

Security Overview Report

Last Updated January 16th, 2023
Version 1.0



Security Overview (page one)

Purpose a Security Overview Report

The idea for this report came from a parent suggestion. After speaking to Mr. Roll about security, a parent recently said, “Wow, there really should be a way for the school to make this information available to all parents without you having to talk to each of them for hours. With how crazy the world can get it would make a lot of people feel more comfortable.” And a new report was born!

To say an institution is invincible or to guarantee people that nothing bad will ever happen is disingenuous. Just ask Harland and Wolff, builders of the Titanic. Our goal in releasing this report isn't to project an unrealistic fantasy that nothing could ever go wrong at Da Vinci Tree. Rather, we wish to show our community that we take security seriously. We discuss facts, but the information is generic enough so it could not potentially assist people in breaching our campus. In fact, we believe criminals will think twice about coming after Da Vinci Tree after reviewing this report.

If you have feedback on how we can improve, please email us at info@davincitree.academy.

Considerations Around Degrees of Security

Security means different things to people at different times.

- On a daily basis, security at school means students feeling comfortable going to class and being themselves. This comfort comes from having a school that fights bullying.
- On rare occasions, security can mean being prepared for something like a fire or a wild animal on campus. This security comes from doing traditional drills and utilizing new technologies.
- Finally, during unthinkable events, security means having a plan that keeps kids away from dangerous individuals intent on hurting them. This security can only be achieved through careful planning and coordination with law enforcement.

Our systems listed in this report are designed to address all three versions of what it means for your children to be secure at school.

Report Sections

For organizational purposes, we have divided this report into the following sections:

1. Physical Security Equipment
2. Policies and Training
3. Staff and Student Based Considerations

Physical Security Equipment (page two)

Safe Doors, Safe Windows

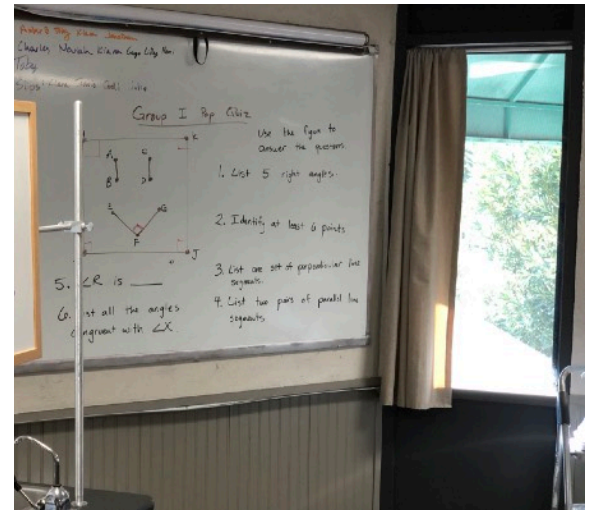
When Da Vinci Tree opened, Principal Roll wanted to make our students as safe as possible without making any child feel like their school is a prison. That is why **all** of our windows and glass doors in the GWC and MC Buildings are protected with Crimsafe screen protectors! Although these products can be prohibitively expensive, Crimsafe is the world leader in security screens. Your kids' security screens can take over 1,600 lb. of pressure and are resistant to cutting, smashing or beating.

Crimsafe screens have been tested by American law enforcement groups, are proven to prevent crime and *will even slow down an attacker in an active shooter situation* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjEmyBh6rus>). Now that the LP Building windows have been installed, we will be outfitting them with Crimsafe security screens so that every class in Da Vinci Tree has the highest level of protection!

Security of Cameras Without Risk of Hacking

From day one, every classroom at Da Vinci Tree has always had closed circuit security cameras. These cameras are there to protect both students and staff from violence, bullying, and unfair treatment. All of our cameras run on an internal system that does not broadcast to the internet. This eliminates the possibility of a stranger hacking and watching our students.

Within reason, all of our footage of your children is available for their parent or guardian to view. If a parent believes that an incident has occurred, they are free to request to view the video footage of their child's classroom. A member of staff will review the footage with the parent or guardian. It is often the case that this is the first time a school employee has viewed the footage in question, ensuring complete transparency. Please note that this process often takes a great deal of time for our small staff, so we respectfully request the parents only utilize this service when they feel it is absolutely necessary.



