



LEICESTER THERAPEUTIC SCHOOL

BUILDING FOUNDATIONS THROUGH NURTURE AND MINDSET

Lockdown Policy

Policy Owner	Leicester Therapeutic School
Date Published	September 2026
Date of Next Review	September 2027
Ratified by Governing Body	September 2026
Circulation	All staff, governors and visitors
Linked Policies	Safeguarding & Child Protection; Health & Safety; Fire Safety; Risk Assessment; Staff Code of Conduct
ISS Regulatory Requirements	Part 3: paragraphs 7, 11, 14 & 16; Part 5: paragraph 25; Part 8: leadership and management

Safeguarding at Leicester Therapeutic School

At Leicester Therapeutic School, we are committed to providing an environment in which pupils feel safe and secure and are able to access their education. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all staff are expected to maintain an "it could happen here" attitude. We recognise our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and to respond promptly to risks arising both within and outside the school. During any lockdown, evacuation or emergency incident, the safety and welfare of children remains the overriding priority. Any safeguarding concern arising before, during or after an incident must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher and recorded in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) at Leicester Therapeutic School

At Leicester Therapeutic School, we recognise that pupils with SEND may need additional preparation, reassurance, communication support or reasonable adjustments during an emergency. Plans will take account of individual communication, sensory, mobility, medical and emotional-regulation needs without compromising safety. Familiar adults, visual prompts, simple language and appropriate sensory supports may be used where safe to do so. Staff must never assume that a pupil's SEND prevents them from understanding or participating in emergency procedures; support will be personalised to enable each pupil to respond as safely and calmly as possible.

1. Rationale

On rare occasions it may be necessary to secure all or part of the school, restrict access and movement, or move pupils and staff to a safer area in response to an internal or external threat. The response may involve lockdown, partial or zonal lockdown, invacuation/sheltering, or evacuation, depending on the nature and location of the danger.

Any response will be calm, proportionate and based on a dynamic assessment of risk. The aim is to protect life, prevent people moving towards danger and minimise disruption so far as is reasonably practicable.

The safety of pupils, staff and visitors is paramount. No member of staff is expected to place themselves in danger in order to implement this policy. Where the situation changes, staff must use professional judgement and follow police or emergency-service instructions even where this requires a departure from the normal procedure.

2. Introduction to Lockdown Plan

Lockdown is a protective security procedure used to secure all or part of the premises and prevent people entering, leaving or moving into an area of danger. A full lockdown may restrict both entry and exit; a partial or zonal lockdown may secure only part of the premises or selected access points. Invacuation means moving people to a safer place within the building, while evacuation means moving people away from the premises or danger. The safest response will depend on the incident.

- A violent, armed or otherwise threatening intruder on or near the school site
 - A serious incident, disorder or criminal activity in the local community that may pose a risk to the school
 - A credible warning from the police or another competent authority about an immediate security threat
 - A hazardous airborne release, smoke plume or chemical incident where remaining indoors and closing ventilation may be safer than evacuation
 - A major fire, explosion or other incident nearby where movement outside may place people at greater risk
 - A bomb threat, suspicious item or terrorism-related threat; the response may be lockdown, invacuation or evacuation depending on the location of the threat and police advice

This policy has regard to the Department for Education's School and College Security Guidance, updated 3 July 2026, and Protective Security and Preparedness for Education Settings guidance. It also reflects current National Protective Security Authority (NPSA) guidance on evacuation, invacuation and lockdown.

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law) has received Royal Assent but, as at September 2026, its duties have not yet commenced. When brought into force, primary and secondary education premises that can reasonably expect 200 or more people, including staff, to be present at the same time will be treated as standard-tier premises; settings below 200 will be outside scope. Leicester Therapeutic School will keep its occupancy and the commencement of the Act under review and will implement any applicable duties when required.

3. Lockdown Plan – Roles and Responsibilities

All staff have access to the school's agreed communication system, including radios where allocated. Staff must know the lockdown alert, the backup method of communication and the location of the nearest safe, securable area.

A full lockdown will normally be initiated by the agreed radio message: "All staff aware of 777 – all staff aware of 777." The message will be repeated clearly. If the normal system is unavailable, senior staff will use the safest available alternative method. Staff must treat any lockdown alert as genuine unless it is clearly identified in advance as an exercise.

