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Department for Education

Guidance

School and college security

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Overview

It is important for schools and colleges to have a policy and plan in place to manage and respond to security related incidents.

Your security policy should complement your safeguarding policy, particularly where it puts in place measures to protect students and address the threat of serious violence. It should form part of your suite of policies to ensure the health, safety and well-being of students and staff.

You should have a competent person or persons to lead in health and safety, and security. This may or may not be the same person. The role will sit alongside the designated safeguarding lead.

Staff and, where appropriate, students should take personal responsibility for both their own security and the security of those they work and learn alongside. This, along with the effective management and handling of security related matters, should help to ensure that staff and students are able to work and be taught in a safe and secure environment, including the online environment.

Staff and students should be familiar with what is required by your security policy and plan. Senior staff should have an awareness of relevant security networks and be able to evaluate and assess the impact of any new initiatives on your security

policy and its day-to-day operation.

Health and safety law

You should consider security alongside your safeguarding responsibilities and the legal obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAWA) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR).

Health and Safety at Work Act

The basis of British health and safety law is the HASAWA, and the regulator in schools is the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The HASAWA sets out the general duties employers must follow to ensure the health and safety of their employees and others on school and college premises.

The law requires employers to take a common sense and proportionate approach to identify, assess and keep under review health and safety related risks and take steps to reduce or eliminate those risks. This includes security risks where there is a threat of attack on staff and students from within or outside the school or college.

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations

The MHSWR set out what employers are required to do to manage health and safety on a day to day basis. This includes a requirement for employers to appoint one or more competent persons to oversee workplace health and safety and to support compliance with the regulations. The HSE has also published Employer's responsibilities: Workers' health and safety and Education: health and safety in schools, further and higher education on managing risks in the education sector.

Responsibility

Competent persons are required to have subject knowledge, be trained in matters related to handling risks and have the experience to apply that subject knowledge correctly in the workplace. It is possible that certain aspects of security will be outside of the scope and experience of your personnel and may require professional advice, which may be secured though your local authority or academy trust, via other partnership working, or from the police.

The competent person should consider matters of security, including areas regularly used for off-site education and those related to your educational visits policy. They should put in place a security policy that:

- identifies the likelihood of a security related incident occurring
- assesses the level of impact
- develops plans and procedures to manage and respond to any threats

The competent person will also need to ensure that business continuity plans are in place to enable staff and students to react appropriately and promptly in the event of a serious incident. This should include arrangements to respond to the immediate crisis as well as short, medium and long term issues that may subsequently arise.

Getting started on your security policy and plan

All staff and students must be able to work in a safe and secure environment. Whilst education establishments continue to be amongst the safest places, you should not ignore the potential threat of, and impact arising from, security related issues, such as vandalism, arson, cyber-attack, a serious incident involving a weapon or terrorist attacks.

Your security policy should:

- reflect the balance between maintaining an open and welcoming environment for learners, parents and the wider community and protecting them from harm
- help create a culture in which staff and students recognise and understand the need to be more vigilant about their own and the safety and security of others
- demonstrate an understanding of the issues that could impact on your school or college and wider community

Plans and supporting procedures should:

- be based on a realistic assessment of the threats relevant to your school or college
- demonstrate that there is a shared and common understanding about how to respond to identified threats
- be very clear about what is expected from the staff, students and the local community should an incident occur
- draw on experience and expertise provided by your local authority, academy trust, police and others, such as local resilience forums

In a rapidly changing world where security threats are becoming more prevalent

and diverse, it is essential you consider and routinely review your security arrangements, policies and plans.

Whilst serious security incidents in schools and colleges remain relatively rare this guidance is intended to help you consider your security arrangements and develop and put in place measures that are sensible and proportionate to the security threats you have identified.

Risk assessment - identifying internal and external security risks

You should be familiar with, and understand how to undertake, a health and safety survey and risk assessment. When considering security, the same approach can be followed. In summary, you should determine the type, frequency and probability of an incident or event happening and then put in place measures either to eliminate or reduce the risk of it occurring.

You should also be aware of the indicators which may signal that students are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. There is a range of advice about violence, drugs and child exploitation in this document, which will help inform your understanding and help with policy development.

