



Richmond Hill School Lockdown and Emergency Policy

We aim to in all we do to -

‘Grow independence, build communication and believe we can achieve our personal goals’

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This is school policy	Yes

Richmond Hill School	Lockdown and Emergency Policy	
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Date	Review Date	Author	Nominated Governors
Sept 2026	Sept 2027	JC & JL	Fully Governing Body

Introduction & Rational

At Richmond Hill School, we support pupils with a wide range of disabilities, many of whom are on the autistic spectrum and may experience greater challenges with social understanding and communication. It is therefore essential that our lockdown policy is implemented consistently and thoughtfully to ensure the safety, physical well-being, and emotional security of all pupils and staff.

Lockdown procedures are designed as a measured and proportionate response to any internal or external incident that poses a potential threat to the safety of pupils, staff, or other site users. These procedures prioritise maintaining a safe environment while minimising disruption to the learning experience as much as possible.

Lockdown may be initiated in response to a variety of situations, including but not limited to:

- A reported incident or civil disturbance in the local community that could place staff and pupils at risk.
- The presence of an intruder on school premises posing a threat to safety.
- A bomb threat.

- A warning regarding local environmental hazards such as air pollution, smoke plumes, or gas clouds.
- A major fire nearby the school.

It is vital that all staff are fully familiar with the lockdown procedures to ensure swift, coordinated, and effective action when required.

Key Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure effective management of any lockdown situation, the following key roles are designated:

- **Lockdown Incident Controller (LIC):** Headteacher or designated Senior Leadership Team member, responsible for overall control and coordination of the lockdown incident.
- **Deputy Lockdown Incident Controller (DILC):** Acts on behalf of the LIC if they are not on site and may be delegated specific tasks by the LIC, Deputy Headteacher/Assistant Head Teacher.
- **Site Agent:** Responsible for securing all perimeter gates, external doors and access points promptly during lockdown. If not on site, a member of the administrative team will fulfil the role.
- **Office Manager / Administrative Staff:** Responsible for collating information from staff regarding pupil locations and any known threats and for communicating this information to the LIC.

Signals	
Signal for Partial Lockdown	A member of office staff as directed by: LIC - SLT or in their absence Phase leads Would signal 'Partial Lockdown' via the phone tannoy system/class walkie talkies. Office staff use air horn to alert any staff outside to return with pupils into the building.
Signal for Full Lockdown	A member of office staff as directed by: LIC - SLT or in their absence Phase leads Would signal 'Full Lockdown' via the phone tannoy system/class walkie talkies. Office staff use air horn to alert any staff outside to return with pupils into the building.
Signal for all-clear	Verbally via phone tannoy/class walkie talkies.

Partial Lockdown

Alert to staff: 'Partial Lockdown'

Initiated when the threat is outside the school grounds or as a precautionary measure, a partial lockdown enables the school to maintain a degree of normality while remaining prepared for any escalation. This may be triggered by a reported incident or civil disturbance in the local community that could potentially pose a risk to staff and pupils within the school. It may also be activated in response to warnings about environmental hazards, such as air pollution or toxic gas clouds.

Immediate action:

- All outside activity to cease immediately, pupils and staff return to the building. Staff will be alerted via office staff and the air horn.
- All staff and pupils will remain in the building and external doors and windows will be locked.
- Movement may be permitted within the building dependent upon circumstances, but this must be supervised by a member of staff.

All situations are different.

Once all staff and pupils are safely inside, senior staff will conduct an on-going and dynamic risk assessment based on advice from the Emergency Services. This can then be communicated to staff and pupils via class phone (tannoy)/walkie talkies.

'Partial lockdown' is a precautionary measure but puts the school in a state of readiness (whilst retaining a degree of normality) should the situation escalate.

In the event of an air pollution issue, air vents should be closed (where possible) as an additional precaution. Emergency Services will advise as to the best course of action in respect of the prevailing threat.

In the event of a child refusing to co-operate and return to the building during a lockdown then emergency physical intervention will be used to take the child to a designated safe space

Full Lockdown

Alert to staff: 'Full Lockdown'

Initiated when the threat is inside the school premises or when a partial lockdown escalates due to new information indicating a higher risk.

Immediate action:

- All outside activity to cease immediately, pupils and staff return to the building. Staff will be alerted via office staff and the air horn.
- All pupils return to a classroom or remain in the teaching area (if safe to do so). Close any doors in the corridor in passing.
- External doors should be locked. Classroom doors should be blocked – wedge or bolt.
- Windows are locked, blinds drawn and pupils encouraged to sit quietly out of sight where possible (e.g. under desks).
- Head count of pupils. Designated classroom leads can communicate lockdown with offices that all pupils are accounted for.
- At any point during the lockdown, if the fire alarm sounds this will signal a full evacuation as per fire alarm.

