



Department of Education

SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY STRATEGY

1. Introduction

School Safety and Security is an issue that has attracted a great deal of attention and concern from learners, educators, parents and the public at large. A number of well publicised cases have focused concern on the lack of safety in Gauteng schools and informed research conducted by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention notes that school violence is widespread and while it may take different forms in urban and rural schools and amongst provinces, cannot be correlated with socio-economic status and it affects both schools in both affluent and impoverished areas.

Since 1994, different partnerships and programmes have been developed to tackle issues and problems related to school safety, security and discipline. These programmes have included the Department of Education, the Department of Community Safety, the Department of Health and Social Development and the National Youth Commission.

These programmes have included:

- The Tirisano programme to address youth violence in South African schools
- The Adopt a Cop programme
- The Hlayiseka programme
- Numerous life skills , and training programmes to raise awareness of bullying and sexual abuse
- The Ke Moja campaign to combat substance abuse

The programmes have met with limited success due to uneven and differentiated roll out; inadequate resourcing and weaknesses and misunderstanding amongst school leadership, and departmental officials on policy, and responsibilities.

This strategy attempts to remedy these limitations in the following way:

- It provides an integrated framework and approach to all aspects of school safety and security issues
- It clearly identifies the roles and co-ordination mechanisms of the different role players from the GDE, Department of Community Safety (and SAPS), Department of Health and Social Development, NGO's and the private sector
- It sets up a clear structure to implement and monitor the roll out of the strategy at school, departmental and societal level
- It sets out clear resourcing of the strategy.
- It sets out monitoring and evaluation mechanism including the communication mechanisms (call centre)

2. Problem statement

Promoting and providing a supportive learning environment in which all learners can expect to feel safe is an essential function of all schools. Learners have a fundamental right to learn in a safe, supportive environment and to be treated with respect. The school community rightly expects authorities charged with managing our schools, both in the government and non-government sectors, to take all available measures to ensure the safety of learners, to support learners and to

set out clearly, transparently and explicitly the policies and programmes they have in place to fulfil this important responsibility.

Schools should be among the safest places in the community for children and young people. Some good work has already been undertaken and continues to be undertaken by most schools to provide a safe and supportive environment. The framework identifies strategies that can inform practice which enhances school safety and students' physical, social and emotional wellbeing.

Department of Education has a responsibility to provide a school environment in which learners, educators and school principals feel and are safe. Learners and The educators have a fundamental right to learn and teach in a safe environment and are treated with respect.

Tax payers have a right to know that school infrastructure and movable assets financed from state revenue is safe, well maintained and protected from unnecessary threats and risks.

Communities rightly expect that authorities charged with managing our schools both in the government and non-government sectors take all available measures to ensure the safety of learners, teachers and school property and act when transgressions occur.

It is therefore imperative for the Department to review its previous approach to dealing with Safety and Security in Schools and adopt a more comprehensive strategy to enable the Department to manage issues which threaten school safety with efficiency and effectiveness.

3. Setting the scene

3.1 Literature review

There is a considerable body of international and national research that supports a comprehensive approach to creating safe and effective schools. This must include four components of school life that influences or changes the safety of the entire school premises and neighbouring areas.

The first component is the physical environment of the school. This includes the location of the school. Gangsterism, poverty index, parks, police stations, hospitals, businesses and commercial centres surrounding schools impacts on school safety. The school premises will focus on secure perimeters and signage. Any physical condition that would lead to accidental harm needs to be included in safety planning. Places of loitering needs to be limited. Supervision and vigilance needs to be and integral part of the planning process. Learners, educators and support staff should be able to travel to and from school without any danger.

The second component is the personal characteristics of learners, educators and support staff. To achieve safe schools there must be a belief that safety is possible for all learners and educators regardless of the demographic and social conditions affecting the schools. Safe schools planning must take into account the socio-economic status, ethnic, racial, cultural and religious background of learners. The life experiences of learners and educators and support staff need to be enhanced through curriculum planning. Ongoing crime prevention training is needed to create safe schools.

The third component is the school's social environment. The schools leadership must provide strong leadership and which includes a safety in the vision for the school. School leaders must ensure that safety committees are elected and actively drive school safety. These safety committees will ensure that educators have positive attitudes towards parents and learners.

The fourth component is the schools culture. Learners, educators and support staff must feel physically and psychologically secure from physical, emotional and verbal attacks. Everyone will work together to ensure that strategies are in place to build a sense of community within the school environment. There is significant national and international data to show that schools with a democratic ethos and a sense of community ownership and belong have lower crime rates and where community ownership is weak, schools often have higher crime levels. Effective school site management is key to school safety. Classroom organisation and structure, discipline and consequences, participation and involvement are all attributes to school safety.

