

Insight



PERIMETER SAFETY AND SECURITY  
AT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

**Jacksons  
Fencing**



## How can bursars and heads best defend themselves against them?

There's no substitute for developing and implementing a robust security and safety plan which starts with carrying out a security audit to understand the threats to safety and security as they would apply to the site today and into the future.

### Based on an interview with Peter Jackson, Chief Executive, Jacksons Fencing

The clear demarcation between public and private property and the ability to control and monitor access and egress (on foot, by bicycle or vehicle) to and from the school boundary forms the backbone to any security solution.

The trend today is away from solid boundaries like walls to alternatives which afford clear sight lines employing steel welded mesh or vertical railing type fencing; allowing activities within the boundary to be monitored and areas where intruders can conceal their presence from the road are reduced.

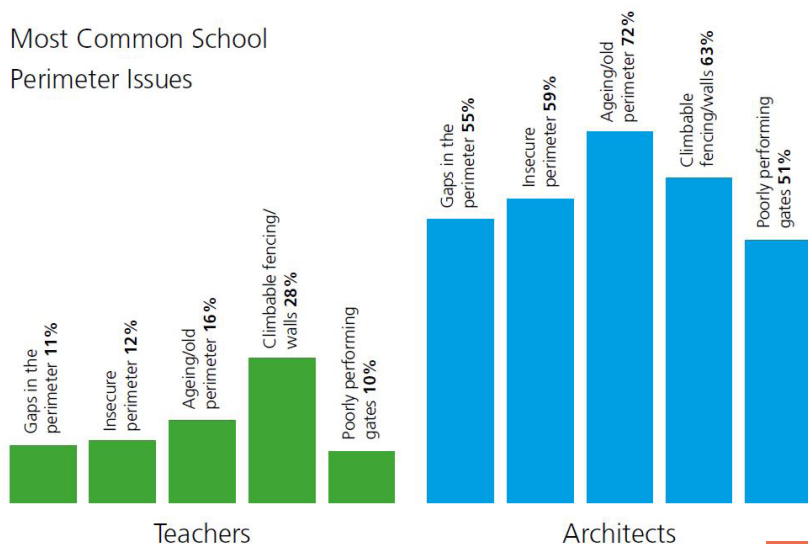
However, in some instances, it may be preferable to protect students or property from unwanted attention; in these cases a solid boarded fence will offer a cost effective solution.

## What are the greatest threats to an independent school's security?

While security risks are broadly similar across all schools whether independent or state funded -preventing unauthorised entry to the grounds, protecting pupils, staff and visitors from accidents and injury, deterring theft, anti-social behaviour, abduction, arson and malicious damage - specific threats will vary from location to location for instance inner city schools are likely to face increased risks of anti-social behaviour, assault, theft from property and acts of vandalism. Naturally, boarding schools face additional duties of care and attendant risk where staff and pupil will need to be maintained during and after school hours with different safety and security regimes in operation for each.

As a company, we have delivered over 5,000 projects to pre-schools, primary and secondary schools, academies and places of higher education over the past 10 years and I can honestly say that while there are many similarities, virtually every project is characterised by its differences.

Most Common School Perimeter Issues



Our recent education report highlighted the most common perimeter issues found in schools as illustrated by the graphs. Teachers had significantly different views to how secure their school's perimeter was, with 16% stating that the most common issue was an ageing/old perimeter, compared to 71% of architects. [You can read the full report here.](#)

What sort of security provision should they look for?

The means to reduce the risk of security and safety incidents with minimal human intervention should rank as a key objective.

A security audit will highlight vulnerabilities to existing and evolving threats as well as the considerations required for efficient school operations including the movement of people and vehicles around the site, the protection of property against malicious and accidental damage, the provision of safe sports and recreation areas, the rapid evacuation of the site and access for emergency services in the event of a major incident.

Any common security mistakes that a school leader should avoid?

The two most common and understandable mistakes are to allow the balance sheet to dictate the level of safety and security afforded to pupils, staff and visitors and adopting a reactive rather than strategic approach to security and safety planning and implementation.

What would an ideal procurement process look like?

The ideal step by step procurement process would include:

1. Consultation with educators, administrative staff, facilities management for input to the current and foreseeable risks which need to be reduced
2. Conduct a thorough security and safety audit
3. Establish your operational requirements and document your security and safety plan
4. Speak with the manufacturers of potential solutions and insist on a site visit
5. Understand fully how the solutions offered will reduce risks and mitigate against the threats to safety and security your audit has identified, meet with your operational requirements and provide the resilience a school needs
6. Consider the design of fencing, gate and access control solutions not only in terms of fitness for purpose but also on aesthetic dimensions – naturally they should deter and delay access to the school grounds, but they also need to blend into their surroundings and neighbourhood and help in fostering an environment conducive to learning and development

7. Evaluate and compare competitive quotations based on price, specification and guarantee period offered – products tested and certified to security and safety standards cost more than those which don't for good reason; the same applies to products backed by long guarantees which will result in lower whole life cost, reduced impact on the environment and sustainability
8. Insist your chosen supplier can provide evidence that all staff and contractors working on your site have been DBS checked and cleared at the required level
9. Ensure any automated products including turnstiles, gates and vehicle barriers are designed and engineered to exceed BS EN 12978 and BS EN 12453 in relation to gate safety and CE marked as compliant with EU Machinery Directive 2006-42-EC
10. Don't expect fencing, gates, access control and other security products to perform to their design specification over time without regular inspection and maintenance build this consideration into your scheduled operational procedures



## Where can I find further information and guidance on security and safety in an education environment?

There is a wealth of experience and guidance on the subject freely available. For our part, we can provide you with a [White Paper on School Safety and Security Best Practice](#), a checklist for carrying out a school security audit, expert guidance on the range of perimeter security and access control options, from inherently safe fence and gate designs approved by RoSPA and conforming to BS EN 1176 for application in preparatory and junior schools and play areas to a wide variety of LPS1175 certified security fencing and gate systems and even acoustic barriers which provide security, privacy and prevent the migration of environmental noise into or from a school site.

In addition, the Designing Out Crime Officer at your local police force and Secured by Design's New Schools Guidance document are excellent sources of further information.



### Contact Us

For further information, advice or to arrange for a site visit, please contact us on +44 (0) 1233 750 393 or email [security@jacksons-fencing.co.uk](mailto:security@jacksons-fencing.co.uk)

### Head Office Security and Export Enquiries

Jacksons Fencing  
Stowting Common  
Ashford  
Kent TN25 6BN  
United Kingdom

T: +44 (0) 1233 750 393