

Safer Schools

Assessment of how design affects crime in a primary and a secondary school & implementation of crime reduction measures.

Home Office Scientific Development Branch

The “Safer Schools” projects is an initiative headed by the Police Scientific Development branch of the Home Office. Intelligent Space were asked to evaluate the role of the physical design of the buildings and grounds on the risk of crimes occurring.

Two schools were selected due to the problems that each faces from crime and anti-social behaviour. The intention is to reduce crime and fear of crime in the schools to create a safer, more secure teaching environment.



SECONDARY SCHOOL - VANDALISM BY PUPILS

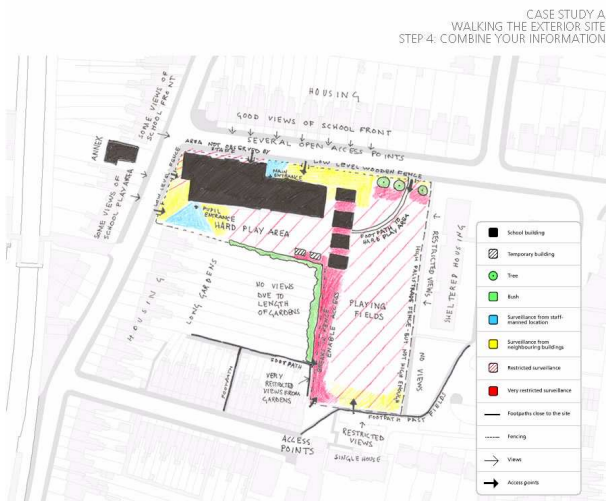
The crime and antisocial behaviour at the secondary school arises mainly from misbehaviour among the school population aged 11-16. The aim for this school were to identify which parts of the school were more susceptible to vandalism and other crimes and incidents by pupils and to identify how the current design controls security. Key issues were:

- The school building is very broken up with free standing buildings and internal divisions. This makes the natural surveillance of the corridors and outside areas very difficult.
- Changing the route by which pupils access the school was suggested to reduce the number of students going through the secluded locations targeted for vandalism.

BENEFITS

Using these methods has provided the schools with three key benefits:

- Showing use patterns - by pupils, staff and visitors
- Detailed analysis of the location and times of crime and relating these to use patterns.
- Highlighting locations that are visually secluded with little or no natural surveillance which may be targeted for crimes or incidents.



PRIMARY SCHOOL - TRESPASS BY YOUTHS

In the primary school, the key problems faced were from trespass by youths out of hours. The analysis of the school showed:

- The south of the site, where the trespass occurs, is adjacent to a footpath that is poorly surveyed. Although the fencing here is higher than in other locations, it is not sufficient to prevent access.
- Locations within the school site that were the target for crimes & incidents were in locations that again could not be overseen from neighbouring properties.

Design guidance was also proposed to minimise the risk of pupil abduction. There is a low probability of this but as the school boundaries are very permeable it was decided to address what is obviously perceived by parents as a real danger by reducing the risk further.