

Arson Prevention Bureau



## How to Combat Arson in Schools



[www.arsonpreventionbureau.org.uk](http://www.arsonpreventionbureau.org.uk)



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"How to Combat Arson in Schools" was first published in March 1993, one of the earliest of the guidance documents issued by the Arson Prevention Bureau produced in recognition of the large number of arson fires begun in schools. The document resulted from discussion within a working group of experts representing the insurance industry, the fire and police services, local authorities, Home Office, Scottish Office and Department of Education and Science.

## FOREWORD

With the number and cost of school arson fires still at an unacceptable level this second edition of "How to Combat Arson in Schools" is published by the Bureau in response to a request from the reconvened Arson in Schools Working Group. They recommend that an updated and revised guide should be made available and for the important advice it contains to be brought once again to the attention of school governors, head teachers, school premises managers, education authorities and local authority risk managers.

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The Bureau would like to place on record its gratitude to members of the Working Group whose help and knowledge has made this publication possible. Particular thanks go to Larry Stokes, Zurich Municipal, who chaired the Working Group, Chris East, Association of Local Authority Risk Managers and Chris Bissell, Department for Education and Employment who have been largely instrumental in translating the working group's views into this guidance document.

"No school is immune from the threat of arson. This document provides invaluable guidance to all those responsible for school security on practical steps they can take to minimise the risk.

Reducing the Arson risk will also reduce the risk of other crimes such as burglary, theft and vandalism.

We are indebted to Zurich Municipal for their generosity in sponsoring this publication."

*Tony Lancaster, Chairman of the Arson Prevention Bureau.*

"Government has placed Education at the heart of the national agenda. But despite new funding, resources are finite, and wasted resources are increasingly unacceptable.

Risk management in schools offers a major opportunity to reduce these unacceptable losses and Zurich Municipal has lobbied hard over recent years for more emphasis to be placed on this new thinking.

We, therefore, are delighted that we have been able to assist with bringing this initiative forward, and wish it every success".

*John Murray, General Manager, Zurich Municipal*

July 1998

## INTRODUCTION

This guide is addressed primarily at school governors, head teachers, school premises managers, LEAs and local authority risk managers. It aims to alert those responsible for school premises to the continuing dangers of arson attacks on schools, and suggests means by which such potential can be reduced.

School fires - accidental as well as malicious - are all too common. In 1996, local authority fire brigades attended 2003 school fires of which 1402 (70%) were thought to have been started deliberately. Evidence from research carried out by the Arson Prevention Bureau suggests that this is not the full picture as fire brigades are not always called to fires, particularly if they self-extinguish or are put-out by staff.

Statistics from the Fire Protection Association for large fires, i.e. those costing over £250,000, show that schools are top of the list of building types vulnerable to arson attack.

Zurich Municipal, the principal insurer for schools, estimates that the cost of school fires in 1996 was £55 million, of which 75% was attributed to arson. Some fires result in losses in excess of £1 million. Over and above these direct costs are the consequential losses, such as the need to find alternative temporary accommodation, or the loss of irreplaceable records, teaching notes, and course

work for external examinations and tests. In addition to the financial consequences, large fires can impact on morale and the performance of the schools for many years.

Every fire in a school has the potential to cause considerable damage and disruption, and can also threaten the lives of children, school staff and others who may be on the premises, including those attending evening classes. Those who have experienced a serious fire at their school have difficulty in forgetting the pain and despair, caused by the incident.

The majority of fires are at night or when the school is closed during holiday periods and casualties are rare. Sadly, this cannot be taken for granted. In 1990, 3 young boys were killed in a school shed fire in Essex.

## NATURE OF THE PROBLEM: WHO ARE THE ARSONISTS?

Arson is committed for a variety of "reasons" and there are many kinds of arsonist. Arsonists may not be strangers to the school but children and adolescents feature prominently. Fires in schools are most likely to be started by pupils, ex-pupils or their friends, or others with knowledge of the school.

Of the 4600 individuals prosecuted, cautioned or found guilty each year for arson offences, almost half are aged from 10 - 16. Girls as well as boys may be involved.

The Arson Prevention Bureau's research shows that the great majority of malicious fires take place outside school hours with a peak at around 11pm. Many fires are started outside school buildings often with material found easily to hand (such as in bins or rubbish skips). The use of an accelerant, such as petrol, is comparatively rare.

