

Martyn's Law and Schools

Does Martyn's Law even apply to your School?

Martyn's Law, aka The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, applies to all educational premises where more than 200 persons are expected to be on your School premises.

What to consider when trying to understand if your school meets the criteria:

- Number of Staff; this means all staff, including any regular employees of other employers – catering, for example, who work at your school.
- Number of pupils.
- Expected number of visitors for School events; this includes parents at any sports days or parents' evenings.
- Expected number of occupants for any after-school or out-of-term-time use.

Martyn's Law has two tiers of duty level when it comes to expected perpetration and controls; however, all Schools, where they meet the lower tier criteria, have what is called Special Considerations under the Act. Special Considerations means that Schools must only comply with the lower tier duties.

My School meets lower tier criteria, what do I need to do?

It is important to remember that Schools are already well versed and well placed to deal with the requirements due to the many complex systems already in place to comply with safeguarding requirements. Most of the UK Protect guidance and training for all tiers is about prevention; schools, as they are set up with their gates, protected entrances and vigilant staff members, are well placed to deter any threat and detect it swiftly with simple tactics such as the power of Hello.

Things your School should have in place to comply with Martyn's law:

1. A security lockdown plan which is practised by your team (this is different from invacuation, which relates to environmental issues such as local airborne pollutants release).
2. Staff training on security threats such as suspicious packages and suspicious persons. Free training is available from ACT UK – this is the official UK Counter

Terrorism website, the only authority on this legislation. Links are provided below.

3. Have a communication plan prepared – for example, parents may need to know what is happening, which is understandable and their right, but consider how any information you provide in these situations could help an attacker.
4. An identified and agreed place of safe escape that is off your school site - SEND provisions must consider and plan for moving high dependency pupils as they would in a fire evacuation.
5. Check up on the information you provide on your website – for example, are you providing any ground or site plans that a potential attacker could use for planning?
6. Identify a responsible person in your SLT – for MAT schools this should be a senior level individual at the Trust. It could be an Operations or Estates Manager, or for Independent Schools and Academies the School Head. This person should complete enhanced training, oversee arrangements, and stay up to date.

What if something happens on a School trip?

When you attend another company's premises, that company holds their own duties to comply under Martyn's Law; as such, it would not be required or practical for you to make arrangements at the site you visit. This applies to day visits and residential visits.

As a school, you should ensure these arrangements are in place (they won't be able to share the details for security purposes and you are not lawfully entitled to see them) and you should ensure that you are preparing staff and pupils to be ready to listen and follow all instructions as they would for any other health and safety information.

Common questions and issues that come up from schools when planning for Martyn's Law.

- A siren or signal that is different from the fire alert.
- Preventing the team from accidentally oversharing key security details.
- How do we move pupils off site safely?
- Where can we go? What constitutes suitable offsite premises?
- How far away do we need to move our pupils?
- Can we just call the police if there is a bomb threat?

Training should help you answer most of those questions should they come up, and it is freely available for all staff, including enhanced training for your responsible person at the following link from ACT UK. You can even create a School account, and track who has completed training and when it needs to be refreshed.

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

Safetying also works in the Event Industry and is experienced in complex security risk assessment. Contact us for any site-specific guidance, support to complete or a mini audit of your Martyn's Law arrangements.