

## CHAPTER

# 4

## APPROACHES TO SCHOOL SECURITY IN JAPAN

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**Abstract:** This paper describes the school stabbing incident at a primary school in Ikeda, Japan, in 2001 and the response of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. It describes the implementation of "soft" and "hard" approaches to strengthen school security, and budgetary implications. Soft approaches include developing a crisis management manual for schools, publishing a collection of security models currently used in schools, and implementing crime prevention education, community projects and post-event care for students. Hard approaches include organising a meeting of experts, publishing a report on security in school facilities in Japan, and revising the school facilities guide and crime prevention manual. Finally, the paper presents the steps taken at Ikeda school after the tragedy.

## **Incident at Ikeda Elementary School**

In June 2001, an unprecedented incident occurred that had a significant impact on Japanese society, affirming the need to ensure the safety of schoolchildren. On Friday, 8 June 2001, Mamoru Takuma entered the grounds of Ikeda Elementary School armed with a cleaver. He arrived after 10:00 a.m. through a gate that was used exclusively for automobile access, just as the second hour of instruction was finishing. He attacked children and teachers in first- and second-grade classes on the first floor, leaving eight dead (one male first-grade student and seven female second-grade students) and 15 injured (five male students, eight female students and two faculty members).

On 14 September 2001, the Osaka District Public Prosecutor's Office brought an indictment against Takuma for murder, attempted murder, trespassing and violation of the Firearms and Swords Control Act. After deliberating for two years, the Osaka District Court reached its verdict on 28 August 2003 and sentenced the defendant to death. The defendant's lawyers initially appealed the verdict, but the defendant withdrew the appeal himself on 26 September 2003, resulting in the Osaka District Court passing the death sentence.

On 8 June 2003, exactly two years after the incident, the ministry, Osaka Kyoiku University and Ikeda Elementary School (which is attached to the Osaka Kyoiku University) finalised a written agreement with the families of the children who died in the tragedy. According to the terms of this agreement, the ministry, university and school admitted that security at the school had been inadequate, apologised for the deficiency, and pledged to take systematic and rapid measures to prevent the recurrence of similar incidents. In addition, the national government recognised its responsibility to pay compensation to the victims' families.

## **Criminal offences in Japan**

The tragedy at the Ikeda Elementary School was a great shock to the general public in Japan, which had traditionally been regarded as one of the safest countries in the world. However, in recent years the number of crimes in Japan has been increasing rapidly while the number of arrests has been decreasing. The number of criminal offences rose from about 1.8 million in 1996 to 2.9 million in 2002, which is a 1.6-fold increase; over the same period, the number of arrests fell from around 740 000 to 590 000, a decrease of about 20% (Table 4.1).

The number of crimes committed on school grounds also rose from about 29 000 in 1996 to 45 000 in 2002, which is about a 1.6-fold increase; the number of felonies in schools – murder, burglary, arson and rape – doubled, rising from 48 to 96 over the same period (Table 4.2).

**Table 4.1. Number of acts recognised as criminal offences in Japan\***

| Year | Number of acts recognised as criminal offences | Index of number of acts (1995 = 100) | Number of arrests | Number arrested | Crime rate (crimes per 100 000 people)** |
|------|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--|
| 1996 | 1 812 119                                      | 101                                  | 735 881           | 295 584         | 1 439.80                                 |
| 1997 | 1 899 564                                      | 105                                  | 759 609           | 313 573         | 1 505.20                                 |
| 1998 | 2 033 546                                      | 113                                  | 772 282           | 324 263         | 1 607.50                                 |
| 1999 | 2 165 625                                      | 120                                  | 731 284           | 315 355         | 1 709.30                                 |
| 2000 | 2 443 470                                      | 136                                  | 576 771           | 309 649         | 1 925.50                                 |
| 2001 | 2 735 612                                      | 152                                  | 542 115           | 325 292         | 2 148.90                                 |
| 2002 | 2 853 739                                      | 158                                  | 592 359           | 347 558         | 2 240.00                                 |

\*The table does not include traffic violations.

\*\*The crime rate indicates the number of acts recognised as crimes per 100 000 people. The population used in the calculation of the crime rate was based on data from estimates as of 1 October of each year

Source: Statistics Bureau of the former Management Co-ordination Agency and National Census.

