SCHOOL SECURITY

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1. THE LAW

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 covers the unauthorised use of school sites, this gave Local Education Authorities the power to prosecute where nuisance and disturbance on educational premises was being experienced.

2. KEY ACTION POINTS

- Record, in full detail, any incidents that occur
- Ensure that employees are aware of the correct procedures are that these are adhered to.
- Make sure the safe systems that are in place in school are used correctly and efficiently eg door locking systems
- Full documented risk assessments for the security of the building are implemented

3. RECORDING OF INCIDENTS ON SCHOOL PREMISES

3.1 To take effective legal action against offenders who cause nuisance and/or disturbance on school premises it is important to have a contemporaneous account of events. Such a record, if sufficiently detailed can form valuable evidence.

3.2 Criminal offences such as assault and criminal damage may be dealt with by the Police. Other offences such as trespass and nuisance may be dealt with by the Authority under Education Legislation. But any action depends on the availability of an account of relevant incidents written at the time of each incident. Without such information, the Police may merely have a discussion with the offenders (and/or their parents), and this course of action is seen by the wrongdoers as a soft option, and is open to ridicule.

3.3 In addition to reporting the Accident/Violent Incident on MyView, the attached “Witness Report Form” devised by Legal Services is commended for use, to record incidents as and when they occur.

3.4 A copy of the form needs to be completed by each person who witnesses a particular incident as soon as possible following the incident. A file for completed forms will need to be maintained in school. Any letters written to offenders about revocation of parental licence or about nuisance and disturbance together with all Witness Report Forms relating to the particular individual will form the basis of evidence if the problem escalates to the point where further action needs to be considered.

3.5 Staff should be encouraged to support this initiative which is intended to be a helpful contribution to the protection of schools, their staff and pupils.

3.6 Schools are free to photocopy or print off the attached form as necessary.

3.8 WITNESS REPORT FORM

INCIDENT AT ..... SCHOOL

Name of Witness: .....

Date and Time of Incident: .....

Type of Incident: .....

Location at Site: .....

Details, including Actual Words spoken:

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Names of Any Other Witness(s):

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4. PARENT'S LICENCE TO ENTER SCHOOL

4.1 Parents have a limited "Licence" (right) to enter the premises of the school that their children attend. This has derived from the practice of schools permitting, even welcoming, parents to enter school premises especially to deal with matters relating to their children's education. Whilst the terms of such a "licence" are not clear they would normally be derived from common sense and the usual practice of the school concerned.

4.2 This licence does not, however, allow parents to roam the school premises at will nor to disrupt the day to day activities of the school, nor abuse or otherwise interfere with school staff or for that matter, other children or anyone else.

4.3 In these circumstances should any disruption/abuse arise, it is possible for the parental "licence" to be revoked but case law requires that proper procedures must be followed. Schools should, therefore, in consultation with the LA, set down in writing the terms of these "licences" including the procedures for circumstances in which such licences may be revoked.

4.4 This LA advises schools in persistent cases of unacceptable behaviour, to consider "banning" parents from school premises for a determined period of time. "Bans" should only to be imposed as a last resort and after appropriate warnings about the action that will be taken if the problem persists. A "ban" cannot be total, access must still be allowed to discuss educational matters relating to the "banned" parent's child(ren), but made subject to formal appointment so that their presence on the school premises can be appropriately controlled and managed by the school. Arrangements for review when the Headteacher can be satisfied that acceptable behaviour will/can prevail should also be included in the arrangements. A model letter for use by schools is attached.

4.5 Parents must be given the opportunity to comment on the "ban" particularly any factors that they feel might cause a Headteacher to reconsider its imposition. It is not unreasonable for a temporary "ban" to be imposed pending receipt and consideration of any such comments.

4.6 To assist schools to meet these requirements model terms of a "Parent Licence" that can be applied by any school is set out in section 4.9 and a model prospectus entry in 4.8. In individual cases additional terms may be added to meet particular local circumstances, subject to consultation with the LA to ensure such additional terms could not be deemed unreasonable or perverse.

