



**L A L E H A M L E A**

A Catholic Independent Primary School for boys and girls aged 3 to 11

Headteacher: Mrs. M Reece

## **LALEHAM LEA SCHOOL & NURSERY**

### **BOMB THREAT POLICY**

*This is a whole school policy which applies to all sections of the school, including Early Years Foundation Stage, Out of School Care and Clubs.*

	Date	Signed
Date reviewed	April 2024	<i>M Reece</i> Headteacher
Ratified by the Board of Governors	May 2024	<i>M Ryan</i> Chair of Governors
Date of next review	May 2026	



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## **Rationale**

Following on from NaCTSO's guidance and advice to schools and other educational establishments, the following policy and procedures have been drawn up for all staff and pupils to follow.

## **Statement of Intent**

Laleham Lea School believes that the safety and wellbeing of all children, staff and visitors is of paramount importance.

This policy outlines the procedures and responsibilities of key staff members in case of a bomb threat. Although these procedures will come into effect in the event of a bomb threat, the police will be contacted immediately, and their instructions will be followed primarily at all times. It is essential that all threats be taken seriously and acted upon in a professional manner.

## **Employees' Duties**

All employees have a duty to take reasonable actions to ensure that they do not place themselves or others at risk of harm. They are expected to fully comply with procedures which are introduced to protect the safety and well-being of everyone on site.

If a threat is received or a suspect package discovered, then the police should be called immediately.

Senior Leadership Team and Fire Marshals are responsible for ensuring that everyone has evacuated the building, and a register of attendance is available for the emergency services.

## **Procedures to follow on receipt of a bomb threat.**

The vast majority of bomb threats are hoaxes designed to cause alarm and disruption. Any hoax is a crime and, no matter how ridiculous or unconvincing, must be reported to the police. While many bomb threats involve a person-to-person phone call, an increasing number are sent electronically using email or social media applications.

No matter how ridiculous or implausible the threat may seem, all such communications are a crime and should be reported to the police by dialling 999.

Be alert, but not alarmed!

## **Communication of the threat**

A bomb threat can be communicated in a number of different ways. The threat is likely to be made in person over the telephone; however, it may also be a recorded message, communicated in written form, delivered face-to-face or, increasingly, sent by email or social



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media (e.g. Twitter or Instagram, etc.). A threat may be communicated via a third-party, i.e. a person or organisation unrelated to the intended victim and identified only to pass the message.

## **Immediate steps upon receipt of a bomb threat**

Any member of staff with a direct telephone line, mobile phone, computer or tablet etc., could receive a bomb threat. Such staff should, therefore, understand the actions required of them as the potential first response to a threat message.

### **If a telephone threat is received, staff should:**

- Stay calm and listen carefully.
- Have immediate access to a Caller Details Checklist outlining key information that should be recorded (see Caller Details Checklist - attached). It is recommended that they keep copies at hand.
- If practical, keep the caller talking and gather as much information as possible. Alert a colleague to dial 999. The information collected will be recorded in the Caller Details Checklist after the call by the person who took the call.
- If displayed on your phone, note the number of the caller, otherwise, dial 1471 to obtain the number once the call has ended.
- Immediately after the phone call, the information will be passed on to the Headteacher or, in the Head Teacher's absence, a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- If the threat is a recorded message, write down as much detail as possible.
- If the threat is received via text message do not reply to, forward or delete the message. Note the number of the sender and follow police advice.

Depending on the information collected and the advice given by the police, a decision may be taken to evacuate or lockdown. If a decision is taken to evacuate then the School Emergency Plan will be followed, and staff and children will move to John Fisher School. If a decision to lockdown is taken, then the Lockdown Policy will be followed.

### **If the threat is delivered face-to-face:**

- Try to remember as many distinguishing characteristics of the threat-maker as possible.

### **If discovered in a written note, letter or as graffiti:**

- The Headteacher or, in the Headteacher's absence, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be notified immediately.
- The letter is to be handled as little as possible before handing over to the police – treat the note as police evidence.
- A record is to be made of the letter's delivery date and time.
- The police will be called immediately, and their advice followed regarding further course of action, including evacuation or lockdown.



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## **If the threat is received via email or social media applications**

- Do not reply to, forward or delete the message.
- The message will be saved for investigation by the police.
- Note the sender's email address or username/user ID for social media applications • preserve all web log files for your organisation to help the police investigation (as a guide, 7 days prior to the threat message and 48 hours after
- The Headteacher or, in the Head Teacher's absence, a member of the Senior Management Team will be notified immediately.
- The police will be called immediately, and their advice followed regarding further course of action, including evacuation or lockdown.