**Table 4.2. Number of acts in schools recognised as criminal offences in Japan\***

|              |                        | 1996                         | 1997          | 1998          | 1999          | 2000          | 2001          | 2002   |        |
|--------------|------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------|--------|
| Felonies     | Murder                 | 3                            | 4             | 8             | 5             | 9             | 3             | 1      |        |
|              | Burglary               | 4                            | 7             | 11            | 11            | 8             | 16            | 10     |        |
|              | Arson                  | 32                           | 46            | 37            | 46            | 31            | 36            | 51     |        |
|              | Rape                   | 9                            | 20            | 25            | 30            | 27            | 30            | 34     |        |
|              | <i>Subtotal</i>        | 48                           | 77            | 81            | 92            | 75            | 85            | 96     |        |
| Non-felonies | Battery                | 1 124                        | 1 393         | 1 374         | 1 530         | 1 952         | 1 930         | 1 702  |        |
|              | Theft                  | Theft, breaking and entering | 7 270         | 7 608         | 7 081         | 7 329         | 7 491         | 7 438  | 8 122  |
|              |                        | Car theft                    | 10 804        | 10 761        | 10 269        | 10 058        | 10 758        | 12 065 | 11 663 |
|              |                        | Other thefts                 | 6 680         | 6 272         | 7 436         | 8 399         | 9 942         | 10 704 | 11 397 |
|              | Fraud or forgery       | 104                          | 182           | 191           | 75            | 264           | 70            | 93     |        |
|              | Charge of obscenity    | 62                           | 132           | 170           | 81            | 141           | 142           | 132    |        |
|              | Other criminal offence | 2 836                        | 3 184         | 3 499         | 4 121         | 5 965         | 9 172         | 11 681 |        |
|              | <i>Subtotal</i>        | 28 880                       | 29 532        | 30 020        | 31 593        | 36 513        | 41 521        | 44 790 |        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>28 928</b>          | <b>29 609</b>                | <b>30 101</b> | <b>31 685</b> | <b>36 588</b> | <b>41 606</b> | <b>44 886</b> |        |        |

\*Data refer to all types of schools listed in Article 1 of the School Education Act (i.e. elementary schools, junior high schools, high schools, universities, technical colleges, schools for those with visual or auditory impairments, schools for the physically or mentally disabled and kindergartens), those listed in Article 82 of the same Act, and nursery schools regarded as equivalent to kindergartens.

## New approaches to school safety and security

Following the tragedy at Ikeda Elementary School, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in Japan has implemented a number of “soft” and “hard” approaches to strengthen school security.

