

2025/26

# UK Lockdown Drill Parent Letters



Public Child Protection Wales  
2025/26

# **THIS LOCKDOWN DRILL ADVOCACY PACK CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING:**

## **School Lockdown Drills (Wales)**

### **Template Letter:**

- Information Version
- Rights-based Version
- Health & Safety Version

## **School Lockdown Drills (UK)**

### **Template Letter:**

- Information Version
- Rights-based Version
- Health & Safety Version

## **Helpful References**

- American School Health Association (ASHA) (2023) ‘Self-Reported Anxiety and Perception of Safety Following School Lockdown Drills among Adolescent Youth’, *Journal of School Health*, 95(2):134–141.
- Everytown for Gun Safety & Georgia Tech PNN Lab (2021) *The Impact of School Lockdown Drills*.
- HuffPost UK (2022) ‘The Mental Health Toll Of School Lockdown Drills’.
- MyVoice Project (2020) *Active Drill Experiences in Schools: Youth Perceptions*, *Journal of Adolescent Health*.
- Schildkraut, J. & Nickerson, A.B., et al. (2024) *Drills and Perceptions of Safety, Fear, or Risk: Mixed Student Responses*, *Journal of School Violence*.
- Teen Vogue (2023) ‘School Drills and Disabled Students’.

**Disclaimer:**

All information provided in this pack is **general guidance only** and is intended for informational purposes. It does not constitute legal advice and may not reflect the policies or practices of individual schools, local authorities, or regions. Guidance is subject to change at any time, and users are encouraged to verify details with relevant authorities before taking action.

## Information Version

[Parent Name]

[Address]

[Date]

To: [Head/Governor Name], [School Name]

**Subject: Information on School Lockdown Drills**

Dear [Head/Governor Name],

I am writing to request further information regarding the lockdown drills conducted at [School Name].

### Key Points:

- Research shows that lockdown drills can create **psychological and emotional stress** in children, including anxiety, fear, and feelings of helplessness (Everytown & Georgia Tech, 2021; Zullig, 2020).
- Drills may disproportionately affect **vulnerable students**, including those with disabilities or mental health conditions (Teen Vogue, 2023).
- Evidence suggests that while drills can increase staff preparedness, **student perceptions of safety are mixed**, and some may feel less secure (Schildkraut & Nickerson, 2024).

**Callout:** Even well-intentioned drills can trigger distress, especially if unannounced or high intensity.

Please provide details on: 1. The **frequency, content, and method** of lockdown drills. 2. Whether drills are **age-appropriate and trauma-informed**. 3. Support measures for students experiencing distress post-drill.

Yours sincerely,

[Parent Name]

## **Rights-Based Version**

**[Parent Name]**

**[Address]**

**[Date]**

**To:** [Head/Governor Name], [School Name]

**Subject: Parental Rights and School Lockdown Drills**

Dear [Head/Governor Name],

I am concerned about the impact of lockdown drills on students' rights under UK and Welsh legislation:

- **Children's Rights:** Right to protection from harm and respect for wellbeing under **UNCRC** and **Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011**.
- **Parental Rights:** Entitlement to be informed under **Education Act 1996** and **Education (Wales) Measure 2009**.
- **Duty of Care:** Schools must provide a safe environment under **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974** and **Education (Independent School Standards) (Wales) Regulations 2003**.

**Callout:** Parents have the right to be informed and consulted about practices affecting their child's safety.

Please provide: 1. Written policy on **lockdown drills**. 2. Evidence of **risk assessment and parental notification**. 3. Measures to **mitigate distress**.

Yours sincerely,

[Parent Name]

## Health & Safety Version

[Parent Name]

[Address]

[Date]

To: [Head/Governor Name], [School Name]

**Subject: Health & Safety Concerns Regarding Lockdown Drills**

Dear [Head/Governor Name],

I am writing to express concern regarding the health and safety implications of lockdown drills at [School Name].

**Evidence:** - Students may experience **acute anxiety, panic attacks, and physiological stress** (ASHA, 2023; HuffPost UK, 2022). – Drills can create **unsafe situations for vulnerable students**, including those with disabilities (Teen Vogue, 2023). – Staff report **emotional distress**, highlighting a duty of care concern (Everytown & Georgia Tech, 2021).

**Callout:** Health and safety obligations require schools to minimize emotional and psychological harm.

Please provide: 1. **Risk assessment protocols** for drills. 2. Preventive measures or **accommodations** for vulnerable students. 3. Staff **training and guidance** on managing student stress.

Yours sincerely,

[Parent Name]

## **Template Letter 1: Information Version**

**Parent Name]**

**[Address]**

**[Date]**

**Subject: Concerns Regarding Lockdown Drills in School**

Dear [Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead],

I am writing as a concerned parent/carer to raise questions about the use of school lockdown drills at [School Name].

Recent peer-reviewed studies and policy reports demonstrate that lockdown drills may cause elevated levels of anxiety, stress, and trauma among children, without clear evidence of increasing safety.

I kindly request clarification on whether such drills are planned, their rationale, and assurance that any measures will be trauma-informed, inclusive, and balanced with mental health priorities.

**Yours sincerely,**

## **Template Letter 2: Rights-Based Version**

**[Parent Name]**

**[Address]**

**[Date]**

### **Subject: Rights Concerns Regarding Lockdown Drills**

Dear [Headteacher/Governors],

Under Article 2 of Protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), parents have the right to ensure education is delivered in conformity with their philosophical convictions. Article 9 further protects freedom of thought and belief.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) requires that children's best interests and mental wellbeing be prioritised. Documented harms of lockdown drills risk infringing on these rights.

I request confirmation of [School Name]'s position and details of how rights compliance is being ensured.

Yours sincerely,



### **Template Letter 3: Health & Safety / Safeguarding Version**

**[Parent Name]**

**[Address]**

**[Date]**

**Subject: Safeguarding and Health & Safety Concerns Regarding Lockdown Drills**

Dear [Headteacher/DSL],

Schools are bound by duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Children Acts 1989 & 2004, and the Equality Act 2010. Safeguarding guidance (KCSIE) also stresses preventing harm and promoting wellbeing.

Evidence indicates that lockdown drills may create significant psychological distress. I request that the school reviews risk assessments, provides details of statutory compliance, and considers alternative measures.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours faithfully,