## CASE STUDIES OF SCHOOL ARSON ATTACKS

### Arson at a School in Greater Manchester - Loss £1.5 million

This multi storey 'system-built' school is located in an area with a relatively low level of crime. The school had not suffered from any previous fires but incidents of vandalism had been encountered on a frequent basis. There was unrestricted access to the site with little boundary protection. The design and layout of the school created a number of vulnerable concealed recessed courtyard areas. Little existed in terms of compartmentation and fire stopping in voids. There was no automatic fire detection or sprinkler system.

A member of the Council's own security force discovered the fire at 03.12 hrs. upon responding to an intruder alarm activation. A severe fire was found in the maths/technology block of the school. By 03.30hrs, ten fire engines were at the scene. The fire completely destroyed the maths and technology block, which represented about 20% of the school classroom accommodation. The origin of the fire was found to be in a recessed courtyard to the rear of the block probably as a result of deliberate ignition by intruders.

### Arson at a Kent School - Loss £0.8 million

This was a 25 year old single and two-storey secondary school of 'system-built' construction with extensive roof and ceiling voids, without fire stopping. The school had neither automatic fire detection nor a sprinkler system.

The fire was discovered at 05.50 hrs by the caretaker who lives on site. He had been alerted by the activation of an intruder alarm. The Home Economics room to the rear of the building was found to be ablaze. The fire brigade was alerted and the first fire engine arrived at 06.00 hrs. A total of ten fire engines and 50 fire-fighters were required to tackle the blaze. The arsonists had ignited external timber wall cladding which then spread internally via the wall cavity. Once the fire entered the building there was little or no compartmentation to prevent rapid fire spread, except the concrete floor between storeys which limited the spread of the blaze to ground floor rooms only.

### Arson at a School in the North - Loss £3.7 million

This was a single storey comprehensive school. The school had neither automatic fire detection nor a sprinkler system.

The fire was discovered by a caretaker at 22.20 hrs. who, after hearing the intruder alarm activating, responded by inspecting the alarm control panel. Further investigation established that one part of the building was smoke logged. The fire brigade was called and arrived within 10 minutes. Investigations established that the fire had started in a doorway recess adjacent to a classroom and quickly spread to timber walling, entering the roof void at eaves level. The roof void had no fire breaks and the fire therefore spread at great speed engulfing all of the lower school. The fire was stopped at 03.30 hrs, but not before the entire lower school had been gutted. Two children under 10 years of age were suspected by the police to be involved.

### Arson at a School in the North West - Loss £1.2 million.

The fire was discovered at 00.39hrs. The block, which was almost completely destroyed, housed 16 teaching rooms, the library, main office, pastoral offices, the head and deputy's offices and the staff room. The history and geography departments were completely wiped out whilst the modern languages, mathematics, english, special educational needs and RE departments lost many resources.

The trauma and devastation was summed up by the head teacher:

'The first reaction is shock and numbness, followed by total disbelief and then realisation that 25 years of resources had gone; that all the carefully collected photographs, booklets and artefacts from all over Europe had gone; that all the paperwork for the administration of public examinations had gone, and all the school text books and personal belongings had gone.'

The timing of the fire was particularly unfortunate, since Year 9 SATS were to be held later in the week and GCSE examinations were due to begin within a month. Heads of subjects had to contact Examination Boards to discuss what arrangements could be made for loss of coursework and pupils' revision material.

The burnt out classrooms were replaced by mobile rooms and the school had a derelict building at its centre for over a year; this became a demolition site and is now a building site. These circumstances are obviously not conducive to marketing the school and pupil recruitment and the sixth form suffered in particular. This had a massive effect on the school budget resulting in a large deficit.

## ASSESSING A SCHOOL'S VULNERABILITY TO ARSON ATTACK

In order to prevent arson, school management must first assess vulnerability of their premises to attack. With limited resources available for improvement work, the risk assessment will allow schools to rank their findings in a priority order and to concentrate their efforts and resources where they are most needed. To aid schools in undertaking one of these, an assessment sheet has been compiled and is shown in Appendix 1.