4.7 Terms and procedures need to be formally adopted by school governing bodies and be added into the school's disciplinary code.

4.8 Model School Prospectus Entry

Parental "Licence" to Attend School

Through the school's practice of welcoming parents of its registered pupils into the school and parents natural need to visit the school from time to time to deal with matters related to their children's education; parents acquire, a limited "licence" to enter the school premises.

In certain, rare circumstances of either very serious or persistent cases of unacceptable behaviour this "licence" may be revoked by the Headteacher.

The full policy document setting out the detailed terms and procedures of this school's "Parental Licence to Attend School" is available from the school office for interested parents.

4.9. Model Policy Document

Parental "Licence" to attend school
Policy/Terms/Procedures to apply

..... School

Through the School's practice of welcoming parents of registered pupils into the school and the natural right of parents to visit the school from time to time to deal with matters related to their children's education, parents acquire, what is seen in law as, a limited "licence" to enter the premises of the school at which their children are educated.

In certain, rare circumstances this "licence" may be revoked by the Headteacher.

Policy/Terms of the School's Parental Licence

- Parents of registered pupils are welcomed into our school
- The "Parental Licence" is only acquired by parents of registered pupils at the school and pertains only whilst such parents have a child actually registered at school.
- Parents are expected to conduct themselves in a proper manner whilst on the school premises and to observe normal common courtesies.
- The "Licence" does not give any parent any right to roam the school at will or any right to enter the school premises outside normal school times, at weekends, or school holiday periods.
- The "Licence" does not give any parent the right to disrupt in any way the delivery of education at the school nor to otherwise behave in an unacceptable manner towards the premises, its staff, its children or their belongings or any other persons on the premises.
- The "Licence" does not give any parent any right to expect to be able to access members of the school's staff or the Headteacher outside the normal arrangements for making appointments.

4.10. Circumstances in which the "Parental Licence" may be revoked.

Revocation of the "Parental Licence" will be considered in persistent cases falling into any of the following categories:

4.10.1 Any behaviour on school premises towards staff, pupils, parents or anyone else on the school premises deemed by the Headteacher as being unacceptable and/or

4.10.2 Physical or verbal abuse of staff, pupils, parents or anyone else on the school premises.

4.10.3 Misuse, abuse, damage of/to any school staff, pupils' parents' or anyone else's property or equipment on the school premises.

4.10.4 Any nuisance or disturbance on the school premises (eg any unauthorised use of the premises, trespass, dog walking, playing of games etc) in or out of school hours, including evenings, weekends or school holiday periods.

4.11 Procedures leading to revocation of The Parental Licence.

4.11.1 In exceptional, very serious circumstances related to the safety of staff, pupils, other parents, any other persons, property and/or equipment etc the parental licence may be revoked without prior warning.

4.11.2 In most circumstances the Headteacher will have warned the parent concerned either verbally or in writing, (whichever is the most practicable in the circumstances) on at least one previous occasion. Notifying them that their behaviour was unacceptable and will not be tolerated and that if it persisted would result in the parent being "banned" from the premises;

4.11.3 Where unacceptable behaviour persists after prior warning; or the circumstances are so serious to warrant an immediate ban, the Headteacher shall:

4.11.4 If practicable tell the parent they are "banned" from the premises and that they should leave immediately. The Police should be notified if any difficulties arise and the parent concerned refuses to leave the premises:

4.11.5 Write to the parent concerned setting out the reasons for the ban and the period of the ban if it is not to be left open ended. The letter should also include an opportunity for the parent to make written representations to the Headteacher against the imposition of the ban and its continuance as well as details of when and how the ban will be reviewed. The letter should also explain that, as and when necessary, the parent will be allowed onto the premises for legitimate educational reasons relating to the education of their child on a strict appointment basis only.

4.11.6 In the case of Primary school include: "For the duration of this decision you may bring your child (put full name) to school and collect them at the end of the school day, but you must not go beyond the school gate".

4.11.7 In the case of Infant school insert: "Arrangements have been made for your child (put full name) to be collected and returned to you, at the school gate by a member of the School's staff.

