



Safeguarding: Physical Security and Visitor Control

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of ensuring the security of premises with regard to both people and property can not be stressed enough. Good security allows both staff and pupils to feel safe and confident in their surroundings.

Ofsted Expectations

Inspectors take into account the extent to which the school takes reasonable steps to ensure pupils are safe on the school site, for example by monitoring visitors or volunteers or those using the school premises during school time?

- Does the school have adequate security arrangements for grounds and buildings?

Whilst this statement is open to interpretation by an inspector, in a health and safety context 'reasonable' means taking into account costs, sacrifice, resources etc. against any potential risk and recognising that there is a balance between community access, the undesirable 'fortress school' and safeguarding.

Risk Assessment

These highlight that schools would not be found inadequate solely due to site issues such as footpaths running through school playing fields, holes in fences etc. but it is important schools have assessed and mitigated any such risks and ensured pupils are aware of them.

In order to demonstrate we have taken all reasonable steps to control visitors, we ensure that a robust risk assessment is in place for the effective supervision of pupils in each area of the school.

E.g. Playgrounds, Playing field / play equipment etc

Perimeter Fencing

The boundary of the school is defined and consistent around the entire perimeter. Fencing and gates are in good condition, at least 1.8 metres high.

For effective security, fencing such as weldmesh, super 70 is replacing wooden fencing as part of the school development.

Unless particularly dense and well developed, hedging is generally not acceptable, robust planting in conjunction with secure fencing can help aesthetically and is used in areas of the school grounds.

Gates

Lockable perimeter gates (with anti lift hinges) matches fencing heights and avoids features which assist climbing. Plans to install gates at the front of the school are within the wider plans for the development of the school site.

Gates are always be locked when the school is not in use. Closing gates (both pedestrian and vehicle) during the school day provides a deterrent to casual access and protects the children from leaving the premises.

Site Layout

Clear boundaries and signage removes any excuse for visitors wandering and aids staff in challenging those on site. Visitors can only access the school from the main entrance.

Prominent signage is displayed at all access points, car park etc. directing visitors to the main entrance.

Clearly defined route is place between site entrance and main reception, with direct access to children by visitors prevented.

Main access route has informal surveillance and as a result of building works in the summer of 2016, the school now has disabled access, a reception area and holding area to prevent visitors accessing the school without triaging.

Building design

External classroom doors can be made more secure through simple measures such as removal of the external handle in order it may be opened from inside only, or access restricted to staff use e.g. through keypad, proximity reader etc. However, the school has an open door policy throughtout the school day as a result of the needs of the pupils. All doors are locked and checked after school hours.

Where such doors are designed to be used as a fire exit they **must** remain immediately openable internally without the use of a key.

Reception

Reception does not have a full view of anyone entering the school, though access within the building is signposted for visitors.

Visitor access is controlled by reception through an electronic entry system: intercom / buzzer entry.

Visitors enter into a secure lobby area with access beyond reception controlled by office staff and staff through an entry system.

Key codes on security doors are changed regularly.

Electronic access doors

In all cases doors with electronic locks fitted fail in the open position and open automatically upon:-

- Operation of the fire alarm system;
- Loss of electrical power;

- Operation of an adjacent override;
- Loss of power / fault with the fire alarm system.

Procedures for dealing with visitors

All visitors, including contractors sign in and are asked to produce evidence of their identity –where appropriate.

The Collett School, St.Luke’s School and Forest House Education Centre all institute an identity badge system to enable staff to differentiate between authorised callers and their visit purpose. These are electronically printed sticky labels, required to be visible at all times, and record visits over the course of time.

Staff should be instructed to politely challenge any person not displaying identification and direct them to the main reception. Pupils should be encouraged to inform staff of any suspicious people they have seen.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further advice on is obtainable from :

- Your Herts Constabulary local Safer Neighbourhood Team are available by entering your postcode or council ward and district in the following link.
<http://snt.herts.police.uk/aCMS/meet.php>
- The Health and Safety (Education) team on 01992 556478

[Section L](#) of Property Matters provides detailed guidance on site security issues.