

AUDIT REPORT 22'017

PRIMARY SCHOOL ESTATES SECURITY

Executive Summary

The annual audit plan for 2021/22 provides for an audit review to be undertaken of the controls to restrict unauthorised access to primary school buildings and grounds. It was found that the age, type of school buildings and locations of play areas do vary considerably across the Authority. This does present challenges in ensuring the implementation of consistent security arrangements.

The scope of the audit reviewed policies, procedures, and an appraisal of the security controls within primary schools. The audit not only included a review of guidelines issued centrally by the Education Service but also instructions or handbooks that individual schools may have developed. The audit process involved selecting a sample of primary schools to visit where the actual security controls operating in practice were observed and tested. It was also noted that some schools had attached early years nurseries.

The audit was carried out in accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).

The audit found examples of good practices and improvements that have been made to the physical security of the primary school estates. However, the review has highlighted where further improvements should also be considered.

- Examples were found where individual schools have developed good internal security procedures to control access to the building, grounds and play areas. However, no central guidance had been issued to assist schools in implementing good security practices.
- The audit visits to primary schools confirmed a security door access system in operation that controlled access from the reception area into the main school building. However, testing at two schools noted a control weakness concerning the particular type of security entry system used. All schools with a similar security system have been identified, and remedial action is underway.
- Physical controls to restrict access to school grounds and play areas varied. It is appreciated the challenges facing some schools regarding this issue. Consideration should be given for every school to undertake a risk assessment of their security risks and the mitigating controls that should be considered.

Recommendations

Risk Ratings for Recommendations						
High	Key controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved. Urgent attention required.	Medium	Less critically important controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved.		Low	Lower level controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved.
No.	Audit Recommendation	Priority	Accepted (Yes/ No)	Comments	Responsible Officer	Timescale for Implementation
Key Control: The controls around school access are sufficient to prevent unauthorised entry to primary schools.						
5.01	Guidance should be prepared and issued to all schools detailing good security practices. Due to the different nature of individual schools with regard to buildings, play areas, etc.; consideration should be given for each school to develop its own documented security procedures.	Medium	Yes	Work on guidance has commenced. Each school to be supported in producing its own security procedures in line with Council wide guidance.	Resources Officer (ERC) Resources Officer and Head Teachers	31 August 2022 for guidance document. 31 December 2022 for local school procedures to be developed.

Appendix 2

Risk Ratings for Recommendations						
High	Key controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved. Urgent attention required.	Medium	Less critically important controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved.		Low	Lower level controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved.
No.	Audit Recommendation	Priority	Accepted (Yes/ No)	Comments	Responsible Officer	Timescale for Implementation
5.02	Remedial action should be undertaken to resolve the security concerns found during the audit regarding a door entry security system.	High	Yes	Work is complete.		Implemented
5.03	A review of the CCTV arrangements including coverage requirements for all primary school estates should be undertaken.	Medium	Yes	Programme of CCTV implementation/upgrade ongoing. Coverage requirement to be reviewed as part of guidance (ref 5.01).	Resources Officer (ERC)	31/08/2022

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No.	Audit Recommendation	Priority	Accepted (Yes/ No)	Comments	Responsible Officer	Timescale for Implementation
5.04	A standardised recording system should be introduced within all primary schools to ensure a consistent approach is followed in the recording of incidents or concerns. In addition, notices/ posters should be displayed within Schools to remind staff and pupils to follow good security practices.	Medium	Yes	To be incorporated into guidance (ref: 5.01).	Resources Officer (ERC)	31/08/2022
5.05	Regular training to promote good security practices should be provided to all staff within schools.	Medium	Yes	Service discussion underway as to best approach to implement this.	Resources Officer (ERC) and Head Teachers	Ongoing from 31 August 2022

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No.	Audit Recommendation	Priority	Accepted (Yes/ No)	Comments	Responsible Officer	Timescale for Implementation
5.06	Each primary school should undertake a documented assessment of the buildings and grounds including play areas to assess current security risks and the controls implemented or required to mitigate these risks.	Medium	Yes	Risk assessment guidance to be included in School Security Guidance (ref 5.01).	Resources Officer (ERC) and Head Teachers	31 August 2022 for risk assessment guidance. 31 December 2022 for risk assessments to be completed.