

# Thomas Johnson Lower School

## Invacuation and Lockdown Policy

Agreed October 2025

Reviewed October 2026

### Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to the following:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025
- Department for Education (DfE) (2014) *Fire safety in new and existing school buildings*
- DfE (2023) *School and college security*
- DfE (2022) *Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools*
- DfE (2023) *Emergency planning and response for education, childcare, and children's social care settings*
- DfE (2025) *Protective security and preparedness for education settings*

### Section 1: Invacuation

#### Purpose

To ensure the safety and security of all children, staff, and visitors by providing clear procedures for remaining safely inside the school buildings during an external threat or emergency.

#### Definition

Invacuation is the process of securing the school indoors to protect children and staff from an external hazard or threat, such as severe weather, a dangerous animal nearby, or an external security risk.

#### Procedures

##### 1. Triggering an Invacuation

- Invacuation will be initiated by the Headteacher or designated senior leader upon receiving credible information about an external threat.
- The school's invacuation signal will be communicated clearly via the use of a siren from a portable megaphone.

##### 2. Actions on Invacuation Signal

- All children and staff will immediately cease outdoor activities and return calmly and quickly to the nearest classroom or safe indoor area.
- External doors and windows will be secured and locked by staff.

- Children will be accounted for using class registers.
- Movement within the school will be restricted unless authorised by a senior leader.

### **3. During Invacuation**

- Children and staff should remain calm, quiet, and follow instructions.
- Staff will supervise and reassure children and maintain communication with the leadership team via mobile phones. *This is an exceptional use of mobile phones in the classroom as otherwise outlined in our staff handbook.*
- No one should leave the building until the “all clear” signal is given.

### **4. Communication**

- The leadership team will contact and liaise with emergency services as necessary.
- There is a panic alarm button located in the Reception classroom on the wall outside the kitchen.
- Parents will be informed of the situation as soon as safely possible via the school’s communication channels.
- If the incident was still ongoing at the end of the school day, and therefore impact upon parents/carers collecting their children, advice would be sought from emergency service personnel.

### **5. Ending Invacuation**

- The “all clear” signal will be given by the Headteacher or senior leader once it is safe to resume normal activities.
- A headcount will be conducted to ensure all children and staff are accounted for.

### **6. Training and Review**

- Regular invacuation drills will be conducted at least twice a year.
- This policy will be reviewed annually or following any invacuation incident.
- Following an occurrence necessitating the invacuation procedure, the following actions will be taken:
  - A follow up talk with staff members and pupils will be delivered by the headteacher.
  - Support will be sought where necessary, for example, from counselling services.
  - Parents and other stakeholders will be informed via letter.
  - The response to the crisis will be evaluated and procedures amended where necessary.

## **Section 2: Lockdown**

### **Purpose**

To protect children, staff, and visitors by securing the school internally during a serious security threat or intruder incident within or near the school premises.

### **Definition**

Lockdown is a procedure to safeguard children and staff by locking all internal and external doors and windows, and keeping everyone inside, away from danger.

### **Procedures**

#### **1. Triggering a Lockdown**

- Lockdown will be initiated by the Headteacher or designated senior leader upon receiving information about an immediate threat inside or near the school.
- The lockdown signal be communicated clearly via the use of a siren from a portable megaphone.
- The headteacher will take all factors into consideration when deciding whether to partially or fully lockdown the school. Where possible, advice will be sought from the emergency services
- The partial lockdown procedure is a precautionary measure but puts the school in a state of readiness should the situation escalate.
  - It will be used in the event of, but not limited to, the following:
    - A civil disturbance in the local community with the potential to pose a risk to the school.
  - The full lockdown procedure will be used in the event of, but not limited to, the following:
    - An intruder on the school site
    - The close proximity of a dangerous dog, or other animal, roaming loose

#### **2. Actions on Lockdown Signal**

- All children and staff will immediately move to the nearest safe room or classroom.
- Doors and windows will be locked and blinds drawn.
- Children should sit quietly out of sight from doors and windows.

