

NMAT LOCK DOWN POLICY (Statutory)



Preamble

Safeguarding students is at the top of our agenda in all NMAT Academies. Schools in the UK are normally a safe place for children; but as events both overseas and at home have shown, they can become involved in an emergency at any time.

The Department for Education recommends that schools create and maintain an emergency plan in the event of a situation where students and staff are placed in a situation where they may be endangered by the threat of deliberate harm. In emergency planning terms this situation is called 'Lockdown.'

Such an incident may be as the result of any of the following:

- A reported incident/civil disturbance in the local community with a potential to pose a risk to staff and students in the academy.
- A threat received by the academy e.g. on social media, or in person by an intruder.
- A warning being received regarding the risk of air pollution. In the event of air pollution, air vents/windows 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.

The advice from the Department for Education reminds us that 'planning for emergencies can save lives. It can prevent an incident getting worse.'

What is a 'lockdown'?

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

It is very unlikely that NMAT academies will ever need to implement a real lockdown but it is important to have arrangements in place to help us deal with such a situation.

Reception

If a threat warning is received by telephone to the Academy reception, for example a bomb threat, the receptionist should:

- Remain calm and talk to the caller.
- Note the caller's number if displayed on the phone.
- If possible record the call.
- Write down the exact wording of the threat.
- Ask questions such as: where the bomb is located, when the bomb will go off, what materials are in the bomb, who is calling, why the caller is doing this.
- Listen closely to the caller's voice and speech patterns and to noises in the background.
- Notify the Head of School/most senior member of staff on site.
- Head of School/most senior member of staff may then order evacuation of all persons inside the building(s).
- Head of School/most senior member of staff notifies police (call 999).

This policy will be kept under regular review in light of legal developments and best practice.

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Bomb Threat

- In the case of a bomb threat the Head of School/most senior member of staff in liaison with police/emergency services will evaluate the situation and conduct appropriate evacuation procedures. These might include using the fire alarm procedure to clear the building but would depend on where the threat was perceived to be located, i.e. close to the Fire Assembly points.
- Staff will take a register after evacuation.
- No one may re-enter the building until the entire building is declared safe by the police or fire service.
- Head of School or nominated member of SLT will notify staff and students of termination of emergency.

Intruder

In the case of an intruder in the building a 'Lockdown' procedure would be initiated, including:

- All students will stay in their classrooms during teaching periods or return to a safe 'base' if during a break/lunch time. The location of these 'safe bases' will be communicated to staff and students in a similar manner as to how evacuation assembly points are publicised.
- External doors will be locked, classroom doors closed, windows closed, blinds/curtains drawn, students sit quietly out of sight (e.g. under desk or around a corner) where possible, somewhere not visible to external people.
- Register taken – the office will contact each class, either in person if considered safe to do so, or by radio/phone/e-mail in turn for an attendance report.

A suitable signal for lockdown

The signal for a lockdown will be suitably distinguishable to that of an evacuation (fire drill). Any confusion may result in staff and students congregating at an assembly point, thus potentially making them more vulnerable.

The signal for initiating a lock down will be by communication through radios, telephone calls and messages via Classcharts/emails.

Communication between staff/building(s) will be maintained by radio, mobile phone or internal room phones and email.

Potentially any member of staff could be the first to raise the alarm for a lockdown, so it is important that all employees are aware of this plan.

Once the signal has been initiated the office staff, Head of School and person raising the alarm are responsible for calling the emergency services.

Teachers MUST detain students in the classroom, keeping them secure by closing windows and doors. The attendance log for the day will be located on Class Charts/SIMS.

Support staff will direct students inside the classrooms and assist teachers as appropriate. .

All staff will not allow anyone in or out of the classroom until being given the signal that it is safe to do so. Once inside a secure area, staff and students will:

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- Stay away from doors and windows; turn off lights; close blinds;
- Beware of sight lines if there is a window in the classroom door;
- Consider covering window;
- Take cover, if available (get behind something solid);
- Remain absolutely quiet;
- Teachers to take attendance;
- No phone use unless necessary to communicate regarding the incident;
- Mobile phones must be on silent.

Open areas, including hallways and other open areas are the most vulnerable, making them the most likely location for a threat, and the most difficult areas to quickly and effectively secure.

It is very important everyone understands what to do and where to go in the event a lockdown is called when they are in an open area. For clarity, these are listed below:

Nunthorpe Academy

Year 7 open area
Tennis Court
Sports Field
Back of Art/Maths
Front of School
Reception

Dining Hall
Sixth Form building
Sixth Form building
Maths Quad/Classrooms
Sports Hall
Sports Hall

Terminating a lockdown

Plans to conclude a lockdown will normally involve a room to room visit from Police/Senior Academy personnel so that occupants know it's safe to leave the room. In all cases where police have responded, the decision to end lockdown can only be made after approval of the police on scene.

Lockdown Practice Drills

It is important that the students know what action to take if a lockdown happens at the Academy. Becoming familiar with lockdown drills will improve the likelihood of these procedures being implemented swiftly and effectively. Lockdown will be practised twice a year.

Students are introduced to lockdown through discussion at tutor time. Our primary aim is not to alarm anyone so a meaningful discussion time must be allowed for this.