



QUANTOCK

EDUCATION TRUST

Counter Terrorism & Emergency Preparedness Policy (Part 1) and Operational Guidance (Part 2)

LINKS: QET Health and Safety Policy and Procedures, QET Risk Management Strategy, QET and Local Emergency and Business Continuity Plans, Educational Visits Policies

DATE: Ratified

POSTHOLDERS: The Chief Executive Officer, Trustees, Chief Operations Officer and Estates Lead of the Quantock Education Trust and the Governors, Head Teachers, Office and/or Premises Managers of Trust Schools and Educational Visits Coordinators

AUDIENCE: All Trust Staff

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Part 1: Counter Terrorism & Emergency Preparedness

1. Policy Statement

Quantock Education Trust (QET) is committed to protecting pupils, staff, visitors and the wider community from the risks of terrorism and major incidents. The Trust will take all reasonably practicable steps to reduce harm, ensure appropriate procedures are in place, and promote a culture of vigilance, preparedness and cooperation with relevant authorities.

This policy sets out how the Trust meets its duties under the **Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025** and aligns with national guidance for protective security in education settings.

QET believes that safeguarding against terrorism and other major incidents is an extension of our existing duties to protect pupils, staff, visitors, and the wider school community. We will:

- Take all reasonably practicable steps to reduce risks of physical harm in the event of a terrorist act or major incident.
- Where the Act applies, implement robust Public Protection Procedures including evacuation, lockdown, invacuation and communication plans as necessary.
- Where the Act applies, introduce appropriate Public Protection Measures including security controls, monitoring and secure information handling procedures.
- Ensure all persons are trained, competent, and aware of their responsibilities.
- Foster a culture of vigilance, preparedness, and cooperation with local authorities, emergency services, and the Security Industry Authority (SIA).

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out how The Quantock Education Trust complies with the Department for Education's guidance, the Act, and other related statutory guidance. Its purpose is to reduce the risk of physical harm from acts of terrorism or major incidents in Trust premises or at Trust events. This will ensure that adequate plans are in place; staff are aware of their responsibilities, and vulnerabilities are identified and managed.

It applies to every Trust site, all staff, trustees, governors, volunteers, contractors and visitors. Where a school meets the criteria of a qualifying premises under the Act, the statutory duties set out in the legislation must be followed. Where they do not, schools must still implement the Department for Education's protective security guidance

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework (see also Section 6)

This policy is underpinned by the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, which requires responsible persons to take proportionate steps to reduce the risk of physical harm and, for enhanced duty premises, to reduce vulnerability to terrorism.

The Security Industry Authority (SIA) is the regulator for compliance.

The Trust also follows the Department for Education's *Protective Security and Preparedness for Education Settings* guidance (April 2025). It aims to strengthen security awareness, preparedness, and response capability so that the setting is better able to deter, prepare for, and respond to terrorism or other major security incidents. The guidance contains advice on practical and low costs steps that can be used to provide proportionate measures to improve safety and enhance preparedness.

The Act is proposed to come fully into force as a statutory requirement in Spring 2027.

4. Definitions

- **Responsible Person:** The individual with control of a premises or event, accountable for compliance.
- **Qualifying Premises:** Sites where 200 or more people may reasonably be expected.
- **Enhanced Duty Premises:** Sites where 800 or more people may be present.
- **Public Protection Procedures:** Plans for evacuation, invacuation, lockdown, movement to safety and communication.

See Appendix 1 for additional key definitions

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Overall accountability sits with the CEO and **Trustees**, who approve this policy, ensure resources are available and monitor compliance across all schools in the trust.

The **Chief Operations Officer and Estates Lead** oversee implementation, provide advice, and ensure consistency across the Trust.

Headteachers and Senior Leadership Teams act as, or appoint, the Responsible Person for their site. They ensure legal compliance where applicable, maintain plans, and ensure staff are trained.

- Will act as or nominate a Responsible Person for their premises
- Will ensure their individual premises comply with the guidance and legislation where applicable to their school
- Will undertake and provide sufficient training
- Will conduct a review of their setting using the Department for Education's Protective Security and Preparedness self-assessment template
- Will formulate a Counter Terrorism Risk Assessment where appropriate
- Will oversee the development and implementation of plans and procedures
- Will liaise with the Trust Operations Officer and Estates Lead as necessary

The **Responsible Person** is accountable for implementing procedures, maintaining documentation, notifying the regulator where required, and ensuring staff awareness and training. Each school must have a designated Responsible Person who oversees the planning, implementation and review of all

requirements under the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025. This role may be carried out by the Headteacher, a member of the Senior Leadership Team, or another nominated individual with appropriate authority.

