



13th October 2016

Dear Parents/Carers,

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE

The Department for Education (DfE) recommends that schools create and maintain an emergency plan and be ready to deal with the sort of emergencies that no one really wants to think about – the situation where the children and staff are endangered by the threat of deliberate harm. In emergency planning terms, this is called lockdown, a description that will be used throughout this letter.

The advice from the DfE reminds us “planning for emergencies can save lives. It can prevent an incident getting worse, provide confidence to staff, governors, parents, carers and pupils and enhance your school’s reputation as a safe place to learn and work. Plans which deal with the consequences of large-scale emergencies also help staff to deal with the smaller (but nevertheless potentially distressing) incidents that schools can experience on a regular basis”.

The purpose of a lockdown is to prevent an intruder or other threat outside the school from causing harm to pupils and staff. It means that the entrances to the school must be secured in an effort to prevent any threat entering, and staff and pupils must find a suitable place to protect themselves.

In the case of a fire or similar emergency the children and staff are taught how to leave the building quietly and safely. In a lockdown, they need to learn almost the opposite, to actually get inside the building as quickly and safely as possible and to stay there until the threat is removed, or – in extreme circumstances - to leave if an intruder gains entrance to the building. A distinct procedure is needed because it is so different from the standard emergency drills, and is so extreme in nature that everyone needs to be thoroughly well versed in its contents and the role they are to play during such an incident.

Lockdown arrangements depend heavily on the size and layout of the school, and as a small school on a large shared site, and relatively open fields to the rear we have a number of challenges to overcome.

It is very unlikely that our school will ever need to implement a real lockdown but it is important for us to have arrangements in place to deal with such a situation. Therefore, during the week beginning 17th October 2016, the school will practise the lockdown procedure. The children will be informed of the lockdown procedure during Monday’s assembly.

A copy of the school’s lockdown procedure is available from the school office.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Rob Fenton
Acting Head Teacher