### “Soft” approaches

#### *Crisis management manual for schools*

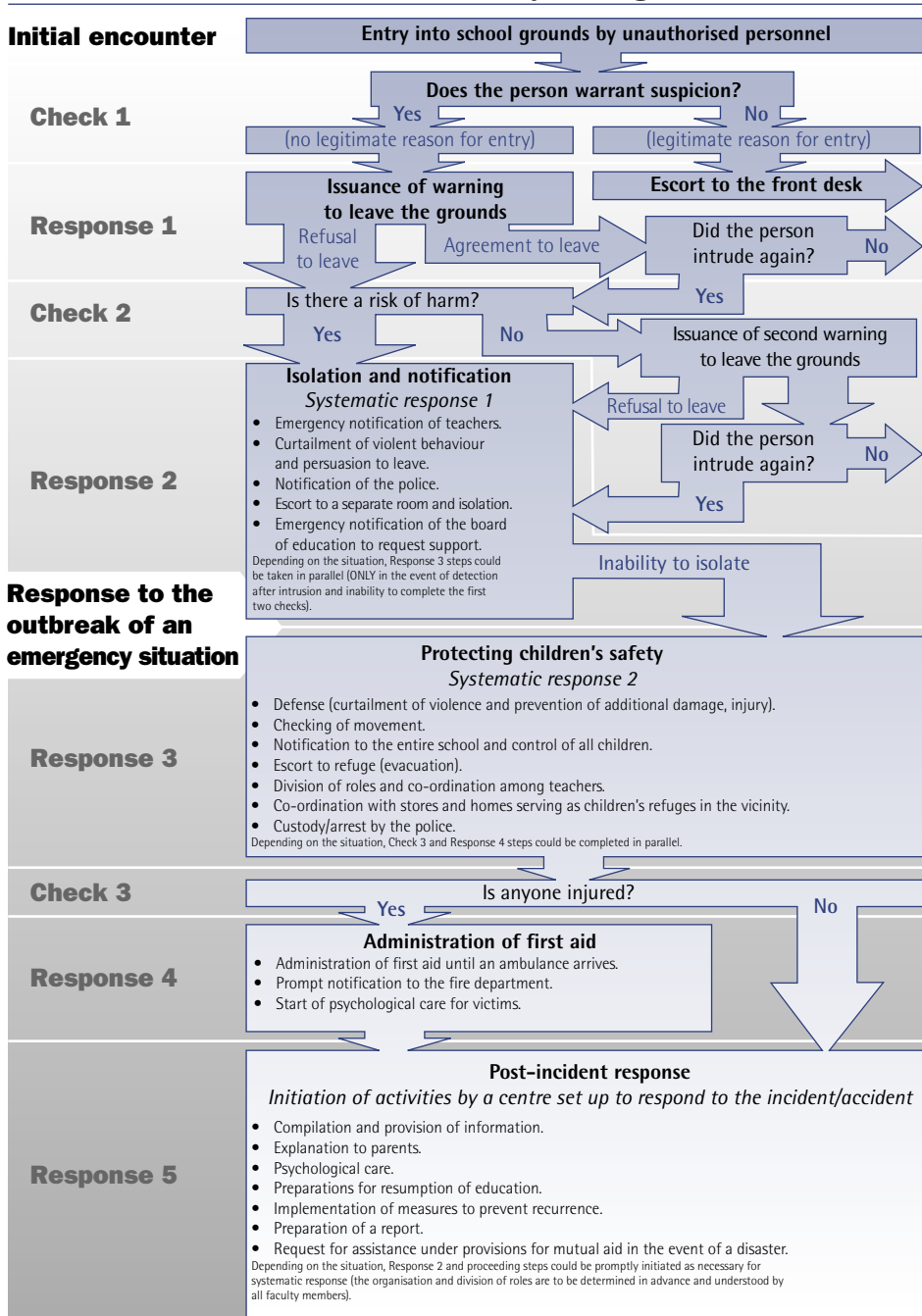
The ministry has prepared a crisis management manual on dealing with school intrusion by strangers (an excerpt is provided in Figure 4.1). It identifies specific procedures to be followed by faculty members for ensuring the safety of children and others in the school during an incident and for obtaining the assistance and co-operation of parents, community members and emergency services such as police and fire departments. The manual also identifies how faculty members can heighten their crisis management capabilities and execute programmes for systematic crisis management in schools.

#### *Collection of school security models*

The ministry has also published a collection of security models currently used in schools, mainly concerning the response to school intrusion. Thirty model approaches are presented, which schools and boards of education can adapt to the individual circumstances of the school and community. These include:

- Organising emergency drills to respond to an intrusion, in co-operation with police and fire departments.
- Restricting access, installing signs, and using other methods to control access and identify and monitor the arrival of visitors.
- Establishing a system for rapid notification of the entire community regarding suspicious persons, in co-ordination with schools, police and community groups.
- Designating emergency refuges for children, increasing the number of these refuges and disseminating information about the refuges to community members. Emergency refuges are private homes, stores and other facilities that have agreed to serve as places where children can seek help and shelter if they are approached or pursued by strangers. These centres have identification plates or stickers displayed on doors or windows, and will notify the police once the child is in the refuge.
- Organising patrols inside and outside the school, in co-operation with police and other concerned authorities, community groups and volunteers.
- Preparing and distributing security maps indicating potentially dangerous areas in the school district.
- Installing anti-crime surveillance systems and alarms.

**Figure 4.1. Examples of emergency response for dealing with school intrusion by a stranger**



**Figure 4.2. Demonstration by police officer for dealing with school intrusion by a stranger**



### *Crime prevention education*

The ministry is promoting talks and demonstrations in schools by professionals in the field of school safety:

- Lectures by experts, school principals, active or former police officers, and active or former fire fighters on school safety to students, teachers and other faculty members.
- Demonstrations by active or former police officers of methods to ensure the safety of schoolchildren in the event of intrusion by strangers (Figure 4.2).
- Demonstrations of staunching, resuscitation and other first-aid techniques by school physicians and active or former fire fighters.

