

**One Staffordshire Information Sharing Protocol**

**Safer Schools Partnership**



# Safer Schools Partnership

## Joint Protocol

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Introduction	3
2. Purpose of Agreement	3
3. Partnership Aims and Objectives	4
4. Safer Schools Partnership Officer (SSPo)	
5. Roles and Responsibilities	5
6. School Staff Responsibilities	6
7. Expectations	7
8. Line Management of SSPo	9
9. Management of Information	9
10. Review Process	9
11. Finance	10
12. Local Arrangements	10
13. Training	11
14. Health and Safety and Duty of Care	12
15. Risk Management	13
16. SSPo Programmes of Activity	14

## **1. Introduction**

The Safer School Partnership (SSP) programme was launched in September 2002 after a proposal from the Youth Justice Board (YJB) for a new policing model for Police and schools to work together in order to keep young people safe; reduce crime and the fear of crime and improve behaviour in schools and their communities.

The Staffordshire SSP is designed to build on the existing high levels of partnership work between Staffordshire Police and places of education within Staffordshire police area and other agencies. It intends to allocate a dedicated Police Officer to work within the school in order to address specific issues and to meet the objectives of this partnership.

The officers' presence is not necessarily because schools need a Police presence; it is about partnership working and represents a new approach to Police involvement in schools, focusing on early intervention and prevention to create well rounded students who have respect for the law and their communities.

Ten schools throughout the county have been identified through the Strategic Profiling Unit as being those which may benefit from being party to a SSP agreement and having a dedicated Safer School Partnership officer (SSPo) allocated to their establishment.

The level of service offered to each school may vary locally following agreement between the school and Police, but the ethos and intention of the agreement underpins the partnership.

## **2. Purpose of Agreement**

The purpose of this Partnership Agreement is to clarify the operational and financial arrangements of all parties when working within the SSP. This agreement forms part of the One Staffordshire Protocol and is in addition to any other existing protocols and guidelines that might be effective within either organisation, and reflects Staffordshire Police's commitment to education, young people and safer neighbourhoods.

### 3. Partnership Aims and Objectives

These objectives aim to support the outcomes of Every Child Matters (Dept. of Education 2003) and will be achieved through a multi-agency, problem-solving approach involving representatives from all partners relevant to the issues being addressed.

*To reduce the prevalence of crime and victimisation amongst young people and reduce the number of incidents and crimes in schools and their wider communities by:*

- working together to provide consistent and appropriate support and intervention to divert young people from social exclusion and criminality.
- sharing information to identify those young people at risk of becoming victims or offenders as well as those who already are.

*To provide a safe and secure school community which enhances the learning environment by:*

- reducing the incidence of bullying and violent behaviour experienced by pupils and staff in the school and the wider community.
- reducing substance misuse in the school and the wider community.
- developing crime prevention strategies to improve the physical security of the school and the personal safety of all who use it.
- developing a multi-agency approach to supporting teachers and other school staff in managing the learning environment.

*To ensure that young people remain in education, actively learning and achieving their full potential by:*

- developing strategies to improve attendance by addressing both authorised and unauthorised absence.
- supporting vulnerable young people through transition, between phases in their education and other aspects of their lives.
- raising attainment by ensuring a calm learning environment free from disruption.

*To engage young people, challenge unacceptable behaviour, and help them develop a respect for themselves and their community, by;*

- developing a whole school approach to conflict resolution.
- ensuring that young people have opportunities to learn and develop citizenship skills.
- promoting the full participation of all young people in the life of the school and its wider community and decisions that directly affect them.

#### **4. SSPo Role and Responsibilities**

The dedicated SSPo will be attached to and based at/between designated schools within the SSP. The role will be demanding and varied. It will be focused on working in partnership with the Local Education Authority, school staff and education services to prevent offending and to create a safer school environment. The role will involve a high level of multi agency working and co-ordination specifically in relation to individual ‘high-risk’ offenders and vulnerable young people when problem solving in and around the school environment.