4.11.6 Consider any representations made and determine whether to continue the ban and for how long and to convey that decision to the parent in writing.
Set up review arrangements. Review must be undertaken at least once a week. The outcome of each review should be notified to the parent in writing on each occasion.

4.12 REVOCATION OF PARENTAL LICENCE TO ENTER SCHOOL – Model letter

Model letter from Headteacher to parent to control access to the school premises following unacceptable behaviour:

Dear

Revocation of Parental Licence to Enter School

Following our conversation (earlier today/yesterday/last week/etc) when you (describe nature of behaviour/abuse), I am formally notifying you of the arrangements your behaviour has forced me to establish to control your future access to school to deal with any matters relating to the education of your (child/ren).

With immediate effect you will, in future, only be allowed onto these school premises if you have made a prior appointment to see me. My telephone contact number is shown at the head of this letter. The arrangements I shall make will attempt to ensure that you have no or little opportunity to repeat the behaviour you have recently demonstrated.

I reiterate that the school will not tolerate such behaviour from any parent, nor will the Local Authority to whom I have had to report this incident under their required procedures.

If there are any mitigating circumstances or other comments you feel would justify the lifting of this ban which should be taken into consideration, please let me have them, in writing, as soon as possible.

If after considering your comments I decide that the continuation of the ban is still justified I shall review this situation on at least, weekly basis following which I shall write to you with my decision. For your information I can tell you that I shall only be prepared to lift this ban when I can be completely satisfied that you are prepared to behave in an acceptable manner and that there will not be a repeat of the intolerable behaviour that caused me to have to impose the ban in the first place.

I sincerely hope that this need not be too long and should you wish to discuss anything with me in respect of this, I shall be happy to receive your telephone call.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Cc: Telford & Wrekin Council (LA) for the attention of Business Partners, People Services

5. NUISANCE AND DISTURBANCE ON EDUCATIONAL PREMISES

Problems arise from time to time as a result of unauthorised access to school grounds particularly outside school hours.

School grounds and playing fields are private property.

5.1 Under Section 47 of the Education Act 1996 any person who without lawful authority is present on the premises of a school or other educational establishment (including playgrounds, playing fields and other premises for outdoor recreation) 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) is guilty of an offence and can be fined by a Magistrates Court.

5.2 A Police Constable or a person authorised by the Local Authority who has reasonable cause to suspect that any person is committing or has committed such offence, has the power to remove that person from the premises.

5.3 The Corporate Director, Children and Young People can authorise certain members of staff at each school or establishment to exercise the powers under the Act such as Headteachers, deputy Headteachers, caretakers or assistant caretakers and cleaners-in-charge. Upon receipt of the full names and designations of those concerned the necessary form of authority can be issued.

5.4 The Local Authority, to meet the requirements of this legislation, hereby authorises all those members of staff of LA maintained community and voluntary controlled schools whom Headteachers consider have the necessary experience for dealing with such situations and who, as part of their normal day to day duties and responsibilities for the safety, security and supervision of the site, would be expected to deal with, including the challenging and removal of, unauthorised users of the school premises.

For Foundation and voluntary aided schools similar authorisation needs to be given by the respective governing body.

5.5 No member of staff is encouraged to put themselves at risk in exercising this power. No members of staff should put themselves in the position of approaching an individual or group where they feel they may not be able to control the situation. The obvious factors to bear in mind are the age and number of a particular group, the time of day at which any approach is made, the presence of other persons on the premises who could give assistance or telephone the Police if necessary etc. The need to act with restraint is emphasised.

5.6 If any authorised person has to remove any person from the premises this would normally be done by pointing out to that person that there is reasonable cause to suspect that s/he is committing or has committed an offence by causing or permitting a nuisance or disturbance and thereby persuading him/her to leave the premises in a peaceful manner. Only such force as is reasonably necessary to secure the removal of a person from the premises can be used. **In practice as it is so difficult to satisfy that condition all staff are instructed that force of any type must not be used.**

5.7 It is difficult to give an exhaustive definition of what constitutes a nuisance or disturbance but the following examples may be of assistance:

- Unruly behaviour.

