

Anti-Terrorism in Schools

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This code outlines the steps to be followed on receipt of a telephone bomb threat. Receptionists are the most likely to receive a telephone bomb threat. It is, however, foreseeable that other individuals, particularly in smaller buildings, could receive a call of this type.

2.0 Anti-Terrorism Procedures

- 2.1 The current international situation involves a generally heightened risk of terrorist activities although there is no specific threat to St. Helens Council facilities beyond the wider threat to UK interests.
- 2.2 Headteachers **shall** ensure that employees are aware of the need to report any of the following: -
- Suspicious packages.
 - Suspicious persons.
 - Telephone calls making any sort of threat.
- 2.3 It is important that access to School buildings is effectively controlled and Head teachers **shall** ensure that visitor procedures are in place at their site. Staff **shall** wear Council Identification badges whilst on Council business.
- 2.4 Head teachers who have responsibility for staff dealing with mail and/or public enquiries **shall** ensure that employees receive the following:-
- Guidance for dealing with suspect packages.
 - Guidance on receiving a telephone bomb threat.
- 2.5 The Head teacher **shall** ensure that Caretakers, Cleaning and Kitchen staff have received instruction on the action to be taken on receipt of information that a bomb threat has been received.

3.0 On Receipt of Call

- 3.1 As soon as it is clear that a caller is making a bomb threat the recipient should **LET THEM FINISH THEIR MESSAGE WITHOUT INTERRUPTION**. If any response is essential, as to a statement such as "This is about a bomb, are you listening?" keep it to one or two words. Whilst the caller talks, record the message as accurately as possible and also listen for clues to:-
- Caller's sex and approximate age;
 - Noticeable condition affecting speech, such as drunkenness, laughter, anger, excitement, incoherency;
 - Note callers ID from switchboard display (if available)

Peculiarities of speech, such as foreign accent, mispronunciations, speech impediment, tone and pitch of voice;

Background noises audible during the call, such as music, traffic, talking, machinery.

When the caller has given the message, try to keep them in conversation. The following are key questions and should be asked, if possible, **AFTER THE CALLER HAS GIVEN THE MESSAGE:** -

- If a code word is given the exact detail should be taken down (Any code word should only be disclosed to the Police).
- Where is the bomb located?
- What time will it explode? (note the time of detonation i.e 3pm or in 40 mins)
- What does it look like?
- When was it placed?
- Why was it placed?
- Who are you?
- Where are you?

Note whether the caller repeated the message or any part of it.

Note the exact time of its receipt. Write the message down.

4.0 Action Following Receipt of a Call

- 4.1 Call the Police - in all circumstances the Police must be notified immediately that a "bomb threat" has been received (using the emergency telephone number) and follow their advice.

Indicate that you have received a bomb threat and give:-

Your Name

Telephone Extension Number

Details of conversation

Exact Building/Venue/Area named

- 4.2 Contact the Security Service (6728/6727) advise them of the threat and to make contact with Emergency Duty Officer, and brief them on the police advice.
- 4.3 Where it is determined by the Police an evacuation is required, inform all staff to evacuate the premises by pre agreed means and the assembly point to use.
- 4.4 On arrival at the assembly point, immediately contact the most senior officer present and brief them. You will be advised of the assembly point by the person in charge of the evacuation (Emergency Duty Officer/Police).

5.0 Action by Staff

- 5.1 Where you are requested to leave the premises, follow their instructions, which will include;
- The route to exit the premises
 - The correct assembly point
- 5.2 After request to evacuate a premises, quickly collect your personal belongings such as, coat, handbag, lunch box, shopping bags, packages etc, (if nearby).
- 5.3 Inspect briefly your work area for any suspicious packages, objects etc.

DO NOT touch suspect items.

5.4 **EVACUATE** the building, staff will be directed to assemble at an alternative place well away from the building.