This guidance does not provide an exhaustive list of security threats for you to consider. However, the examples of potential threats and preventative measures document highlights some of the main threats you may face and, in conjunction with other security intelligence, you can use these to inform the development of a new policy or review of an existing one.

There are templates and checklists which can assist you with the following:

- emergency planning
- risk assessment
- business continuity planning
- evacuation
- bomb alert or threat
- invacuation
- lockdown
- post incident support
- debrief and lessons learned

Building partnerships

You should establish and maintain relationships locally and work in partnership with the police, local authority and others in the wider community to gather and share security related information. This may involve working with neighbouring schools and colleges, the local resilience forum and the local divisional or district police commander or a police partnership officer. You can then use this intelligence to inform the development of your security policy and plan that is proportionate, measured and reflects local and national security issues or threats.

Many schools and colleges have good working relationships with the local police, established through formal partnerships, by working with named officers, or other partnership arrangements. Whilst it is primarily your responsibility for security planning, it is good practice to develop strong links with the police. This will enable you to put arrangements in place to share information quickly and help with the development and review of your policies and plans. In most cases, you are best placed to make decisions about how to respond to incidents on your premises. The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) is planning to produce guidance to help schools and colleges determine when to call the police. This will be available on the NPCC's website later in 2019.

In some areas the local resilience forum may also be a source of advice and support.

Due to the likelihood of an external incident having an impact on your school or college, a security risk assessment should extend beyond your estate. We have advice on:

- how to draw up plans to help staff respond to an emergency or incident at your school or college
- health and safety on educational visits

Your assessment should also include an assessment of cyber security risk, which is included in the examples of potential security threats and preventative measures document. Cyber security's core function is to protect the devices we all use (smartphones, laptops, tablets and computers), and the services we access - both online and at work - from theft or damage as well as preventing unauthorised access to personal information. The National Cyber Security Centre has a range of advice.

Working closely with a range of partners, such as the police, local schools and colleges or other local networks will bring about a number of benefits. Securing access to expert advice and local intelligence will help you identify broader security issues that could impact on your day-to-day business. You can use the intelligence obtained when developing your security policy.

Resources

- Visits and the threat from terrorism, Good practice and Residentials - Outdoor Education Adviser's Panel guidance on handling emergencies on visits and residential stays
- School trips - guidance encouraging schools to make more planned school visits

Preventative measures - supporting advice and guidance

You will have policies, plans and procedures in place to deal effectively with health and safety responsibilities. You can adapt the process to identify, assess, and review health and safety risks to address security matters. The information below signposts the main online resources and practical tools that you can use to inform the development of your security policy and plan that:

- reflects your school or college's size and location
- considers your school or college's unique circumstances, character, ethos, educational needs and local priorities

Protection of premises against a potential criminal, terrorist and other unlawful action is an important issue. You should consider how both local and national security incidents might impact on your day-to-day business and the safety and security of staff and students. Whilst you may determine that you would routinely have to deal with incidents involving abusive or threatening individuals, or acts of vandalism on site, consideration should be given to the likelihood of a more serious incident occurring, such as one involving a student with an offensive weapon, a serious cyber-attack, or a physical attack on the premises.

In determining the type of preventative action to be taken, you should keep in mind that any measures put in place should be proportionate to the type of threat when assessed alongside the likelihood of it occurring and the impact that it would have on school or college life. Where significant risk is identified, you should review your existing measures and where necessary update them. For example, review invacuation and evacuation procedures, or consider whether to introduce dynamic lockdown procedures in order to help manage an increased level of risk. The local police will be best placed to give advice on lockdown procedures where there is a threat to your school or college. Guidance is available on developing dynamic lockdown procedures. You can use our lockdown, evacuation and invacuation templates to create your own procedures.

There is further health and safety advice for schools that you can use to inform and support the development of your school security policy and plan. You may also consider our summary advice on site security.

In particular, understanding and making best use of your estate can improve its security. A well maintained estate can act as a visible deterrent and underpin risk prevention plans. For example, having good access controls and effective physical security measures, such as security lighting, will make it harder for an intruder to infiltrate buildings and premises. Our good estate management for schools offers practical advice on effective estate management and governance.

