



St Helens Primary School

Invacuation and LockdownPolicy

Reviewed by: FGB

On: July 2025

Next review due: July 2026

Chair of Governors: Matthew Searle

Signature: Matthew Searle

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Matthew Searle', is written below the 'Signature:' label. The signature is stylized with a long horizontal stroke and a vertical line crossing it.

St Helens Primary School

Invacuation / Lockdown Policy and Procedures

Rationale

As part of our health and safety policies and procedures, the school has an invacuation policy. We prefer the term 'invacuation' to 'lockdown' to avoid unnecessary upset and confusion around pandemic lockdowns.

On very rare occasions, it may be necessary to seal off the school so that it cannot be entered from the outside. 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.

An invacuation is implemented when there are serious security risks on the premises due to, for example, nearby chemical spillage, proximity of dangerous dogs, serious weather conditions or attempted access by unauthorised person's intent on causing harm or damage.

NaCTSO (National Counter Terrorism Security Office) Guidance.

In January 2016, NaCTSO provided the following advice to leaders of schools and other educational establishments for reviewing protective security:

Most bomb threats are made over the phone and the overwhelming majority are hoaxes made with the intent of causing alarm and disruption. Any hoax is a crime and no matter how ridiculous or unconvincing must be reported to the police. Be alert, but not alarmed! On receipt of a bomb threat dial 999 and police will respond.

You should always consider their advice before a decision is made to close or evacuate.

Notification of invacuation

Staff will be notified that invacuation procedures are to immediately take place on hearing a specific signal on the school's fire alarm bells, consisting of a 3 second ring, followed by a 3 second silence, repeated.

Procedures on hearing Invacuation Alarm

Office staff are to make sure the front entrance door, main gates, windows in the office, staff room and toilets are all locked and blinds drawn..

Headteacher will ensure other external doors and windows are locked in the main building. Pioneers teachers will ensure all mobile doors and windows are locked.

Classroom staff are to ensure all doors and windows are locked and blinds drawn in the rooms they are in.

Office staff to inform the catering staff of the nature of the emergency. The catering staff are to remain in the kitchen area.

Headteacher will contact the police.

Front gate and entrance door to be opened by the Headteacher only.

Children Action

The Invacuation Alarm will activate a process of children being ushered into the school buildings if on the playground or in the outdoor EYFS area as quickly as possible.

Members of staff on duty to do a sweep of the outdoor areas before coming into school and securing the outside doors.

Children and staff will remain in the room they are in, or in the nearest room. Staff will ensure windows, blinds, roof openings and doors are closed. Children to be positioned under tables where appropriate and away from windows and doors. Lights, smart boards and computer monitors to be turned off. Staff should sit on a chair, on the floor or under a table.

The Headteacher will decide if children and staff would be safer in the hall or in a particular classroom depending on the emergency situation.

A roll call will be taken using the fire registers once in positions.

Once the police are on site the School Administrator will hand out the registers.

Children or staff not in class for any reason will proceed to the nearest occupied classroom and remain with that class, e.g. children using toilets when Invacuation Alarm sounds.

Headteacher to ensure all outside doors are secure and then base themselves in the school office.

Site Manager and any cooking staff base themselves in the kitchen / hall area.

NO ONE SHOULD MOVE ABOUT THE SCHOOL ONCE IN PLACE.

Staff to support children in keeping calm and quiet.

Staff remain in positions until informed by the headteacher in person that there is an all clear.

As soon as possible after the invacuation is at an end, teachers return to their base classroom and conduct a roll call and notify the office immediately of any pupils not accounted for.

Any visitors to remain with the staff member they are visiting. Unescorted visitors should head immediately to the nearest room with staff present and follow staff instructions.

STAFF/VISITORS CANNOT SIGN OUT OR LEAVE THE PREMISES DURING LOCK DOWN

Communication with Parents

If necessary parents will be notified as soon as it is practical to do so via the school SMS text system.

Depending on the type and severity of the incident, parents may be asked NOT to collect their children from school as it may put them and their child at risk.

Pupils will not be released to parents during an invacuation nor will parents be permitted to enter the school.

Parents will be instructed not to call school as this will tie up emergency lines.

If the end of the school day is extended due to the invacuation, parents will be notified and will receive information about the time and place pupils can be picked up from office staff or emergency services.

A letter to parents will be sent home as soon as possible following any serious incident to inform parents of the context of the invacuation and to encourage parents to reinforce with their children the importance of following these procedures in very rare circumstances.

Invacuation drills

Practices will take place a minimum of twice a year to ensure everyone knows exactly what to do in such a situation. Monitoring of practices will take place and be debriefed to staff so improvements can be made.

Parents will be informed of the upcoming drill in a half term, but not the exact time and date. This is to allow parents to reinforce the necessity of such drills but also manage fears. Invacuation drills should be as common, and as calm, as fire drills.

Letters advising about Invacuation Drills should include a copy of this policy, examples of possible scenarios, but be carefully worded to avoid escalating fears or paranoia. It should be emphasised that these procedures are an example of St Helens Primary being proactive against risks that could happen, although extremely unlikely, and not as a result of incidents elsewhere in the country.

Invacuation Drills will be co-ordinated by the Headteacher, Safeguarding Governor and DDSL. Drills can include scenarios to improve response to differing situations.