- The exercising of dogs and allowing them to foul the premises.

- The playing of games – some care needs to be exercised on this topic. A game of football being played by youngsters on a corner of the school field may not be causing a nuisance. The factors to be borne in mind would be the proximity of games to buildings also, where damage might be caused eg damage to goal posts, permanent damage to the playing surface by excessive wear, etc. Other activities such as the practising of golf are dangerous to both person and property and would probably constitute a nuisance in any circumstances.

- The use of foul language or abuse.

- However, a person who simply walks across a playing field eg as a short cut, would not necessarily be committing an offence unless of course the short cut is so regularly used by people in the neighbourhood that it is causing damage to the playing field surface. Nuisance may also be caused during the course of the school day eg where a short cut over school grounds causes difficulties in exercising oversight over school pupils or unauthorised access by ex-pupils during the course of the school day.

5.8 The essential information required in order that action can be taken is:

5.9 The name and address of the person who is alleged to have committed the offence. In some cases the name of the person involved may already be known to the member of staff and it will not be necessary to secure the name and address of the person on the occasion of the incident although if prosecution is to follow it would be desirable to be able to show that the person concerned was advised that they were committing an offence and that they should leave the school premises.

5.10 The date, time and place of the incident.

5.11 Details and nature of the incident

5.12 How removal from the premises was effected (if the person was removed)

5.13 Name of the authorised person concerned

5.14 The Witness Report Form contained in Telford & Wrekin Council's "Administrative Advice for Headteachers and Schools" Handbook, Paper 13 should be used for the purpose of recording and submitting this information to the LA.

5.15 The Police are aware of the legislation and in difficult circumstances it might be prudent to summon Police assistance.

5.16 In the first instance a warning letter needs to be sent to offenders. This can either be sent by the school, as some schools have preferred to do, or by the Council's Legal Services.

For schools' use, a model warning letter is set out below. The Council's Legal Services have advised that it is inappropriate to include a direct threat of prosecution in the first letter. This letter should be firm but conciliatory informing the offender that it is an offence to cause a nuisance or

disturbance on school premises, which is a serious matter, and should give an opportunity to avoid further legal action. All evidence including copies of warning letters should be held on file.

Should problems persist, cases should be referred to the Council's Legal Services together with all relevant evidence, witness statements and copy warning letters so that further action including prosecution can be considered. For a prosecution to be successful the necessary evidence together with witnesses willing to attend court are required.

MODEL WARNING LETTER

For use by schools who prefer to issue their own "first instance" warning letter. Alternatively, cases can be referred to the Council's Legal Services for "first instance" warning letters to be issued.

Addressee to be the person committing the nuisance or disturbance in the case of a child (under 18 years of age) the child's parent(s)

Dear

On (date) at approximately (time) you (or "your child name)" were/was witnessed (describe incident of nuisance or disturbance) on the school premises (if more specific description is available – eg school playing fields, school reception area, school gymnasium etc, use it). You/child's name were/was advised that you/child his/her actions constituted nuisance and/or disturbance and you (or child) were asked to leave the premises by (name of authorised member of staff) who is an appropriately authorised member of the School's staff to take this action.

Under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 it is an offence to commit nuisance or disturbance on school premises. This letter is, therefore, formal warning that there should be no repetition of the behaviour described.

Should this problem persist I shall have no option other than to refer the matter to Telford & Wrekin Council's Legal Services for the consideration of further action against you. I sincerely hope that this will not prove necessary.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

6. UNAUTHORISED ACCESS AT RECEPTION - DEPARTURE TIMES

6.1 Review risk assessments of access arrangements at these times to consider whether any additional measures need to be put in place to resolve or reasonably control such problems.

6.2 It is recognised that access by parents at such times, particularly in primary schools, is seen as being an important part of school relationships. However, such arrangements should not be allowed to compromise children's or staff safety or the security of the premises.

6.3 All school situations will be different. It is unlikely therefore, that a common solution could meet all needs and circumstances. Differences will exist between primary and secondary school situations because of the varying layouts of buildings, various access doors having to be used, existence of transport, numbers of staff available for supervision, other legitimate site users etc.

