



Graffiti Management Guide for Schools

Suggested guidelines to assist with developing or improving a Graffiti Management Strategy in schools.

Schools are often the target of graffiti vandalism. To support schools across Western Australia, the Western Australia Police Force Graffiti Team (the Graffiti Team) have developed guidelines which can assist schools to develop or improve their graffiti management strategies.

Graffiti Management

Graffiti management is most effective when several interventions are implemented at one time, rather than individually. Interventions require a number of approaches aimed at reducing opportunities for crime, increasing community awareness and making graffiti vandalism less attractive to potential vandals.

Policies and Procedures

Individual education sectors may have existing graffiti management policies and procedures. This document is intended only as a guide and respective sector policies and procedures should be adhered to.

Process

This document provides a step-by-step process on how to develop a Graffiti Management Strategy within schools:

1. **Identify the issue**
2. **Identify who can help**
3. **Form a committee/working party**
4. **Develop a plan of action**
5. **Implement action**
6. **Evaluate action plan**
7. **Recognise and reward success**
8. **Maintain and review graffiti action plan**

1. Identify the issue

- Where are the graffiti hotspots?
- What implements are being used for graffiti vandalism?
- Identify the physical differences between targeted areas and non-targeted areas.

2. Identify who can help

- Teachers
- Students
- Local council (Community Development Officer/Community Safety Officer)
- Local police (Officer in Charge/Community Engagement Coordinator)
- Parents of school students (P&C/P&F groups)
- Volunteer organisations (e.g. Neighbourhood Watch, People Against Vandalism, Lions, Rotary)

A well coordinated and integrated approach to graffiti management will achieve better outcomes than an isolated effort. Different organisations will have specialist knowledge and skills to help address the problem.

It is recommended that those involved in developing or improving the Graffiti Management Strategy organise a meeting with the local police and local government (usually the Community Development Officer or Community Safety Officer). Some local councils offer school education programs and are able to deliver graffiti-prevention education to students. Making the local police aware of issues and encouraging networking between the school, police and the local council, gives support to the school from several angles.

Each participant should be in a position to make decisions and follow up with any identified responsibilities.

Keep parents informed and make them aware of the issues through the school newsletter or website. Inform parents of the degree of the problem, the costs associated with removal and ask for recommended solutions.

3. Form a committee/working party

It is recommended that those involved in developing or improving the Graffiti Management Strategy develop a committee or working party with those that can assist in implementing changes. It might be useful to invite the Officer in Charge at the local police station onto the committee. By involving the local police and making them aware of the issues, a network between the two agencies can be established, providing the school with further support in the development and delivery of the Graffiti Management Strategy.

4. Develop a plan of action

1. Decide what outcomes are to be achieved;
2. Complete an environmental audit within the school premises (see information on Designing out Crime below);
3. Decide what needs to change and the time-frame for the change;
4. Consider reduction strategies suitable for the school;
5. Decide who will be responsible for what action;
6. Consider what resources are required;
7. Establish baseline measures (eg statistics recorded prior to implementing strategies, to compare any success or change since strategy implementation);
8. Decide how the school community will be kept informed of the changes and achievements.

Be sure to keep the aims, objectives and time-frames realistic and achievable. Acknowledge there will be things that cannot be changed, so focus on the things that can be changed and the school has control over. Communicate regularly with the

participants of the Graffiti Management Strategy and consider developing a brief communications plan.

If the school is able to identify whether the graffiti vandalism is the result of students or external offenders, this is a useful factor when identifying solutions. If the graffiti is occurring from the students, a focus on education and student involvement will be beneficial. If the graffiti is occurring from external offenders, perhaps a focus on Designing out Crime will be beneficial.

When developing a Graffiti Management Strategy, it is recommended to conduct several actions at one time as this will result in a better outcome. The following list of strategies incorporates rapid removal, prevention and policing approaches, and has been developed as a guide only. Actions should be flexible and must be tailored to the circumstances of the school.

Rapid removal

It is recommended that rapid removal is the first strategy adopted in graffiti management. Rapid removal is recognised as best practice because it reduces the level of recognition sought by vandals. Rapid removal also prevents assets from looking neglected.

Graffiti vandalism is a crime and for this reason it is recommended that the school retain photographic evidence of incidents of graffiti vandalism.

If the students are involved in the removal of graffiti (see the following possible actions) and this cannot occur immediately, then it is recommended the school cover over the graffiti area with a removable board. In the case where graffiti is racist or obscene, the school may choose to remove the graffiti immediately following photographic action.

