

School shutdown security guidance

During these uncertain times of Covid-19, School Buildings may be facing temporary closure. It is therefore essential that the school management teams start to consider and plan suitable arrangements for these changes. Historically, closedown periods have seen many significant losses in terms of thefts, vandalism and arson attacks, which commonly are crimes of opportunity as opposed to planned events. It is essential that adequate measures be taken to ensure effective security is provided to school and academy premises in order to combat these potential losses. This guidance is from a risk management perspective only. Any queries relating to insurance cover should be made with your insurance advisor or broker.

Control Measures

The following advice is aimed at helping you to provide an appropriate level of security for your school premises during these close-down periods:

- **External lighting:** Ensure external lighting is operating correctly and that any damaged fittings/bulbs are repaired or replaced.
- **Refuse storage:** Bins and skips should be located at least 10m from buildings and be secured in position. Ideally bins and skips should have lockable lids.
- **Schools minibuses/coaches:** These should not be parked near the buildings (unless secure and alarmed garage etc.). This is due to the potential fire spread from a vehicle to the building. Keys to vehicles should be stored in non-obvious locations in secured buildings.
- **Contractors:** If work must be undertaken, a permit to work/hot work permit system should be strictly adhered to. [Click here for additional guidance.](#)
- **Windows, doors and skylights:** Ensure these are adequately locked and secured.
- **Maintenance Programs:** Checks are required to ensure that maintenance programs on services including fire alarms, intruder alarms and sprinkler systems are up to date. Ensure gutters and drains are clear of debris and included in the routine ongoing inspection program (even during the closure period).
- **Intruder & Fire alarms:** Ensure these are 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 stations are able to detect activation.
- **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, and this aspect should be monitored during these extended periods of closure/partial closure.
- **Review Key holders:** Ensure that key holders are not considered vulnerable and remain capable and available to respond to activations during the close-down. 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 has up-to-date key-holder details.
- **Consider isolation of non-essential services:** Gas, water and electrical services left connected to empty properties present hazards with regards to fire and water damage. If the premises remains in close-down for an extended period, consider isolation of non-essential services, ensuring that the Intruder Alarm, Fire Alarm and any sprinkler systems remain active and fully effective.
- **Regular Inspections:** Where at all possible (and subject to Government restrictions) try to implement periodic inspections of the building (internally and externally). Please ensure that you comply with existing government guidance regarding vulnerable people and lone worker risk assessments. Consider the provisioning for alternative skilled personnel, such as security guarding/patrolling companies. We recommend that the premises is inspected at least fortnightly by an authorised representative to ensure that any defects or damage are noted and remedied as a matter of priority.
- **Access Control:** Access control is vital should your school face partial closure. Consider only opening entry/exits point that can be easily managed by the onsite skeleton staff to prevent unauthorized visitors.

Temporary Construction Site Closure Checklist

Closedown checklist

Here is a short checklist that we have developed to help school managers secure the school and to use as a reference point for regular checks during temporary closedown periods.

Site checks

Valuable equipment is secured and out of view	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
Flammable materials are locked away	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
Rubbish is removed from the building and secured away from the building	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
All internal doors are kept shut	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
Windows are locked shut – any grilles locked shut	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
External doors are adequately locked/secured	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
Security alarm is working correctly and activated whenever the building is secured (zoned if necessary)	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
Security Keyholder response is update and adequately resourced	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
External lighting is operational	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
CCTV is still operational	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
Fire alarm is operational, and any faults reported/rectified	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
Windows are intact and any broken windows repaired/boarded up	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
Notify your insurer of any planned hot works	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
Hot work permit procedures strictly are adhered to	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
Do roof tiles/slates/flashing/skylights appear in good condition (visible check from ground)	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
Fencing complete and effective and gates locked – look for signs of access	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
Regular inspections of the property are completed	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:
Mail is cleared from the letterbox during property inspections	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	<input type="radio"/>	Date:

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We understand that some of the advice given in this document may be impractical due to ever-changing circumstances and government advice or restrictions. Some advice may not apply to your circumstances. We have attempted to provide as much succinct advice as quickly as we could to assist you.

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