6.4 It is essential that each school considers its own individual situation and reviews risk assessments on a regular basis to check whether arrangements are in place to effectively resolve or suitably control any possible intruder situation. Some issues that need to be considered follow:

- Use one point of access rather than several. If this is not possible, reduce entrances to a more manageable number that can be adequately supervised and therefore controlled effectively.

- Ensure that staff are able to oversee and manage access, that they are situated both inside and outside the building entrances.

- That there are sufficient staff to deal with pupil/parent needs – staff involved with individual pupils/parents cannot also maintain an effective watch against potential unauthorised access.

- Ensure that access beyond the designated reception or collection areas are protected either by locked doors or staff supervision.

- Make a specific point of checking communal and unoccupied areas as soon as arrival/departure finishes

- Consider suitable access/departure management arrangements to try and create an ordered rather than chaotic environment. Perhaps "in" and "out" arrangements, only so many pupils/parents allowed in at a time (particularly parents with prams, pushchairs), rather than a free for all.

- Parents who need to talk to staff should either have recourse to a designated person whose attention to them will not dilute the overall "access supervision" arrangements, or they wait until attention can be given either after reception/departure is complete or at some other appointed time.

- If there is a need to supervise pupils disembarking or boarding vehicles, orderly supervision arrangements will need to be made to deal with this in addition to those dealing with other pupils.

- Provide staff with walkie-talkies/mobile telephones as a means of rapid communication in the case of an incident.

- Secondary schools are unlikely to have a problem with parents at these times but even so should establish arrangements that can reasonably ensure unauthorised access cannot be gained unnoticed when pupils are entering/leaving the site.

- Some schools may have to consider changing their arrangements to the extreme of not allowing parents into the building at all if this is the only way they feel they can reasonably ensure the safety of pupils/security of the premises.

7. BUSINESS (SCHOOL) WATCH

7.1 Business Watch was established to improve security and reduce risk at all school sites and the contract is renegotiated annually. For those participating schools, evening and night time patrols are carried out by guards.

7.2 At weekends and during school holidays, daytime visits are also undertaken.

7.3 In the event of a school alarm activating, the alarm company contact Business Watch and the named keyholder which could, in some case, also be School Watch.

7.4 The guards make their way to the school site to investigate the situation and take the appropriate action e.g. contact the Police or a glazing company.

7.5 In the situation where a member of staff is the named keyholder the guard will meet the person on site and accompany them whilst inspecting the buildings.

7.6 For those sites experiencing high levels of vandalism, the opportunity exists for increasing the number of site visits made by School Watch.

8. ASSESSMENT OF SECURITY RISKS - CHECKLISTS

Assessment of security risks is done to enable control measures to be devised. As an authority we need to have an idea of the relative importance of risks and know as much about them as we can in order to take decisions on control measures which are both appropriate and cost effective.

The checklist is designed to remind those who have a responsibility for carrying out the security inspections of important items to check.

	LIGHTING	Yes	No
1	Is external lighting checked to ensure correct functioning?		
2	Is the external lighting directed towards vulnerable areas during the hours of darkness?		
	INTRUDER ALARMS		
1	Before setting the system, do you check that protected doors and windows are closed properly?		
2	Do you check that other devices, such as detectors are clear of obstacles?		
3	Do you have an alarm maintenance system in place?		
4	Have staff received training in the operation of the alarm system		
5	Are all weekly checks carried out on the alarm recorded along with the location point?		
	PROPERTY MARKING		
1	Is valuable equipment visibly and permanently marked?		
2	Is valuable property also invisibly marked?		
3	Are there notices informing that equipment is marked?		
	PERIMETER PROTECTION		
1	Are boundary fences maintained in a good state of repair?		
2	Do boundary barriers provide cover for criminals?		
3	Is there a public right of way across school grounds?		
	ARSON		
1	Are wheeled bins secured and kept away from buildings?		
2	Are LPG cylinders stored well away from flammable liquids and combustible materials?		
3	Are flammable materials kept under lock and key?		
4	Are ladders and similar equipment that could be used to gain access, secured when not in use?		
5	Are there any tell-tale signs of vandalism around the school building?		
6	Can any person reach into the letter box?		
	INCIDENT RECORDING/SHARING INFORMATION		
1	Are incidents recorded and investigated?		
2	Do you share information on security issues and initiatives with other schools in your area?		
3	Do you liaise with Emergency Services?		
4	Have you considered adopting a School Watch programme?		
5	Do you advise pupils and parents regarding security issues?		
	CONTRACTORS	**Yes**	**No**