#### **3. During Lockdown**

- Staff will keep children calm and quiet.
- No one is to leave their safe space until the “all clear” is given.
- Lines of communication between staff members will be kept open using mobile phones / emails. However, unnecessary calls to the school office will not be made as this could delay important communication.
- Children will not be released to parents during a full lockdown

#### **4. Communication**

- The leadership team will coordinate with emergency services.
- Parents will be informed as soon as it is safe to do so via Class Dojo.

#### **5. Ending Lockdown**

- The “all clear” will be given by the Headteacher or senior leader.

- A roll call will be conducted to ensure everyone's safety.

## 6. Training and Review

- Lockdown drills will be held at least annually.
- The policy will be reviewed annually or after any lockdown event.

In the event of a full lockdown, any incident or development will be communicated to parents as soon as is practicable.

Parents will be:

- given enough information about the situation and what will happen so they are reassured that the school understands their concerns and that it is doing everything possible to ensure children's (and staff) safety
- encouraged not to contact the school during a lockdown to ensure staff are free to deal with emergency services and another council senior management support
- advised not to come to the school site until the emergency declared closed as their presence may interfere with emergency services work and may even put themselves and others in danger
- informed when it is safe to pick up their children and where from

## Training and Exercise

Situations requiring a school lockdown to be activated are rare. Similar to fire safety, fires in school are not expected to occur but must be prepared to react expeditiously and effectively should the fire alarm sound; and as for fire safety, staff and pupils must be familiar and confident with the actions required during lockdown procedure activation.

To ensure the required level of confidence and familiarity in the school's lockdown arrangements, the following actions will be taken:

- a lockdown drill of both red and amber levels will be undertaken at least once a year
- all internal lockable doors will be identified, locking mechanisms tested and keys made available
- communication systems will be tested

## Section 3: Lockdown Contingency Planning – Duress and Coercion

### Purpose

The school recognises that during a serious security incident there may be circumstances where staff are placed **under duress or coercion** by an intruder or external threat. This section outlines contingency arrangements to ensure the safety of children and staff where normal lockdown procedures cannot be followed as intended.

### Duress Situations

A duress situation may include, but is not limited to:

- a member of staff being forced to unlock doors or provide access
- an intruder attempting to use a staff member to gain compliance
- situations where staff judgement indicates that strict lockdown procedures would increase immediate risk to life

In such circumstances, **the safety of children and staff takes precedence**, and staff are expected to use their professional judgement to reduce harm.

### Contingency Actions Under Duress

Where a staff member believes they are acting under duress:

- they should comply where refusal may place themselves or others at immediate risk
- where possible, they should discreetly alert leadership or emergency services using available communication methods
- classrooms and safe spaces should continue lockdown procedures where safe to do so
- staff should avoid confrontation and prioritise calm, non-provocative responses

The school acknowledges that **lockdown procedures may not always be fully achievable** under duress and staff will be supported in decisions made in good faith during such incidents.

### Post-Incident Response

Following any incident involving duress:

- the incident will be reported to emergency services and recorded as a safeguarding concern
- a debrief will be conducted with affected staff
- support will be offered, including access to wellbeing or counselling services
- procedures and training will be reviewed and updated where necessary

## **Section 4: Protective Security and Preparedness – Martyn’s Law**

### **Purpose**

Thomas Johnson Lower School is committed to strengthening protective security and preparedness in line with the **Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn’s Law)**. The school recognises its duty to take proportionate steps to reduce the risk of harm from terrorism and other serious acts of violence.

### **Proportionate Security Measures**

In accordance with Martyn’s Law, the school will:

- assess risks associated with its premises and activities
- maintain appropriate evacuation and lockdown procedures
- ensure physical security measures are proportionate to the school’s size, layout, and risk profile
- regularly review access control, perimeter security, and visitor management arrangements

### **Training and Awareness**

The school will ensure that:

- staff receive training appropriate to their role on recognising and responding to security threats
- leadership staff are familiar with emergency decision-making and liaison with emergency services
- evacuation and lockdown procedures are practised through regular drills

### **Planning and Continuous Improvement**

To support compliance with Martyn’s Law, the school will:

- keep emergency and security plans under regular review
- consider lessons learned from drills, incidents, and national guidance
- work with the local authority and emergency services where appropriate
- ensure that protective security planning is embedded within wider safeguarding and health and safety arrangements