

Monday 11th March 2025

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Enhancing safety in our school

At Westgate CP School, we take safeguarding and the safety of our pupils very seriously. It is important that we put procedures in place and plan even for those events that are very unlikely to occur. As part of this, we have introduced a new safety procedure called “internal lockdown.”

I am writing to give you more information about an internal lockdown and to let you know that we will be practising this procedure this week.

What is an internal lockdown and when would it happen?

An internal lockdown procedure is a standard health and safety procedure, similar to a fire drill.

Our internal lockdown procedure would be used when there is a threat to the safety of our pupils, staff and others in the school, and when it’s safer for everyone to remain in school rather than evacuating. The aim is to keep people safe by confining them to a secure place of safety inside the school building.

Situations where our security lockdown procedure may be used include:

- A potentially dangerous person or animal on the school site.
- A disturbance or dangerous situation in the local community that could affect the school.
- A nearby chemical incident or other risk of air pollution.
- An incident related to terrorism.

What is our school’s internal lockdown procedure?

Our procedure for how an internal lockdown will work in our school is:

- A radio message will go out telling everyone that there is an internal lockdown. Adults will ensure that all staff are aware of that message.
- Under the guidance of the teacher, pupils will move immediately to their own designated internal safe space.
- Any classes, children or staff outside will enter school via their nearest entrance point.
- As with the fire drill, we will make sure all pupils are accounted for by taking the register.
- To ensure all pupils are safe and secure, all doors will be closed and secured.
- The emergency services will be called.

Instructions for parents/carers in the event of an internal lockdown

I appreciate that in the event of an internal lockdown, you will all be concerned about the wellbeing of your child/ren. However, I would ask that you follow these procedures:

- Parents/Carers will be informed that our school is in lockdown via a message at the earliest opportunity.
- Parents/Carers should not attempt to call or come to the school at this time, as this may hinder our effort to contact and work with the emergency services.
- Parents/Carers should not discuss the event on social media, as this may spread false information and create panic.
- The children's safety will be our priority, but we will continue to update you of any changes and/or to let you know when you can come to collect your child/ren.
- If an internal lockdown were to continue beyond school hours, we will keep you informed about any changes to collection arrangements.

About our upcoming internal lockdown drill

We have already had a whole school assembly to talk to the children about an internal lockdown and compared it to the fire drill, explaining that sometimes it might be safer for us to stay inside the school building, for example if a dangerous dog was to get onto the playground.

Prior to practising this procedure with pupils, staff will take time to talk to pupils about internal lockdown procedures and explain why they are important. They will reassure pupils before and after the drill that they are safe and will emphasise that practising procedures like this will make sure that the school remains a safe place to learn.

We will take a gradual approach to the internal lockdown practices. This week, we will ask teachers to simply take their class to the internal safe space so that the children can familiarise themselves with walking there calmly, quietly and sensibly to their designated space.

I must emphasise again that this is simply a drill, so that in the very unlikely event of such a situation in the future, our pupils and staff are fully prepared and can stay safe.

If you or your child have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via the School Office.

Kind regards,

Rhonda Kidd