1	Is the LA Officer responsible for Contractors defined?		
2	Do we know the name of the Manager in charge of the Contract?		
3	Do we know the arrangements for securing plant and equipment?		
4	Are we aware of the services that may be disconnected or disrupted?		
5	Do we know the duration of the project?		
6	Is there a clearly defined agreement for delivery times?		
7	Do the Contractors wear identification badges?		
8	Will the building site be illuminated during the hours of darkness?		
9	Will work be undertaken outside normal hours?		
10.	Are they shown the Asbestos Survey Reports and sign to say they have read and understood the contents before they undertake any works on the schools site?		
	DIRECTION SIGNS AND VISITORS		
1	Are signs to main reception area clearly visible for all visitors?		
2	Are visitors encouraged to use the main entrance door?		
3	Are you and your staff able to monitor the arrival and departure of visitors?		
4	Are visitors asked for identification?		
5	Are visitors escorted to their destinations?		
6	Do your staff challenge strangers they see in the building?		
7	Are staff aware of the need to look after personal property?		
8	Is there an appointment system for vehicle school deliveries?		
	KEYS		
1	Is a key register maintained within your school?		
2	Is there a policy for obtaining keys in an emergency outside normal hours?		
3	Is the key register audited at regular intervals?		
4	Is there a key safe in use?		
	WINDOWS AND DOORS		
1	When windows are closed, are catches checked to make sure that they function properly?		
2	If installed, are key-operated window locks used?		
3	Are curtains and blinds drawn to obscure from view enticing items?		
4	Do you have any windows which are vulnerable to criminals?		
	DOORS		
1	Is there an established routine to ensure that all external doors are locked when the building closes?		
2	Are bolts on double doors checked to make sure they function properly?		
3	Are appropriate doors open at arriving/leaving times and supervised to ensure unwanted personnel cannot gain entry – and other doors kept locked?		
	SKYLIGHTS – FLAT ROOFS – LETTER BOXES		
1	Are skylight protected by wire mesh or bars?		
2	Is access equipment or similar objects which would provide access to flat roofs, secured outside normal hours?		
3	Are drainpipes and railings protected so as to avoid illegal entry?		
4	Is the letter box sited in a conspicuous location so that mail delivery can be observed?		

	JOINT USE	Yes	No
1	Are members of the public restricted to relevant parts of the building?		
2	Are adequate directional and restriction signs in place?		
3	When the building closes are rooms such as toilets checked to ensure no one is hiding?		
4	Are other users and neighbours encouraged to keep their eyes and ears open for suspicious behaviour?		
5	Are liaison meetings with other school users in place?		
	VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION/TRAINING		
1	Has a documented risk assessment been carried out to determine areas of vulnerability? a) Working alone at remote split sites b) Evening Work c) Cash handling d) Supervising and disciplining of pupils		
2	Has Personal Safety Training and practical training been provided for dealing with violence and aggression?		
3	Have staff read Telford & Wrekin's "Personal Safety Policy"?		

9. USEFUL WEBSITES

www.dfes.gov.uk/schoolsecurity - The Department's school security website

www.teachernet.gov.uk/responsibilities - includes the Departmental publication **Health & Safety Responsibilities and Powers**

www.teachernet.gov.uk/streetcrime - includes the guidance **Police-School Protocols: Principles and guidance on Safer School Partnerships**

http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/raindex.htm - Includes Health & Safety Executive (HSE) guidance on risk assessments

http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns.edis1.htm - includes HSE guidance on Reporting School Accidents

http://213.212.77.20/riddor/index.htm - The HSE RIDDOR website