



Department  
for Education

# School security

**Government consultation**

**Launch date 26 November 2018**

**Respond by 18 February 2019**

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## Introduction

The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on proposed new guidance for employers, headteachers, teachers and other school staff to help them to deal with security related incidents in their schools. The full guidance is [available on Gov.uk](#). All school staff and pupils must be able to work in a safe and secure environment. Whilst schools continue to be amongst the safest places to be, no school can afford to ignore the risk and impact of having to deal with a range of security related incidents. The department is therefore proposing to publish new school security guidance that will provide schools with access to a range of information sources and tools that will help them to develop sensible and proportionate policies and plans to meet their security needs.

## Who this is for

- Head teachers, teachers, other school staff and governing boards<sup>1</sup> in maintained schools and academies, including pupil referral units
- Proprietors of independent and non-maintained schools
- Local authorities

Whilst this guidance is provided for schools, it will also be relevant to further education and sixth form colleges.

## Consultation dates

The consultation was issued on 26 November 2018. To allow sufficient time for schools and others to consider and comment on the proposals. The consultation closes on 18 February 2019.

## Enquiries

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact the team at: [schoolsecurity.consultation@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:schoolsecurity.consultation@education.gsi.gov.uk)

If your enquiry is related to the DfE e-consultation website or the consultation process in general, you can contact the DfE Ministerial and Public Communications Division by email: [consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk) or by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the [DfE Contact us page](#).

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<sup>1</sup> The board should be taken to mean the accountable body for the school or group of schools: in local authority (LA) maintained schools, this will be the governing body and in an academy trust this will be the board of trustees (committees to whom the board has delegated functions should take account of guidance to *the board*, in so far as the relevant function has been delegated to them)

### **Additional copies**

Additional copies are available electronically and can be downloaded from [GOV.UK DfE consultations](#).

### **The response**

The results of the consultation and the Department's response will be [published on GOV.UK](#) in spring 2019.

## About this consultation

This consultation document seeks feedback on proposals for new school security guidance. The department recognises that the existing guidance does not provide schools with the information needed to draw up effective school security policies and plans. The aim of the guidance is to provide schools with information to help them to handle the range of security matters that they are most likely to face. This guidance sets out how schools can use the framework, described in the guidance, to introduce or update their security plans.

The guidance has been informed by representatives from the education sector, including school employers and staff, security and education experts from across government and from the trade unions.

**Section 1:** Seeks feedback on whether or not the framework presented will enable schools to develop their own security policies and plans.

**Sections 2 to 5:** Explains each stage of the framework and invites comment on whether or not there is sufficient information for schools to use to be able to draft and implement their policies and plans across the stages.

**Section 6:** Invites comment on specific security matters that may help the department to develop this policy area in the future.

## Respond online

To help us analyse the responses please use the online system wherever possible. Visit [www.education.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations) to submit your response.

## Other ways to respond

If, for exceptional reasons, you are unable to use the online system, for example because you use specialist accessibility software that is not compatible with the system, you may download a word document version of the form and email it or post it.

### By email

[schoolsecurity.consultation@education.gov.uk](mailto:schoolsecurity.consultation@education.gov.uk)

### By post

School Security Consultation, Teacher Regulation, School Safeguarding and Security Team, Level 0, Department for Education, Bishopsgate House, Feethams, Darlington, DL1 5QE.

## **Deadline**

The consultation closes on 18 February 2019.

# Section 1

## Creating a school security policy and plan

This section explains the context in which the school security guidance has been developed and why schools should consider how security is managed. It clarifies why it is important for every school to be able to determine a proportionate response in order to address local security matters.

Throughout the guidance schools are signposted to a range of expert advice, tools and resources. The guidance describes a framework that takes schools through a process that starts with the identification of security risks and ends with the evaluation of plans following a security incident.

In summary the framework guides schools through the:

- identification of internal and external security risks;
- introduction of strategies to manage identified security risks;
- development of preventative measures that are proportionate and tailored to each school's assessment of the security risks;
- setting up of plans to respond, recover and evaluate security arrangements after an incident.

## Proposal

**Question 1:** Does the guidance provide schools with sufficient information to be able to develop a security policy and plan to reflect its characteristics and local priorities?

**Question 2:** Is there anything missing from the guidance that would help a school to develop its policy and plan?

## Section 2

### Identification of internal and external risks

In this section schools are directed to the health and safety risk assessment procedures with which many schools will already be familiar and which can be adapted and used to undertake a security risk assessment. The importance of partnership working with the local security networks and police is explained, along with information on how to link up with those networks.

We recognise that each school will approach security risk assessments differently and put in place policies and procedures that reflect its own characteristics, size and location. To help schools to develop security assessments we have included a series of prompts that explain some potential risk areas that some schools may want to use to inform their thinking, and which others may find useful to review an existing risk assessment.

