

Jeanee Fairbrother

Good morning everybody. Thanks for the invitation to provide this very brief introduction to Martyn's Law, the Terrorism Protection of Premises Act 2025.

So I'm Jeanee Fairbrother. I'm from an organisation called Safe School. We're a health and safety consultancy working across the North West. We work with primary schools, nurseries, secondary schools and colleges across the area.

In brief, Martyn's Law received Royal Assent on 3 April 2025. It comes in response to the Manchester Arena bombing in 2017 and is known as Martyn's Law after Martyn Hett, one of the victims. The government has committed to a minimum two-year implementation period from April 2025, so we have around 18 months before the requirements commence.

Ultimately, the Act aims to improve preparedness across the UK in response to the evolving threat of terrorism.

Further information is coming out almost daily from the Home Office, the Security Industry Authority (SIA), and the Department for Education, and more information will emerge over the next 18 months.

There was a short video I was going to show, but I'll leave that because of time.

Southport is uppermost in the minds of anybody involved in education or working with groups of children. The question for many organisations, schools and colleges is: is there actually a need for us to do anything? Why should we bother?

Many schools are already thinking about this, but our experience as consultants visiting settings is that even recently we've heard headteachers say, "This won't happen here. We don't need to do anything about it."

There's a lot of denial out there. At one end there's panic about whether organisations are doing the right thing. At the other end are people saying, "I'm in a leafy area. Surely I don't need to think about this."

Lockdowns and emergency planning already concern schools. There are frameworks and guidance available, but when something awful happens in your setting the concern becomes very real. Martyn's Law has significantly increased that concern.

It is a daunting subject.

From our experience working with organisations ranging from tiny nurseries to large sixth-form colleges, the experts in your building are you and your staff. You know your building, your pupils, your site, your local area and your parents. You are best placed to plan your response.

You are required to have simple and effective plans in place to improve protective security awareness and preparedness that can deter terrorists and other security threats looking for targets.

In educational settings, a great deal of what you already do is about looking after everyone who comes onto your premises. Schools and colleges already have a strong duty of care.

You already do so much:

- Safeguarding
- Emergency planning
- Lockdown procedures

Compared with many other sectors affected by Martyn's Law, education is already well ahead.

There are various compliance tiers. However, all education settings remain within the Standard Tier regardless of their size, even if they occasionally host larger events.

This is because the legislation recognises your existing safeguarding, security and emergency arrangements.

The focus for education will therefore be on incident response:

- Evacuation
- Invacuation
- Lockdown
- Communication

Communication is especially important. You need to think about how you will communicate different types of emergency across your site.

Ultimately, this is about embedding a culture of safety.

Video Narrator

The Terrorism Protection of Premises Act aims to improve protective security in the UK, requiring organisations to take steps to prepare for the possibility of a terrorist attack.

Certain premises and events must take steps that could mitigate the impact of an attack and reduce the risk of physical harm.

Examples of premises within scope include:

- Shops
- Restaurants
- Nightclubs
- Cinemas
- Arenas and sports grounds

- Libraries and museums
- Conference centres
- Visitor attractions
- Hotels
- Places of worship
- Hospitals
- Schools and universities

The Act separates premises and events into two categories:

Standard Tier

Premises where between 200 and 799 people may reasonably be expected to be present at the same time.

Enhanced Tier

Premises and events where more than 800 people may reasonably be expected to be present.

Events must also meet additional conditions including public accessibility and controlled access measures such as ticketing or payment.

Premises and events in both tiers must notify the Security Industry Authority that they fall within scope and must have procedures in place to protect people from harm in the event of an attack.

Enhanced Tier venues must also implement measures to reduce vulnerability to attack and must document these procedures for the Security Industry Authority.

For more information, search for "Terrorism Protection of Premises Act" on GOV.UK or ProtectUK.

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So what does this mean for education settings?

Schools and colleges will be required to put in place reasonably practicable public protection procedures to reduce the risk of harm resulting from a terrorist attack.

Again, remember that most educational settings already have strong health and safety arrangements. This isn't a completely new way of working. You're already doing many of the things required; this is about checking, reviewing and strengthening them.

The procedures you should be considering include:

Evacuation

Getting everybody safely out of the premises.

Invacuation

Bringing people into a safer location within the premises when a threat exists outside.

Lockdown

When a threat becomes immediate or is within the premises.

Communication is vital throughout all of this.

Different settings will require different systems. A small primary school may use simple communication methods, while large secondary schools and colleges may have more sophisticated systems. The important thing is that whatever system you have works effectively.

You'll need to identify a responsible person who can notify the Security Industry Authority when required.

Everything must be documented:

- Plans
- Procedures
- Drills
- Exercises
- Reviews

Emergency preparedness should be an ongoing process.

Keep plans simple and make sure staff understand their roles and responsibilities.

Not every emergency is terrorism-related. In my years working in schools we've dealt with:

- Dogs loose on school playgrounds
- Individuals arriving on site with exotic animals
- Armed incidents occurring nearby
- Other unexpected threats

Think broadly about potential emergencies.

One useful approach is to consider three scenarios:

1. An incident outside the site.
2. An incident within the perimeter.
3. An incident inside the building.

Training is absolutely essential.

A colleague recently visited a school where staff didn't know what the lockdown alarm sounded like. That's concerning.

You don't need dramatic full-scale drills, but you do need:

- Table-top exercises
- Walk-throughs
- Leadership exercises
- Staff rehearsals

Debrief afterwards, review what worked and what didn't, then improve your systems.

Consult your staff:

- Premises teams
- Cleaners
- Administrative staff
- Leaders

Everyone has a role to play.

Use your security risk assessment to support your planning.

Assess your buildings, perimeter and neighbourhood.

Think about issues such as:

- Lighting
- CCTV effectiveness
- Door security
- Delivery procedures
- Access controls

In one school we visited, the CCTV wasn't working and wasn't even aimed at main entrances.

In another multi-building site, numerous doors were left open allowing unrestricted movement between buildings.

I've also seen delivery drivers routinely admitted into buildings without questions being asked.

These are all vulnerabilities that should be addressed.

Training is key. Everyone must know what to do automatically in an emergency.

The ACT for Education e-learning programme is particularly good. Every member of staff should complete it because it clearly explains what to look for and how to respond.

Implement security measures that are reasonably practicable. The law does not expect perfection, but it does expect reasonable action.

Preparation should focus on proportionate and low-cost responses.

Be cautious of companies seeking to sell expensive products marketed around Martyn's Law. Before purchasing anything new, review what you already have in place and seek advice from trusted providers.

The goal is to deter anyone looking for an easy target and to strengthen your broader resilience against antisocial behaviour and other threats.

To summarise:

- Have simple, effective plans in place.
- Improve security awareness and preparedness.
- Start preparing now rather than waiting.
- Focus on deterrence and effective response.
- Build on systems you already have.

The aim is not to create fear. The purpose is to ensure that organisations can respond effectively and keep people safe.

There are many useful resources available through:

- Department for Education guidance
- ProtectUK
- ACT for Education

We've also been running workshops on Martyn's Law, emergency planning and lockdown procedures, and we have guidance available through our website.

If you'd like more information, please get in touch.

Thank you, and we'll be available during the break if you have any questions.

Moderator/Host: Thanks.