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3rd March, 1983

G. J. Wasserman, Esq.  
Central Policy Review Staff  
Cabinet Office  
70 Whitehall  
London S W1

CC FM

Dear Gordon,

FAMILY POLICY GROUP : USE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY EDUCATION FACILITIES  
BY THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE

You asked on the telephone if we could provide a background note describing the work known to the Home Office Research and Planning Unit which might be relevant to the Family Policy Group's discussion of the papers by the Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for the Environment when the Group meets on 9th March.

We have prepared a paper setting out the experience of which we are aware and which is mainly concerned with vandalism. It shows that formidable difficulties and risks can arise when attempts are made to use schools for non-educational purposes. I enclose a copy for your own information, but we should not like it to be circulated to the Group as a whole because it might give an unnecessarily discouraging impression if it were considered at this stage. If the Group would like to go into the potential difficulties in more detail after they have discussed the two main papers, we could perhaps have a fresh look at the matter and put in a rather different paper for a subsequent meeting.

I am afraid it all goes to show the difficulty of trying to prepare papers on complicated and potentially difficult subjects at a few days notice.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Tim Flesher.

Yours sincerely,

A. Dear

pp (D. E. R. FAULKNER)



## CRIME PREVENTION AND THE SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL USE OF SCHOOLS

### A background paper by the Home Office Research and Planning Unit

1. In recent years with the development of renewed interest in the prevention of crime there have been a number of research and policy initiatives which have touched not only upon the role of the school in the prevention of crime, but upon its more passive position as a target for crime and vandalism within the community. A number of studies both in this country and abroad have examined the patterns of crime and damage experienced with ways of reducing their incidence, these include, research on burglary and a demonstration project on school vandalism undertaken by the Home Office. This note assesses the likely benefits and disadvantages of developing the use of school buildings for crime prevention purposes.

#### Crime prevention in schools

2. The school, as a public building, often somewhat isolated from public view or located in areas where crime and delinquency are common forms of behaviour, and uninhabited for large periods of the day and school year, is particularly vulnerable to damage, whether deliberate or accidental, and to attack. They are more likely to be set on fire than all other classes of property and in London at least, they are 38 times more likely to be burgled than a residential dwelling. The costs in terms of repair of damage or replacement of stolen property, apart from the wider disruption of school life are high, and the school has, therefore, formed a natural subject for the extension of crime prevention techniques including the application of the 'situational approach' to crime prevention. This approach involves the careful analysis and assessment of the extent and type of damage and crime in relation to individual buildings, and the consideration of the features of the building its pattern of use, staff, students and locality which may encourage or enable certain types of crime or damage. This will lead to a



variety of recommendations concerning physical or design improvements to buildings, improved street lighting or surveillance, extended use of the building after school hours, or better social and community provision.

#### Benefits of extended use

3. The extension of school use after teaching hours either for school clubs or community activities has received considerable attention as a way of reducing both juvenile crime in the community and the risk to school buildings. The idea would seem to have a number of advantages. The increased occupation of the buildings should provide greater protection from attack. It may increase the extent to which the local community, and young people in particular, identify with the school, thus discouraging them from vandalism and crime against the building itself. It may have a broader crime prevention function in providing young people with a more constructive range of activities and interests than roaming round the streets, and help - in the case of school clubs - to cement better student-staff relationships and school ethos. There is some evidence from a number of studies, that the involvement of pupils in projects concerned with their school does help to reduce vandalism and damage. Finally, extended use of school facilities and buildings may help to justify expenditure on an under-utilized community resource.

#### Risks

4. Unfortunately, such benefits need to be offset against a number of disadvantages in terms of crime prevention. First, there is little available evidence to demonstrate that increased use of schools does lead to a reduction in criminality amongst juveniles, apart from the obvious point that a young person engaging in activities on school premises will not be misbehaving himself elsewhere. Nor is it easy to see how such a question might be answered - crime may after all be displaced elsewhere. In the case of school burglary much of it would appear to take place at weekends after



10 pm, and thus is unlikely to be affected by recreation schemes. Secondly, increased use of school buildings does not necessarily reduce the risk of crime to the buildings, and may even increase it. The Home Office investigation of London schools found that those with the most evening use were also those which suffered most from burglary (although both vulnerability to burglary and evening use were also influenced by other factors such as the design and siting of the schools themselves). Bringing more people onto the premises may also increase the amount of accidental damage and casual vandalism to public facilities such as tablets and canteens or external features. A study of vandalism in Manchester schools, for example, found that much of the damage to buildings was 'play vandalism' caused accidentally in the course of unsupervised football games after school. Increased youth activities may also increase the risk of violence both to other youngsters and staff. Finally, the opening up of school premises may give potential burglars more opportunity to familiarize themselves with the lay-out of the building. None of these factors obviates the use of school premises for social and recreational purposes, but there is sufficient indication from available research to suggest that such risks are likely to accompany increased use.