The Responsible Person must notify the Security Industry Authority (SIA) that they are responsible for the premises and must also inform the SIA if anything significant changes. This includes changes to the school's capacity, layout, use of the site or who has control of the premises. Where more than one organisation shares control of a site, the Responsible Person must work with those organisations to ensure that responsibilities are clear and that compliance is coordinated.

All **staff** are expected to understand procedures, participate in training and drills, and report concerns promptly.

6. Determining Schools in Scope

Within the Trust:

- **Primary schools** are not expected to meet the 200-person threshold and are therefore outside the Act's scope. However, they must follow DfE guidance and maintain appropriate procedures.
- **Secondary schools** meet the threshold and are classified as qualifying premises. They must comply fully with the Act.
- **Trust events** are not generally expected to meet the definition of qualifying events, but if attendance increases significantly, requirements must be applied proportionately for that period. Events that satisfy all of the following four criteria fall within the scope of the Act:
 - The event is taking place at a **Qualifying Premises**
 - The event is expected to host at least 800 attendees including pupils, staff and members of the public
 - The event has specific entry conditions
 - The event is accessible to members of the public

7. Policy Monitoring and Review

Legislation, guidance, or following an incident. Continuous improvement will be informed by training, exercises and operational experience.

Part 2: Operational Guidance

1. Implementation of the Act (Secondary Schools)

Secondary schools within the Trust must comply with the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 by implementing proportionate and practical measures to reduce risk and improve response capability. Actions should be based on risk, scale and practicality, with clear documentation to support accountability.

Each school must have a **Responsible Person** (as defined in Part 1) who leads operational compliance, maintains plans, and liaises with the Security Industry Authority (SIA). Where premises are shared or adjacent to other organisations, responsibilities must be clearly coordinated.

1.1 Core Public Protection Procedures

Schools must implement the following procedures, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- **Evacuation** – safe exit to designated assembly points, including arrangements for those needing additional support
- **Invacuation** – moving individuals to safer internal areas
- **Lockdown** – securing buildings to prevent access
- **Communication** – alerting and directing occupants and coordinating with emergency services

An enhanced **Move to Critical Plan** may be implemented where there is increased threat or intelligence.

These procedures should be simple, scalable and capable of immediate implementation. No specific equipment is mandated, and measures should remain proportionate.

1.2 Record Keeping and Compliance

- Procedures, decisions, training and drills must be recorded
- Documentation must be reviewed regularly and updated following drills, incidents or changes
- Records must be retained proportionately and made available for inspection if required
- Schools must cooperate fully with the SIA and respond to any compliance requirements

2. Implementation of the DfE's Protective Security and Preparedness for Education Settings

All schools should adopt proportionate, low-cost measures to improve security awareness and preparedness. These steps help deter threats, reduce vulnerability, and support effective response.

2.1 Leadership and Responsibilities

A **Security Lead** (normally a senior leader) should be designated to oversee protective security. Their responsibilities include:

- Maintaining policies and procedures
- Undertaking regular risk assessments
- Ensuring staff awareness and training
- Liaising with external agencies

During an incident, the Security Lead (or deputy) assumes the role of **Incident Lead**, responsible for coordinating response, making decisions, and managing communication.

All staff are expected to:

- Understand procedures
- Remain vigilant
- Report concerns promptly
- Participate in training where required

Preventative and Protective Measures

Schools should maintain practical measures such as:

- Access control and visitor management
- Staff awareness of suspicious activity
- Use of risk assessment tools
- Appropriate emergency resources (e.g. grab kits)

Arrangements must consider all users, including those with additional needs, supported through **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)** where required.

Communication

Effective communication systems must:

- Enable rapid alerts across the site
- Support contact with emergency services
- Provide clear communication with parents, carers and stakeholders

3. Protective Security in Primary Schools

Primary schools are not generally within the scope of the Act but must follow DfE guidance. They should apply the same principles outlined above in a proportionate way, focusing on:

- Clear leadership (Security Lead)
- Simple, practical procedures

- Staff awareness and vigilance

Where appropriate, drills may initially be staff-focused, with a staged approach to pupil involvement.