Goodbye Graffiti Teaching Resources

The Graffiti Team have developed an education program for delivery to primary and secondary aged students in schools across Western Australia. The resources are available on the [Goodbye Graffiti website](#), and come with an easy-to-navigate learning-

outcomes rubric. The resources aim to increase student awareness of graffiti vandalism and associated consequences.

Designing out Crime

Designing out Crime is a crime prevention strategy which aims to reduce opportunities for crime through the design and management of the built and landscaped environment. It is also known as CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design).

It is recommended that schools undertake an environmental audit of the surroundings, to find out what makes the school vulnerable to graffiti, and what can be done to address the issues (eg improved lighting and surveillance). Visit the [Goodbye Graffiti website](#) for more information about Designing out Graffiti.

Urban art projects

There have been positive results in urban art projects which show that a wall with a painted mural is less of a target for graffiti vandalism, than a blank wall. There are urban artists who can be contracted to come into the school and take students through a workshop of urban art/mural painting. For a list of available urban artists, contact the Graffiti Team (see below for details).

Graffiti Education

Several local councils or police stations are equipped to provide graffiti education in schools. If the local council/police are unable to assist, the school may consider organising a graffiti education week. It is suggested to provide student education on graffiti vandalism and the consequences for individuals and the community.

During the graffiti education week the school may decide to incorporate an urban art competition, a presentation from police on legal consequences of graffiti vandalism, organise a clean-up activity, run a poster/motto competition, or distribute a graffiti brochure (obtained through the Graffiti Team).

Rewards system

When graffiti management strategies are implemented within the school, there should be a reduction in graffiti vandalism and a reduction in removal costs. Using the money saved on graffiti removal and directing it into a reward for the students (excursions or new sporting/play equipment), places a positive emphasis on graffiti education and awareness.

Parent Groups/Anti-graffiti committee

Through the P&C/P&F, graffiti vandalism can be placed on the agenda to discuss and consider solutions. There may also be a possibility of involving parents in graffiti clean-up activities.

Student ownership initiatives

Students can be encouraged to adopt-an-area. They would be responsible for monitoring graffiti in their adopted area and reporting it to a designated adult in the school. If the school has undergone Taste-A-Trade, the Graffiti Busters can be in charge of the removal.

Reporting to the Goodbye Graffiti website

Graffiti vandalism can be reported online at www.goodbyegrffiti.wa.gov.au. When an online report is submitted, the report is sent to the relevant authority responsible for removal.

Resources

The Graffiti Team have a selection of resources available for use within schools. There are resources to promote reporting, and resources informing of the consequences of graffiti vandalism. Resources are free of charge. For more information or to order resources, please visit the [Goodbye Graffiti website](http://www.goodbyegrffiti.wa.gov.au).

Strategies used in other schools

Restricting student's access to graffiti implements

Some schools ban markers and liquid paper. While this may deter some vandals, the effectiveness of this strategy is limited. If a student is determined to graffiti, then they will find a way to incur damage regardless of the implement. This also may increase the difficulty of removing graffiti vandalism, as students may then try other implements such as boot polish which is very difficult to remove.

Public acknowledgement of savings

Having a practical example of money saved from graffiti removal can assist students in understanding the true cost incurred by the school. One school has developed a picture of a thermometer which indicates how much money has been spent or saved on removal costs. Money saved by the school is then used to reward the students with excursions or new sporting/play equipment.

Record the tag

One school takes photographs of student tags and compiles a database. If teachers see tagging on a student's pencil case, book, bag etc a photo is taken and recorded on the database. Tagging on any personal possessions is not permitted within the school. The school also works closely with local police who also use the school database to link tagging on local property.

Crime Stoppers

Crime Stoppers WA have developed free Civics and Citizenship teacher resources. These are available through the [Crime Stoppers WA website](#).

5. Implement action

After consulting with the right people and gaining approval from the appropriate sources, it is time to implement the relevant graffiti management strategies. It is important during the action stage to monitor all events and outcomes.

Involve students in appropriate reduction and prevention activities. Make sure they know how to report graffiti, give them an opportunity to participate in clean-up activities and ensure they receive education about the impact of graffiti on themselves and on the wider community.

Consider holding a neighbourhood meeting to educate local residents about graffiti vandalism and to introduce the school's strategies.

6. Evaluate action plan

Using baseline measures, establish which strategies have been effective in reducing graffiti or raising awareness, and which strategies have been less effective. Whatever is working, do more of it. For strategies that have not proved to be effective, see if they can be altered to better suit the school and incorporate support from relevant staff in the process.