Often the assessment is more effective if carried out with the assistance of specialists within the LEA or using outside agencies, such as the Fire Service or Insurance Company. It is essential to develop site specific proposals and ensure that the measures taken are commensurate with the risk.

## FIRE PRECAUTIONS (WORKPLACE) REGULATIONS, 1997

Fire safety policies in schools need to incorporate the requirements of the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations, 1997, which came into force on the 1st December 1997.

The Regulations are based upon self-compliance, with emphasis being placed on the employer's own assessment of risk. The fire authority is the enforcing authority.

These Regulations apply to all employers (with one or two specific exemptions) and place a duty on an employer to assess the risks of a fire and the effect it would have on staff. The Regulations do not directly cover the members of the public who are on the school premises, although an employer does have to take account of other people (including the pupils) who may be in the workplace, when carrying out their risk assessment. The risk assessment process should take account the risk of arson.

**Completion of Appendix 1 and 2 will assist you in completing your fire risk assessment required under the above legislation.**

## DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN AGAINST ARSON

Once an assessment has been carried out, the next priority is to address the weaknesses identified. These may not all require significant financial resources but may involve housekeeping or training issues. Management is a vital ingredient of a safety policy.

### Responsible Person

It is imperative that one person, the head teacher or other senior member of staff, has overall responsibility for initiatives against the threat of arson. This arson prevention strategy may be encompassed in a school's overall health & safety risk management plan. The process should be supported and endorsed by the governing body and, where appropriate, by the Local Education Authority.

**Checklists for the head teacher and for the site officer are shown at Appendices 2 and 3.**

### Five Point Action Plan

The prevention of arson attacks falls into a logical process:-

1. Deter unauthorised entry onto the site;
2. Prevent unauthorised entry into the building;
3. Reduce the opportunity for an offender to start a fire;
4. Reduce the scope for potential fire damage;
5. Reduce subsequent losses and disruption resulting from a fire by preparing a disaster recovery plan.

Each of the above aspects are addressed below.

#### 1. Deter unauthorised entry onto the site

- Discourage unauthorised entry onto the site by the use of signs and by delineating the boundary of the premises by use of a robust fence or hedge. This action makes it clear to would-be intruders and trespassers that they are on private property and for neighbours to see clearly that people are within the site boundaries. Consideration should be given to the type of fence or hedge used so that it does not obscure the vision of passers-by and neighbours. It may also be necessary to consider security fencing for part of, or the whole site, if unauthorised intrusion is a major problem.

- Most trespass and associated vandalism occurs out-of-school hours and often under cover of darkness. Consequently, good lighting is recommended. Sodium lighting should be used on elevations which are overlooked. Such lighting is inexpensive to run. In contrast, tungsten halogen lighting which is operated via infra-red motion detection is ideal for elevations which are not overlooked, but such lighting can be expensive to run. Lighting on elevations which are not overlooked or in recesses can attract unwanted visitors or provide intruders with 'working light'. The colour rendering of light sources needs to be considered where CCTV surveillance is in use. Bespoke advice on security lighting can be obtained from local crime prevention officers.
- The presence of school staff living on site is obviously a high deterrent to intruders. Where this is not feasible, then roving patrols by either commercial or local authority security teams can be effective. Such patrols should be random in order to avoid a recognised pattern. If such a service is used, close liaison should take place with the Police.

#### 2. Prevent unauthorised entry into the building

If access to the site is controlled then the next barrier to the miscreant is the building itself.

- Deep recesses and alcoves are particularly vulnerable. Ideally, building alterations should be undertaken to eliminate these features. Failing that, point lighting should be used.
- The weakest points of entry into the building are, of course, the doors and windows. The numbers of doors and windows, particularly those out of view from the public, should be kept to a minimum. Clearly the means of escape should never be compromised and the Fire Brigade should always be consulted prior to any changes being made.
- All external doors and windows should be fitted with approved locks (Thief Resistant Locks BS3621:1980) and secured immediately the building is vacated. The local crime prevention officer would be pleased to advise on this subject.

