



# Safer Schools: Introduction

## Foreword



I am pleased to support **Safer Schools** on behalf of the New Zealand Police. Schools are at the heart of our communities, and play a vital part in crime prevention. We are committed to supporting schools so that students have the best environment for learning, and that everyone in the school community is safe and feels safe.

**Safer Schools** has been developed as a joint Police and schools initiative to work together to prevent crime, road trauma and harm in our communities.

It draws on the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), with the aim of preventing crime by designing a physical environment that influences positive human behaviour.

While these principles have been around for some time, **Safer Schools** provides a structured series of learning activities involving students, the school and Police, culminating in student-led recommendations and actions to improve the school environment.

**Safer Schools** aligns with *The New Zealand Curriculum* while incorporating expectations for both schools and Police. It is designed to enhance the connections between schools and the communities that surround them.

### Bill Searle

Assistant Commissioner: Prevention  
Police National Headquarters

# Acknowledgements

We would like to particularly acknowledge Fleur Knight from Murrays Bay Intermediate School and Sergeant Deane McEntee from Auckland City Police's School Community Service for their hard work and dedication to initiate **Safer Schools**.

We would also like to acknowledge the following people who have contributed their time, thoughts and ideas to **Safer Schools**:

- Colin Dale – Principal of Murrays Bay Intermediate School
- Amelia Wilson – student at Murrays Bay Intermediate School (cover artwork)
- Kyle Brewerton – Principal of Remuera Intermediate School
- Julie Miller – Teacher at Remuera Intermediate School
- Robyn Curry – Principal of Te Papapa Primary School
- Sergeant Scott Svendsen – Scene of Crime Team Leader with Auckland City Police
- Senior Sergeant Jason Edwards – Youth and Community Coordinator with Auckland City Police
- Lawrie Stewart and Roly Hermans – National Prevention Centre, Police National HQ

# Introduction

## Overview

**Safer Schools** has been designed for members of the school community to identify and prioritise action that will enhance the school environment to make it safer. It is anticipated that after completing the lessons, the school can look to further extend **Safer Schools** through the community to identify and solve common issues and to form better connections with the school.

## Rationale

Schools in New Zealand face many issues that put the school, their students and staff at risk. One issue that schools face is that they are often targeted by people who commit burglaries or property damage. The cost of this crime in terms of property replacement and repair amounts to millions of dollars; however the cost in lost educational opportunities is immeasurable.

**Safer Schools** is not limited to property crime; it can be adapted to address any issue affecting students in schools throughout New Zealand, such as road safety, bullying, or drug abuse. The ability to adapt **Safer Schools** to any relevant issue makes this an ideal tool for schools to use to improve the safety of all connected with their school.

The benefits of implementing **Safer Schools** are that students who feel safer are more likely to:

- have higher educational achievement
- behave positively
- extend themselves both physically and socially by being able to mitigate and manage risk situations
- develop closer connections with the school
- be more actively engaged with the school community.

**Safer Schools** is based on the principles of [Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design](#) (CPTED). These principles assist in reviewing and modifying the design and effective use of the environments. From here on in, CPTED principles will be referred to as **Safer Schools** principles.

**Safer Schools** uses a problem solving method called SARA (Scan, Analyse, Respond, Assess). This method is used extensively by Police.



## Role of the teacher and the school

The role of the teacher in **Safer Schools** is to teach the students the **Safer Schools** principles, in partnership with the School Community Officer.

To achieve this the students will:

1. define the **Safer Schools** principles using real-life examples of crime prevention and crime response
2. identify examples in their school environment of the four **Safer Schools** physical principles of Natural Surveillance, Access Management, Territorial Reinforcement and Quality Environments, and justify whether these are good or poor examples
3. complete a safety audit of the school using the four **Safer Schools** physical principles
4. identify and justify unsafe areas, grading them 0-3
5. write up the safety audit using the template provided
6. create a presentation with findings and images to explain areas in the school that are safe, marginal and/or unsafe
7. present findings, as recommendations, to school management and staff, School Community Officer and Board of Trustees
8. act on the recommendations made in the audit
9. involve the wider community in the improvement of safety in schools.

## Role of the police officer

The role of the police officer (often the School Community Officer [SCO], but could also come from other Police groups) is to support the school in the delivery of **Safer Schools**. The police officer will be able to assist by:

- providing real-life examples of crime prevention and crime response
- reinforcing the value of partnering with Police to have safer communities together
- drawing on the experience of other trained Police personnel such as Crime Scene Attendants (CSAs) and detectives (CIB).

The learning experiences that will benefit most from the police officer's involvement are highlighted in the **Safer Schools** timeline landscape under the heading 'SCO role'.

## Safer Schools timeline

- [Timeline landscape](#) [DOCX]
- [Sequence of lessons](#) [PPTX]

## Where to afterwards?

On the conclusion of **Safer Schools**, you could consider:

- introducing the four additional social 'soft principles' of CPTED essential for social action to be effective, namely cohesion, connectivity, culture and capacity (the four 'C's)
- doing a community audit, for example in neighbouring streets around school
- initiating community murals
- coming up with ideas for curriculum integration and community engagement following the audit.

See [Applying Safer Schools to home, school, community](#) [DOCX] for more details.