Lockdown Procedures During Off-site Activities

- In the event of a lockdown while off-site, staff and pupils will remain at the off-site location until it is safe to return to school or be collected.
- Where possible, groups will be directed to the Richmond Hill School site not affected by lockdown.
- If all school sites are in lockdown, groups will remain off-site, and parents will be informed when it is safe to collect pupils.

Communication during Lockdown

- Lockdown alerts will be initiated only by designated staff (usually office staff under the LIC/DLIC instruction) and communicated via:
 - Classroom telephones
 - Tannoy system
 - Walkie talkies
 - Air horns to alert staff and pupils outside the building
- Staff should keep communication lines open for essential updates during lockdown, using classroom telephones and walkie talkies.
- Unnecessary calls to the central office should be avoided to keep telephone lines free for urgent and emergency communication.
- The school will maintain ongoing contact with Emergency Services throughout the lockdown to receive advice and updates.
- Staff and pupils must remain in lockdown until it is officially lifted by the Lockdown Incident Controller (LIC), Deputy LIC or Emergency Services. The all-clear will be signalled via the tannoy or walkie talkies.

Lockdown		
Rooms most suitable for lockdown	All classes	Remain in own classroom
Communal Areas		
	Hall	Music room (West) Meeting room (East)
	Playground	Enter school by nearest door and remain in the building
	Expressive Arts Room	Remain in the room
	Cookery room	Remain in the room
	ICT room	Remain in the room
	East- break out rooms	Nearest classroom
	Soft play/light room	Remain in room – nearest phone Library – West Flamingo/ICT HQ – East
	Garden (West)	Enter school by the nearest door & join Emerald or Silver Class
	Jade, Teachers Lodge, Family Room (West)	Remain in the room
	The Nest and Phoenix Room (East)	The Nest (a phone is available)
	External classrooms	Remain in the room
Possible entrance points – all should be secured	External doors Reception	

	Staffroom Internal doors All windows
Corridors	Close doors if possible on returning to classrooms.
Communication	Class telephones & walkie talkies
Notes	If someone is taken hostage on the premises the school should seek to evacuate the site in a safe and ordered way.

Training and Lockdown Drills

- All staff, including temporary and agency workers, will receive training on lockdown procedures and their specific roles.
- The school will conduct lockdown drills at least once per year to ensure readiness and reduce anxiety in the event of a real lockdown.
- Table-top exercises will also be undertaken periodically to test procedures against various scenarios and incorporate lessons learned into the lockdown plan.
- Following drills or actual lockdowns, the lockdown plan will be reviewed and updated as necessary, with changes communicated to all staff.

Reporting and Review

- Any initiation of a full or partial lockdown outside of planned drills will be reported as a work-related near miss on AssessNET as soon as practicable after the event.
- A debrief will be conducted following any lockdown or drill to identify lessons learned and necessary amendments to the plan.
- The lockdown policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required by changes in legislation, local authority guidance or after an incident.
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Information for parents

The school recognises the importance of timely, clear and consistent communication with parents during a lockdown. Procedures for communicating with parents will be routinely shared through the school newsletter and website to ensure parents are well-informed in advance.

In the event of a lockdown, parents will be informed as soon as practicable, usually via ParentMail or other established communication channels. The message will include:

- Reassurance that the school understands parents' concerns for their child's welfare and is doing everything possible to ensure their safety.
- A clear request not to contact the school during the lockdown, as this could tie up telephone lines needed for Emergency Services and school communications.
- A request not to come to the school, as this could interfere with emergency operations and potentially place parents and others at risk.
- Instructions to wait for official communication from the school regarding when it is safe to collect their children or details about transport arrangements home.

Parents will be explicitly informed of the lockdown status with wording such as:

“The school is in a full lockdown situation. During this period, the switchboard and entrances will be unmanned, external doors locked, and no entry or exit permitted.”

The school will provide updates to parents as the situation develops, maintaining clear and transparent communication while prioritising the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff.

Emergency Services

It is important to keep lines of communication open with Emergency Services as they are best placed to offer advice as a situation unfolds. The school site may or may not be cordoned off by Emergency Services depending on the severity of the incident that has triggered the lockdown. Emergency Services will support the decisions of the Head Teacher regarding the timing of any communication to parents.

Site Evacuation

In a worst case scenario that we had to leave the sites arrangements have been made with local schools to support us.

West pupils would go through the gate on the field and would walk through the park to St Matthews. East site would then contact parents to collect pupils as a matter of priority from St Matthews.

East pupils would exit the school site via the gate in the carpark perpendicular to the double playground gates, leading onto the alleyway.

