**North Tawton Primary School Lockdown Procedure**

**Background**

Lockdown procedures should be seen as a sensible and proportionate response to any external or internal incident which has the potential to threaten the safety of staff and pupils in the school. Procedures should aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all pupils and staff.

These procedures may be activated in response to any number of situations. Some examples might be:

* An intruder on the school site
* A reported incident / civil disturbance in the local community
* A terrorist threat
* A warning being received regarding air pollution such as a smoke plume from a major fire in the vicinity of the school
* The close proximity of a dangerous dog/farm animals roaming loose.

This list is not exhaustive but the key issue is that each incident *poses a risk to staff and pupils*. This judgement can be made by staff responding to events directly or be on the advice of the emergency services.

The arrangements in this plan are to be read in conjunction with the overall Schools Emergency Management Plan document and should be reviewed annually. The school's lockdown plan is as follows:

**Lockdown Procedure**

*Signals:*

Signal for lockdown: a repeated whistle blast or communicated verbally by the most senior member of staff present.

Signal for all clear: communicated verbally by the most senior member of staff present.

(Senior member of staff order: Lisa Paton, Tara Penny, Jason Foreman. One of these staff members is always on site.)

*When the lockdown procedure is initiated, staff must take the following action:*

* Pupils who are outside of the school buildings should line up and are brought inside as quickly as possible and returned to their classroom. It is of course likely that staff based outside are amongst the first to be aware of the problem and even be the staff who have initiated the lockdown. If this is not the case a member of staff should alert supervising staff in external areas
* Those inside the school should either remain in or return to their classrooms.
* Staff should check the toilets for pupils plus the disabled toilet for staff or visitors who may be unaware of the lockdown.
* The senior member of staff should be informed at this point if any children are unaccounted for and a search undertaken to locate them.
* Staff should ensure that the following external doors should be closed and secured
* Depending on the circumstances, internal main school classroom doors may also need to be closed and, as far as is possible, secured by moving furniture in front of the doors.
* Depending on the circumstances, and as advised by the emergency services, windows should be secured and where available blinds drawn.
* Once in lockdown mode, pupils should remain seated in their classrooms and as far as possible in the circumstances staff should encourage an atmosphere of calm.
* As appropriate, the school office will establish communication with the

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. If the advice is to evacuate the building, the fire alarm will be sounded and the fire evacuation plan followed in the usual way.

* Parents will be notified as soon as it is practicable via *School Comms/Arbor* and the school website. Advice will be taken regarding the nature and content of this communication from the emergency services. This is especially important as exaggerated and alarmist information can circulate quickly in the community via social media.
* Once the incident has been assessed as safe, all classes will be informed verbally by the senior member of staff that the situation is under control and the class can resume activities as normal. This is the decision of the senior member of staff but typically will be taken after consultation with the emergency services. Pupils will not be released to parents during a lockdown until the all clear is given.

*All situations are different and some of the above may not be possible in all circumstances. Once all staff and pupils are safely inside the secured building, the senior member of staff will conduct a dynamic assessment based on the specific circumstances prevailing, as well as on advice from the emergency services. This will then be communicated to staff and pupils.*

It is of vital importance that the school's lockdown procedures are familiar to all members of the school staff. To achieve this, staff will be briefed in these arrangements at least once a year following the review of this plan.

February 2024