

## Industrial Action

Industrial action can have an impact on the safety of school occupants if it is not properly planned for, due to the potentially significant reduction in staffing levels. In preparation for industrial action, the school's Senior Leadership Team should consider the following:

### **Risk Assessments**

In preparing for industrial action, it is important to review risk assessments and business continuity plans along with national guidance - [Handling strike action in schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/handling-strike-action-in-schools). A draft risk assessment can be found at the end of this document.

The decision to stay open or close a school should be supported by a clear assessment of the potential risks and control measures. Consideration should be given to ability to priorities vulnerable children and young people, children of critical workers, and pupils due to take public examinations and other formal assessments; especially if considering restricting attendance. If cannot support attendance of vulnerable children then consider staying in touch and undertaking safeguarding monitoring. Where a school decides to close to children on the grounds of health and safety, and has notified parents/guardians accordingly, it should remain open for the purposes of staff attendance. The principles of the previous paragraph should apply in such circumstances.

### **Key holder Arrangements**

Schools need to assess any impact the industrial action might have on the opening and closing of the building(s), including if used for community use or lettings. If the 'usual' key holder will not be available because of industrial action, or will not cross any picket line, alternative suitable and safe arrangements must be put in place. This could include securing spare keys where applicable and details of any alarm codes and activation procedures.

Anyone carrying out key holder duties must be made aware of the local procedures and understand the fire alarm system, intruder alarm system and any arrangements to ensure fire exits are operational once the building is open.

## Fire Safety

The Fire Risk Assessment must be reviewed if circumstances change such as the temporary loss or reduced number of key staff involved in fire emergency plans e.g., fire marshals. As a minimum, this should include:

- Establishing procedures at each school to include who will raise the alarm, and who has fire panel keys and alarm codes.
- Checking that fire equipment is in position and fire extinguishers have not been discharged.
- Liaising with your insurance provider about any changes.
- Informing staff of any temporary arrangements or changes to the site's emergency action plan and evacuation procedures.
- Reviewing your fire risk assessment and implementing changes to normal arrangements (for example, certain activities deemed low risk in your FRA may be higher risk if staffing levels are too low and may not be safe to undertake).
- Ensuring you have enough suitably trained staff to enable everyone (including disabled persons, children or those with mobility problems) to be evacuated quickly and safely.
- Ensure that any areas of the school vulnerable to arson, such as areas which will not be regularly used during industrial action and do not have automatic fire detection, are regularly inspected.

The school's ability to maintain this level of cover should be considered as part of the risk assessment.

## First Aid Arrangements

The school's First Aid Assessment should be reviewed to include any changes in arrangements. A minimum level of first aid provision must be maintained including:

- Access to first aid equipment
- An appointed person to take charge of first-aid arrangements
- Communication of any changes to the first-aid arrangements
- Review arrangements for calling an ambulance

**Contractors/building work** – Consider restricting or suspending certain contractor operations for the duration of the industrial action if it increases risk.

**Educational Visits/Trips** – Review the risk assessment to ensure that all the control measures and supervision ratios can still be met.

**Lifts (Emergency Arrangements)** - Where buildings have lifts, consideration must be given to the possibility of the lift becoming stuck. Ensure that there are people available to receive an alarm call from the lift and procedures in place to rescue a trapped person. Details should be made available in both the lift, and where alarm calls are received in the building.

**Visitors** - Have you considered all the people likely to be present in your workplace and others with whom you share the building?

- Ensure that the workplace is secured against unauthorised entry?
- Consider how visitors will be managed e.g. signed in and out of the premises?

**Staff training** - Remaining staff should only undertake tasks for which they have been trained and are competent. Managers should not ask remaining staff to undertake tasks for which they are not competent and confident. Where team-working is required e.g. manual handling, tasks should be assessed to determine if they can be safely undertaken with reduced staffing or whether the task needs to be modified.

