

SECURING THE FUTURE



Guidance on School Security for School Governors and Head Teachers

SECURING THE FUTURE

Adverse incidents on school sites have received a great deal of publicity in recent years. As a result, central and local government have been extremely active in seeking to secure the health, safety and welfare of children whilst they are in school.

Conwy has addressed the specific needs of the schools in its authority and has sought to ensure the security of school sites, control access to schools and give guidance and support on personal safety.

This guidance handbook sets out the health and safety responsibilities of the various partners in the education service – Conwy CBC Education Services; School Governors; Head teachers; School Staff; Visitors to school sites and the pupils themselves.



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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CONWY CBC EDUCATION SERVICES

GOVERNORS AND HEAD TEACHERS RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGEMENT

Conwy CBC Education Services will provide advice, guidance, monitoring and support for Governors and Head teachers on all matters appertaining to security on schools sites (as outlined in this document).

School Governors should include in their annual report to parents, a section outlining the measures which have been taken to address school security issues. Head teachers are responsible for the day to day management of school security and the Governing Body will need to prepare its own statement outlining:-

- ✚ How the Governors exercise their responsibilities, e.g. whether through a committee or an individual Governor with specific responsibilities for security (perhaps in conjunction with health and safety issues).
- ✚ How each school is to complete a risk assessment checklist (e.g. Appendix 1). Advice and guidance is available from Conwy CBC Education Services on all aspects of risk assessment.
- ✚ Arrangements for consulting and informing all staff on security.
- ✚ How resources are being made available to address security issues.
- ✚ Staff training programme.
- ✚ Arrangements for reviewing the policy, including the frequency and nature of reports prepared by the Head teacher.
- ✚ The procedure for producing the Governors statutory annual reports to parents on security.

It is important to involve school staff in policy development *and* as far as is practicable, other site users such as parents.



RESOURCING SECURITY MEASURES

Considerable expenditure is not always essential for improving security. Reviewing existing procedures can often bring improvements with little extra cost.

Determine future priorities for security improvements and address them as part of a continuing programme. Education Authorities and School Governors have limited budgets and expenditure may need to be phased over a number of years.

Where considerable vandalism costs are regularly experienced, consider whether security measures such as C.C.T.V. installations would be cost-effective.

Conwy CBC Education Services will continue to bid for external funding which may be available to help improve security in schools.

Please contact Site Management in the first instance should you wish to progress any security issues within the school.

UNAUTHORISED USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES

Complaints are often received from schools regarding unauthorised use of school premises. This is a particularly difficult problem to address effectively.

Section 40(1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 states:

“Any person who without lawful authority is present on premises to which this section applies, and causes or permits nuisance or disturbance to the annoyance of persons who lawfully use those premises, (whether or not any such persons are present at the time), shall be guilty of an offence, and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine.”

Sub Section (3) states that either:

✚ A police constable

Or

✚ A person authorised by the Conwy CBC Education Services (usually the Head teacher or Caretaker) who believes, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that someone is committing, or has committed an offence under this section they may be removed from the premises. Proceedings can only be brought against the offender by the persons mentioned above.

WHEN ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM OF UNAUTHORISED USE OF SCHOOL SITES, GOVERNORS AND THE HEAD TEACHER SHOULD CONSIDER:

- ✚ Whether there is a tradition of informal use of the site by the community.
- ✚ Whether signs have been erected warning against causing a nuisance or disturbance.
- ✚ The practicalities of enforcing any “ban” as the site cannot be constantly manned.

- ✚ Potential for strong adverse reaction from the local community.
- ✚ Limited Police resources in terms of response to incidents.
- ✚ The cost of any prosecution and the time involved.
- ✚ Whether or not the persons are actually causing any significant damage or nuisance.

