

Freedom of Information Request – Response – 27789

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

This request arises from the serious incident at Thorpe St Andrew School in Norwich in March, in which a pupil was stabbed on school premises, triggering a lockdown, an armed police response and widespread concern among pupils, parents and the wider community. The incident has prompted significant public interest in understanding how Suffolk County Council communicates with schools regarding safety, security and emergency response procedures following major incidents affecting educational settings.

I am seeking information about communications issued by Suffolk County Council, or on its behalf, to schools and educational settings across the local authority area following this incident and more generally in relation to school security and emergency preparedness.

Information requested

Please provide details of any communications sent since this incident (on 11 March 2026) to date, to schools or educational settings in Suffolk that relate to:

- school security;*
- pupil and staff safety;*
- emergency response procedures;*
- critical incident management;*
- lockdown or evacuation procedures;*
- violence or weapons incidents in schools;*
- police incidents affecting schools;*
- threat awareness;*
- school safeguarding responses to serious incidents; or*
- guidance, alerts, reminders or advice issued following the incident at Thorpe St Andrew School.*

For each communication identified, please provide:

- 1. The date on which it was issued.*
- 2. The name of the department or team that issued it.*
- 3. The intended recipient group, including whether it was sent to:*
 - 1. all schools;*
 - 2. all primary schools;*
 - 3. all secondary schools;*
 - 4. special schools;*
 - 5. maintained schools;*
 - 6. academies;*
 - 7. multi-academy trusts; or*
 - 8. specific educational settings.*
- 4. The subject line or title of the communication.*
- 5. A brief summary of its purpose.*
- 6. Whether the communication was:*
 - 1. an alert;*
 - 2. guidance;*

3. *a reminder of existing procedures;*
4. *a request for action;*
5. *a reassurance communication; or*
6. *another category.*
7. *A copy of the communication itself, where possible.*

Please see attached spreadsheet and screenshots showing the articles appearing in Headlines and the Suffolk Learning Page.

Clarification

For the avoidance of doubt, I am not seeking:

- *operational security plans;*
- *information that would identify security vulnerabilities;*
- *tactical response procedures;*
- *site-specific security arrangements;*
- *personal information relating to staff or pupils; or*
- *information whose disclosure would prejudice ongoing criminal investigations.*

Redacted Information

All information released in response to a Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) or Environmental Information Regulation 2004 (EIR) request is deemed to be in the public domain. As such we must consider whether or not the requested information qualifies as personal information and should therefore not be released into the public domain.

The council has determined that this is personal information and is therefore exempt from disclosure under **section 40** of the FOIA and **regulation 13** of the EIR.

The Council considered the following, including the possible consequences of disclosure for the data subjects concerned and their reasonable expectations as to the use of their data:

- expectations of the individuals concerned about personal information being put into the public domain;
- reasonable expectations - the data subjects concerned would have a legitimate expectation of privacy concerning their personal information and would not have anticipated this being put into the public domain;
- whether or not the requested information could be anonymised; and
- balancing the individual's rights and the legitimate interests - In past cases the Information Commissioner has weighed the individual's rights to privacy against the public interest in disclosure. There is no presumption in favour of releasing personal data.

This is an absolute exemption, which means that if the condition is satisfied there is no additional public interest test to consider.

In assessing fairness, the Council considered the likely consequences of disclosure of the requested information. Personal information should not be used in ways that have unjustified adverse effects on the individuals concerned. The council also considered

whether such disclosure would be within the reasonable expectations of the individuals, given that any response to a request under the FOIA or EIR is deemed to be in the public domain. The council believes that in this instance it is not fair to disclose personal data and is therefore withholding the requested information under section 40 of the FOIA and regulation 13 of the EIR.