- Work with young people to assist them to help make the school and community safer and more secure, and to ensure that their views are actively taken on board in developing the partnership.
- Assist in a partnership approach to any incidents of bullying and truancy.
- Assist in a partnership approach to the delivery of Personal, Social, Health and Economic classes (PSHE). The areas specific to the police are: crime, ASB, violence, hate crime, knives/weapons, personal safety, drugs and the law.
- Undertake patrols in and around the school including truancy patrol.
- Conduct initial investigations involving allegations such as assault, sexual assault, offensive weapons and drugs offences.
- Investigate other crime reported to Police by the school following the National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS) ‘Crime Recording by Police Officers Working in Schools’. (Minor crime matters that are reported will normally be dealt with out of school hours after full details have been reported and any immediate evidence gathered. Arrests at school should normally only be made in relation to serious offences).

- Implement Restorative Justice (RJ) measures for crime in community that is linked to school problems.
- Assist school staff in the management of potentially violent situations and in the lawful searching of students.
- Be aware of and comply with the 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People' (Dept. for Children, Schools and Families 2006).
- Attend safeguarding meetings.
- Provide CEOP awareness for pupils and for parents.
- Work alongside Integrated Offender Management Unit with identified pupils for various problems (drugs, domestic problems, bullying, alcohol, ASB) in an attempt to reduce offending.
- Work alongside Youth Offending Team to discuss highlighted pupils at risk of offending/re-offending and those who receive final warnings/reprimands.

#### **5. School Staff Responsibilities (*in line with Governors guidance*)**

School staff will work in conjunction with the SSPo to achieve the aims of the partnership:-

- Staff will assist in a partnership approach to dealing with any incidents including bullying and truancy, and work with the SSPo to agree an approach for involving the SSPo in its resolution.
- Staff will report incidents of assault (with injury), robbery, sexual assault, offensive weapons seized or found, and drugs seized or found to the Head Teacher, or designated staff lead, who will then liaise with the SSPo or Police Control Room in their absence. (Third party reporting is acceptable and staff will provide comprehensive details of the incident and parties involved, based on the available information).
- The Head Teacher will develop an agreement with the SSPo on the circumstances in which other crimes are reported.
- School staff will preserve evidence of an offence whether physical or from a witness whenever practicable and will seek any advice necessary from the SSPo. Continuity of exhibits and property will be given priority. Any exhibits

will be brought to the attention of the SSPo for them to be dealt with according to police procedures.

- In the event of students being searched by the SSPo, school staff will aim to assist. Parents will be notified of such action by school staff and a stop search form will be completed. A copy of this form will be given to the student and a record kept on the school's student file.
- The school will have a pastoral support system that takes into account the needs of vulnerable and at risk young people, including young people who have offended.
- The school will provide a copy of their Bullying policy .
- The school will provide a copy of their Behaviour Management policy and procedures.

## **6. Expectations of SSP**

The key roles of SSPo's working within SSP's will be to prevent and detect crime within the school community; provide reassurance to staff, pupils and parents; be a positive role model for young people; promote the role of the Police service amongst young people; address issues of behaviour and disorder within and around the school and gather community intelligence.

Police officers are not qualified or trained to teach and as such they should be supported by qualified teachers/support staff at all times when formally addressing pupils in a capacity aimed at educating. All such inputs must be scrutinised by the school, to ensure that they are appropriate and relevant to the age of the pupils to be addressed. Predominantly, the role of the Police Officer is to support the staff who are teaching, delivering training or other educational inputs if required, by providing context, content and experience in line with their professional role within the Police service.

Both head and identified lead teachers will ensure that SSPo's enhance teaching roles at the school. SSPo's are not a replacement for teachers and should not be given tasks that they are not equipped to deal with or are inappropriate for their duties within the SSP. The establishment will ensure that school staff are aware of the role of the SSPo as being specific to support the education and safety of those who attend, work or visit the school.

Each SSPo will work in uniform and have access to their personal protective equipment. Any exception to this must be authorised by Police supervision.