4. Incident Response

Schools must be prepared to implement appropriate responses depending on the nature of the incident, using the core procedures outlined in Section 1.

Responses should:

- Be flexible and proportionate
- Be clearly understood by staff
- Prioritise safety and communication

All responses must take account of individuals requiring additional support.

5. Training, Drills and Continuous Improvement

Training and preparedness are essential to effective implementation.

Training

- All relevant persons must understand procedures and how to raise an alert
- Training must be proportionate to roles and responsibilities
- Volunteers, contractors and hirers should be included where appropriate
- National resources (e.g. ProtectUK) should be used where possible
- Training records should be maintained

Drills and Exercises

Drills should be:

- Proportionate, age-appropriate and inclusive
- Carefully planned to minimise distress
- Conducted using a staged approach where appropriate

For student-involved drills, a staged model may include:

1. Awareness raising
2. Pre-informed practice
3. Limited-notice drill
4. Full drill (where appropriate)

Review and Improvement

Procedures and plans must be compliant with the Act, documented, reviewed regularly and after drills or incidents with:

- Outcomes and decisions should be recorded, retained and used to improve procedures
- Lessons learned informing continuous improvement
- Records should be made available to the regulator or other relevant authorities upon request for the purposes of compliance assessment or inspection.

6. Educational Visits and Business Continuity

Emergency planning must be integrated into all educational and off-site visits and aligned with national guidance. The OEAP recently updated national guidance which includes a new model critical incident plan (section 4.1i). EVCs and trip leaders should familiarise themselves with this guidance :

<https://oeapng.info/downloads/good-practice/>

Schools should ensure:

- Clear, documented emergency procedures for each visit
- Alignment with school and Trust emergency plans
- Availability of a competent emergency contact at all times
- Staff are trained, briefed and understand their roles
- Participants know how to seek help where necessary
- Plans are regularly reviewed and, where appropriate, tested

Guidance from the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel (OEAP) should be followed including ensuring that:

- All those involved in off-site visits, whether part of the visit leadership team, acting as emergency contact, or having a role in the Emergency Incident Plan at either establishment or employer level should:
 - Be competent to fulfil their role including having the ability to function effectively in a crisis;
 - Be familiar with the relevant plan and have easy access to key information and resources;
 - Receive appropriate briefing, training and support;
 - Have regular opportunities to engage in practice scenarios;
 - Be available

A positive security culture is promoted through vigilance, awareness and familiarity with emergency procedures.

All incident responses must align with the school's **Business Continuity Plan**, ensuring ongoing operations and effective communication.

7. Coordination with Authorities

Schools will cooperate fully with the Security Industry Authority, police and emergency services. Any compliance requirements or notices must be addressed promptly.

8. Supporting Information

Further operational detail, including attack methodologies and enhanced response measures, is provided in the appendices. These support awareness and planning but should be applied proportionately.

Appendix 1: Key Definitions

For clarity, the following definitions apply throughout this policy:

Terrorism refers to the use or threat of violence to achieve political, religious, racial or ideological objectives.

The **Responsible Person** is the individual who has control of a premises or event and is accountable for meeting legal requirements under the Act, even where tasks are delegated.

Qualifying Premises are sites where there is at least one building, the main use falls within the Act (including education), and 200 or more people may reasonably be present.

Enhanced Duty Premises are qualifying premises where 800 or more people may be present, requiring additional measures.

Public Protection Procedures are the core emergency plans required under the Act. These include evacuation, invacuation, lockdown, movement to safer areas and communication.

A **Move to Critical Plan** refers to additional response measures that may be implemented when there is increased threat or clearer intelligence about an incident.

Attack Methodology describes the way an attack may be carried out, supporting planning and preparedness.

Appendix 2: Understanding Attack Methodologies

Attack methodologies describe the different ways in which harm could be caused. Awareness helps staff recognise risks early and respond appropriately. The following categories provide a high-level overview for planning and training purposes.

Bladed or Physical Attacks

These involve handheld weapons and are often fast and unpredictable. A rapid response, including alerting others and initiating lockdown where appropriate, is critical.