Notice anything unusual about this window? That's right, you don't! Da Vinci Tree has the highest quality window protection available without making our kids uncomfortable.



The security camera footage (above) was given to TPD on 9/7/22. They recovered our property on 9/18/22 (right).

Physical Security Equipment (page three)

Our security cameras have a proven track record. On September 6th, 2022 Da Vinci Tree Academy used our security cameras to give the Tucson Police Department a video of a criminal stealing the school's work truck and trailer (<https://youtu.be/GyO-NuDUpJM>). The security footage was so good, it took TPD less than two weeks to apprehend the criminal! The Grand Theft Auto Sergeant shared that it was some of the best security camera footage he has seen and it made their job much easier. Since then we have updated our system with newer, higher resolution systems and now have over 40 cameras! **Every classroom and all outdoor spaces are covered by these 40 cameras.** While our cameras are fastened on the sides of the walls of our buildings, we have supplemented the cameras with telephoto lenses to get the best possible views of our sports and playground areas.

Electromagnetic Locks

In buildings that are directly exposed to the street, meaning that they have a door that opens to the public when all gates are locked, we utilized a physical locking mechanism and an electromagnetic lock. The electromagnetic lock gives staff members a greater degree of control over who can come in and out.

If left unlatched, physical locking mechanisms can sometimes take 30 to 60 seconds to activate. This may be as simple as turning a dial or it may be as difficult as using a flathead screwdriver to loosen a bolt. Our electromagnetic door locks by contrast are activated by default and can be engaged or disengaged by the simple press of a button.

Gates & Fences

Da Vinci Tree is spread out over eight acres. The entirety of the campus is enclosed with chainlink fencing and wrought iron gates. Note that within Tucson city limits, it is illegal for schools to have any barbed wire or cattle wire along the tops of school fences. Soon, all of our gates will be made from bespoke wrought iron. The goal is to have gates heavy enough that a vehicle could not smash through them without taking significant damage.



Street-facing door on the MC Building. The red indicator light shows that the door is secure. Note the Crimsafe security screen grid (visible through the glass door) which couples with the electromagnetic lock to create a secure entry/exit.



Our custom welded wrought iron gates provide space for two lanes of cars or emergency vehicles while providing an excellent deterrent.

Policies and Training (page four)

Coordination w/ Tucson Police Department (TPD)

Da Vinci Tree Academy has participated in training courses and private consultations with our amazing peace officers at TPD. In September, 2022 Da Vinci administrators and several teachers participated in TPD's "Active Shooter Response Training." In the past twelve months, Principal Roll and several other members of staff have had extensive, private consultations with multiple heroes of our community. Detective Johnson with Child Abuse and Neglect spent four hours working with Principal Roll, Coach Freyer, and Mr. Battaline training us on spotting signs of abuse or depression in adolescent youths. Officers Rosebeck, Castle, and Garcia have been kind enough to make multiple courtesy visits and give us pointers. It is a direct result of these positive interactions that the school has developed our new plans for emergency situations.



Da Vinci Tree Staff with Det. Jennifer Crawford, Threat Mitigation & Human Trafficking, at Active Shooter Response Training.

Overview of Emergency Plans

As stated above, our consultations with TPD have helped us develop and train our staff on a new, modern plan for emergency situations. This plan involves basic self-defense and threat assessment training for staff along with research-based techniques for improving the odds of positive outcomes in emergency situations. While the school's exact plans will remain unpublished for security reasons, we can share that we have a three tiered system (listed on the next page). We have also started training our staff in these new defensive techniques.



Policies and Training (page five)

Lockdown Response (Code Yellow)

Used in situations where there is no danger as long as people stay where they are.

Examples include a rattlesnake on the playground, a water main rupture, etc.

By a large margin, this is the most common lockdown at Da Vinci Tree Academy and other schools we've worked with.

Lockdown No Response (Code Red)

Used in situations where there is a potential threat that can be avoided by staying out of sight.

Examples include an unarmed stranger lingering outside campus, or an active police situation at a neighboring home or business.

Planning for a worst case scenario was tough for us. Even so, we know that as your child's school it is our responsibility to make sure they are safe in an unthinkable situation.

Lockdown Decision (Code Black)

Used in situations of highest potential danger. Specific lockdown procedures in this category were taken directly from TPD's research-based, best practices and tailored to our situation in order to maximize the probability of a favorable outcome in an emergency.

