



St Paul's Catholic School

Invacuation and Lockdown Policy

Approved by:

Governing Body

Date: November 2024

Last reviewed on:

October 2024

Next review due by:

September 2025

Rationale

The aim of St Paul's Invacuation and Lockdown procedures are not to cause alarm but to protect the lives and the wellbeing of all site users at any time by keeping all persons safe within the internal environment, guiding them safely away from any perceived dangers and any aspect of potential harm.

Stage 1 Invacuation: The Invacuation procedure will be initiated in the first instance in the event of potential risks that may include intrusions by persons or animals that pose a risk, a major fire in the local vicinity, airborne pollutants, chemical spillages or outbreaks of disturbance within the localised area.

Stage 2 Lock Down: The Lockdown procedure will be initiated in response to the highest risk dangers that may include but not limited to an armed intrusion or extreme disturbances onsite in the localised area.

Invacuation implementation

Activation of Alarm.

Stage 1: The Invacuation procedure will be initiated by the Principal or in her absence the designated responsible person. The activation of the Invacuation alarm will be sounded via the internal alarm system. The invacuation sound is a high-pitched constant tone. The invacuation alarm will be sounded in all school buildings. In the event of an invacuation, all members of staff should prepare for an internal Invacuation with the possibility of a (Stage 2) full scale lockdown to follow. A full-scale lockdown will be instructed by an alert on laptop computer screens or in the case of electric failure, verbal communication from the Principal or designated person.

In the event of a failure in the alarm sound system, the Invacuation alarm will be raised by the sounding of five intermittent blasts delivered by hand-held air horns in the Plaza, Chapel and temporary mobile buildings.

Initial Instructions:

In instances of both stage 1 and potentially stage 2 procedures, the Principal or the designated responsible person, will take control of the situation and offer further instructions via computer screen alerts and verbally through handheld radios if necessary. The information announced will be at the discretion of the Principal or designated responsible person and fully dependent upon the developing situation.

Site staff will liaise with SLT at all times and initiate the locking of all external doors once students have moved to their designated safe rooms. Roller shutters at reception to be drawn down and two main internal doors around reception area to be locked by premises/office staff.

If it is deemed necessary to identify an alternative safe location, the Principal or designated person will inform both staff and students as to the new location via a computer screen alert, the use of a hand-held radio and appropriate signage if required. A megaphone may be used as a contingency means of communicating the alternative safe location.

Locations of Safety:

On initiation of stage 1 Invacuation alarm, all students and staff should either stay in their current location (classroom) or should the alarm be raised during break or lunch time, proceed directly in silence and in a controlled manner to the location of their next timetabled lesson. Should the students be in an external environment at the time of the alarm, they should proceed to the first available internal classroom/sports hall in silence and a controlled manner unless otherwise instructed otherwise by the Principal or designated responsible person.

Internal lines of communication for staff:

Ongoing instructions will be provided by the Principal or designated person via the use of computer screen alerts and the schools internal hand-held radios. In the failure of Information Systems, megaphones may be used as the means of communication where necessary as a means of contingency.

Mobile phones are to be used by staff to receive a text message from the designated member of the administration team as to the progress of the Invacuation/lockdown and any changes respectively.

Lines of communication to parents:

PA to the Principal or designated person of administration team to take responsibility for instigating parental contact via the schools established method of communications, text, email etc.

The initial message to parents will be:

“At present St Paul’s is in a Lockdown (or Invacuation) situation, during this period the switchboard and entrances will be unmanned, all external doors locked and no-one will be allowed to enter or exit the building. Please do not attend the school until informed and do not contact the school as this may tie up emergency lines of communication”.

Depending on the severity and type of incident, parents and guardians may be instructed not to collect the students until informed it is safe to do so.

Students will not be released to parents and guardians during an Invacuation or lockdown and will only be released when it is deemed safe to do so.

If the end of the school day has to be extended, parents and guardians will be informed not to collect students until they have received confirmation it is safe to do so and confirmation of the as to the new time and place for collection.

Following a serious event that resulted in the instigation of an Invacuation or Lockdown procedure, a letter is to be sent to all parents as soon as possible following the event to explain the reasons for the procedure and to request that they reinforce the importance of the procedures with all students.

If someone is taken hostage on the premises, the school will seek to evacuate the rest of the site by the initiation of the schools’ standard fire evacuation procedure.