- Door frame construction should be of good quality, with solid core doors without lower panels which may easily be forced. The hinges and frames should be reinforced to deter removal. Where letterboxes are fitted they should be fitted with metal enclosures on the inside to prevent damage arising from the introduction of burning materials.
- Break-ins via roof-lights should be prevented by fitting grills or bars within the inside of the frame.
- Low level glazing should be avoided both on security and safety grounds. If this is not possible it should be laminated or toughened, and securely fixed within the frame.
- Intruder alarms should be fitted which take account of the detailed advice shown at Appendix 4. In most cases they should be connected to a call monitoring centre. Where the coverage of the alarm has to be limited, areas of high value should be alarmed. Consideration should be given to alarming areas such as corridors where intruders might be detected moving between rooms.
- Schools should foster relationships with neighbours who are able to observe out-of- hours activity on the premises. In addition, the school should become involved in local 'Neighbourhood Watch' schemes, or develop their own 'School Watch' scheme in conjunction with the local police.
- The installation of CCTV has a high deterrent effect. CCTV systems which are not monitored have limited value, as the wide-angle lenses used to get the required coverage do not provide recordings of evidential quality. Some joint arrangements for monitoring CCTV pictures between schools and local Councils who operate a CCTV system have proved valuable in spreading the costs. The subsequent reduction in vandalism has proved such schemes to be cost effective, despite the initial high capital outlay. Specialist advice should always be sought before installation of CCTV is considered.
- With the use of school buildings outside normal school hours and opening the premises to a wider public, it is imperative that access to other parts of the school is

limited. A routine should be adopted by a nominated person to check that all external doors and windows have been locked once the school is vacated at the end of the day. It is important that the means of escape are not compromised when deciding which areas to secure whilst the premises are occupied, and important also that the local Fire Safety Officer is consulted.

**Many of these measures will not only prevent arson but keep the school more secure generally.**



### 3. Reduce the opportunity for an offender to start a fire

If an arsonist intent on causing damage is unable to enter the premises then the opportunity to light a fire on the outside of the building is often exploited. In many circumstances wilful damage can get out of hand. For this reason, it is important that the opportunity to ignite combustible material is eliminated.

- Refuse containers should ideally be placed in a secure compound or alternatively secured by a padlock and chain to a post sited **no less than 8 metres** from the building to prevent them being moved against the building.
- Many schools are involved in re-cycling or fund- raising initiatives where newspapers, clothing and other materials are collected. Recycling bins should be located at least **8 metres** from the building in secure compounds, and collections made regularly to avoid a build up.
- Sheds and other storage facilities for sports and play equipment should be sited at least **8 metres away** from the main building. This will avoid fire spread from such buildings involving the whole school.

- Similar precautions should be taken with heating oil, natural gas and liquid petroleum gas installations. In particular the vulnerable parts of these systems, such as the pipework and meters, should be secured and protected to avoid them from being vandalised and used as a ready supply of fuel. Bund walls should be provided around fuel tanks to ensure spillages are contained.
- 'Skirts' should be fitted at the base of mobile classrooms to prevent combustible materials being placed underneath buildings and ignited.
- Waste bins should not be fixed to walls or under roofs constructed of combustible materials, but secured to the ground and away from the school building.
- Partition walls need to be inspected regularly. When any maintenance, repair or alteration has been finished, such as installation of pipes/cables through partitions, the gaps around pipework should be made good with fire retardant sealant.
- Equipment of high material value, such as audio visual aids, computers and similar laboratory-type equipment, should ideally be located in a secure, separate room where it will be out of sight and better protected in a fire.
- Early warning of the outbreak of fire can significantly reduce the losses if early firefighting can be initiated. This ranges from a waste paper bin being extinguished by a member of staff to the alerting of the fire service whilst the premises is unoccupied. An automatic fire detection system, possibly using the same communication system as the intruder alarm, can mean the difference between containing the fire to the compartment of origin and the loss of the whole building and contents. To be effective the alarm must give warning off-site.

#### 4. Reduce the scope for potential fire damage

Should a fire be started, either deliberately or accidentally, it is important that its effect is minimised by containing the fire to a limited area, or ensuring high value contents are protected.

