

September 2026



Dear Parent/Carer,

Thank you again for all of your support during the opening weeks of the new term. It has been a really positive start for everyone, and I couldn't be prouder of our students, who have returned focused, enthusiastic and ready to learn.

I am writing to inform you that South Axholme Academy will be carrying out a **lockdown drill during the week commencing 21 September 2026**. Lockdown drills will subsequently take place at least annually, in line with expectations set out in Martyn's Law and as part of our ongoing emergency preparedness arrangements.

The purpose of the drill is to ensure that our students and staff are familiar with the Academy's lockdown procedures and know how to respond calmly and appropriately should they ever be needed. It also provides an opportunity for us to test our procedures, identify any areas for improvement and ensure that staff are confident in their responsibilities.

The drill will be carefully planned to minimise disruption to teaching and learning and is expected to last only a few minutes.

Preparing our students

Students will be informed about the lockdown drill as part of our normal **virtual whole-school assembly on Monday 21 September 2026**. This will provide an age-appropriate explanation of what a lockdown is, why we practise our procedures and what students should do if the lockdown alarm is activated.

A new lockdown alarm was installed over the summer. This has a different sound from the fire alarm and will be demonstrated to students during the assembly so that they can recognise it and understand what it means before the drill takes place.

During the drill, students will be expected to follow the instructions of staff, remain indoors and move to a safe location as directed. Staff will reassure and support students throughout the exercise. The drill will conclude when the Academy issues the appropriate **all-clear** notification.

Lockdown procedures may be used in a range of emergency situations where remaining inside the Academy is considered the safest course of action. These may include an incident on or near the Academy site, a significant environmental hazard, severe weather or any other situation where there is a potential risk to the safety and wellbeing of students, staff or visitors.

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Mobile phones

As a reminder, students should have their mobile phones switched off and securely stored in their bags during the school day. In line with strengthened government guidance, mobile phones should not be seen or used at any time in school unless there is a medical or other reason that has been agreed with the Academy in advance.

Students will also be reminded that the use of, or recording on, mobile phones during a lockdown or lockdown drill is not permitted. Any inappropriate use or recording will be taken seriously and may result in appropriate consequences in line with our behaviour and mobile phone policies.

Parents and carers

Please be reassured that this is a **planned practice exercise and is not being carried out in response to any current threat or incident**. We understand that the word 'lockdown' may sound concerning, which is why we will ensure that students are properly prepared and supported before, during and after the drill.

In the event of a real lockdown, parents and carers will be provided with accurate and timely information as soon as it is practicable to do so, in line with our policies and procedures. Parents and carers should not attend or contact the Academy during a lockdown unless specifically instructed, as this could interfere with the Academy's response and access for Emergency Services.

We hope that our lockdown procedures will never need to be used in a real emergency, but it is important that we are prepared to respond effectively and keep our students and staff as safe as possible.

If you have any questions or concerns about the drill, please contact the Academy.

Thank you again for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Hamilton', written over a horizontal line.

Mrs S Hamilton
Principal
South Axholme Academy