

## **Practical security guidance during the school holidays**

Historically the number of thefts, vandalism and arson attacks rises during the summer holiday period.

This checklist aims to improve your school security. We ask you to address any areas of weakness prior to the summer closure:

### **Site or boundary fencing:**

Check whether the fencing is intact, and has no holes or footholds evident. Ensure gates are fitted with suitable locks.

Ensure that bolts, hinges and handles do not act as easy footholds/scaling points.

### **Overgrown planting:**

Ensure planting around the building does not provide cover for intruders or obstruct CCTV site lines.

Ensure that planting cannot act as an access route for intruders, ie trees and bushes overhanging boundary / security fencing.

### **External lighting:**

Repair or replace any damaged fittings/bulbs.

### **Loose debris:**

Remove from the site any loose debris, which may be used for vandalism attacks or to assist in gaining entry.

### **Refuse and vehicle storage:**

Place bins and skips in a secure position, at least 8 meters from buildings (in case of contractors skips, please pass on these instructions). Ideally bins and skips should have lockable lids.

Ensure that school minibuses/coaches are not parked close to the buildings (unless within a secure and alarmed garage etc) to prevent potential fire spread from a vehicle to the building.

Don't leave combustible items including furniture outside the buildings.

### **Security shutters/grilles:**

Ensure that shutters/grilles operate correctly and are fitted with suitable locks.

### **Windows/doors/skylights:**

Ensure that these are adequately locked and secured at all times.

We recommend that grilles be fitted to skylights.

Effective access control must be provided in the summer holiday with particular attention being paid to parts of the building being used by clubs, community groups and contractors.

### **Maintenance programmes:**

Checks are required to ensure that maintenance programmes on services including fire alarms, intruder alarms and sprinklers systems are up to date.

### **Intruder alarm:**

Ensure this is operating correctly and showing no faults. If the system is linked to a central monitoring station, check that this link has not been broken and that the monitoring station are able to detect activation.

**Fire alarm:**

Ensure this operates correctly and test this during the holiday.

If the system is linked to a central monitoring station, check that this link has not been broken and that the monitoring station is able to detect activation.

If the system currently contains automatic detection (smoke/heat), we strongly recommend that the system is linked to a central monitoring station.

**Building damage:**

Assess damage to the building and action any remedial works. Particular attention should be given to:

- Broken windows\*
- Roof damage – missing tiles/slates/broken roof lights\*
- Damaged wall cladding – vertical tiling, timber boarding etc\*.
- Skirts to base of 'temporary' or demountable classrooms
- \* Repair works must be carried completed without delay

**Contractors:**

Ensure contractors compounds are placed in a secure position, at least 10 meters away from the building. Contractors skips must be secured and placed at least 8 meters away from the building and ideally be enclosed skips with lockable lid/doors.

Permit to work/hot work permit systems should be introduced and adhered too. Access control is essential when contractors are working in parts of the building. They should wear security badges and any workers be challenged if not doing so. Opportunist thieves often strike when contractors have access within the school accommodation, when they pose as contractors if challenged.

**Disaster recovery plan:**

Ensure such a plan is up to date and copies are kept off-site. Remember to include such details as key contacts, showing names and numbers.

**Security patrols:**

Consider the need for security patrols, which may include random visits. This is of particular relevance if the school has suffered unwanted attention in the weeks/months leading up to the summer holiday period. If this has been the case, speak to both the Police and Fire Authority for further advice during the holiday period.

**Key holders:**

Check that designated key holders will be available during the holiday period. It may be necessary to put alternative arrangements in place, including the employment of a professional key-holding company to assist in this process. Ensure that the monitoring station for the intruder alarm provision has up to date key-holder details.

**IT security:**

Put in place adequate security arrangements for IT equipment.

Place alarms within areas where equipment is located and secure equipment to desks.

Ensure items are security marked and that warning labels referring to security marking are placed in prominent locations/windows.

Consider entrapment devices to Data Projectors or remove and secure in high security and alarmed stores.

If new IT equipment is being installed/delivered, increased vigilance is required. Such equipment should not be visible from outside, and empty packaging must not be stored outside.

**Essential building information:**

Key information on the location of isolation switches, gas shut off valves, stopcocks etc. should be updated and ideally kept inside the school entrance in a readily identifiable location and given to key-holding staff.

It may be beneficial to share such information with your local fire station in the case of the larger more complex school buildings. Any on-site Fire Hydrants should be suitably marked (and serviced / checked).

**Holiday access policy:**

Clear instructions should be given to staff in relation to times when the premises are accessible. The management of keys is an important factor in school security at all times, but perhaps of greater importance during long holiday periods. Staff should be asked to be vigilant when visiting/attending the school during the holidays – this is for their own safety in addition to school security. The unnecessary opening of windows should be discouraged and care-taking staff should pay particular attention to such practices when securing the building.

**Routine maintenance/servicing works:**

If essential works are being carried out on services such as the fire or intruder alarms, which may result in the system/s being out of operation for extended periods, suitable contingency arrangements should be put in place. Advice in this regard can also be sought from the Police and Fire Authorities. Zurich Municipal should be advised of any extended periods where these services will be out of commission/operation.

**Deliveries/mail:**

It is recommended that letterboxes be fitted with metal containers to the inside, in which to contain the mail deliveries. It may be beneficial to arrange for school mail to be collected from a local post office or similar in order to reduce the amount of mail being left at the school. Deliveries should not be left outside when premises are unoccupied.

**Smoking procedures:**

Smoking needs to be carefully monitored and designated smoking areas checked on a regular basis when the premises are partly occupied. Contractors must be advised of and comply with the smoking policies. Suitable metal receptacles must be provided for smoking materials and be clearly separate from general waste receptacles.

**Procurement process:**

It may in certain cases be necessary to review the procedures for Site/Care-taking Staff raising orders for essential maintenance and repair works. Such measures may be deemed necessary to facilitate the rapid procurement of contractors for completion of essential works.

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