#### Implementation problems

5. Thus the gains from a reduction of crime elsewhere, if it in fact occurs, must also be weighed against the cost of providing not only additional heating, lighting and staffing, but also, if damage is to be kept to a minimum, adequate supervision of activities. As in the case of play-schemes run by the police and crime prevention panels in some parts of the country careful supervision is important. The lay-out of school buildings may also affect the difficulties encountered in opening-up premises. Large schools would appear to be more vulnerable than others since they offer more targets - and windows - for attack, and present greater supervision problems.



6. The experience of both the Home Office and NACRO in developing schemes to reduce vandalism also points to the formidable organisational problems in co-ordinating activities at a local level, ensuring the co-operation of school staff, local authorities and the police, and ensuring that actions once agreed upon are followed through.

March 1983

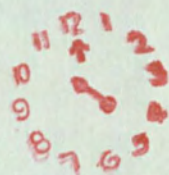
Research and Planning Unit  
Home Office  
Queen Anne's Gate

Useful references

- CASSERLY, M., BASS, S. and GARRETT, J.. (Eds) 1980 School Vandalism: strategies for prevention. Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books.
- An American review of strategies to prevent vandalism in schools (including community relations programs) and guidelines for developing prevention schemes.
- DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE/WELSH OFFICE 1983 Vandalism in schools and colleges: some possible ways of reducing damage. Broadsheet 12.
- Recently revised guidance for education authorities and individual schools.
- FAIR PLAY FOR CHILDREN 1979 Why Lock Up Our Schools? London: Fair Play for Children
- Makes the case for extending the social and recreational use of school buildings, particularly for young people. Contains case studies and guidelines for action.
- GLADSTONE, F. J. 1980 Co-ordinating Crime Prevention Efforts. Home Office Research Study No.62. London: HMSO.
- The report of the first phase of the Home Office demonstration project on vandalism in schools: deals with the process of analysing vandalism problems and of co-ordinating community resources to deal with them.
- HOPE, T. and MURPHY, D. J. I. 1983 'Problem of implementing crime prevention: the experience of a demonstration project' The Howard Journal, XXII, pp. 38-50.
- The final report of the Home Office demonstration project. Discusses some of the problems of implementing measures to deal with vandalism in schools.
- HOPE, T. 1982 Burglary in Schools: the prospects for prevention. Research and Planning Unit Paper 11. London: Home Office.
- A study of the causes of burglary in schools and a review of methods for preventing the offence (includes discussion of expended use of schools).
- HOPE, T. 1980 'Four approaches to the prevention of vandalism in schools'. Oxford Review of Education, 6, pp- 231-240.
- A review of methods of preventing burglary and vandalism in schools; including methods of involving pupils and the community in preventive schemes.



1983





cc. Recipients of  
TF's letter to HO  
d/d 24.2.83  
on 4/3/83

## FAMILY POLICY GROUP

## USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS

Paper by the Secretary of State for Education and Science

The 1978-79 Survey

1. A sample survey of the extent of shared and extended use of maintained primary and secondary schools in England for the year 1978-79 (described in Statistical Bulletin 1/82) showed that:
  - i. At some time in the year most schools (93% of primary and 99% of secondary) were regularly or occasionally used outside the formal school day.
  - ii. Most schools (65% of primary and 98% of secondary) were regularly used in the evenings and weekends during termtime.
  - iii. About one fifth of all schools (17% of primary and 39% of secondary) were regularly used during school holidays.
  - iv. The common users of school buildings outside the formal school day during termtime were the school children themselves (49% of schools were used in this way). Other users included adult and further education students (28%), the Youth Service (26%), organised groups and societies (36%) and private individuals (6%).
  - v. The most commonly used facilities, where available, were those provided for sport: during termtime 85% of schools possessing indoor specialist sports facilities had these regularly used (most were secondary, for which the figure was 95%), while 51% of schools had their playing fields regularly used (41% of primary and 81% of secondary). Comparable figures for summer holiday use were: indoor 25% (mostly secondary); playing fields 16% (23% of secondary and 13% of primary).