This lockdown is for active shooter situations.

Our Community Transparency

Charter schools typically are not the victims of mass shootings. In fact, the only mass shooting we are aware of that ever took place at a charter school was in Denver, Colorado in 2019. What makes charter schools different than private or district schools?

Determining an exact answer is impossible, so we can only speculate. Charter schools in our experience are communities of families who want to be there. They tend to be close knit and often have families where parents and children are looking out for each other. Just like at our school, these communities support each other. Da Vinci Tree has something that we consider special and unique. We have an unprecedented level of transparency with our families. When something negative happens we don't cover it up. We address our problems head on. While it would be disingenuous to guarantee that nothing bad will ever happen at Da Vinci Tree, we can promise with certainty 1.) that we will always do everything we can to keep our students and staff safe and 2.) we will always give our community that maximum level of transparency that the law allows us.



Our families expect prompt transparency like this video made in the middle of a lockdown in January of 2023. Click the image above for the YouTube link.

Staff and Student (page six)

Staffing Numbers

The number of staff members a school has working with children has a direct correlation to safety. Da Vinci Tree Academy has a large number of staff for a school of our type. We have at least two adults in each classroom. While this is primarily for the educational purpose of giving students a more personalized experience with plenty of attention, it also has other applications. Having two or more adults with each group of children give us a higher chance of identifying and taking care of the following issues quickly:

- Bullying
- Self-harm and other mental health challenges
- Food insecurity
- Physical or emotional abuse

While we hope that your child will never wrestle with the issues listed above, a student in their class may be struggling. ALL students are safer when students with problems are given the best possible chance of having their issues addressed.

This is not a hypothetical benefit. It is a regular occurrence for students from other schools to transfer into Da Vinci Tree before having their problems quickly identified and addressed with counseling or other services.

Strength in Staff Age & Gender Diversity

Just as a diverse board of directors increases a company's operating efficiency,¹ a diverse staff increases a school's capacity for identifying and addressing security issues with students. We are proud that the diversity in both our student body and our staff reflect our community at large. To be clear, we don't hire staff because of their age, gender, or race. It just so happens that the best educators in Tucson tend to come from all parts of our community.

Some students respond better to being disciplined by women. Some are better with men. Da Vinci Tree Academy has close to a 50/50 staff mix between men and women. We are also well balanced with age, our youngest employees being in their early twenties and our oldest being in their seventies. In an emergency situation, it is also good to have a several strong, often younger men and women who can help lift and carry an injured student or coworker.

¹ Chih-shun Hsu, Wei-hung Lai & Sin-hui Yen (2019) Boardroom Diversity and Operating Performance: The Moderating Effect of Strategic Change, *Emerging Markets Finance and Trade*, 55:11, 2448-2472, DOI: 10.1080/1540496X.2018.1519414

Staff and Student (page seven)

Division of Students to Prevent Bullying

It is not uncommon for a child to be anxious or feel unsafe while at school due to students in a different grade level. At Da Vinci Tree, we minimize the possibilities for cross-grade negative interactions and bullying by dividing the campus up by age.

The George Washington Carver Building and its surrounding playground specifically houses grades Kindergarten through third. The Louis Pasteur Building houses grades four through six. The Marie Curie Building is the home of our oldest students, grades seven and eight. While outdoor areas are shared, interactions outside of these building groups is limited by our scheduling and the configuration of campus.

Equal Dispersal of Staff to Prevent Bullying & Violence

As stated earlier, having a diverse group of ages and genders helps a school to most efficiently control the security of our students. Given the size of our campus, it is important that staff members are distributed across the campus evenly. Any gains our diversity would give us would be lost if we only had male staff members in one building and female staff members in another for instance.

Da Vinci Tree Academy actively manages our staff by age and gender to make sure that all buildings are balanced between men and women and younger and older. In each of our buildings you will find a near equal dispersal between gender and age.

Da Vinci Tree does not tolerate students acting violent or threatening violence in the classroom. On very rare occasions, one of our trained, younger members of staff will have to remove a student from a classroom to preserve the safety of the learning environment. In these unusual circumstances, there is always a staff member close at hand who is physically able to do what needs to be done to make sure that the rest of the class has as positive and supportive a school experience.