Procedures:

All staff:

- If pupils and staff are outside and it is safe to do so, they should move quickly to the nearest safe, securable area. If returning to the school building would move them towards the threat, they must move away from danger and seek a safe location instead. Call 999 when safe to do so.
- Those already indoors should remain in, or move only a short distance to, the nearest safe and securable room where this can be done without approaching the threat. Close and lock doors and windows where possible and position people away from doors, windows and obvious sightlines.
- Use only pre-identified security measures that can be implemented safely. Do not create improvised barricades that block required escape routes, create a fire risk or require staff to expose themselves to danger.
- Turn off or dim lights, interactive boards and screens where this can be done safely. Personal phones should be placed on silent.
- Close blinds or other window coverings where available and where doing so does not expose anyone to danger.
- Support pupils to remain as calm and quiet as possible. Use clear, simple language and personalised SEND strategies such as familiar adults, visual prompts or agreed sensory supports where these do not compromise security.
- Account for the pupils, staff and visitors in the room using the current class list, attendance information or lockdown register. Record any additional people present and any person known to be elsewhere. Do not delay securing the room in order to complete paperwork.
- Remain in the secure location until an authorised all-clear or further instruction is received. Radios and phones should remain available but silent/low-volume so that essential instructions can be received without revealing the room's location.
- A lockdown is dynamic. If remaining in the current location becomes more dangerous than moving, staff should follow police instructions or use the safest available route away from the immediate threat. Do not automatically evacuate to the normal fire assembly point if that would move people towards danger.

Front office staff (Lead Administrator and Maintenance Manager):

- Visitors in reception should be directed to the nearest safe, securable area only where this can be done without moving towards danger. Staff must not cross the building merely to reach a pre-selected room.
- Reception/office staff should secure themselves in the nearest safe location, taking essential communication equipment only if immediately available.
- Lock or secure the room where possible, move away from doors and windows and keep communication devices on silent while remaining able to receive instructions.
- Call 999 as soon as it is safe to do so, providing the school name and address, the nature and location of the threat, any injuries, descriptions available and any people known to be unaccounted for.
- Staff who are not in a classroom, including those working 1:1 with a pupil, should not travel through the building to reach their usual class. They should use the nearest safe, securable location or move away from the threat if this is the safer option.

Remain with and supervise any pupils present. Notify the office or emergency services of your location only where communication can be made safely and does not compromise security.

Children using toilets:

- A child in or near a toilet or corridor should be directed to the nearest safe, securable area only where this can be done without exposing the child or staff to danger. Staff must not leave a secure room or cross a danger area to search for a pupil.

Class Teachers:

- Account for all pupils, adults and visitors in the room. Record the time and any person not accounted for, including their last known location if known.
- Report the room's status and any missing or additional person using the agreed discreet communication method. Keep radios and phones available but silent once essential information has been sent.
- Include any additional adults in the room, for example floating support staff, SALT, OT, visiting professionals, volunteers or contractors.
- If a pupil or adult is unaccounted for, report their name and last known location. No member of staff should leave a secure area to search unless specifically directed by the police or unless an immediate life-saving action can be taken without unreasonable risk.
- Record the time the missing-person information was reported and any subsequent update received.

Senior Leadership Team will:

- Senior leaders should not move through the building simply to convene in one office. They should coordinate from safe locations using the agreed communication system and establish a single incident lead where practicable.
- Undertake an ongoing dynamic risk assessment, prioritising the immediate safety of pupils, staff and visitors and taking account of the location and movement of the threat.

- Confirm attendance information, identify any person unaccounted for and pass essential information to the emergency services. Communication must be concise and must not require staff to leave secure locations.

Liaise with the police and other emergency services. Where the police are managing the incident, their instructions take precedence and the school will not issue an all-clear until advised that it is safe to do so.

Coordinate authorised communication with parents/carers, transport providers and other agencies. Staff must not post, livestream or share incident details, locations or images on social media during an incident.

4. During Lockdown

- MOVEMENT SHOULD BE MINIMISED. People should remain in their secure area unless moving is necessary to avoid immediate danger or is directed by the police/emergency services.
- Normal signing in/out, collection and access to the premises will stop during lockdown. Nobody should enter or leave through normal access points unless the police/emergency services or the incident lead confirms that it is safe.
- Staff, volunteers and visitors must not post or transmit information about the incident on social media or public messaging platforms. Personal phones should remain silent. Only authorised school communications should be sent to families or external agencies.