ACTION

- ✚ Advise local Police, Conwy CBC Education Services if unauthorised users are causing damage or being a nuisance.
- ✚ Formal arrangements must be established for hiring school premises outside the school day (*e.g. hiring and letting forms*)
- ✚ Ensure signs are erected warning against unauthorised use.
- ✚ Encourage local communities to report unauthorised use (particularly if vandalism is evident) e.g. The School Watch Initiative.
- ✚ If persistent and serious problems occur, liaise with Conwy CBC Education Services and local Police regarding the possibility of the prosecution (bearing in mind the need to identify offenders and the requirements of sub-section 3 of the 1982 Act referred to previously)



SECTION 2

SITE SECURITY

LIGHTING

THE AIM OF SECURITY LIGHTING IS TO ILLUMINATE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE THE EXTERIOR OF AN ESTABLISHMENT (BUT NOT INTERNAL COURTYARD OR REMOTE AREAS). THIS HAS TWO EFFECTS:

- ✚ The persons in the grounds of an establishment will be visible from a road or pathway, from private homes and commercial premises, and may possibly be reported to the police.
- ✚ If the police are called out by a member of the public or by an Intruder Alarm system they should be able to identify the problem on arrival.

CONSIDERATIONS

- ✚ Lights should be carefully positioned in order to obtain maximum benefit.
- ✚ Advice should be sought from Conwy CBC Education Services on the types of lights available, number, location and maintenance of such devices.

PERIMETER PROTECTION

- ✚ The boundary of an establishment is the first line of defence against crime. Existing perimeter boundary fences must be maintained in a good state of repair.
- ✚ Boundary fences must not obscure the establishment from view or provide cover for the criminal.
- ✚ Advice should be sought from the Conwy CBC Education Services if the Head teacher is unsure whether or not the perimeter is sufficiently protected.
- ✚ Consider public areas which adjoin roads, pathways and playing fields.
- ✚ If a public right of way runs across the school grounds, the possibility of re-routing the path should be investigated by the Conwy CBC Education Services
- ✚ Where public footpaths run alongside schools, consideration should be given to additional segregation from the school i.e. landscaping of an intervening space.
- ✚ Consider adjoining private residences i.e. sensitivity of neighbours when deciding on type and height of fence etc.
- ✚ Consider areas adjoining commercial premises.
- ✚ Gates should be managed during the day and locked shut out of school hours.

INTRUDER ALARMS

- ✚ Your risk assessment checklist will determine the need for an intruder alarm system. The decision as to whether an alarm system is fitted, improved or altered in any way should be in liaison with Conwy CBC Education Services
- ✚ The Head teacher of an establishment should ensure that all staff who operate the alarm system have thorough training in operating and setting the system.
- ✚ The school should consult Conwy CBC Education Services for advice and guidance prior to signing any contract or agreement.
- ✚ Advice document relating to Intruder Alarms can be found on the Simply Click website – Resources/Edu. Property and Site Management Services/Alarms Systems, Guidance Document

PROPERTY MARKING

- ✚ Consideration should be given to the type of equipment that requires security marking e.g. computer and AVA equipment.
- ✚ Schools who lease equipment will need the owner's permission before marking equipment.
- ✚ Items should be marked clearly and visibly with the establishment's postcode.
- ✚ Prominent notices should be displayed and full publicity given to the fact that equipment in the building has been marked and can be identified by Police or the Home Office register.

DELIBERATE FIRES

- ✚ Deliberate fires account for the greatest financial loss to the Authority. They are often associated with other, less serious vandalism e.g. graffiti, minor damage. If relatively minor incidents are allowed to go unchecked, the greater the risk of deliberate fires. It is therefore important to maintain a good liaison with the Police and neighbours to discourage the likelihood of attack.
- ✚ Skips and wheeled bins should be kept in a secure compound where possible away from main school building. Regular collection arrangements should also be in place.
- ✚ LPG cylinders should be stored well away from flammable material in a secure compound.
- ✚ Do you need a letter box? If so, position in such a way that an intruder cannot reach through it with a hand or other instrument. Limit the size of the letter box to 400mm.
- ✚ Advice is available from the Police, Conwy CBC Education Services and Fire & Rescue Service (on request).
- ✚ Recycling Facilities – need to be located away from the building with regular collections in place.



