



### Enhancing Safety at School

**15.03.2019**

At Banks Road we take safeguarding and safety very seriously. It is important that we continue to review all our procedures, taking into account even those events that are very unlikely to occur. As part of this process, I would like to inform you of the procedures in place, which are planned to be carried out termly, and are rigorously assessed to ensure in the event of any emergency that all children and adults are both aware of procedures as well as any recommendations for future actions.

Last week we carried out both a fire drill and a 'shelter' exercise as part of our ongoing risk assessments and standard health and safety procedures. The fire drill is evaluated on the effectiveness of arrangements in place. The children are used to these drills and the evacuation of the building is always carried out calmly and effectively and within 3 minutes.

Last Friday (8.3.19) we practiced 'shelter'. This is carried out in the event of a critical incident where a lock down procedure is necessary. Lockdown is similar to a fire drill, and is part of our safeguarding arrangements. Lockdown would be used when there is a threat to the safety of pupils, staff and others in the school, and when it is safer for everyone to remain in school than evacuate. The aim is to keep people safe by confining them to a secure place of safety.

Situations where our lockdown procedure may be used include:

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

This list is for your reference only. Our children are given a low key example, such as there is a strange dog on the playground that we need to hide from. We do not alarm our children and we stress that it is only a practice so that we can be prepared.

Prior to the drill staff take time to talk to the children about the procedure and reassure them that this is to practice keeping them safe. Staff and children are notified to 'shelter' via an air horn and children are then led by staff to a safe place within the classroom area where they are not visible from the outside areas. During this time, myself and the office staff ensure all external doors are locked as well as the internal doors that lead into the hall. Following this, checks are made including making sure all the children are accounted for and are gathered in a safe area of their classroom. When all checks are carried out, the school day continues as normal. I would like to congratulate all our children and adults on how well all our drills are carried out. The children are always very calm and sensible. It is especially worth noting how silent they are when lockdown is practised.

We would like to bring to your attention that if you are on school site and inside the school building at the time of any of our safety procedures, you will be directed on procedures by a member of staff. If you arrive at the school entrance following a lockdown, please be aware that we will refuse you access to the building until the procedure is complete. If the school were to have a lockdown we would contact you to advise that it was taking place and not to come to or call the school. This is because it may endanger yourselves or block our telephone lines to the services that we may need to help us.

While this may all sound very serious, the need for a lockdown is extremely rare.

We will continue to practise this procedure regularly so that we are ready should the need occur.

Yours sincerely

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