



Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School

Part of The Romero Catholic Academy

21 June 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Enhancing safety in our school

At Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School, we take safeguarding and the safety of our students and staff very seriously. It is important that we continue to review all our procedures, taking into account those events that are very unlikely to occur.

As part of this process, we have introduced a new procedure called “lockdown”. This is a recommendation of good practice for schools from the Department for Education. The need for all schools to have effective lockdown procedures has arisen due to numerous changes in wider society ranging from terrorist attacks to increase in violent crime. As such, we have to assess the risk that a school could be a potential target for an external threat and be able to respond accordingly.

I am writing to inform you that in the coming weeks, all staff and students will take part in a lockdown drill.

What is a lockdown and when would we carry it out?

A lockdown procedure is a standard health and safety precaution similar to a fire drill. Our lockdown procedure would be used when there was a threat to the safety of pupils, staff and others in the Academy and when it is safer for everyone to remain on site rather than evacuate. The aim is to keep people safe by confining them in a secure place of safety. Situations where our lockdown procedure may be used include:

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

Our Academy will only have one type of lockdown: “**Full Lockdown**”.

Full Lockdown will be used when the Academy receives an immediate threat and we feel that the students and staff are in immediate danger. A continuous siren will sound inside and outside the Academy to inform all that full lockdown is in operation. The aim of a full lockdown is for the Academy to appear empty.

Executive Principal: Mr Anthony Quinn

Principal: Mr Thomas Leverage



All students will remain in situ at the time of the lockdown. If students are outside, they will be directed to the nearest safe location as quickly as possible. All external doors will be locked (depending upon the nature of the incident). All teachers will lock classroom doors and turn classroom lights off. Teachers and students must hide in their locations and remain silent at all times. Students will not be allowed to leave the Academy until full lockdown has been lifted by the Principal or most senior member of staff on site.

It is important that parents do not call or attend the Academy when lockdown is in operation as this may hinder the Academy's efforts to contact and work with the emergency services. We also ask that parents do not discuss the event on social media as this may spread false information and create panic within the community. Students will also be instructed to turn off all mobile phones during a lockdown. Therefore, please do not contact your child in the event of a lockdown as they will be unable to respond.

If lockdown continues beyond school hours, parents will be notified of this via a text and the website will be updated. Emergency services would ensure that appropriate arrangements were in place for parental contact and for the collection of students once the lockdown is complete.

Prior to our drill, staff will take time to talk to pupils about lockdown procedures and explain why they are important. Information will be delivered through focused assemblies and reinforced through the PSHE curriculum.

Whilst the chances of being caught up in a gun or knife attack are very small, we know from case studies and testimony of people who have survived attacks that, if followed, this advice can save lives. However, it is crucial that this message is conveyed to young people in a way that is sensitive and not alarmist and students will be made to feel that the Academy is a safe place.

If you or your child have any further concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Head of Year or Form Tutor.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T J Leverage', with a stylized flourish at the end.

T J Leverage MA (Cantab)
Principal