Suggested outcome measures include:

- Recorded levels of graffiti incidents;
- Teacher perceptions of graffiti within the school;
- Student perceptions of graffiti within the school;
- Resident perceptions of graffiti within the surrounding local area;
- Financial savings to the school/local council due to strategy initiatives.

7. Recognise and reward success

Inform the school community of the success of the graffiti management action plan. If the strategies have been effective in reducing removal costs around the school, reward the students in an appropriate way.

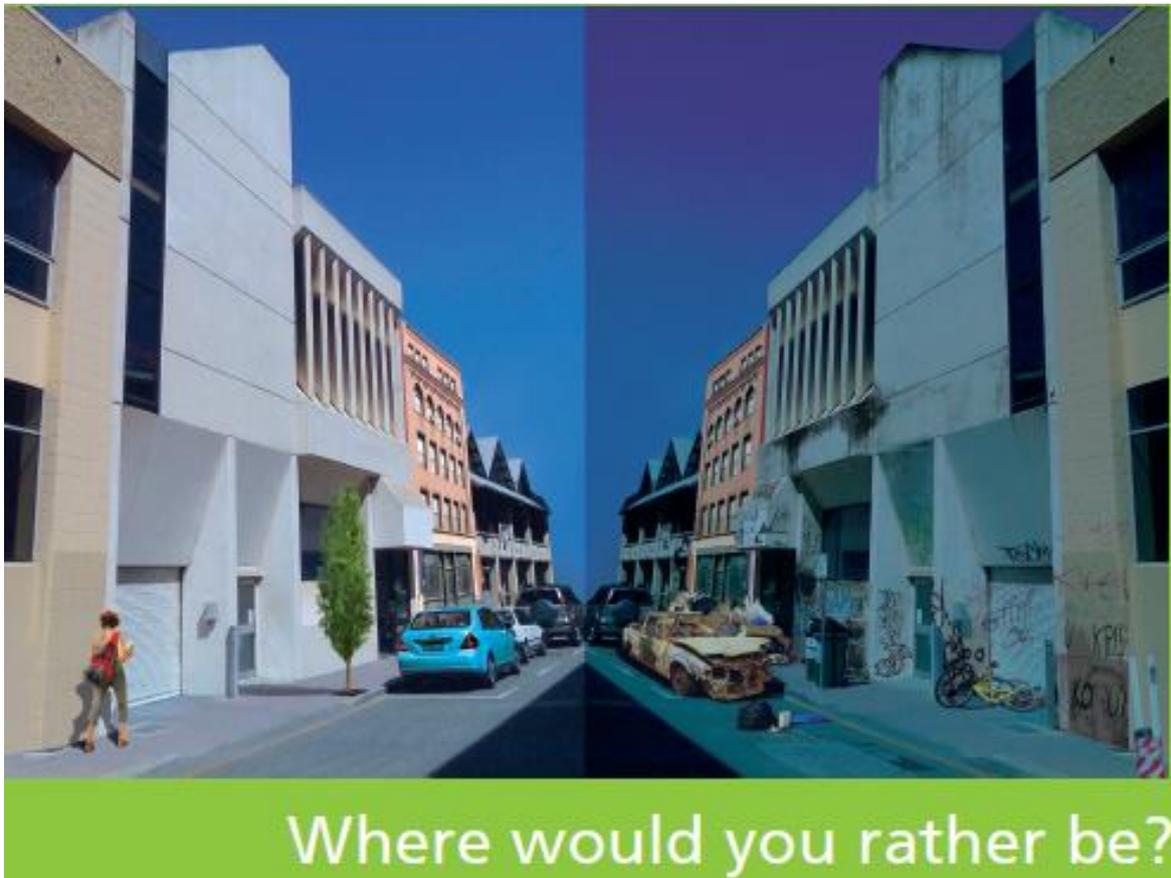
8. Maintain and review the graffiti management plan

Follow up the activities with information in the school newsletter and website about specific activities and outcomes. Periodically evaluate the goals and strategies for graffiti reduction, and do more of what works.

Make sure information on graffiti management is communicated to the students, and allow students to take ownership of the problem where appropriate.

For further information...

If you would like to provide the Graffiti Team with feedback regarding this guide, or if you are requiring further information on graffiti management, please contact the WA Police Force Graffiti Team at graffiti@police.wa.gov.au, or visit the [Goodbye Graffiti website](#).



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