CONTRACTORS CATERING, CLEANING, BUILDING

Control of Contractors - the revised Code of Practice clearly identifies the Headteachers/Site Managers specific responsibilities and the need to complete “Contractors Accessing Site Checklist” and “Permit to Work” forms before any building works take place

Code of Practice and permit to work forms available to download from the Resource Section on Simply Click



SECTION 3

ACCESS CONTROL

SIGNS

- ✚ Erect clear signs, which make it difficult for unwelcome visitors to claim they are “lost”.
- ✚ Locate them in areas where they will be seen.
- ✚ Use directional arrows (Directing visitors to one school entrance).
- ✚ Where external lighting is not provided consideration should be given to luminous signs.
- ✚ Signs must comply with BS 5378.

KEY SECURITY

- ✚ Key holders must be kept to a minimum.
- ✚ Keys should be locked in a key safe or in a secure store or cupboard.
- ✚ Discourage the use of duplicate keys.
- ✚ Record the number of keys in existence.
- ✚ Record the names and addresses of key holders. Inform emergency services of any amendments

VISITORS

PUPILS SHOULD NOT OPEN THE DOOR TO VISITORS

- ✚ Visitors must use the main entrance door (so that their presence can be monitored).
- ✚ Ask visitors for identification.
- ✚ Ask visitors to sign visitors' book.
- ✚ Provide visitors with a "visitor badge" if possible.
- ✚ Visitors should be escorted (by staff).
- ✚ Lock away personal valuables to avoid sneak theft.
- ✚ Make appointments (wherever practicable).
- ✚ Vehicle delivery drivers should close gates.

WINDOWS

- ✚ Windows are the most vulnerable targets for vandalism and account for a large proportion of damage costs in schools.
- ✚ Windows are by far the most common method of illegal entry, particularly windows not in view.
- ✚ It is essential that all windows are secured when the building is unoccupied, and that keys for operated locks are kept separately.
- ✚ Blinds or curtains should be used to obscure expensive items or equipment. All blinds to be closed at night.
- ✚ Where possible expensive equipment e.g. TV's, videos should be kept away from windows.
- ✚ High risk windows may need window film (to make illegal entry more difficult).

DOORS

- ✚ Internal doors should be closed but not locked, unless designated as secure storage. Once inside a building, a thief can cause immense damage to locked doors, often greater than the value of the property stolen.
- ✚ Bolts on double doors should be placed into their sockets and floor sockets kept free from dirt.
- ✚ The integrity of fire doors should not be compromised. Conwy CBC Education Services and Fire & Rescue Service will give advice and guidance as appropriate.
- ✚ External door handles may be removed, when appropriate.
- ✚ External doors should be kept locked whenever it is reasonably practicable to do so, (preventing access but not exit).

SKYLIGHTS & FLAT ROOFS

- ✚ Consider anti-climbing paint on the top sections of drainpipes, tops of fences or railings.
- ✚ Skylights should be protected by wire mesh and internally fitted bars.
- ✚ Wherever physical measures are being considered, seek advice and guidance in the first instance from Conwy CBC Education Services.

SCHOOLS WITH COMMUNITY FACILITIES / LEISURE CENTRES

- ✚ Establish a clear policy to identify responsibility for effective control of lettings.
- ✚ Liaise regularly with Community groups/leisure management using the building.
- ✚ Encourage Community users to be vigilant and to report any incidents to the Police.
- ✚ Check all rooms including WC's when establishment closes to ensure that no one remains in the building.
- ✚ **Lock all access gates at the end of the day.**



SECTION 4

PERSONAL SAFETY

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR VERBAL OR PHYSICAL

Risk assessment will identify areas of vulnerability and control measures required i.e.

- ✚ Caretaking
- ✚ Reception Area
- ✚ Lone Working (see County guidelines)
- ✚ Evening Work
- ✚ Split site or removed building/s
- ✚ Working with pupils with behavioural difficulties
- ✚ Cash handling (see County guidelines)
- ✚ Supervising and disciplining pupils
- ✚ Public footpath through/alongside school

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR TRAINING

Training in avoidance and diffusing of violent incidents is fundamental. The Conwy CBC Education Services will make the necessary arrangements for challenging behaviour training. *Key elements:*

- ✚ Familiarisation with policy on violence.
- ✚ Techniques for preventing/avoiding violence.
- ✚ Calming aggressive people.
- ✚ Communication and interpersonal skills.
- ✚ Method of formally recording incidents – accident form CSU1
- ✚ Counselling employees exposed to violence.