Controlling access to school premises provides guidance on handling incidents and restricting access to, and barring of abusive or threatening individuals from, school premises and clarifies what a school is able to do should such an incident occur. Section 85A of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 enables the removal of a person committing, or who has committed. an offence of nuisance or causing a disturbance when on premises of colleges, 16 to 19 academies and institutions maintained by local authorities that provide FE and HE.

Searching, screening and confiscation at schools makes clear that where a headteacher or an authorised member of staff has reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil may have a prohibited item in school, they have statutory powers to search pupils and their possessions without consent and can seize prohibited items found as a result of the search. The advice also explains the law on the deletion of images from mobile phones and the confiscation of prohibited items. This may be particularly relevant if you are facing challenges associated with pupils carrying offensive weapons, especially knives, into schools. Sections 85AA to 85AD of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 creates separate search powers relating to FE institutions and 16 to 19 academies if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student may be carrying a prohibited item applicable to their age.

If you have concerns about weapons being brought on to your premises, you should discuss these concerns with the students identified as being at risk and establish what mechanisms should be put in place to ensure the students are kept safe. Before considering the installation of any physical screening of pupils (for instance a knife arch or wand), you should first consult with the local police, who will be able to provide advice about whether installation of these devices is appropriate.

The Home Office provides Preventing youth violence and gang involvement guidance for staff in schools or colleges affected by gang or youth violence. When developing an approach, it is recommended that you discuss ways to address youth violence with local police and community safety partners, as well as other local educational institutions.

The Serious Violence Strategy sets out the government's response to serious violence and recent increases in knife crime, gun crime and homicide.

There is also guidance on Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines, which outlines what county lines and associated criminal exploitation is, the signs to look for in potential victims, and what to do about it in partnership with the police and community safety partners. Further information is available on

Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked.

As part of its response to violent crime the Home Office has also developed a resource pack for teachers and other professionals working with young people at risk of involvement in knife crime. These resources can be used in lessons or alongside other relevant materials to deliver messages and advice to young people on the consequences of knife crime. The campaign signposts teachers and young people to support services.

Counter Terrorism Policing have collaborated with specialists from the PSHE Association and Girlguiding to produce ACT for Youth. The Run Hide Tell resource pack provides a comprehensive toolkit, including lesson plans, posters and short films. You can use it to introduce security awareness into your school or college, to actively and openly engage with students about the impact and consequences of violent crime and terrorist activity on themselves and others and equip them with good advice and strategies to use outside of your school or college.

In circumstances where we are made aware of an extremist or counter terrorism-related incident at an education institution, we will work with the local authority and other partners to ensure that the relevant support is provided. This would include, if appropriate, support from a FE or HE Prevent Coordinator or the Prevent Education Officer.

External providers and visitors can provide a varied and useful range of information, resources and speakers that can help you deliver security related messages to staff and students. Whilst these sources can make an effective contribution to internal programmes, you must be careful to ensure that external programmes and providers are effective. In order to do this you should consider:

- what are the desired learning objectives and outcomes
- why an external provider or speaker is being used
- are the messages being delivered in line with your safeguarding policies
- whether the external provider has the required skills and knowledge
- how impact will be evaluated

Local authorities, academy trusts or other schools and colleges in local networks may be able to give advice on the effectiveness of providers and resources.

Managing risk

Undertaking a risk assessment will help you reach a balanced view of the risks you may face. The Risk management: health and safety in the workplace and Crowded places guidance provide advice on how to manage the risks identified from an assessment. Each approach is based on a 5 stage risk management cycle that offers practical advice on how to rate and put in place plans and measures to

eradicate, lessen and manage risks and includes useful checklists you can use when assessing, for example, access controls or bomb threats.

You should prioritise the identified risks and put in place appropriate control measures to manage and monitor them. As with health and safety procedures, it is important to keep your security plans and risk assessments up to date and under review so you can risk assess any emerging issues early and update your plans.

The examples of potential security threats and preventative measures identify potential security threats and some possible measures to eliminate, or minimise, the main security risks identified earlier in this guidance. Local authorities, academy trusts, police and local resilience forums should all be able to provide help with managing risks.

The Home Office is proactively involved in raising awareness and developing advice for business, private sector organisations and the public on security matters. For the latest information, visit the Home Office. The National Counter Terrorism Security Office has published protective security advice for the business and public sectors, including educational institutions. Whilst its Crowded places education guidance has primarily been prepared for further and higher education colleges it is also relevant to schools.

