

The Orchard School



Policy & Procedure for Managing Bomb Threats

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Introduction

The vast majority of bomb threats are hoaxes designed to cause alarm and disruption. However, we need to be vigilant and treat any such bomb threat as serious. Bomb threats are commonly in the form of phone calls (person-to-person) however with such a trend of social media, bomb threats can also be made in the following formats: email, twitter accounts, Facebook, snap-chat (including other social media), third person or face to face. All bomb threats must be dealt with in the same way and police must be informed by dialling 999. Staff within the school receiving the bomb threat MUST follow the correct procedures and complete all necessary documentation.

The Bomb Threat Message

Most bomb threats do not offer precise locations, timings and given in advance. Hoax messages are difficult to determine, but may include reasons such as revenge, causing disruption and a desire to impress. The majority of hoaxes and their intent is to cause fear, disruption and inconvenience for the victim. Therefore all threats must be deemed serious.

Immediate steps if you receive a bomb threat communication.

Any member of the school who has access to a direct line, computer or mobile phone are in a position to receive a bomb threat. It is important that all staff are aware of the following course of actions in the case of an emergency.

Telephone Threats

If you are the receiver for a telephone threat you should:

- Stay calm and listen carefully
- Have immediate access to the checklist (attached) for the KEY information that MUST be recorded.
- If possible, signal (Raise a red card) a colleague to phone 999 and report the incident to the police whilst you remain talking to the caller.
- Alert the Headteacher and SLT immediately.
- If the number is displayed on the phone, write it down. If there is no number, try dialling 1471.
- If the threat is a recorded message, write down as much of the threat as possible, word for word.
- COMPLETE THE BOMB THREAT FORM IMMEDIATELY.

Text Messages

If you are the receiver of a text message threat, or social media threat (for example Facebook) you should:

- Stay calm, and DO NOT delete the message. It MUST be kept in the log of your mobile phone / device.
- You MUST not forward the message, or reply to it.
- Note down the number of the sender or profile name of sender.
- Inform head teacher / SLT immediately.
- Contact the police on 999, and follow their advice.
- COMPLETE THE BOMB THREAT FORM IMMEDIATELY.

Emails / Social Media

If you receive an email / social media message you should:

- NOT forward, delete or reply to the message.
- Make a note of the senders email / contact / profile name etc.
- Alert the head teacher and SLT
- Contact the police on 999, and follow police advice.
- ALL web log files must be preserved to help the police and investigation team, 7 days prior to the threat and 48 hours after the threat.
- COMPLETE THE BOMB THREAT FORM IMMEDIATELY.

Face to Face

- Remain calm and do not antagonise the situation.
- Lower your voice and pitch, so not to cause aggravation or show fear / anxiety.
- Remember as many of the words the person has used, do not ask too many questions and listen carefully.
- Remember any distinguishing characters and mannerisms of the threat-maker as possible and write then down as soon as you can.
- Alert the police by dialling 999 and follow their advice.
- Inform the head teacher and SLT.
- COMPLETE THE BOMB THREAT FORM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

In these circumstances the following members of staff must be contacted so the school can follow the evacuation procedure safely:

SLT, Fire Officers, Learning Mentors, All teaching staff and Caretaking Staff if available (to ensure the building remains safe and secure during an evacuation).

External Evacuation

Leaving the school will be appropriate when we have been directed to do so by the police. In these circumstances the following must be adhered to:

- The highest importance is the safety of ALL our students.
- All personal belongings must be left in the building.
- SLT will inform teachers that the school must be evacuated.
- Designated staff must collect the 'Bomb Threat' Grab Bag from the reception.
- Reception staff must also have access to a fully charged mobile device, so we can inform parents / carers.
- Designated staff will escort the students to the evacuation point (The green at the top of LIME KILN ROAD) see attached map.
- All students will need to be placed in tutor groups and checked against school records.
- Necessary arrangements will be made for the safe collection of pupils by parents and carers.
- No one must re-enter the building once it has been evacuated.

Inward Evacuation

There are some occasions, when a bomb threat has been made for the pupils and staff to remain inside the building. If this is the case, everyone needs to be away from all external walls and windows. Police will advise us on where to assemble, as the threat may be placed within the school grounds.

In the absence of advice from the Police, this muster point will be the Sports Hall.

Special Considerations -

Checking the school for suspicious packages / devices.

Regular searches of the school will enhance a good security culture of the school, and reduces the risk of a suspicious package being placed or remaining unnoticed. At the discretion of the police, they may have reasonable and plausible thoughts that a bomb threat may be a hoax and ask the school to conduct a search. If this is the case, the following are guidelines for conducting searches:

- Searches will be initiated by a text message sent to all staff on their school mobile phones.
- Teaching staff will check their immediate areas / classrooms
- Learning Mentors and Teaching Assistants will check the corridors and hallways.
- SLT will check the external parameters of the building.
- Cooks will check their kitchens and outside area.
- ALL areas must be DOUBLE checked by the staff assigned to that area.
- If a package has been located, leave it where it is and report back to the head teacher and inform the police by 999. Depending on the situation of the package following the correct evacuation procedure.

Media and Communication:

It is vital that we do not reveal any details through any social media sites, and this also includes the students. Releasing of information may:

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

Suggested point for evacuation (Google Reference)