In the event of an air pollution issue, air vents will be closed, where possible, as an additional precaution.

Actions of the Principal or designated person:

- Ensure that the procedure is implemented and tested, the Principal or designated person/s will identify designated 'safe rooms' throughout the school buildings and ensure that all members of staff are aware of the requirements of the schools Invacuation & lock down policy.
- Ensure that adequate Invacuation and lock down training is implemented at least once per academic year to ensure a safe working environment for all building users.
- The schools designated 'safe rooms' are identified as the planning rooms, chapel, sports hall, dance/drama studios, classrooms and offices, as applicable.
- The Principal will take all factors into consideration when deciding whether to instigate an Invacuation procedure or to fully lockdown the school. When and if possible, advice and guidance will be sought from the emergency services and the Trust will be informed.
- On activation of the lockdown procedure, the Principal or designated person will ensure that the relevant emergency services are informed and kept up to date with the situation.
- Ensure that all classes are to be guided towards their designated 'safe room' by their classroom teacher or staff member, ensuring that all pupils, staff members and visitors are accounted for.
- Ensure all pupils and staff are to remain in their designated safe rooms/positions until told to do otherwise by the Principal, SLT or emergency services where an announcement to confirm the risk has passed.
- Throughout the Invacuation procedure, the Principal or designated person will keep in contact with the emergency services, ensuring the procedure is being implemented correctly.
- If at any time during either stage 1 or 2 procedure it is deemed necessary to evacuate the buildings, a continuous ring of the fire alarm bell will be sounded and the school's normal fire evacuation procedure, will be followed.

Actions for teaching/Support staff:

- Instruct all students to either stay in the classroom or at break/lunchtime to proceed to their designated area and to remain silent at all times.
- Staff to close all classroom windows and doors (Invacuation) and lock doors or block access with furniture and draw blinds/curtains (Lockdown).
- Take responsibility for students in their care and support and encourage all students to remain calm and stay silent.
- Instruct students to take a position on the floor, away from the windows remaining out of site as far is practical, hide under tables if applicable (Lockdown).
- Ensure all persons remain in their positions until further instructed.
- Listen and wait for further instructions from Principal, designated persons or emergency services and act upon information/instructions.
- Staff members will keep in contact using mobile phones in order to inform each other of any problems experienced while carrying out the procedure, e.g. missing pupils.
- As soon as possible take a register to account for all students and inform the attendance officer of any missing students

- If staff are in buildings adjacent to where pupils or other staff members are outside and unaware of the situation, they will signal to the class/individual to come inside immediately if it is safe to do so.
- Staff to ensure that the toilets, dining areas and playgrounds are cleared of all pupils, staff members and any visitors.

Actions for students:

- Student will proceed to the designated locations in complete silence and remain in silence at all times, listening and wait for further information and instructions.
- Students should listen and act upon any instruction given by staff.
- Students will not use mobile phones to contact parents or post on social media
- Students will participate in all arranged Invacuation and lock down training as requested.

Actions for Premises Staff:

- Main entrances into the school site will be locked if necessary or instructed to do so, this will include entrance and all other external doors that offer ingress to an intruder. Reception shutters will be drawn down and two main internal doors around reception area to be locked down.
- Staff will unlock doors when officially informed that it is safe to do so by the emergency services, Principal or SLT.
- Staff will use the internal radios to receive and offer internal instructions during the Invacuation and lock down procedures in addition to listening to verbal instruction offered by the Principal.

Actions for Parents, Guardians and Carers:

- Do not attend the school to collect students under any circumstances until informed it is safe to do so.
- Await instructions from the school via text message and email.
- Do not call students on their mobile during any procedure.

Conclusions:

Following any disturbance/occurrence necessitating the instigation of the Invacuation or lock down procedure, the following actions will be taken:

- A feedback/reflection talk with all members of staff and pupils will be delivered by the Principal to both reflect upon the procedure itself and to highlight the sources of support on offer.
- A variety of support mechanisms will be sought and offered where necessary to individuals/group in the form of counselling, support groups and further information.
- Parents, guardians, carers and other stakeholders will receive feedback in the form of an official school letter as soon as practicable.
- All aspects of response to the crisis/event will be fully evaluated by SLT and procedures amended where necessary to drive improvements and further enhance the safety of all building users.