### *Community projects*

The ministry is also promoting a number of community projects involving schools, such as model districts for school security, and disseminating the results throughout the country. The projects involve:

- Preparing and executing guidelines for security education, which can be adapted to the level of education and to the community.

- Implementing security approaches in schools, in co-ordination with parents, local authorities and community groups.

In 2002, 49 schools and boards of education were instructed to execute these projects.

### *Care for victims*

The ministry is providing a system of care for students suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and related conditions, which includes:

- Preparing pamphlets on care policies and methods.
- Constructing a database of specialists in psychological care.
- Organising research conferences involving experts, school health care personnel and others to share information and experiences on approaches and issues related to psychological care for schoolchildren.

### **“Hard” approaches**

#### *Meeting of experts and report on security in school facilities*

In November 2001, a meeting was held to consider key points in policy-making, planning and design for crime prevention in school facilities. It was attended by school architects, experts in crime prevention and school security, and officials in school education authorities and administrations. In the year following the meeting, a team of experts was sent to schools and public housing projects in Japan. In addition, the team visited schools in the United States where random shootings had occurred. A meeting was also held with relatives of the Ikeda Elementary School victims.

In November 2002, the group presented its findings in a final report entitled “Crime Prevention Measures for School Facilities”, which presents comprehensive proposals for crime prevention measures in Japanese schools. The report is divided into three chapters: policies for crime prevention measures in school facilities; key points in planning and design; and ways to promote these measures. It identifies three minimum safety measures that must be implemented in Japanese schools, which are based on crime prevention strategies in school facilities in other countries and principles of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED):

- *Facility planning to enable confirmation of visitor arrival and identity.* Facilities must be planned to enable supervision of visitors and prevention of intrusion by strangers. This can be achieved by installing security gates at strategic locations; positioning visitor waiting rooms, faculty rooms, offices and supervisors’ rooms in view of front and other access gates; installing external access controls at the school front reception desk; and arranging sure locking of classroom entrances and windows on the first floor of school buildings.
- *Facility planning with an emphasis on visibility and domain protection features.* The layout of school facilities must be planned to minimise blind spots and maximise

views of the grounds and interior. Plans must also consider the concept of domain, *i.e.* the scope of protection and the means of protection within the domain. Gates, fences, outdoor lighting, vegetation, parking spaces for cars and bicycles and anti-crime surveillance systems should clearly define, in both physical and visual terms, the domain to be protected.

- *Installation of emergency notification systems in classrooms.* In the event of an emergency, natural or man-made systems should be installed so that police and fire departments, parents, all classrooms, faculty rooms, the principal's office and other offices can be promptly notified. Such systems could comprise interphone or telephone lines linking both normal and special classrooms, intramural communication systems and emergency evacuation routes. Crime prevention measures such as a guard service could also be used on nights and weekends.

The report concluded that:

There can be no question about the primacy of ensuring the safety of children and other personnel in schools. It is important to develop school facilities that are open to the community only after taking measures for crime prevention and making full provisions for security.

The opening of schools to the community must not be equated with the practice of keeping the grounds physically open with no measures to keep intruders out.

### *Revision of school facilities guide*

The guide instructs local public bodies and other organisations on basic planning and design policies and practices. It comprises eight chapters on general rules, facility planning, layout planning, classroom planning, detailed design, outdoor design, structural design and equipment design. The ministry has compiled a different guide for each school type. In August 2003, following the publication of the report on security in school facilities described above, the ministry revised the section of the guide relating to crime prevention: a ninth chapter was added on crime prevention planning, basic perspectives on the subject were inserted into the first chapter and related material was incorporated into other chapters.

### *Crime prevention manual for schools*

The ministry is preparing a manual on crime prevention measures in school facilities, which will consider characteristics of different schools, category of buildings (*i.e.* new, existing, renovated and modified schools) and "soft" safety supervisory measures in the context of developing open schools. It will also include case studies for a range of school conditions. The manual will be published in 2004. The ministry is also planning to organise an experts' group in 2004 to study crime prevention measures for school facilities with the participation of teachers, administrative authorities, architectural designers and other related parties.

### School security budget 2003

The ministry's budget for security in schools for the 2003 financial year is presented in Figure 4.3.