**Supervision** - Are there sufficient suitably trained and experienced staff to supervise certain categories of employees, e.g. agency staff, new employees, disabled workers, pregnant workers, work experience students, voluntary workers and apprentices.

**Lone working** - Will remaining staff be working alone – if so, have risks been completed and suitable controls implemented. Consider the following:

- Will they be at increased risk of verbal or physical assault?
- Will they have access to communications in the event of an emergency?
- Will they need assistance if working with machinery / equipment?

**Cleaning/Infection control** - Are arrangements in place for cleaning areas such as toilets and food preparation areas or other high-risk areas. Can infection control arrangements be maintained? Can any deep cleaning be arranged if an outbreak of an infection is identified?



**Security/reception staff** – consider if these staff need to be updated on changes to normal procedures:

- Do security / reception staff have contact numbers in case of emergency (especially if not the staff normally completing these roles)?
- Are they aware of signing in/out procedures?
- Are they aware of fire, bomb threat and other emergency procedures?
- Will access to the building have to be restricted for security purposes?

**RAISE-AP**

Hazards	Who is at risk?	L	S	Risk (L*S)	Current Control Measures	L	S	Risk (L*S)	Additional Requirements	Timescale
Number of staff reduced significantly during period of industrial action affecting supervision of pupils and site/pupil security.	Staff Pupils				<p>Consider the number of staff who may be participating in industrial action and whether pupil safety and security can be maintained.</p> <p>Consider closure of certain buildings/departments/areas of the school site to ensure pupils are adequately supervised and the site is safe.</p> <p>Consider the utilisation of other staff e.g. Agency cover/other staffing options.</p> <p>Consider the partial closure of school if necessary e.g. the school is closed to specific year groups with remote learning arrangements put in place where necessary.</p> <p>Consider a shortened school day on the days of industrial action if this staffing is sufficient to provide this.</p>				<p>Refer to the school's Business Continuity Plan.</p> <p>The school should follow it's normal procedures for informing the local authority of closures.</p> <p>Consider contingencies for catering, break time supervision, transport etc. in the event of ancillary staff action.</p>	

					<p>Maintain communication with the Local Authority regarding the impact of industrial action on the School and pupils.</p> <p>Maintain communication with parents/carers regarding school opening times/closure details etc.</p> <p>If a school has to close for some or all pupils on a strike day, the Y code should be used for pupils who are not required to attend. Pupils who are required to attend should be marked down in the usual way.</p>				
<p>Reduced numbers delay evacuations or make them unsafe in the event of a fire.</p> <p>Reduced numbers increase fire vulnerability.</p>					<p>A procedure has been put in place to account for the absence of normal fire safety personnel.</p> <p>Xxxx is responsible for checking that fire equipment is in position and fire extinguishers have not been discharged.</p> <p>Insurance provider has been about of changes including currently</p>				

					<p>vacant properties/sections of the buildings.</p> <p>Staff newsletter used to inform staff of temporary arrangements for the emergency action plan and evacuation procedures.</p> <p>Fire risk assessment has been reviewed, and the following temporary changes to normal operations will be made:</p> <p>Evacuation plans adapted to accommodate reduced staffing numbers (for example, pupils who require manual evacuation have been moved to a class with an immediate exit, additional staff trained in use of evac chairs etc.)</p> <p>Temporarily vacant spaces will be part of the site managers daily security walk.</p>				
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Initial Assessment Review Date	Risk Assessment assessed, reviewed by the following competent person:	<b>Tasks and control measures reviewed by the Educational Directors:</b>
Name (PRINT)		Name (PRINT):
Signature:		Signature: Date:
Next Review Date:	<p>Your workplace will change over time. You are likely to bring in new equipment, substances and procedures. There may be advances in technology. You may have an accident or a case of ill health.</p> <p>You should review your risk assessment:</p> <p>if it is no longer valid</p> <p>if there has been a significant change</p>	