

Synergy

Safeguarding in case of an emergency resulting in a lockdown (Synergy). Information for parents

What is Synergy?

Safeguarding is the number one priority at St Anne's and your child's safety and wellbeing is of the utmost importance. St Anne's is a safe place, and we build a harmonious environment based on the core values of mutual respect, tolerance and genuine inclusion where everyone is valued and equal. We have many procedures and structures in place to ensure safety. One of these procedures is our unique **Synergy** strategy which is, in effect, our lockdown procedure. This would happen, for example, if there is an intruder on the school premises.

How it works.

If there is a safety concern the following occurs:

- An email is sent by the member of staff who identifies the concern to the school office
- A tannoy announcement is made which informs the school that we are following a lockdown procedure
- Teachers are notified that there is a synergy activation
- Teachers and staff immediately account for all the children in their care
- The headteacher and SLT who are free patrol the school to ensure that everyone is accounted for
- At the end of the alert the lockdown is de-escalated in an orderly manner and teaching will resume if it has been paused.

Is it necessary?

Definitely, yes. Although we are a safe site it is important that in the case of an emergency we can immediately account for every person in the building and ensure that they are safe.

Do we practice Synergy?

Yes, we practice Synergy three times a year, one each term. This is to ensure that all pupils know what is expected in case of a real emergency. We would rather our pupils and staff have an awareness of the procedure to minimise any issues in the unlikely event of a lockdown.

Do children know what Synergy is?

Yes, in assembly, our safeguarding team led an assembly to all students. Each time there is a practice, staff will explain the purpose of the practice and share our expectations and this is then followed up in form time the next day. Children are aware that during Synergy they will be involved in making a whole class decision as to whether they would like to do something as a collective to feel safer. This may, for example, include moving furniture, closing blinds or changing the seating arrangements. Staff are aware that this is about making everyone feel safe.

Do we communicate to parents when there is a Synergy?

In the event of a full lockdown parents will be informed via ClassCharts. This will be done at a time when it is safe for staff to do so. A full lockdown requires students to stay in the classroom until the safety of the school site has been secured. In the event of a 'soft' lockdown parents will be informed via ClassCharts when the lockdown procedure is complete. An example of a 'soft' lockdown might be when there is an incident in the local community but there is no threat to people on the school site. Students must not use mobile phones to contact parents. Normal rules about the use of mobile phones will apply.

Social Media

In this modern era of social media, it is likely that you will find something out about school following a Synergy procedure before your child even gets home. This is a hinderance to our timely response to ensuring the safety of everyone. If you are reading something on social media, it is second hand and likely to be factually incorrect. Rest assured, if we need to contact you, we will do so through our normal communications channels.