We want to establish whether the guidance is adequate for all schools to be able to work with partner organisations to identify security risks.

It would also be helpful for the department to understand more about the types of security issues that are being identified by schools in order to determine whether additional advice may be useful in a particular area.

### Proposal

**Question 3:** Does the guidance provide a mechanism for all schools to be able to identify the internal and external security risks they may face? If not, please indicate what could be included in the guidance.

**Question 4:** What do you see as the main security issues facing your school and/or schools in your local area?



## Section 3

### Managing risks

This section helps schools determine what to do once potential security risks have been identified. It advises schools to take steps to determine the likelihood of an incident occurring, and to assess its impact, before putting in place plans to manage and keep the identified risks under review. The guidance signposts schools to advice that will help them develop measures to limit the risk. We acknowledge that schools should take a proportionate and sensible approach to risk management.

### Proposal

**Question 5:** Does the guidance provide sufficient information for schools to put in place measures to manage the risks identified?

**Question 6:** If not, please indicate what could be included in the guidance?

## Section 4

### Prevention and whole school approach

This section asks schools to consider how local and national security concerns might impact on their day to day business and to think about how effective preventative measures can reduce the chances of a serious incident happening.

Schools are signposted to specific sites where they can readily access available tools and resources. These resources can be used to help raise general security awareness, drive cultural change and educate and inform school staff and pupils about various security related matters, for example dealing with pupils carrying prohibited<sup>2</sup> items, restricting access to and the barring of abusive or threatening individuals from school premises and how to respond if caught up in a terrorist attack inside or outside of school. The guidance encourages schools to consider the use of innovative practice to help lessen or prevent a serious incident. In the guidance reference is made to supporting pupils to report any information on the possibility of a serious incident happening, which will allow school staff to collect, evaluate and if necessary intervene to prevent an incident occurring.

### Proposal

**Question 7:** Does the guidance provide sufficient direction to help schools identify appropriate preventative measures to limit or lessen the chances of an incident occurring?

**Question 8:** What innovative preventative measures has your school used, for example, anonymous reporting mechanisms? What degree of success have you had in using such innovative measures?

**Question 9:** Please provide examples of how a whole school approach has helped you to deal with identified security risks.

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<sup>2</sup> Prohibited items are knives or weapons; alcohol; illegal drugs; stolen items; tobacco and cigarette papers; fireworks; pornographic images; any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been or is likely to, used to commit an offence or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of any person (including pupils)

## Section 5

### Recovery

Restoring business as usual in the aftermath of a serious incident can place significant pressure on those involved. Effective business continuity/recovery planning will help things to run smoothly in a time of crisis, enabling attention to be directed to the immediate emergency, for example, injured staff and/or pupils.

The guidance signposts schools to sources of information which will help them to draw up effective recovery plans. The guidance also stresses the need for schools to evaluate how plans stood up when dealing with a real security incident. It further encourages schools to consider the outcomes of their evaluation and use their findings to refresh and update existing plans.

The consultation seeks to understand the effectiveness of the evaluation procedures when schools have had to consider post incident recovery.

### Proposal

**Question 10:** Does the guidance provide sufficient information to enable schools to draw up recovery and evaluation plans? If not, please indicate what should be included?

**Question 11:** Drawing on your experience over the last 24 months, how did you evaluate the effectiveness of your recovery plans and how did your plans change as a consequence?

## Section 6

### General questions

The department is seeking to extend its evidence base and to gain more insight into the type and frequency of security incidents in schools. The following questions seek to obtain information that would help the department to consider what more could be done to help schools to deal with security related matters and to inform the development of work in this policy area in the future.

### Proposal

#### Weapons in school

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of young people being fatally injured or drawn into carrying and using offensive weapons, particularly knives. This guidance provides general information to help schools educate and raise awareness with staff and pupils on the consequences of carrying offensive weapons in and outside of school, how to restrict weapons in school and how to put in place plans to prevent and respond to a serious incident.

**Question 12:** Does the guidance help schools to educate and raise awareness with staff and pupils about the consequences of carrying weapons?

**Question 13:** Can you provide examples of how your school currently deters and restricts the risk of weapons being brought into school?

#### Working with the police

This guidance explains the benefits of building and maintaining relationships, especially with the local police and security networks, both in terms of preparing and responding to risks and to identify emerging risks.

**Question 14:** Please give examples that provide an illustration of close partnership working with the police and local security networks and explain why they are effective?

**Question 15:** How could this partnership working be built on or improved?

### Next Steps

A formal response to this consultation will be published with the School Security guidance in spring 2019.



Department  
for Education

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