- Schools of open plan design are more difficult to protect than those with traditional layouts with separate classrooms. With the latter, the compartmentation (fire-stops in the roof/ceiling voids) is an essential element of the design - even though the classroom construction may not be fire resisting.
- During alterations and maintenance, consideration should be given to providing additional fire-break walls or doors to separate the building into compartments. This should include protection of concealed spaces such as roof voids. This needs to be properly designed and carried out with the assistance of professional advice.
- This compartmentation may require fire resisting screens and doors across corridors, and the restrictions this may impose can be reduced by installing hold-open devices linked to automatic fire detection. Doors not required to protect means of escape routes may be left open during the day but need to be closed at night as part of the close down routine.
- Sprinkler systems are rare in existing schools but are increasingly being fitted in new school buildings, particularly in those which have been assessed as high risk. Sprinkler systems are best regarded as a combined detection and extinguishing system. They have a proven track record over many years for successfully controlling fires in commercial buildings. The number and distribution of the sprinkler heads is arranged so that they can cover the area protected. This is usually the entire floor area of the school.
- Sprinklers are expensive to install but are relatively cheap to maintain. By careful design of the system, malicious damage can be avoided, e.g., by using concealed heads. There can be additional costs to provide a suitable water supply. Insurance premiums and retained excess levels e.g. where the school or LEA pays the first £100,000 of each loss from a retained fund, may be reduced in schools with sprinklers, thereby reducing the overall annual running costs.

### 5. Reduce subsequent losses and disruption resulting from a fire

- Recognition should be given to the provision of the most appropriate form of extinguishing medium. Water is the most effective medium for most fires but inappropriate for fires in electrical equipment.
- Schools located away from residential areas may have poor water supplies which can hinder the fire service when trying to extinguish the fire. Ideally a private hydrant on a suitable sized main is desirable, but this is usually only available when the site is developed. An alternative would be an emergency water supply. This may be the swimming pool, but could be an ornamental pond of sufficient size which could double for nature and wildlife studies/ecology area.



- In the event of a fire, a service recovery plan will be invaluable. This should be formulated in advance with the assistance of the LEA's Risk Management Group where this exists, or with the Local Education Authority. The service recovery plan, should include:
  - details of people who can help in an emergency;
  - information on suppliers;
  - inventory information;
  - how media enquiries will be handled.

- Members of staff should be adequately trained in fire procedures, including how to summon the Fire Service, building evacuation and the use of fire extinguishers. They should also be aware of the location of high value materials and equipment, particularly school records which may be irreplaceable, and have knowledge of a salvage plan to recover these items.

## APPENDIX 1 Vulnerability Assessment

A	RISK FACTORS	YES	NO
1	Is your school system-built, with extensive use of lightweight materials or timber construction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Is combustible waste regularly removed from school premises and placed in a secure bin store sited away from the main school buildings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Are there serious crime problems in the locality of your school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Are all parts of the school perimeter observed easily by surrounding houses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Have you suffered more than 2 arson attacks in the past 3 years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Have you suffered more than 10 incidences of vandalism in the past 12 months?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Have you experienced more than 5 incidences of theft or break-ins during the past 12 months?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Is the school site easily accessible to public access, and is trespass a problem?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Is the external perimeter of the school (doors/windows/roofs) vulnerable to intruders?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Are management and staff at the school aware of the need of effective visitor monitoring, key security and locking procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	SCORE 'A' Score only answers in shaded boxes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## APPENDIX 1 Vulnerability Assessment (continued)

B	RISK REDUCTION FEATURES	YES	NO
1	Is your school fitted with an automatic sprinkler or fire <u>detection</u> system linked to the Fire Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Is your school fitted with an intruder alarm with a monitored link to an alarm receiving station?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Is the school perimeter and grounds monitored by a Closed Circuit TV system?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Is the school site bounded by palisade or weldmesh fencing, to a height of two metres?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Are the school premises regularly patrolled by an external security service, with communication links to a central monitoring station?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	SCORE 'B' Score only answers in shaded boxes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	OVERALL SCORE (A-B)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

A score of 6 or more indicates your school may be vulnerable to an arson attack. Advice on preventative strategies is available from your local education authority, Fire Service, Police or Insurance Company.