Resources

- Controlling the risks in the workplace - guidance on the 5 stage risk management process
- Bomb threats guidance - guidance on what to do if a bomb threat or other malicious comunication is received
- Mail screening - advice on handling post from the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure
- Counter terrorism e-learning - online course to help individuals within UK businesses better understand and mitigate against terrorism

Adopt a whole school or college approach

Not all security incidents are triggered by external factors. In determining the likelihood of a security risk materialising from within your school or college, for example an argument getting out of hand in a classroom, you should consider putting in place preventative measures which will help to avoid the risk of negative behaviour quickly and unexpectedly escalating to a more serious incident.

Effective behaviour management strategies can help to reduce the likelihood of

such escalation occurring. You should have their own policies and strategies for managing behaviour. Behaviour and discipline in schools sets out what should be in your policy.

Alongside the development of robust behaviour management policies it is important you acknowledge that serious incidents, whilst rare, do occur. Lessons learned from dealing with such incidents have identified that young people should know how to share information in their possession about the possibility of a serious incident occurring and they should be actively supported so they feel safe to do so.

There are a number of mechanisms being used to encourage and support young people to share information, including some that provide facilities for anonymous reporting by students, parents and the local community. It is widely understood that anonymous reporting can help to support a culture where young people can be encouraged and, without fear of recrimination, feel safe to leave information about issues of concern for adults to pick up and take action on. You should also be aware of survey results which allow students to say what they feel is good or bad. In circumstances where effective information sharing arrangements are used, prompt action to risk assess the likelihood of a related incident occurring and timely action to intervene, may help to avert a serious incident. Students need to know the difference between dialling 999 (emergency) and 101 (non-emergency), and other ways to interact with the police, for example through social media and reporting online.

Resources

- Creating a culture: how school leaders can optimise behaviour - highlights strategies you can use to design and maintain a culture that prevents classroom disruption, maintains good discipline and promotes students' education, focus and wellbeing
- Use of reasonable force in schools - provides guidance on the use of physical restraint in schools
- Searching, screening and confiscation at school - explains the powers schools have to screen and search pupils, and to confiscate items they find

The curriculum

The curriculum offers many excellent opportunities to help you manage your security, inform young people about the dangers they may face, both in and around school and beyond, and provide students with the means to help keep themselves safe. Most schools and colleges teach the new relationships education and relationships and sex education as part of their PSHE have PSHE

programmes that support students, helping them prepare for modern life, including how to handle issues relating to relationships, mental and physical heath and staying safe on line. You should consider how your PSHE programmes can be used to address the issues identified in this guidance.

Many third party partnerships contribute effectively to the PSHE curriculum. You should also consider the benefits of working with the police in this context. This can help:

- deliver messages that are of concern to the police and schools and colleges
- with early intervention with youth crime
- foster positive relationships between the police and young people

Many police forces work closely and collaboratively with schools and colleges making sure students understand the law and the consequences of risky behaviours. Further information and best practice about working in partnership with the police, and the benefits, can be found in Police in the classroom - a handbook for the police and PSHE teachers, a joint publication by the PSHE Association and the NPCC.

Testing security plans

You should regularly test policies and handling plans. Practice drills will identify where improvements can be made and enable you to assess what the wider residual effects of an incident are likely to be. You should consider involving neighbouring schools or colleges, local police, local authorities, academy trusts or other outside agencies in helping evaluate practice drills.

Managing an incident or emergency

The aim of a your emergency plan is to help staff respond effectively to an emergency at the school or college, or on an educational visit. It should be generic enough to cover a range of potential incidents that could occur. Examples include:

- serious injury to a student or member of staff (for example, transport accident)
- significant damage to school property (for example, fire)
- criminal activity (for example, bomb threat)
- severe weather (for example, flooding)
- public health incidents (for example, influenza pandemic)
- the effects of a disaster in the local community

Plans should cover procedures for incidents occurring during normal hours and

out of hours, including weekends and holidays. Emergency procedures for extended services that take place on your premises should also be included. You can use the self-assessment emergency incident planning template to help you plan.

Effective communication is essential for the efficient management of any incident. It is important that all staff know what to do in the event of an incident, or potential incident. They should know who to contact, and how, including how to raise an alarm to alert staff and students. It is important that all staff feel empowered to make decisions and know what action to take where they have a concern.