The SSPo will work on school premises. As part of the agreement they will need to be seen as an integral part of the school community and a member of the education team. A dedicated lead will be identified within the school to address any specific issues regarding the deployment.

Should other Police Officers attend the school as part of normal neighbourhood Police duties then they will inform the school of their presence.

Crime recording will be completed by SSPo's as per Force Policy utilising professional judgement, where appropriate.

When dealing with incidents that amount to a crime, the presumption, in line with the National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS), will be to avoid where appropriate, criminalising children and young people.

In all cases where it is right and proper to do so, elements of Restorative Justice (RJ) principles will be applied before seeking resolution through the criminal justice process. This 'informal resolution' will always be documented and take place only with the agreement of the victim, victim's parents/guardians, teaching staff; and the offender and offender's parents/guardians. At the conclusion of this process, which may involve some elements of reparation or restitution, but never (under any circumstances) compensation, there must be a consensual agreement by all parties that the incident has been resolved.

Where 'informal resolution' is inappropriate or unsuccessful then recourse to law will be at the minimum level applicable to the situation in line with the directions of the Youth Justice Board (YJB).

## **7. Line Management of SSPo's**

SSPo's will remain under the line management and authority of their immediate police supervisor. However, they will also adhere to the direction of the Head

Teacher or other identified lead in order to ensure that the activities of the SSPo within the school are focused on identified issues and serve to support the stated aims of this protocol.

## **8. Management of Information**

In furtherance of the aims of the SSP, information may be shared in accordance with the terms of the One Staffordshire Protocol. This draws on Section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Any other verbally shared information will remain confidential and not shared with other persons unless the required authority under the above information sharing protocol has been complied with.

## **9. Review Process**

This protocol is a 'live' document that will continue to evolve with the partnership. It may be reviewed at any time, and in any case a formal review will be conducted every twelve months. The review will be conducted by representatives of the Police and the school and is intended to identify whether the agreement remains current, effective, and to identify ways in which it can be improved.

## **10. Finance**

No charge will be made for SSPo's working in schools offering the universal level of service within SSP's and Staffordshire Police remains responsible for funding the SSPo's salary.

Where an enhanced level of service is agreed between the school, Local Authority, Police and partners, a charge may be agreed for this provision. (Any such agreement will be with reference to the ACPO standard scale of charging. It is envisaged that this will be a rare occurrence within Staffordshire).

Where additional costs may be incurred, such as for the training of SSPo's to carry out specific extra roles in schools, then the funding and other costs of this training will be subject of negotiation between the school, the Local Authority, Staffordshire Police and partners.

The school will provide an acceptable, safe working environment for SSPo's and make available those facilities that are necessary in order that the officer is able to effectively perform their duties, for example, the use of office equipment and an area in which to work etc. Where any issues arise as to liability for any given expenditure, this will be resolved through negotiation between the parties who agreed this protocol.

## **11. Local Arrangements**

The SSPo will have access to the school grounds at any time. On the rare occasions that the school has a specific event where they feel the presence of police officers will be disruptive then this should be communicated to the SSPo in advance.

The SSPo will not routinely enter classrooms without invitation from either the teacher or school. This is to ensure that the presence of the officer does not disturb the learning environment of pupils. The SSPo will meet with the school and agree any restricted areas.

It is expected that the SSPo will deal with and have ownership of all incidents occurring within the school or the school environment - where appropriate. They will also act as a point of contact for other Police teams working with or investigating incidents at the school.

The working hours of the SSPo will be such that they are able to provide a daily point of contact and carry out interventions where required outside of school hours. This will result in the shift pattern being one is flexible to meet demand.

In the unlikely event of the Partnership Agreement failing then this will be resolved by the Staffordshire Police lead for the SSP and the nominated school lead.

## **12. Training**

A modular training approach mitigates the effect of abstractions and allows officers to undertake training modules best suited to the particular needs of a specific school. The training modules could be undertaken during school holidays to further reduce the effect of abstractions and help to provide the best service.

