



**EFiRE**

FIRE & LIFE SAFETY SYSTEMS

# Lockdown Systems

A Kings Secure Technologies Company



## WHAT IS LOCKDOWN?

A lockdown is when occupants are prevented from freely entering, leaving or moving around the building because of danger. There are many reasons that a school lockdown may be imposed, including:

- Defending against an intruder with malicious intent
- An incident or civil disturbance in the school's local area
- A local environmental hazard such as a smoke plume, gas cloud, etc.
- The appearance of a dangerous animal

## HOW DOES A LOCKDOWN WORK?

School lockdown systems are designed to automatically close and lock the external (and sometimes internal) doors of the building via a network of electro-magnets or other similar locking mechanisms.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IN A LOCKDOWN?

Whilst each school's lockdown system will be designed differently, in general, you should:

- Implement a recognisable, audible alarm signal to alert pupils and staff to the activation of the lockdown. The signal should be audible throughout the whole school.
- Escort pupils who are outside the building into the building as soon as possible.
- Take a register of students and notify the school office of any pupils who are unaccounted for.
- Ensure all windows are locked.

## COMMUNICATING DURING A LOCKDOWN

One of the most important parts of an effective lockdown system is good communication. It is essential that staff understand the situation and their responsibilities as this enhances the effectiveness of the lockdown procedure and minimises panic. **Consider the following:**

- Modes of communication: consider a paging or instant messaging system like Whatsapp for keeping everyone informed during the lockdown.
- Contacting the emergency services: It is recommended that you appoint a designated person to contact the emergency services to reduce confusion and ensure that communication is consistent.
- Contacting parents/guardians: Parents/guardians must be told to stay away from the school building, but this must be some sensitivity to avoid panic.



# Types of Lockdown Alarms/Tones

## ALARM

Depending on the system already installed on site, it may be possible to use the existing alarm/bell system but with a different sound (pulsing vs. continuous for example) to signify a lockdown situation. Whilst this solution is cost-effective, it is essential that staff are trained to distinguish between the regular alarm/bell and the lockdown alert.

## VOICE ALARM

Voice alarms are when a speaker system delivers a pre-recorded message, and they are one of the best ways to clearly deliver instructions to students. This makes them ideal for schools in which students won't always be accompanied by a member of staff.

## ILLUMINATED WARNING SIGNAGE

Usually situated over exit doors, visual alarm devices warn occupants not to evacuate the building or open the doors.

## ONSITE TANNOY

Similar to voice alarms, tannoy systems can be equipped with pre-recorded messages. They are easily connected to the school lockdown switch and is an ideal way to make clear site-wide announcements or relay instructions.

## PAGING SYSTEM

Paging systems present a good alternative to raising a general alarm in situations where a lockdown alarm could cause unnecessary distress to students.



## DESIGNING YOUR OWN SCHOOL LOCKDOWN ALARM SYSTEM

Every lockdown system is customised to suite the facility in which they are installed. Unlike fire alarm systems, school lockdown alarm systems don't have specified codes or rules attached to them, meaning they are very versatile and varied. You will need an experienced and knowledgeable partner to help you consider what kind of system will suite the layout of your site, the systems already installed on site and your budget.

### RAISING THE ALARM

Consider the layout of your site. Where could a potential threat gain access to the building? These areas - which could include receptions, security offices, entry halls - should have manual lockdown activation switches. Alternatively, you need to implement a procedure for staff in other areas to quickly contact staff within reach of the lockdown switch.

To avoid false school lockdown activations, it is recommended to either keep the manual lockdown switch in staff-only areas or using a ky-activated switch (in which case, the activation key must be easily accessible to staff in an emergency.)

### PREVENTING UNAUTHORISED ACCESS FROM THE INSIDE

A major concern during a school lockdown is the accidental admission of an intruder into the building via one of the exit doors, usually because someone has misinterpreted the lockdown alarm for an evacuation alarm. Your lockdown system may be able to isolate the exit doors to prevent them being opened.

### ISOLATING THE RECEPTION ROOM

A simple and cost effective way of preventing access into the school is by securing the reception/waiting room area with a key fob or code operated door.

### EVACUATION IN NON-FIRE SCENARIOS IS NOT THE SAME AS EVACUATION DUE TO FIRE

School buildings must be designed, maintained and operated to reduce the risk to safety arising from fire. Consequently, staff, students and visitors are likely to be familiar with the principles and practice of fire drills including evacuation.

In some emergency scenarios such as a terrorist attack, the appropriate response may not be to evacuate. Where evacuation may be required, the evacuation response may differ to that of a fire. For example, people may be directed to specific exits or to avoid a particular route or area.

For this reason, it is suggested the activation of the fire alarm to initiate evacuation or lockdown should be avoided to reduce the possibility of an incorrect response. Public Address (Tannoy) systems, if available, may provide more flexibility to provide information and instructions appropriate to the scenario.



# EFiRE's Bespoke Taylor Made Lockdown Solution



Rapidly deployable with no wires or cabling



Monitor and control units with optional PC App



Annunciator or simple alert variants



Wireless with up to 64 units per system



1km transmission range between units



Long battery life of up to 3 years



Robust IP66 weather rating



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