SUFFOLK HEADLINES

The weekly bulletin presenting information for all Suffolk schools from the Suffolk County Council

The bulletin will be issued every Tuesday

Deadline for submission: Friday, 12.00 noon

Please send the completed form to [REDACTED]

Article title (Max of 10 words) <i>This should reflect the content of the article.</i>	Critical Incidents – policy and procedure guidance
Target audience:	All LA schools
Submitted by:	[REDACTED] – SHaW Advisor SCC maintained Schools
Contact details:	[REDACTED]
Would you like your name and/or contact details to be published within the article?	Both please
Article text: (60 words max)	A new document entitled ' Critical Incidents – policy and procedure guidance ' has now been published on Suffolk Learning. This document will help LA maintained schools to prepare for the enablement of Martyn's Law in April 2027 and to enshrine realistic and proportionate emergency procedures such as lock-downs, invacuations and evacuations into their day-to-day risk analysis. The document is sourced from Government (DfE etc), HSE, and National Counter-Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) guidance – further advice if required is available from your SHaW Advisor .
Date of publication:	17 March 2026
Additional information	SHaW logo attached to email.

[View this email in your browser.](#)

Suffolk

Headlines



The weekly bulletin presenting information for all schools from
Suffolk County Council

Tuesday, 17 March 2026

Suffolk Headlines is the local authority's method for communicating key messages to Suffolk school leaders across the Suffolk education community; to promote our partnership working and share other opportunities around our ambition to ensure that Suffolk is a great place to teach, lead and learn.

On occasions we may ask school leaders to share specific information with their school/setting community.

Suffolk Headlines as a communication strategy is specifically for communication with school leaders and staff so please do not share the newsletter beyond staff in your setting.

Next Suffolk School Leader Breakfast Meeting:

Friday 20 March 2026 (8.15am on Teams)



(All Suffolk headteachers should have received the Teams invite directly.)

All LA schools

Critical Incidents - Policy and procedure guidance



A new [Critical Incidents - policy and procedure guidance](#) document has been added to the [Critical incidents, bomb threats and national security](#) page on

Suffolk Learning. This document will help LA maintained schools to prepare for the enablement of Martyn's Law in April 2027 and to enshrine realistic and proportionate emergency procedures such as lock-downs, invacuations and evacuations into their day-to-day risk analysis.

The document is sourced from government (such as the Department for Education), HSE, and National Counter-Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) guidance - further advice (if required) is available from your [Safety, Health and Wellbeing \(SHaW\) Advisor](#)

Critical incidents, bomb threats and national security

A range of Department for Education Guidance documents are available below to assist you in completing your own policies and procedures for managing critical incidents.

Please ensure you read the updated non-statutory guidance from the DfE called Protective security and preparedness for education settings. [This article link](#) will provide you with a list of actions for schools to carry out.

Be prepared for Martyn's Law implementation by reading the following articles from Gov.UK, named [How Martyn's Law will affect education settings](#) and [How education settings should prepare for and respond to terrorism and other major incidents](#).

An SCC LA Maintained Schools' '[Critical Incident – policy and procedure guidance](#)' document has now been completed. Schools will be able to use this document to form their own procedures, processes and policy. The document is entirely sourced from Government, HSE, and National Counter-Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) guidance. The Martyn's Law documents (above) will also help. Further advice can be sought from your [SHaW Advisor](#).

It is essential that you read and note the contents of, the [updated September 2025 letter](#) from the Head of Organisational Support, Emma Laffin. This includes new contact details for the Education Officer team, which is crucial to the process of reporting incidents.

Please read the main document entitled 'DfE Guidance – School and College Security, November 2019' (updated 2024) first, and then use the Word templates as required.

This guidance and associated templates can be used in conjunction with the SCC and Suffolk Constabulary self-assessment already published.

There are numerous types of incident which could be deemed 'critical'. For clarification, a critical incident is any event that the head teacher feels the safety of pupils or staff is compromised. These events may include the following, but the list is not exhaustive:

Search

[A-Z Schools' Safety, Health and Wellbeing](#)

[Animals and birds in school settings and on visits](#)

[Asthma Management in Education Settings](#)

[Audits and Workplace Inspections](#)

[Business Continuity](#)

[CLEAPSS and COSHH](#)

[CORONAVIRUS: COVID-19](#)

[Critical incidents, bomb threats and national security](#)

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