INCIDENT RECORDING AND SHARING INFORMATION

- ✚ Record and report all incidents of anti social behaviour on school sites to the Police.
- ✚ Share information with schools in your area.
- ✚ Share security initiatives.
- ✚ Adopt a school watch programme.
- ✚ Adopt links with community groups.
- ✚ Liaise with emergency services.
- ✚ Joint training initiatives.
- ✚ Involve pupils and parents by circulating details of suspicious persons after consultation with the Police.



APPENDIX 1



ASSESSMENT OF SECURITY RISKS

A suitable and sufficient assessment of security risks is required to enable control measures to be devised.

Conwy CBC Education Services has provided a Risk Assessment checklist specifically on school security issues throughout the county. This should ensure that a standard of uniformity will be obtained on security issues throughout the County.

	YES	NO
LIGHTING		
Is external lighting checked to ensure correct functioning?		
Is the external lighting directed towards vulnerable areas during the hours of darkness?		
INTRUDER ALARMS		
Before setting the system, do you check that protected doors and windows are properly closed?		
Do you check that other devices, such as detectors are clear of obstacles?		
Do you have an alarm maintenance system in place?		
Has staff had training in the operation of the alarm system?		
PROPERTY MARKING		
Is valuable equipment visibly and permanently marked?		
Is valuable property also visibly marked?		
Is publicity (i.e. notices) given to the fact that equipment is marked?		
PERIMETER PROTECTION		
Are boundary fences maintained in a good state of repair?		
Do boundary barriers provide cover for criminals?		
Is there a public right of way across school grounds?		
ARSON		
Are wheeled bins secured and kept away from buildings?		
Are LPG cylinders stored well away from flammable liquids and combustible materials?		
Are flammable materials kept under lock and key?		
Are ladders (and similar equipment that could be used to gain access) secured when not in use?		
Are there any tell-tale signs of vandalism around the school?		
Can any person reach into the letter box?		
CONTRACTORS		
Permit to work and Asbestos Register viewed and signed?		
Do we know the name of the manager in charge of the contract?		
Do we know the arrangements for securing plant equipment?		
Are we aware of the services that may be connected or disrupted?		
Is there a clear defined agreement for delivery times?		
Do the contractors wear identification badges?		
Will the building site be illuminated during the hours of		

	YES	NO
darkness?		
Will work be undertaken outside normal hours?		
SIGNS		
Are signs erected to identify where main entrance/reception is located?		
Are they clearly visible even in hours of darkness?		
WINDOWS		
When the windows are closed, are catches checked to make sure that they function properly?		
If installed, are key-operated window locks used?		
Are curtains and blinds drawn to obscure from view expensive items?		
Do you have any windows which are vulnerable to criminals?		
DOORS		
Is there an established routine to ensure that all external doors are locked when the building closes?		
Are bolts on double doors checked to make sure they function properly?		
SKYLIGHTS/FLAT ROOFS/LETTER BOXES		
Are skylights protected by wire mesh or bars?		
Is access equipment (or similar objects which could provide access to flat roofs) secured outside normal hours?		
Are drainpipes and railings protected so as to avoid illegal entry?		
Is the letter box sited in a conspicuous location so that mail delivery can be observed?		
JOINT USE		
Are members of the public restricted to relevant parts of the building?		
Are adequate directional and restriction signs in place?		
When the building closes, are rooms such as toilets checked to ensure that no one is hiding?		
Are other users and neighbours encouraged to keep their eyes open for suspicious behaviour?		
Are liaison meetings with other school users in place?		
VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION TRAINING		
Has risk assessment been carried out to determine areas of vulnerability?		
Working alone		

	YES	NO
Evening Work		
Cash Handling		
Supervising and disciplining pupils		

Has practical training been provided for dealing with violence and aggression?		
Is there a school policy on violence and aggression?		
INCIDENT RECORDING/SHARING INFORMATION		
Are incidents recorded and investigated?		
Do you share information on security issues and initiatives with other schools in your area?		
Do you liaise with emergency services?		
Have you considered adopting a school watch programme?		
Do you advise pupils and parents regarding security issues?		