5.5 Report anything suspicious to the Senior Staff at the Assembly Point.

5.6 Stay at the Assembly Point and await further instruction from headteacher/deputy headteacher who will liaise with the Emergency Services.

6.0 **Action by Teaching/Administration Staff**

6.1 Check briefly for anything suspicious when clearing the area for which you are responsible.

6.2 Check with staff at the Assembly Point whether anyone has seen any suspicious person or package.

6.3 Report anything suspicious to the Senior Member of staff on arrival at the Assembly Point.

7.0 **Guidelines for Dealing with Suspect Packages**

7.1 **Background**

7.1.1 Anxiety is being generated about what action should be taken following the receipt of a suspicious package, and this guidance provides a proportionate response to this situation.

7.1.2 Merseyside Police have well rehearsed procedures for these circumstances and the purpose of this document is to provide appropriate advice to employees and ensure that local arrangements are consistent with Regional Emergency Procedures.

8.0 **General Guidance**

8.1 Good sense and care should be used in inspecting and opening mail or packages.

- Examine (feel) unopened envelopes for foreign bodies or powder.
- Do not open letters with your hands: use a non-metallic letter opener.
- Open letters and packages with a minimum of movement to avoid spilling any contents.

8.2 **What Types of Letters and Packages May be Suspect?**

Possible indicators are;

- Any letter or package that has suspicious or threatening messages written on it.
- Letters with oily stains.
- Envelopes that are lopsided, rigid, bulky, discoloured or have a strange colour.
- Unexpected envelopes from foreign countries.
- No postage or non-cancelled postage or excessive postage.
- Incorrect spelling of common names, places or titles.

8.3 **Suspect Envelopes/Packages**

8.3.1 If a suspect package/envelope is discovered proceed as follows:-

STOP : DO NOT OPEN THE ENVELOPE OR PACKAGE

- **LEAVE the envelope or package as it is (to limit exposure)**, on a clear flat surface. **DO NOT** clean up any residue/powder and **EVACUATE** the room if that is practical and keep others from entering and move people away from the area.
- **NOTIFY** your manager, who should call the Police (confirm with the police whether the package/ envelope has been opened, then inform Security Section on 6728/6727
- The Security Service, on receipt of a call, will ensure that the Emergency Duty Officer and Health & Safety (Ext 1722) are informed of the current situation.

The Management arrangement for this type of situation will be followed on advice of the Police.

8.4 Packages that are Opened and which Contain Suspicious Material

Contain the Exposure

- Close off the room (doors and windows), do not allow anyone other than qualified emergency personnel to enter.
- Close the package or envelope to limit additional exposure. Do not clean powder up; keep others away.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or any other part of your body.
- If possible, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- If clothing is heavily contaminated, don't brush vigorously.
- If possible, close down the buildings heating/air conditioning/ventilation system.
- Make a list of all people who had actual contact with the powder for investigating authorities.
- If the suspicious material is a white powder, the employee who has come into contact with the substance must wait within the room and instructed not to mingle with other members of staff, until given clearance by the emergency services
- **NOTIFY** your manager, who should call the Police (confirm with the police whether the package/ envelope has been opened, then inform Security Section on 6728/6727.
- The Security Service, on receipt of a call, will ensure that the Emergency Duty Officer and Health & Safety (Ext 1722) are informed of the current situation.
- The emergency services will assess the suspect material on arrival at site and provide guidance/assistance/support upon arrival.

Evacuation of any premises will be under the advice of Merseyside Police and activation of emergency procedures will be initiated by the Corporate Safety Team based on advice from the emergency services.

DO NOT PANIC

- Anthrax organisms can cause skin infection, gastrointestinal infection or pulmonary infection. To do so, the organism must be rubbed into damaged skin, swallowed, or inhaled as a fine, aerosolised mist. It does not leap into one's body. All forms of disease are generally treatable with antibiotics.

The same facts and conditions are generally true for other bacteria likely to be considered as biological weapons.