Building aspects

2. The Government has consistently encouraged local authorities to make school premises available to members of the public when not required by schools, and to extend opportunities for public use by sharing or jointly providing school and community facilities. Publications from the DES Architects and Building Group have suggested how existing buildings may be converted or managed in such a way as to accommodate a wider range of users (Design Notes 5 of 1970 and 14 of 1976 on School and Community), and have given guidance on how to design new or remodelled schools in order to allow for use by other family members (Building Bulletin 59 "The Victoria Centre Crewe: School and Community Provision in Urban Renewal" 1981). There is a small but increasing number of 'community schools', in which the premises and the management



structure are designed to exploit the potential for community use of school facilities.

Future work

3. I intend to repeat in autumn 1983 the survey of the shared and extended use of school buildings with additional questions on what types of user are involved and what the management implications are. The results should be available during the spring of 1984. The Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) is considering the inclusion in its General Household Survey of some questions in the section on leisure as to whether people make use of school buildings. These pieces of work will give new information on both educational and non-educational users. When we have it, we shall know better to which aspects of the problem we should, or could, give priority.

Constraints and the scope for removing them

4. The use of educational buildings outside school hours by the community is subject to certain constraints which are referred to below, together with such scope as may be apparent for removing them. Inevitably, many of these factors interact.

- i. Finance: Extra use entails extra costs. At present, extra costs are financed either by providers or by users. I have no information about the extent of any unmet demand and little information about the present range of charges; so I do not know how far higher charges might affect demand.
- ii. Supply and demand: The facilities supplied must match the demands made on them, both in nature and availability. So, for example, a bare classroom is no use to a mother and toddler club without storage and toilet facilities, or if it is only available in the evenings and at weekends. For the Youth Service, the following remarks of the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the National Youth Bureau (Annual Report for 1981) are relevant:-

'At the very least, education authorities will wish to examine the continued relevance of a Youth Service which in many areas still ceases to function during school holidays and during the hours of the day when schools are in session.'

The constraints are thus the range of available facilities in schools and the non-availability of school buildings during school hours or (where this is the case) in school holidays. The scope for removing the constraints without extra expenditure is probably limited.



- iii. Policy: Positive and clear attitudes on the part of those immediately involved in the local administration of schools and the control of their premises are essential if more outside use of schools is to be encouraged. This can be assisted by consistent policy statements and where necessary decisions at all relevant levels (central government, local authority, governors and headteachers).
- iv. Legal aspects: Non-educational use requires compliance with the appropriate provisions - Health and Safety at Work, fire, insurance, licensing bye-laws.
- v. Organisation: There may be clashes among different users, administrative complications and pressures (especially on school secretaries). Guidance on good practice could help to promote planning to avoid such difficulties; to encourage sensitive management; and to stimulate well-directed publicity.
- vi. Staffing: Wider use, particularly by young families, requires appropriate supervisory and cleaning staff. It also requires the cooperation of school caretakers and security guards who are well placed to drive a hard bargain because their duties and remuneration are closely defined in national, regional and local agreements. There may need to be additional staff time to cater for wider use than at present, and this will entail consideration of extra expenditure.
- vii. Accessibility: The scope for wider use is sometimes limited by the location of school buildings (eg if they are not easily reachable by public transport) and their accessibility to prams and wheelchairs. So far as access by disabled people is concerned, the Department has given guidance in its Design Note 17 ("Access for the Physically Disabled to Educational Buildings").
- viii. Design: The design and mix of available facilities may be another limiting factor. The size of the building, or its appearance, may not make it suitable or appealing for social or cultural use; the facilities may not allow flexible use or provide scope for a sufficiently wide potential choice of activities. Some of these difficulties may be remediable with falling school rolls giving scope for adaptation of rooms, but only at a cost, including the cost of alternative uses or sale proceeds which may be forgone if accommodation surplus to the school's normal requirements is retained.

### Conclusion

5. By repeating, with adaptations, the survey of the shared and extended use of school buildings - and possibly with assistance from the OPCS General Household Survey - I intend to bring up to date our



knowledge of the use actually made, the obstacles to extending it and the degree, to the extent that it can usefully be judged, of unsatisfied demand. I would hope that this knowledge would permit further action to overcome these obstacles. But some of them are beyond the scope of Government action, and progress depends on local arrangement and is subject to local resources. I will also continue to give what encouragement I can, through exhortation, publications and any appropriate development projects, to shared and extended use.

KJ  
2 March 1983



Andy knows about  
this. N.



DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY  
ASHDOWN HOUSE  
123 Victoria Street  
London SW1E 6RB

Telephone Direct Line: 01-212 3301  
Switchboard: 01-212 7676  
24.3.1983.

The attached paper was requested  
by the Department but in his  
opinion needed. I am therefore  
returning the paper for your  
retention.

*With the Compliments of the*  
Private Secretary to the  
Secretary of State for  
Industry

*K Jensen*



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