All security policies should include plans for what your school or college will do in the event of an incident, including those which you identify as an emergency. Plans should set out who is responsible for communication to parents, family members (where appropriate), any statutory organisations such as police or local authority as well as the use of social media, press/media handling and so on.

Social media can play an important role in dealing with critical incidents. Working in partnership with the police will enable you to understand how the police use social media to help manage information and keep the public informed during a serious incident. Social media can also be a helpful source of information in preventing such incidents. It is important that intelligence is shared between schools, colleges, the police and other partner organisations where this is appropriate. More information on the use of social media by the police is provided in the Police Foundation's briefing. The police can also advise on how you can maximise the use of social media when dealing with serious incidents.

You should consider undertaking training in communications handling, particularly in relation to the press and media. In the first instance, you should discuss your needs and obtain advice from the police, local authority, academy trust or the local resilience forum.

Further information on handling media attention after a major incident is available in the Handling media attention guidance.

Business continuity management

Business continuity plans are an integral part of a security policy and should set out how your school or college will recover in the event of any security related incident. Your business continuity plan should consider what will happen if an incident occurs and describe how you would react to it. Your plan should define individual roles and responsibilities, explain how to respond to an incident and provide details of what steps will be taken in order to be able to get back to business as usual. The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) has some Safety and disaster management guidance covering disaster plans and recovery.

Your business continuity plan should explain what will be done to handle the emotional impact of such an event and include information about the professional and specialist help available.

The difficulties you face in restoring normality following any traumatic event should not be underestimated. Those leading the recovery will not only be facing and dealing with their own personal challenges but will also be dealing with the impact on staff, students and parents.

Recovery

Post incident evaluation is essential and time must be made to bring together key players to review and evaluate how the security plans in place stood up to the task. Time should be invested to debrief and elicit feedback from all those affected, including staff, students and parents. Undertaking a critical review of the security and business continuity plans should identify lessons learned and the actions needed to improve and ensure the ongoing development of the security policy and plan.

You can use the post incident support checklist and the debrief and lessons learned checklist to evaluate and debrief on aspects of your security policy and how to deal with extensive social media and press interest.

RoSPA's Safety and disaster management guidance provides a step by step approach to preparing, managing, recovering and learning from a serious incident. There is also a self-assessment emergency incident planning template and your local authority or academy trust may have similar tools and guidance which you may be able to use.

NHS

The NHS has produced a Coping with stress following a major incident leaflet on how to recognise and deal with trauma after a major incident.

Staff training

Appropriate training should be given to the person with responsibility for health and safety, and security.

All staff should receive appropriate security training relevant to the nature of the risk your school or college may encounter. This may require a combination of formal and informal training. Your local authority or academy trust may be able to

provide advice about training providers.

Emergency incident and planning

All staff should know what to do to protect themselves and students from harm, safeguard the estate and be able to determine when it is appropriate to contact the police and other emergency services. The emergency incident and planning checklist sets out the critical information which should be included in your plans as a minimum.

Further guidance is available on how schools and other educational settings should plan for and deal with emergencies, including severe weather and floods.

Further guidance

Drugs

- Drugs: advice for schools
- Drug strategy 2017

Hate crime

- Racist and religious hate crime - how to recognise and report a hate crime

Radicalisation

- Prevent duty guidance - guidance on how to protect children from radicalisation
- Protecting children from radicalisation: the prevent duty

Safety and disaster management

- Safety and disaster management - RoSPA guidance on planning in advance and anticipating as many health and safety scenarios in schools as possible (should be used in conjunction with local authority advice)

School staffing advice

- Staffing and employment: advice for schools - guidance on managing staff and employment issues

Support for victims of terrorism

- Support for victims of terrorism - details of official helplines and support services available to victims, survivors, witnesses, family members, and all those affected by a terrorist attack

Violence in the workplace and personal security

HSE provides numerous pieces of guidance about handling work-related violence including setting up policies, how it should be managed and providing support after a major incident:

- Policies and procedures
- Work-related violence
- Risk assessment for work-related violence
- Reporting and recording violent incidents
- Violence - quick guide to control measures
- Violence - partnership working
- Providing support after an incident

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