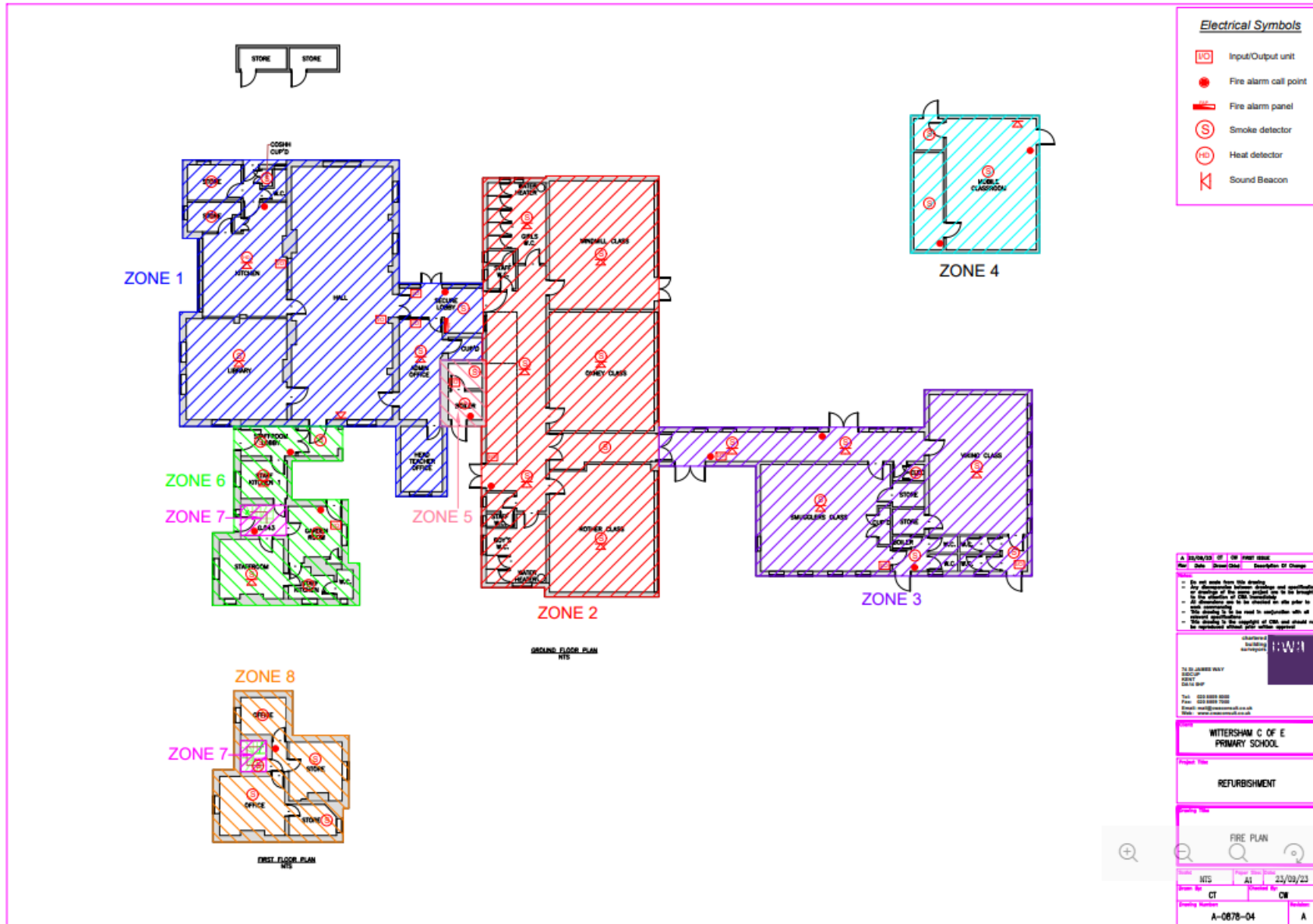
- A review of procedures will take place

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