5. Communication with Parents/Carers

- Parents/carers will be informed as soon as it is safe and operationally appropriate to do so, using the school's approved communication system. Messages will be factual, brief and coordinated with police advice where the emergency services are involved.
- An initial message may state: "Leicester Therapeutic School is currently following its emergency lockdown procedure. Please do not come to the school or call unless you have urgent information relevant to the incident. Pupils will remain supervised and we will provide a further update as soon as it is safe to do so."
- Parents/carers and transport providers may be instructed not to travel to the school or attempt collection because doing so could place them, pupils or emergency responders at risk.
- Pupils will not be released during a lockdown unless this forms part of an agreed safe evacuation or reunification arrangement authorised by the incident lead and, where involved, the police.
- If normal dismissal is delayed, families and transport providers will be told when and where collection or reunification will take place. The school will verify the identity of the collecting adult and maintain an accurate record of pupil release.

6. Emergency Services

- The police and other emergency services are best placed to direct the response to a serious security incident. The school will call 999 promptly where there is an immediate threat to life, violence, a weapon, a credible bomb threat or another emergency requiring an urgent response.
- The school will provide emergency services with accurate information including the school address, access points, number of people on site, attendance information, known location of the threat, injuries and anyone unaccounted for.
- Where an incident is prolonged, the police and local authority may coordinate cordons, family liaison, humanitarian assistance or a separate reunification location. The school will follow those arrangements and will not direct families into a police cordon or unsafe area.

7. Partial Lockdown / Invacuation

A partial lockdown or invacuation may be used where the threat affects only part of the site, where selected entrances need to be secured while safe exits remain available, or where people need to be brought indoors because of an external hazard. For smoke, chemical or other airborne hazards, the

safest response may be to shelter indoors, close windows and doors and switch off ventilation systems where advised by the emergency services.

8. Partial Lockdown / Invacuation – Roles & Responsibilities

Partial lockdown/invacuation will normally be announced by radio using a clear instruction. Three sharp whistle blasts may be used as an outdoor backup signal where radio communication cannot be heard, but staff should not repeat whistle signals in a way that creates confusion or unnecessarily reveals locations.

Whole School – Pupils and Adults:

- Outdoor activity should cease immediately where returning indoors is the safest option.
- Pupils and staff should move to the nearest safe area. If the incident makes the normal route unsafe, staff must use an alternative safe route or move away from the danger.
- Relevant external doors and windows should be secured. For an airborne hazard, ventilation, fans or air-conditioning should be switched off if advised and safe to do so.
- Movement within the building may continue only where the dynamic risk assessment confirms it is safe. Staff must remain alert to the possibility that a partial lockdown may need to escalate to a full lockdown or evacuation.

Senior staff will maintain a dynamic risk assessment using information from staff and the emergency services. Instructions will be updated as the situation develops and must be communicated clearly without requiring unnecessary movement around the building.

Partial lockdown is a precautionary security measure. Invacuation/sheltering may be used for environmental hazards. Staff must understand the difference between lockdown, invacuation and evacuation so that the response does not inadvertently move pupils towards danger.

The school will test its security and emergency plans at least annually and after significant changes. Testing may include tabletop exercises, staff walk-throughs and, where appropriate, practical drills. Any pupil-facing exercise will be planned in advance, clearly identified as an exercise, age-appropriate and adapted for SEND and trauma-related needs. The school will not use realistic surprise simulations that could unnecessarily frighten pupils.

9. Following a Lockdown or Partial Lockdown

After the all-clear, staff will complete an accurate register and immediately report any person not accounted for. Pupil release will take place only through the agreed dismissal or reunification process.

The senior leadership team will conduct a structured debrief, review how the plan operated and identify any changes required to communication, access controls, staffing, registers, safe areas, SEND arrangements or emergency equipment.

Parents/carers will receive an appropriate follow-up communication after a significant incident or exercise. Information will protect confidentiality and will not include operational security detail that could undermine future safety arrangements.

Pupils will be offered proportionate post-incident support, including reassurance, social stories or visual explanations and access to pastoral, therapeutic or specialist support where needed.

Staff will be offered a debrief and appropriate wellbeing, supervision or occupational support. Where a crime or serious incident has occurred, staff must preserve relevant evidence, CCTV, records and communications and follow police instructions.

Lessons learned and actions will be recorded, assigned to a responsible person and monitored to completion. Relevant risk assessments and emergency plans will be updated promptly.

10. Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed at least annually by the Headteacher and Governing Body and sooner following an incident or exercise, a significant change to the premises or staffing, updated police/local authority advice, or changes to relevant legislation or Department for Education/NPSA guidance. Staff will receive lockdown and emergency-procedure information at induction and refresher briefings as required.