Safety issues facing the schooling system can be categorized as follows:

- Environmental risks related health and safety issues and to the location of the school, traffic flow and surrounding facilities and amenities as well as the condition of and management of scholar transport;
- Criminal acts against school infrastructure and movable assets including acts of theft, vandalism and arson;
- Criminal acts against learners, educators and school managers including homicide, assault, corporal punishment, rape, gangsterism and robbery on school premises, in the immediate environ of the school and in aftercare programmes and hostels linked to the school
- Substance abuse and drug and alcohol trafficking both on school premises and outside of schools;
- Undesirable behaviour including bullying, racism, sexual harassment, intimidation, and xenophobia including the use of electronic media to promote these attitudes; and
- Truancy and absenteeism

In the implementation of the strategy, provision has been made for the prevention of:

- abuse of the electronic media, such emails and Mixit
- abuse of children at the aftercare programmes and centres;
- the safety and security of children in hostels especially in special schools;

3.2 Schools as the centres of community life

This Strategy recognises the need for sustained positive approaches that include an appreciation of the ways in which social attitudes and values impact on the behaviour of learners in our school communities. Such approaches encourage all members of the school community to:

- value diversity
- contribute positively to the safety and wellbeing of themselves and others
- act independently, justly, cooperatively and responsibly in school, work, civic and family relationships
- contribute to the implementation of appropriate strategies that create and maintain a safe and supportive learning environment.

The aim of the Strategy is to assist all school communities in building safe and supportive schools where:

- bullying, harassment and violence are minimised;
- learners receive support on issues related to child abuse and neglect;
- provisions of the Occupational Health and Safety Act are promoted;
- E-security is enforced; and
- Psycho-social services are available.

The Framework is underpinned by a set of guiding principles and related key elements/approaches that schools can put in place to effectively provide a safe and supportive learning environment.

3.3 Guiding Principles for the Provision of a Safe and Supportive School Environment

Schools should:

1. affirm the right of all school community members to feel safe at school
2. promote care, respect and cooperation, and value diversity
3. implement policies, programmes and processes to nurture a safe and supportive school environment
4. recognise that quality leadership is an essential element that underpins the creation of a safe and supportive school environment
5. develop and implement policies and programmes through processes that engage the whole school community
6. ensure that roles and responsibilities of all members of the school community in promoting a safe and supportive environment are explicit, clearly understood and disseminated
7. recognise the critical importance of pre-service and ongoing professional development in creating a safe and supportive school environment
8. have a responsibility to provide opportunities for students to learn through the formal curriculum the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for positive relationships
9. focus on policies that are proactive and oriented towards prevention and intervention
10. regularly monitor and evaluate their policies and programmes so that evidence-based practice supports decisions and improvements
11. take action to protect children from all forms of abuse and neglect.

The key elements of the Strategy for School safety have been guided by these principles and the key actions have been designed to be responsive to one or more of these principles.

4. Key elements of the strategy

This strategy is based on the following five pillars:

- **Standardised school policy development and implementation:** Ensuring all schools develop safety, health and discipline policies that are understood and implemented

consistently and timeously by school management, school governors, educators, aftercare workers, hostel staff, learners and parents and are in line with the Occupational Health and Safety Act:

- **Psycho social support and promotion of alternative forms of discipline** to corporal punishment to help schools to deal with inappropriate behaviour, troubled learners and victim support;
- **Advocacy programmes** involving learners, educators, after care workers, hostel staff, parents and the surrounding community, NGOs, the faith based community, the private sector, the Department of Health and Social Development to prevent substance abuse, vandalism, theft, bullying, sexual harassment ; racism and xenophobia including an understanding of electronic forms of this type of undesirable behaviour;
- **Active law enforcement partnerships** with the SAPS, particularly with units dealing with child abuse , Metro Police, Community Policing Forums and Community patrollers to ensure a rapid response to criminal activity in school environs; conduct search and seizure operations for weapons and drugs on school premises and school hostels, enforce liquor by-laws and ensure learners do not patronise taverns and that truants are identified and returned to schools; and
- **Effectively securing the physical environs of schools and hostels** by means of having necessary emergency and evacuation procedures and drills, fire fighting equipment, first aid boxes, appropriate controls over chemicals, laboratories, workshops and catering facilities, regular testing and inspection of school nutrition and kitchens, fencing, burglar bars, guarding and armed response.

