

## Security in schools – new guidance from the Department for Education

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The guidance stresses the need for schools and colleges to instate specific policies and plans to manage any incidents relating to security. The aim is for these policies to complement existing safeguarding measures already in place.

In addition to the designated safeguarding lead, the new guidance also advises appointing a lead person responsible for health & safety and security.

It also advises that schools develop existing local relationships and form strategic partnerships with their local authorities and police to create a network where information on security can be shared. It is anticipated later this year that The National Police Chief's Council will produce its own guidance to help schools and colleges determine when to contact the police. Collaborating with neighbouring schools and colleges is also encouraged.

Whilst the predominant focus is school security, the guidance also offers notes on the following:

- Health and safety obligations
- Planning for and management of incidents or emergencies occurring either during or outside of normal working hours
- Business continuity management.

In conjunction with the guidance, the DfE has also issued a series of templates and checklists to cover a variety of circumstances, including evacuations, terrorist incident response and a business continuity plan.

The DfE guidance stems from the legal obligations upon employers and public bodies to assess the risks to the health and safety of employees and third parties, and to take steps to reduce those risks and promote proper practices. All reviews of security in schools should be based upon the principles of risk assessment.

So far responses to the guidance have been mixed, with some schools praising the flexibility for schools to determine policies based on their own circumstances, and others seeking more prescriptive guidance. Irrespective of individual views on the guidance, it is vital for schools and colleges to prepare comprehensive policies on security and review their current practices.

For more information, please [click here](#).

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