They will proceed to take all pupils to the back entrance of Wigmore school (alleyway off Warton Green) 2: Pre Agreed arrangements with Wigmore to use their field in the events of a major fire. Site lead will contact Wigmore school to inform them of the need to evacuate onto their school field.

West site office team will be informed and directed to contact all of East site's parents informing them to collect from Wigmore as a matter of priority.

Bomb threat

The threat of terrorist violence remains high and recent events have shown that such threats can easily arise from both terrorists and those with simple malicious intent. To counter this the school has in place a set of procedures for dealing with such threats. **See Appendix 2**

Martyn's Law and Counter-Terrorism Preparedness

In line with the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law), Richmond Hill School recognises the importance of maintaining robust security and emergency response plans. The school will:

- Ensure compliance with Martyn's Law requirements as applicable.
- Engage with local authority and national counter-terrorism guidance and training resources, including NaCTSO and Department for Education materials.
- Promote awareness and preparedness among staff for responding to potential terrorist threats.

Appendix 1

Initial Response Checklist (e.g. in response to intruder in the school grounds)	Tick / sign / Time
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1.	Office to activate the partial/full lockdown alarm.	
2.	Office to Dial 999.	
3.	All Staff - Ensure all pupils are inside the school building.	
4.	Site Staff - Lock / secure entrance points (e.g. doors, windows) to prevent the intruder entering the building. Use a wedge on the door if a lock is not available.	
5.	Ensure people take action to increase protection from attack: • Block access points (e.g. move furniture to obstruct doorways) • Sit on the floor, under tables or against a wall. • Keep out of sight. • Draw curtains / blinds. • Turn off lights. • Stay away from windows and doors. Teachers/ Class leads will be responsible for the class they are teaching when a lockdown is announced.	
6.	Ensure that pupils, staff and visitors are aware of an exit point in case an intruder does manage to gain access to the building.	
7.	If possible, lockdown offices, check for missing / injured pupils, staff and visitors. Once in lockdown mode, staff should notify Phase Leaders via the classroom telephones if someone is missing. Phase Leaders will relay information to Deputy Heads or SLT on site.	
8.	Remain inside until an all-clear has been given or unless told to evacuate by the emergency services.	
9.	Staff will be alerted to the activation of the plan through the classroom telephone tannoy/class walkie talkies.	
10.	If it is necessary to evacuate the building, the fire alarm will be sounded and a verbal message to evacuate will be sent via telephone tannoy/class walkie talkies.	
11.	Pupils will not be released to parents during a lockdown. Staff must not use mobile phones to communicate with anyone other than SLT during lockdown.	
12.	Groups that are off-site will be notified by the office when it is safe to return to the premises.	

Appendix 2 – Bomb Threat

Bomb threat checklist

Keep this document in one or more places where it can be grabbed in seconds by any member of staff receiving a bomb threat.

Remember:

- remain calm and keep the person in conversation if possible
- can you record the threat?
- can you get a colleague to immediately dial 999?

Write down the exact wording of the threat.

Additional questions to ask the caller

Question	Notes
Where exactly is the bomb?	
When is it going to explode?	
What does the bomb look like?	

Question	Notes
What kind of bomb is it, if known?	
How will it be detonated?	
What is your name?	
Are you part of a group, or acting alone?	

Call 999 and inform the police. Making a bomb threat is a crime.

Action and reporting information	Details
Inform a senior leader or security lead SLT on site	Headteacher – Hannah Cameron Deputy Heads – Jenny Cottam (West) or Terry Stevens (East). Assistant Heads – Angela Ospalak, Kerri Stenhouse or Emma Gildersleve. Phase Leaders
Incident code to alert staff to a bomb threat Currently via phone tannoy system and fire alarm sounded for whole school evacuation.	
Your name	

Details of threat	Notes
Date and time of threat	
Duration of threat	
The telephone number that received the call (if applicable)	

Details of the person who made the threat	Notes
Sex	☐ Male ☐ Female
Age (estimate)	
Nationality/Accent	
Threat language	☐ Well-spoken ☐ Irrational ☐ Taped ☐ Foul ☐ Incoherent
Caller's voice Call 999 and inform the police. Making a bomb threat is a crime.	☐ Calm ☐ Crying ☐ Clearing throat ☐ Angry ☐ Nasal ☐ Slurred ☐ Excited ☐ Stutter ☐ Disguised ☐ Slow ☐ Lisp ☐ Rapid ☐ Deep

Details of the person who made the threat	Notes
	☐ Laughter ☐ Hoarse ☐ Other.....
Is the caller's voice familiar (like who?)	
Any other details?	
Other sounds?	☐ Street noises ☐ House noises ☐ Animal noises ☐ Motor ☐ Clear ☐ Voices ☐ Static ☐ PA system ☐ Booth ☐ Music ☐ Factory ☐ Office ☐ Other.....