## APPENDIX 2 Checklist for Head Teachers

		YES	NO
	<b>Have you . . .</b>		
1.	Drawn up an Anti-Arson Policy as part of your schools Overall Risk Management Policy or Security Policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Obtained the support of Governors and staff for the Policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Appointed a responsible person to oversee the Policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Carried out a vulnerability assessment? (See Appendix 1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Sought advice from the Police Crime Prevention Officer, LEA or insurance company on security of the site and the building?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Consulted the Fire Safety Officer to ensure no conflict occurs between means of escape and security? (Advice can also be sought on types of alarm system, fire resisting compartmentation, and fire equipment)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Sought advice from the school insurers and Risk Management Group/LEA who may assist with the assessment and action?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Drawn up a list of priorities and built it into the budget planning process?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Considered local funding or fund-raising activities ? (including Government initiatives which may invite bids for funding)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Provided training for staff in security and fire related matters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	Introduced a 'lock up' regime to be undertaken by the Caretaker or last member of staff to leave the premises?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	Fostered good relations with local residents particularly those overlooking the school, and considered participating in Neighbourhood Watch?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	Instituted regular inspections of the school premises on storage and security on and around the site, and on other security and fire related issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	Included fire and security on the agendas of staff and Governors' meetings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	Regularly reviewed and updated the Anti-Arson Policy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## APPENDIX 3 Monthly Checklist for Site Managers

		YES	NO
<b>FIRE HYDRANTS</b>	1 Clear?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2 Are hydrants, hose and nozzles in good order?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>HOSE REEL</b>	3 Clear?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	4 Are hose reels in good condition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>FIRE ALARMS</b>	5 Are bells/sirens working?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	6 Is mains power supply fully operational?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	7 Annunciator panel lamps working?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	8 Fire Brigade/Central Station connection in order?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>EXTINGUISHERS</b>	9 All present and correct?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	10 Not obstructed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	11 In good order?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>FIRE DOORS</b>	12 Not obstructed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	13 All self closing devices working?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>BOILERS</b>	14 Daily and weekly safety checks made/cards entered?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>SMOKING</b>	15 Are smoking rules being observed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## APPENDIX 3 Monthly Checklist for Site Managers (continued)

		YES	NO
<b>FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS</b>	16 No excessive quantities in work area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	17 No damaged/loose earthing or bonding?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	18 No accumulation of empty cans?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	19 No waste or water in tank bunds?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	20 No accumulations of soiled rags/waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>GAS CYLINDERS</b>	21 No idle cylinders in buildings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	22 Are all cylinders secured?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	23 No fittings or hose damage?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>HOUSEKEEPING</b>	24 No accumulations of rubbish?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	25 No area untidy or congested?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	26 No unauthorised portable heaters in use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	27 No intruder alarms obstructed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	28 No sprinkler heads obstructed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	29 No combustibles near switchgear/heaters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>MAINTENANCE</b>	30 No temporary wiring?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	31 No damage to electrical fittings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	32 No heater fuel leaks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	33 All oil tank catchpits clear & drain valves closed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>SPRINKLERS</b>	34 Weekly valve test(s) made and cards entered?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	35 Weekly pump test(s) made and cards entered?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	36 No other items requiring attention?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## APPENDIX 4

Extract from 'Dealing with Troublemakers' reproduced by kind permission of the Department for Education and Employment.

### Police response to intruder alarm systems on school premises

- 1 An increasing proportion of schools are being equipped with intruder alarm systems intended to detect burglary, damage or intrusion when the school's premises are unoccupied. In some cases these systems may incorporate personal alarms enabling staff working in isolated parts of the school premises to raise the alarm.
- 2 This note summarises the policy adopted by police forces on the advice of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). The policy is applied by all police forces, though there may be minor local variations. Schools can obtain more detailed information about local practice from their local police.
- 3 Security firms recognised by one of the five independent alarms inspectorates, such as the National Approval Council for Security Systems (NACOSS) should be familiar with the ACPO policy and the consequent requirements for alarm systems. Details of the inspectorates can be obtained from the police.

### Incidence of false alarm calls

- 4 The policy was adopted by ACPO because of the very high rate of false alarms experienced by police forces from alarm systems generally - not of course exclusively from schools. In 1996, over 88% of calls to the police from this source were false alarms. This is a serious drain on police resources, and may result in unnecessary risks to police officers and others as a result of making an emergency response to such calls. Several forces have experienced significant reductions in the false alarm rate since introducing this policy.