**Figure 4.3. Budget for school security supervision in Japan in 2003**

| Public schools  | National schools   | Private schools  | National, public and private schools   |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p><i>Subsidies for conditioning of public school facilities</i></p> <p><i>budgeted cost of JPY 8 385 million</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme for large-scale remodelling work, including rearrangement of classrooms and faculty offices, construction of gates and fences, and installation of anti-crime surveillance systems and notification facilities.</li> </ul> | <p><i>Measures funded through a special account for national schools</i></p> <p><i>budgeted cost of JPY 379 million</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding for all national schools provided by the national government, with a special account.</li> <li>• Cost of consignment of security services, such as posting of guards, at affiliated schools.</li> <li>• For Osaka Kyoiku University:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Establishment of a school crisis management support centre, for nationwide use.</li> <li>◦ Conditioning of school buildings at Ikeda Elementary School (budgeted cost of JPY 140 350 million).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <p><i>Measures for school security costs</i></p> <p><i>budgeted cost of JPY 1 678 million</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs covered as subsidies for expenditure in private secondary schools.</li> </ul> | <p><i>Improvement of school security and psychological care through the "Children's Safety Project"</i></p> <p><i>budgeted cost of JPY 395 million</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime prevention classes.</li> <li>• Forums to promote school security.</li> <li>• Model projects for school security involving the community.</li> <li>• Preparation of pamphlets for psychological care for post-traumatic stress disorder and other conditions.</li> <li>• Provision of support services for students' mental health.</li> <li>• Programme to execute security measures in school facilities.</li> </ul> <p><i>Subsidies for expenditures for conditioning of educational facilities, including special education (budgeted cost of JPY 20 million)</i></p> |

## **Ikeda Elementary School after the tragedy**

### **Support team**

Following the tragedy at Ikeda Elementary School, a team of 60 experts specialising in mental health was sent to provide support for students, parents, teachers and other personnel at the school. The team was organised by Osaka Kyoiku University, in co-operation with Osaka University, Osaka Prefectural Government, Hyogo Prefectural Government, Osaka Prefectural Police, Osaka Prefectural Clinical Psychologists and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. The team organised the following:

- Counsellors and teachers visited the homes of all children involved in the incident.
- A 24-hour "hot line" was installed to support mental care.
- An emergency check of facilities was completed.
- Three guards were posted at each school gate.
- A three-party liaison council was formed comprising the university/school, Osaka Prefectural Government and Ikeda City Government.

### **Construction of a temporary school building**

After the incident, school authorities decided to construct a temporary building. Given the feelings of parents and the need for continued psychological care of students, it was considered undesirable to resume classes in the building in which the incident took place. Classes resumed in the temporary building on 27 August 2001.

### **Construction of a new school building**

From April to November 2002, an advisory committee on building design, comprising teachers, parents and families of victims at Ikeda Elementary School, examined proposed plans for construction of a new building. The new building was planned to be completed in February 2004. The major features of the new building are:

- Placement of a single entrance to the school grounds.
- Remodelling of the southern building (the location of the incident), which will serve as a special classroom wing with an "encounter gallery" and other facilities on its first floor.
- Reconstruction of the northern building, which will contain ordinary classrooms. The faculty rooms will be designed to allow teachers unrestricted views of the school interior.
- Installation of glass walls in the gymnasium to prevent obstruction of interior views.

### **Support centre**

After the tragedy, many teachers, children, parents and other relatives of the victims

required long-term psychological care and support. Thus, a support centre was established at Osaka Kyoiku University to provide services for all those involved in the Ikeda incident. The centre also conducts research in several areas, disseminating results throughout the country:

- Psychological care of schoolchildren, including recovery from trauma and PTSD.
- Approaches used by schools for children with trauma and other psychological problems.
- Systems of crisis management to be used in schools.

### **Responsibility of local public bodies and the ministry**

Although the tragedy at Ikeda Elementary School took place in a school attached to a national university, elementary and junior high schools in Japan are usually managed by municipalities or other local public bodies. Boards of education and other school authorities attached to these bodies must fulfil their obligation to ensure the security of schools under their jurisdiction. This requires implementing comprehensive and cost-effective measures that consider both "soft" and "hard" approaches to school safety and security, in co-operation with parents, local governments and police and fire departments.

The ministry now allocates subsidies to local public bodies and other qualified parties for school security. It is also looking to learn from school safety and security measures used in other countries, and generally working to increase community awareness.