The training needs to address the nationally recognised four key roles of a Safer Schools Officer:

1. Law
2. Educator
3. Advisor
4. Role Model

Incorporating these four roles, various modules can be adopted to tailor training for the SSPo including (non-exhaustive);

Search & Seizure	Drugs	Critical incident training
Information Sharing	Diversity	Bullying
General Offences Legislation	e-safety	YOT
Restorative Justice	Truancy	ASBO/ABC

Various forms of training can be undertaken to ensure cost effectiveness and best value for schools. These training modules can be delivered as classroom based, self-learning or computer based training packages, where such packages exist.

### 13. Health and Safety / Duty of Care

The primary 'duty of care' for pupils lies with the school. However employees of Staffordshire Police understand their joint responsibility to ensure the health, safety and welfare of students whilst they are on the school premises. Schools also have a

duty of care towards employees of Staffordshire Police when they are on the premises and all necessary steps must be taken to ensure that this duty of care is discharged sufficiently. Schools retain their statutory responsibility for the students, including responsibility for educational needs, but the following apply to all parties to this agreement:-

- Ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against pupils, assistants, helpers or staff on the grounds of race, sex, disability, gender, religion and belief, sexual orientation or marital status.
- Have a published policy on race, disability, gender equality with arrangements in place to monitor its implementation. Schools will be able to demonstrate how they have assessed its impact on pupils, assistants, helpers, staff, visitors and parents or carers.
- Will meet the requirements of the general duty and specific duties in the Race Relations (amendment) Act, 2000, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) code of practice, the general duty and the specific duties in the disability Discrimination Act, 2005 and the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) code of practice and the Equalities Act 2006 and the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) code of practice.
- Schools must meet the requirements of Part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 (DDA) and any subsequent requirements and have regard to the DRC code of practice for schools (2002). The school must inform parents/carers of its accessibility plan and disability equality scheme and report annually on the progress made on these.
- Schools should have procedures to ensure it meets all relevant health and safety legislation and this will be applicable to employees of Staffordshire Police.
- Schools will have in place a child protection policy to ensure that the procedures that are in place are in accordance with local authority guidance, and locally agreed interagency procedures and employees of Staffordshire Police will comply with these in addition to any other responsibilities under legislation or policy.
- Meet the government requirements regarding safeguarding as set out in the DCSF guidance ‘Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education’.

## 14. Risk Management

- Staffordshire Police has completed a generic risk assessment for 'Safer Schools Partnership Working. The SSPo and school should be aware of the contents of this risk assessment. The SSPo should also be aware of the school's generic risk assessment and a copy should be appended to this document.
- The school should provide sight of the school's fire risk assessment.
- The school should provide a copy of the School's Fire Plan / procedures.
- The school should ensure their Certificate of Liability Insurance is available.
- Staffordshire Police's Certificate of Liability Insurance will be made available on request.

## 15. SSPo Programmes of Activity

The SSPo will need to work with respective head teachers, lead teachers and school governors to identify and agree a programme of activity which will best address local needs and priorities. This programme should ideally complement the prescribed roles and responsibilities of the SSPo. This should be based on a needs assessment around crime, disorder and other challenging behaviours in and around the respective school(s). Some suggested inclusions for a programme may include (non-exhaustive):

- Preventing and detecting crime, anti-social behaviour and related incidents in and around the school.
- Improving the security of the school and its site.
- Assessment of and response to incidents of violence, bullying, harassment and victimisation experienced by pupils and staff.
- Developing strategies to address truancy and un-authorized absence.
- Identifying young people at risk of, or involved in, offending and victimisation and working with agencies (such as Connexions) as appropriate.
- Developing responses to drug-related incidents.
- Enabling vulnerable young people to move through the transition phase from primary to secondary schools without being victimised.

- Supporting the introduction of conflict resolution techniques such as peer mediation, and RJ into the school.
- Developing responses to deal with offences committed by young people in and around the school.
- Contributing to strategies to facilitate the full time education of young offenders.
- Contributing to the promotion of positive behaviour and citizenship skills.
- Participating with school staff in designing and implementing behaviour plans for individual pupils.