### Types of alarm system

- 5 There are two distinct categories of alarm system in general use. The first category, normally referred to by police forces as Type A systems, are remote signalling alarms which, when activated, pass a signal automatically to a commercial alarm receiving centre built and operated to BS 5979, who then alert the police in accordance with procedures agreed between the police force and the alarm company. This category includes personal attack alarms which, when activated, trigger a signal from the local alarm system to the alarm receiving centre. Police forces will only establish agreed procedures in this way with firms who comply with certain standards (see paragraph 6).
- 6 The second category, known to the police as Type B alarms, include all audible-only alarms (ie those which sound a siren or bell at the premises but are not connected to an alarm receiving centre); automatic dialling alarms (which dial a prearranged number and play a recorded message when activated); and alarm systems connected to an alarm receiving centre **not complying with the arrangements set out in paragraph 5.**
- 7 Police forces establish procedures for Type A alarm systems only with firms who meet certain standards and have undertaken checks on their staff. Both large and small companies, offering differing levels of service, have met these standards. Police forces' procedures agreed with such firms ensure that the police hold details of premises protected by Type A alarms, and provide arrangements for calling out keyholders.
- 8 The police do not recommend individual companies but require them to be inspected by one of the independent alarms inspectorates, which ensure that standards are maintained and deal with complaints. The police will not agree to issue a reference number to any alarm system that has not been installed by a member of one of the recognised inspectorates. Firms which claim to install Type A alarm systems will be able to show supporting evidence of their inspection and acceptance by the police.

### Police response

- 9 The normal police response to the activation of a Type A alarm will be immediate - that is to say, police officers will treat the call as an emergency and will arrive at the scene as soon as possible.
- 10 The police response to activation of a Type B alarm will **not** be immediate unless, in addition to the activation of the alarm, there is some other indication to suggest that an offence is in progress. In the absence of such an indication that the activation of the alarm was valid, the police will normally expect the premises to be checked by a keyholder without attendance by the police.
- 11 No Type B intruder alarm system should, under any circumstances, be programmed to ring a police station. In addition, automatic-dial calls routed to an alarm company or private premises will not receive a police response unless keyholders have attended the scene and can report suspicious circumstances or a crime.
- 12 It is ACPO policy for police forces to downgrade the response to a Type A alarm system if an unacceptable level of false alarms is experienced. Under this policy, after four false alarms within any twelve month period, the alarm company and the person responsible for the site at which the alarm is fitted will be warned that police response to future activations will be downgraded to a less urgent level - normally, that the police will attend as soon as possible, subject to other higher priority demands on police resources at the time. This lower level of response remains higher than that provided to Type B alarms. The normal higher level of response would be reinstated after three months if during that period the alarm company can report that remedial action has been taken and that no false alarms have been experienced from the installation since the problem was remedied.
- 13 If remedial action is not taken, or is not successful, after seven false alarms to the police during any twelve month period from a Type A alarm, the response will be withdrawn. That means that the police would not respond unless there were some other indication, in addition to the alarm, that an offence was in progress.
- 14 In applying this policy, the police recognise that what initially appears to be a false alarm may subsequently turn out to have been justified. In such cases, on the basis of a report from the alarm company, the police will not treat such an activation as a false alarm.
- 15 The policy also requires alarm receiving centres to have agreed procedures for filtering out calls which have a high probability of being false and passing them to the keyholder only. Such calls are not passed to the police unless a crime is discovered and would not count against the school, if found to be false.
- 16 Even where a poor experience of false alarms leads the police to downgrade their response to a Type A alarm system, they will maintain an emergency response to alarms generated by personal attack alarms connected to that system. This response will, however, be withdrawn, if more than seven further false alarms subsequently occur.

### Application of this policy to schools

- 17 Experience has shown that alarm systems which are properly designed and operated can readily meet Type A standards.
- 18 Schools which already have alarm systems are likely to be familiar in general terms with the policy outlined above. Schools considering installing or upgrading alarm systems should consider carefully the limited security provided by systems not meeting Type A standards. Costs of installation, and running costs, of Type A systems will be higher than those of a Type B system but those costs can be contained by limiting those parts of the school - the high risk areas - which alarm systems are to cover, and sometimes by arranging for centralised secure storage of movable items within a secure area instead of extending security more widely on the site.