Vehicle as a Weapon (VAW)

Vehicles may be used to cause harm or breach site boundaries. Protective arrangements should consider safe access points and movement away from external areas if needed.

Explosive Threats

These may involve unattended items, packages or vehicles. Staff should apply suspicious item protocols and ensure evacuation routes avoid risk areas.

Firearms or Projectile Weapons

Although rare in the UK, plans must consider the need for immediate lockdown, securing rooms and keeping out of sight.

Fire Setting (Arson)

Deliberate fires may be used to disrupt or harm. Strong fire safety practices and site supervision remain essential.

Hazardous Substances

Incidents involving chemicals or other harmful substances require rapid isolation of affected areas and engagement with emergency services.

Threats and Hoaxes

Threats may be communicated in various ways and must always be treated seriously until assessed. Clear procedures for communication and response are essential.

Appendix 3: Move to Critical – Tactical Response Options

In response to heightened threat levels or an ongoing incident, schools may adopt additional temporary security measures. These should be proportionate and reviewed regularly.

Examples include restricting access points, increasing supervision, tightening visitor controls, and limiting non-essential activity. Enhanced checking of vehicles, deliveries and mail may also be appropriate.

Schools may increase site searches, monitor CCTV more actively, and ensure all staff are clearly identified. Communication should be strengthened, including use of pre-prepared messages and clear reporting processes.

Additional measures might include postponing events, reducing site activity, ensuring emergency equipment is ready, and maintaining detailed logs of decisions and actions.

These measures are not intended for long-term use but provide flexibility to respond effectively during periods of increased risk.

The list below sets out actions that may be required:

1. Close non-essential access and egress points
2. Search immediate parking areas and review access to them
3. Ensure that all visitors and contractors provide at least 24 hours' notice, prior to attendance and are accompanied at all times
4. Cancel or postpone events
5. Ensure all staff are challenged and their ID checked
6. Check all vehicles and personnel on entry, including emergency services
7. Implement a regular and unpredictable search sweep rota across site, including areas hidden from surveillance
8. Restrict and only accept deliveries that are essential
9. Scan all mail and ensure that postal procedures are robust
10. Ensure full adherence to incident response and business continuity planning checklist
11. Ensure contents of emergency grab bags are up-to-date, secure and easily accessible
12. Prepare alerts, alarms and pre-scripted messages
13. Ensure that staff are briefed on Threat Level
14. Ensure that any suspicious activity is reported in a timely manner
15. Actively monitor CCTV and review out-of-hours footage
16. Ensure a strong security posture through Security Minded Communications
17. Ensure that perimeter fencing and security lighting is checked
18. Cancel all non-essential training and meetings
19. Ensure communications and decision logs are maintained
20. Ensure supporting technology, such as access control systems, are in working order
21. Consider the threats from unmanned aerial vehicles (drones)

Appendix 4 : Resources and Further Information

Schools should make use of national guidance and training resources to support implementation.

Key resources include:

ProtectUK – provides training such as ACT for Education, awareness materials and practical guidance. <https://www.protectuk.police.uk/catalogue/EducationLearningandGuidance>

Department for Education Guidance (April 2025) – includes protective security advice and self-assessment tools
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protective-security-and-preparedness-for-education-settings>

National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) – offers advice on protective security and incident response.

<https://www.protectuk.police.uk/>

Security awareness training for staff and pupils is available through the Protect UK and the NPSA websites including:

- The ACT for Education e-learning course aimed at staff in education setting:
<https://www.protectuk.police.uk/catalogue/EducationLearningandGuidance>
- The Act for Youth content aimed at pupils:
<https://www.protectuk.police.uk/advice-and-guidance/response/act-youth-run-hide-tell>
- The HOT Protocol:
<https://www.protectuk.police.uk/advice-and-guidance/security/incident-procedures>
- See, Check and Notify (SCaN):
<https://www.npsa.gov.uk/scan-all-staff>
- Run Hide Tell:
<https://www.protectuk.police.uk/advice-and-guidance/response/run-hide-tell>

The appointed regulator, the SIA, has not published their own statutory guidance on compliance with the Act and enforcement measures but the government released statutory guidance on the 15th of April 2026.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-terrorism-protection-of-premises-act-2025>

These resources support staff awareness, planning and continuous improvement.