4.1 Pillar 1: Standardised school policy development and implementation

A number of recent high profile cases in the public domain suggest that not all schools have school safety and discipline policies that are understood and implemented consistently and timeously by school management, school governors, educators, learners and parents. It's also important to ensure that these policies are in line with

Sometimes there are contradictions between school policies and practice. Whereas many schools have comprehensive plans for dealing with violence, enforcement may be uneven or lax. This creates a situation where educators do not feel supported when they impose discipline, learners do not feel protected, and the violence-prone think they will not be punished. Conversely, school management often expresses dismay that educators do not enforce policies in their classrooms.

Despite these inconsistencies, many promising types of anti-violence strategies, focusing on both discipline and social and personal transformation, have been devised by government, SGBs, and schools.

Over the next year the Department of Education will undertake the following:

- Conduct an audit of all school safety and discipline policies
- Issue standardised clauses for inclusion in all school safety and discipline policies
- Ensure that SGB's adopt the revised plans
- Train SGBs, and teachers on the revised policies
- Run awareness for learners and parents on school safety and discipline policies

- Set up a specialised unit at head office to deal with serious cases of school based violence in an integrated manner.

In addition to this schools must institute common sense security measures including:

- The monitoring of learners when they move in and out of school and in places where they congregate, such as toilets, school play grounds, dormitories and bathrooms in school hostels. Some schools use parents as monitors and educators' aides. Doing this is inexpensive and can be an effective deterrent, since learners may be more reluctant to behave badly when watched by someone they regularly see in the neighbourhood. Further, involving parents gives them a sense of ownership of anti-violence efforts and may help them reconsider their own attitudes about violence.
- To keep learners from bringing in weapons some schools and hostels use metal detectors and others administer systematic or random searches of learners' bodies, possessions, and bags. Since there is a strong relationship between learner violence and use and sale of drugs, school management make special efforts to keep schools drug-free, through both education campaigns and searching.
- The formulation of other procedural guidelines for the safe use of the educational, dormitory and sporting facilities. That are consistent with the Occupational Health and Safety Act.
- Development of appropriate emergency measures and evacuation procedures to deal with fire and other dangers consistent with the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

4.2 Pillar 2: Psycho-social support and promotion of alternative forms of discipline

We need to establish a new foundation for school and educational discipline by rolling a programme for principals and educators on alternate forms of discipline and a public education programme for parents on ways to discipline children without using corporal punishment .

In many instances the socio-economic circumstances of many learners means they have serious social and psychological problems which educators are not always in a position to deal with. Many schools do not have the finances for a school social worker or psychologist with the result that learners with serious personal problems are not assisted.

Over the next year GDE will undertake the following:

- Mobilise NGOs and faith based organisations with psycho-social capacity to create a network of lay counsellors to support schools in quintiles 1-3
- Employ qualified social workers/psychologists to act as a point of referral for these lay counsellors on the basis of one qualified person for every 10 schools
- Run training programmes for all school managers hostel staff, and SGBs on alternate forms of discipline to corporal punishment

4.3 Pillar 3: Advocacy programmes

Community activities frequently focus on breaking family cycles of violence. The most effective are long-term interventions providing a range of family services. They involve the collaborative efforts of religious and recreational organizations; social services, public housing and health agencies; the business community; the schools; and law enforcement agencies. For example, programmes in parenting skills and family relationships, particularly those focusing on non-violent living skills and recovery from substance abuse, can protect children from learning violence at home. Programmes in conflict resolution and anger management are similar to those discussed below that are designed for learners

Out-of-school programmes (either independently operated) keep youth constructively engaged when their families are unavailable, and provide them with attention from caring adults and good role models. They also keep youth away from negative influences on the street and television violence. Programmes can also offer educational enrichment and assistance with school work, and help participants develop positive values. Those most effective at violence prevention actively pursue the prevention goals of local schools and serve as extensions of school prevention activities.

Helping young people find employment is an important way for communities to reduce property crime and help build adolescents' self-esteem and sense of responsibility. Having a job also helps youth appreciate how important staying in school is to their future career plans.

Community campaigns to supplement school programmes against gangs are crucial because gang membership cuts across school lines. Effective anti-gang programmes include crisis intervention teams comprised of the police, probation officers, and community leaders; intensive community, family, and youth education programmes; alternative youth activities; and a long-term commitment. This is seen in Sedibeng and the West Rand.