19 Thirty per cent of false alarms are caused by staff or operator error and can be avoided. Keyholders, whether at the local authority or the school, should therefore be aware of what is required of them, and staff who operate alarm systems should be properly trained. Remedial action should be taken after each and every false alarm.

20 This policy is applied to all alarm systems, and not just to those at schools. Where there are particular crime problems at a school, the chief police officer has the discretion to waive this policy. The difficulties caused for police forces by the very serious level of false alarms mean, however, that schools cannot expect to be exempted from this policy if their alarm systems prove to be persistently unreliable.

21 Reducing false alarms by 'confirming' activity within the alarm premises is to be encouraged. Activity can be confirmed by one or all of the following methods:

- **Audibly** by the installation of microphones;
- **Visually** by the installation of special cameras;
- **Sequentially** by one alarm detector confirming activation of another.

Further information on the above technology can be obtained from the alarm companies or a force crime prevention officer.

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Building Bulletin 75, Closed Circuit Television, Looking out for you, Home Office, 1994\*\*

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Managing Security in Schools and Colleges, Secondary Heads Association, 130 Regents Road, Leicester, LE1 7PG, £8.50 ISBN 0 90 6916291

Your Practical Guide to Crime Prevention, 1994, published by the Home Office\*\*  
DfEE Managing School Facilities Guides:-

Guide 4: Improving Security in Schools, 1996, The Stationary Office £6.95

Guide 6: Fire Safety in Schools, to be published in 1998

Managing health and safety in schools, 1995, ISBN 0 71760770 4 HSE Books, £4.95

Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, Guidance for the Education Sector, IAC(L)97, HSE Books, 1995

Sprinklers in Schools: Questions and Answers, Fire Protection Association, FPA Fire Protection Association, Melrose Avenue, Borehamwood, Herts, WD6 2BJ

Broadsheet 28, School Glazing and Vandalism, DES 1992\*

\*DfEE free publication available from DfEE Publications Centre, PO Box 5050, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 6ZQ.  
Tel: 0845 6022260 Fax: 0845 6033360.

DfEE priced publication available from stationery office (previously HMSO)

\*\* Home Office publications are available from the Home Office, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London, SW1H 9AT

In addition to the above, most police forces and fire services as well as many local authorities have issued helpful publications on security related matters aimed directly at schools

### Organisations

Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers, Delta House, 222 Balham High Road, London, SW12 9BS,  
Tel: 020 8675 5211, Fax: 020 8675 5449

ALARM Association of Local Authority Risk Managers, Queens Drive, Exmouth, Devon EX8 2AY

FPA Fire Protection Association, Bastille Court, 2 Paris Gardens, London SE2 8ND.  
Tel: 020 7902 5300, Fax: 020 7902 5301

LPCB Loss Prevention Certification Board Ltd, Garston, Watford, Herts WD25 9XX,  
Tel: 01923 664 100, Fax: 01923 664 944

NACOSS National Approval Council for Security Systems,  
Queensgate House, 14 Cookham Road, Maidenhead,  
Berkshire, SL6 8AJ. Tel: 01628 37512, Fax: 01628 773367

SSAIB Security Systems and Alarm Inspection Board,  
70/71 Camden Street, North Shields, Tyne and Wear,  
NE30 1NH

ECA Security Group, The Electrical Contractors'  
Association, ESCA House, 34 Palace Court, Bayswater,  
London, W2 4HY, Tel: 020 7313 4800

BSIA British Security Industry Association, Security House,  
Barbourne Road, Worcester, WR1 1RT,  
Tel: 01905 21464, Fax: 01905 613625

Youth Action Groups Initiative, Signal Point,  
Station Road, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN1 1FE,  
Tel: 01793 514596, Fax: 01793 514654

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust, The National Charity for  
Personal Safety, 14 East Sheen Avenue, London,  
SW14 8AS, Tel: 020 8392 1839, Fax: 020 8392 1830

Department for Education and Skills, Schools Building &  
Design Unit, Caxton House, 6-12 Tothill Street,  
Westminster, London, SW1H 9NF,  
Tel: 020 7273 6023, Fax: 020 7273 6762

School Security Team, Sanctuary Buildings,  
Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT,  
Tel: 020 7925 5000, Fax: 020 7925 6986.

