

Practicing School Safety Procedures: Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why are you doing a lockdown drill in October?

A real emergency is an understandably stressful time. Having a plan and knowing what to do during a critical incident helps to protect students and staff. People are more confident and better able to manage when they have had a chance to practice and process outside of an emergency situation.

2. What is the difference between a lockdown and other types of emergency protocols?

Depending on the scenario, different emergency responses may be called to protect people, including:

- **Lockdown:** There is a threat to safety in the building
- **Hold and secure:** There is a neighbourhood security concern, such as a police incident unrelated to the school
- **Shelter in place:** There is a safety hazard outside, such as a wild animal
- **Evacuate:** The hazard makes it unsafe to remain in the building, such as a fire

3. What will happen during the lockdown drill?

During the lockdown drill, all students and staff will be instructed to move quickly and quietly into their classrooms. This will involve locking all interior and exterior classroom doors and windows, turning off lights, and remaining quiet until the drill is over. The drill will be conducted in a way that is appropriate for the age and developmental level of students. Before, throughout, and after the drill, staff will be there to guide and support students.

4. What other safety drills will happen during the school year?

On October 15, our school will participate in the Great British Columbia ShakeOut, giving students an opportunity to practice how to “Drop, Cover and Hold On” during an earthquake. In addition to earthquake and lockdown drills, students will also participate in a variety of emergency preparedness exercises throughout the school year, such as drills related to fire and Hold and Secure drills. All of these exercises help students become familiar with the procedures they may need to follow during different types of emergencies.

Each emergency exercise is planned and conducted in an age and developmentally appropriate manner. Staff support students before, during, and after each drill, helping them to understand why it’s being practiced and ensuring that they feel safe and supported throughout the process.

5. How can families help?

We appreciate your partnership and understanding. You may wish to talk with your child about these procedures to help them feel reassured and understand that adults are there to help keep them safe. Safety is always our first priority and we are committed to responding with caution, care, and calm while supporting students throughout.

6. How can families help when a real emergency protocol is enacted?

Please be assured that an emergency protocol is typically enacted as a precautionary measure and to allow time for staff and, if necessary, first responders to assess and manage the situation safely.

When emergency procedures are activated due to a potential incident, the priority is on what is happening inside the building. To best support all involved, we ask you to please avoid coming to the school or calling the office during an active response, as staff are focused on assessing and managing the situation safely with the help of first responders, if applicable. During an emergency response, information may spread quickly through the community or online, and it may not always be accurate or provide the full picture. Please rely on messages from the school or District, as these communications contain accurate and confirmed information.