## **ENSURE THAT 999 HAS BEEN DIALLED AND FOLLOW THE ADVICE GIVEN BY THE POLICE.**

**Seek advice from a member of SLT as soon as possible.**

### **Assessing the credibility of bomb threats**

Evaluating the credibility of a threat is a critical task, particularly if the attack being threatened is imminent. This is a tactic used to place additional pressure on decision makers. Police will assess the threat at the earliest opportunity. When specific intelligence is known to police, advice will be issued accordingly, however, in the absence of detailed information, it will be necessary to consider a number of factors:-

- is the threat part of a series? If so, what has happened elsewhere or previously?
- can the location of the claimed bomb(s) be known with precision? If so, is a bomb visible at the location identified?
- considering the hoaxer's desire to influence behaviour, is there any reason to believe their words?
- if the threat is imprecise, could an external evacuation inadvertently move people closer to the hazard?
- is a suspicious device visible?

### **Actions to consider:**

#### **External evacuation-**

Leaving the venue will be appropriate when directed by police and/or it is reasonable to assume the threat is credible, and when evacuation will move people towards a safer location.

Designated Fire Marshals will assist with this procedure (and utilise Fire evacuation procedures in order to account for all evacuees) to the area advised by the police which will



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depend on the location (if any) of the suspicious item. As with Fire Alarm procedures no one else should be allowed to enter the area once an evacuation has been initiated.

The police will establish cordons depending upon the size of an identified suspect device. Always follow police directions and avoid assembly close to a police cordon.

## **Internal or inwards evacuation (invacuations)-**

There are occasions when it is safer to remain inside. Staying inside and moving away from external windows/walls is relevant when it is known that a bomb is not within or immediately adjacent to your building.

If the suspect device is outside people may be exposed to greater danger if the evacuation route inadvertently takes them past the device and a safer alternative may be the use of internal protected spaces such as the hall.

If the location of the device threatened is unknown, evacuation represents a credible and justifiable course of action.

## **Decision not to evacuate or inwardly evacuate-**

If, after an evaluation by the Head Teacher/School Business Manager/ Senior Leadership Team, the threat is deemed implausible (e.g. a deliberate hoax) then an evacuation/internal evacuation may be ruled out. In such circumstances the advice provided by the police should be followed. All staff should be familiar with their work areas and their immediate surroundings in order to identify anything out of place, see search considerations below.

## **Checking for suspicious items - Search considerations**

The Site Manager should undertake regular searches of the premises. Additionally, if a bomb threat is received and depending upon how credible it is, a 'search' for suspicious items should be carefully undertaken by the Site Manager.

After notifying the Headteacher/School Business Manager, an external search will be undertaken by the Site Manager and School Business Manager whilst other members of staff will carefully review their immediate work areas.

Areas that are open to the public should be searched first; enclosed areas (e.g. cloakrooms, stairs, corridors, lifts etc.) evacuation routes and assembly points, car parks and other external areas.

Under no circumstances should any suspicious item be touched or moved in any way. If a suspicious item is located, then dial 999 and commence immediate evacuation.



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## **Suspicious Packages**

A suspicious package can be left anywhere by anyone or delivered to school by various means. Keeping the following in mind and being vigilant may assist in identification of a suspicious package.

The list below is not exhaustive and anything unusual must be reported.

- Unprofessional wrapping
- An irregular shape, soft spots or bulges
- Protruding wires
- Aluminium foil
- Grease stains
- Distorted handwriting or cut-and-paste lettering used for the address
- Unusual smell
- An inner envelope which is tightly bound or taped
- Unusually thick letter which seems excessively heavy or lop-sided.

## **Media & Communication**

Avoid revealing details about specific incidents to the media or through social media without prior consultation with police. Do not provide details of the threat, the decision-making process relating to evacuation (internal or external) or why a decision not to evacuate was taken. Releasing details of the circumstances may: .

- Be an objective of the hoaxer and provide them with a perceived credibility.
- Cause unnecessary alarm to others.
- Be used by those planning to target other venues.
- Elicit copycat incidents.
- Adversely affect the subsequent police investigation.



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## Appendix One

### L A L E H A M L E A S C H O O L C A L L E R D E T A I L S C H E C K L I S T

<b>Date and time of call</b>	
<b>Duration of call</b>	
<b>Name of person taking the call</b>	
<b>Location of bomb</b>	
<b>About the caller (information gathered or estimated guesses)</b>	
<b>Sex</b>	
<b>Nationality</b>	
<b>Age</b>	
<b>Language (Taped message, well-spoken, incoherent, Offensive)</b>	
<b>Tone of voice (scared, excited, aggressive, upset)</b>	
<b>Background noises (cars, people, voices, music, machinery)</b>	
<b>Remarks or code words used</b>	
<b>Other Relevant Information</b>	
<b>Signature of call taker</b>	