Over the course of this year the GDE will undertake involving learners, educators, parents and the surrounding community, NGOs, the faith based community, the Department of Health and Social Development to prevent substance abuse, vandalism, theft, bullying, sexual harassment; racism and xenophobia these programme will include:

- Roadshows with musicians and artists to promote positive role models and values for young people
- Work with the NGOs to run programmes amongst learners to combat sexual harassment, racism, and xenophobia
- Expand the Ke Moja programme of Department of Health and Social Development to all no fee schools
- Put in place the foundations to roll out public education for parents on ways to discipline children without using corporal punishment
- Working with the Department of Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture to promote school sport and the school holiday programmes

4.4 Pillar 4: Active law enforcement partnerships with the SAPS, Metro Police, Community Policing Forums and Community patrollers

These programmes will include the following:

- Rolling out the Hlayiseka programme to all no-fee schools

- Putting schools on the patrol route of community patrollers
- Agreeing with the Gauteng Shared Services Centre that the GautengOnline armed response must be a generalized armed response for all school premises
- Ensuring that Department of Economic Development and the metro police enforce liquor regulations in taverns surrounding schools and that regular raids are conducted on taverns in the environs of schools to enforce this police.
- Working with the police to conduct regular search and seizure operations at high risk schools to look for weapons, drugs and other banned substances
- Regular inspection by the Department of Transport of Scholar Transport Vehicles
- Special licensing of private scholar transport vehicles and regular inspection of these.

4.5 Pillar 5: Effectively securing the physical environs of schools

There are many steps which schools can take themselves to reduce environmental risks to the school community. In more affluent schools some of these steps have already been taken but for them to be extended to other schools they need proper resourcing. Over the next three years resources must be allocated to the following:

- Auditing school compliance with the provisions of the Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Remedy policy and procedural gaps arising from the audit including providing necessary emergency equipment, first aid boxes etc.
- Fencing all schools and hostels in the province
- Working with GSSC and GautengOnline to make sure all schools have an armed response system
- Establishing scholar patrols to ensure safety of learners arriving at and leaving schools
- Ensuring all no fee schools have a security guard day and night with no other duty

5. Schools Safety Implementation Plan for 2010 – 2014

5.1 Implementation framework

Pillar	Objective	Targets to 2014	Outcome
To provide School Safety and Security with the necessary human resources at District and Head office	Evaluate head office and district structure with regard to ensuring school safety	Relevant structure established including specialised capacity to deal with serious cases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is a dedicated directorate for school safety and security Specialised unit at head Office to deal with serious cases
	Employ 15 Safety and Security coordinators at district level	Recruit, train and deploy district safety and security officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained district safety officers regulating and supporting schools in respect
	Organise relevant training programmes for coordinators and stakeholders	Relevant training organised for coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained support network in place to support schools, learners and educators.
Standardised school policy formulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an audit of all school safety, health and discipline policies Issue standardised clauses for inclusion in all school safety and discipline policies Ensure all policies comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy review and formulation including guidelines Promotion of existing statutory polices policies on the management and procedures for misconduct of learners. Enforcement of provisions for pastoral care duties by educators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Safety Regulations promulgated School procedural guidelines formulated
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that SGB's adopt the revised plans Train SGBs, and teachers on the revised policies Run training awareness for learners and parents on school safety and discipline policies Run training programmes for all school managers, and SGBs on alternate forms of discipline to corporal punishment 	Hlayiseka Workshops for 300 schools per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School will also be able to draft their own safety plans Educators will be able to identify trends of crime and violence before it takes play.

Pillar	Objective	Targets to 2014	Outcome
	To empower educators with the necessary skills and the know-how of dealing with disasters and medical emergencies and promote the provisions of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disaster Management at school level Regulation of the administration of medicines in special and other educational facilities. Promote greater safety in the use of educational and sporting equipment. 	A safer school environment in 900 schools and at least 900 educators have been trained to promote the occupational health and safety provisions
Psycho-social support and promotion of alternate forms of discipline	Mobilise NGOs and faith based organisations with psycho-social capacity to create a network of lay counsellors to support schools in quintiles 1-3	Establish a partnership with NGOs and faith based organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A directory of services to be rendered to schools, teachers and learners List of contact numbers distributed to schools Multi-year programme of action of proactive support
	Employ qualified social workers/psychologists to act as a point of referral for these lay councillors on the basis of one qualified person for every 10 schools	Formulate clear support framework including roles and job descriptions and recruit capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity recruited and deployed
Advocacy	Over the course of this year the GDE will undertake programmes involving learners, educators, parents and the surrounding community, NGOS, the faith based community, the Department of Health and Social Development to prevent substance abuse, vandalism, theft, bullying, sexual harassment ; racism and xenophobia.	Roadshows with musicians and artists to promote positive role models and values for young people and work with the NGOs to run programmes amongst learners to combat sexual harassment, racism, and xenophobia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put in place the foundations to roll out public education for parents on ways to discipline children without using corporal punishment Working with the Department of SRAC to promote school sport and the school holiday programmes
	To expose learners on the outcome of crime, that crime does not pay but it costs. Create an atmosphere that will allow learners to interact with inmates on a face to face basis and share experiences	Prison Visits by 900 schools across Quintiles 1 to 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners understand that crime and violence does not pay. Sudden change of heart
	Expand the Ke Moja programme of DHS to all no fee schools to raise awareness of drugs and awareness on drugs and substance so that learners and educators alike are able to deal effectively with the challenges of drug usage and trafficking	Drug Awareness Campaign targeting 75 000 learners across Quintiles 1 to 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners and educators alike understand the outcome of drug usage and trafficking. Drop on the number of cases of drug usage and trafficking.
	To ensure that all schools near busy roads	Promote Road Safety in 900 schools across	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erection of speed humps and scholar

