Winter Gardens Academy
Belonging • Compassion • Curiosity • Empowerment

Winter Gardens Academy, Hilton Road, Canvey Island, Essex SS8 9QA
Tel: 01268 699305
Web: www.wintergardensacademy.org
Headteacher: Katie Herbert

4th November 2026

Dear Parents/ Carers,

Re: Enhancing Safety in our School

At Winter Gardens Academy, 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, it is that time of year where we practice a Procedure called "Lockdown". This procedure is categorised into a Green, Amber or Red Lockdown Procedure.

I am writing to inform you that we will be practicing the Red Lockdown Procedure on Wednesday 11th November 2026, following the 2-minute silence, as we do each year to mark Remembrance Day.

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

A Lockdown Procedure is a standard health and safety Procedure, similar to a fire drill.
Our Lockdown Procedure 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

Our Procedure

As a reminder, our Lockdown Procedure is as follows:

- A Green Lockdown is for a localised incident and is a warning for a potential Lockdown.
- An Amber Lockdown is for localised emergencies and is a partial Lockdown (children may be unaware of this happening).
- A Red Lockdown is a full Lockdown for a major community for if there is a major community emergency.
- Staff will communicate a Lockdown through word of mouth or through mobile phones. Children will be informed by their class teacher or member of staff supervising them at the time.

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- Dependent on the severity of the Lockdown pupils may merely stay inside their classroom, need to move immediately inside to their own or nearest classroom, and/or sit out of sight (against the wall or under tables). The school will make sure all pupils are accounted for by counting children and taking a register where possible.
- The school will make sure all pupils are safe and secure by securing doors and windows, and drawing blinds, barricading doors etc.
- The relevant emergency service will be called.

Instructions for parents/carers in the event of a Lockdown

- The Senior Leadership Team or office staff will contact parents/carers via text message to inform them of a Lockdown situation, if it is not a drill. We will also update via Class Dojo and the school's website if it is possible.
- Parents **should not** attempt to call or come to the school, as this may hinder the school's effort to contact and work with the emergency services
- Parents **should not** discuss the event on social media, as this may spread false information and create panic
- If the Lockdown continues beyond school hours, parents/carers will be informed of instructions via text message.

Prior to our drill, staff will take time to talk to pupils about Lockdown Procedures and explain why they are important, ensuring all children are prepared. They will reassure pupils after the drill that they are safe, and will emphasise that practicing procedures like this will make sure the school remains a safe place to learn. To help children's understanding of why the Procedure is in place and to ensure they understand the context of using such a drill, we carry out the drill on Remembrance Day and will link it to similar Procedures that have been used in the past for emergencies, such as during the World Wars. The children will be told that they are doing what children had to do in the war as a class activity. Presenting this drill to the children as a learning task should minimise any anxieties some pupils may have. We have now been doing this for the last few years and the children show great maturity imagining themselves to be like children in the war.

I must stress again this is simply a practise, so that in the unlikely event of such a situation, our pupils and staff are fully prepared. If you or your child have any further concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact myself or Miss Vickers or speak to your child's class teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Katie Herbert
Headteacher

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