Pillar	Objective	Targets to 2014	Outcome
	are effectively controlled to reduce accidents.	Quintiles 1 to 3	patrol
Active Law Enforcement partnerships	Agreeing with the GSSC that the Gauteng on line armed response must be a generalized armed response for all school premises.	Extend the armed response for the Gauteng Online Labs to the entire school facility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction of crime, theft, burglary and vandalism in and around the school facility.
	Working with the SAPS to conduct regular search and seizure operations at high risk schools and hostels to look for weapons, drugs and other banned substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase the no. of search and seizure operations to reduce the carrying of weapons and illegal substances in schools in response to requests from principals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction of the carrying of weapons and illegal substances and contributing to a safe and secure school environment
	Ensuring that DED and the metro police enforce liquor regulations in taverns surrounding schools and ensure that regular raids are conducted on taverns in the environs of schools to enforce this police.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closure of taverns in vicinity of schools To work with SAPS and DCS to monitor learner behaviour in high risk public areas such as taverns, taxi ranks and bus terminals such as Gandhi Square 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No taverns near schools and improved learner behaviour in public spaces including the reduction of substance abuse after school hours
	Regular inspection by the Department of Transport of Scholar Transport Vehicles and the special licensing of private scholar transport vehicles and regular inspection of these.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the number of buses that are not road worthy by regular inspections Increase safety of learners on scholar transport provided by the department Regulate the private scholar transport industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fewer accidents and fatalities involving learners or caused by learners.
	To ensure that partnerships are formed and strengthened	Monthly and quarterly meetings with relevant stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More people and organisations involved in combating crime and violence in schools common and joint school safety programme
	To create a platform for school community, safety coordinators, security agencies, NGO's, CBO's, government departments and organizations to debate and make recommendations on new strategies and challenges facing schools.	School Safety Seminar for all safety and security officials and participating stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New challenges and strategies for school safety. Resolutions and recommendations.
	To develop support systems and strategies	Establishment of School Safety Teams in	Incidences of crime and violence are

Pillar	Objective	Targets to 2014	Outcome
	in order to ensure safe learning environment.	all schools	effectively administered and properly coordinated
Effectively securing the physical environs of schools	Fencing all schools in the province and additional security measures as required	100 'at risk' schools per year until 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in trespassing, vandalism and burglaries Reduction of inappropriate behaviour by learners Eliminate the carrying of weapons to schools.
	Working with GSSC and Gauteng on line to make sure all schools have an armed response system	Increase the patrolling by armed response security to all schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protocol established and implemented
		Putting schools on the patrol route of community patrollers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protocol established and implemented Training provided on school response framework
	Establishing scholar patrols to ensure safety of learners arriving at and leaving schools	Ensure that teachers perform duties in respect of ground duty and monitoring the arrival and leaving of learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidelines and reporting framework formulated
	Ensuring all no fee schools have a security guard day and night with no other duty	Formulate and cost a school security deployment framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved plan and budget
	Initiate safety measures at the 65 identified high risk schools in the province	Ministerial Project in 65 high risk schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced number of incidents of crime and violence in target areas
	To create a call centre to facilitate on the data capturing and speed up information given by schools	Establishment of a call centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerated response to incidents of crime and violence in schools from H/O officials
Ensure all schools comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act	Audit all schools and hostels in the province to assess compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act	To complete during 2010/11 financial year : 2300 schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All schools formulate a plan for compliance achievement.
	Put in place emergency evacuation procedures and other necessary policies	All schools during 2010/2011 financial year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedural guideline for the management of emergencies and evacuations distributed to all schools
	Improve emergency equipment in schools in line with Occupational Health and Safety act	Undertake this in 300 schools and hostels per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All schools become a safe and secure environment in support of effective learning.