# How to ensure your Incident Report Form

# is being sent securely to the Schools’ Incidents email address

## Maintained Schools (non-VA/Free/ Foundation schools)

Suffolk County Council (SCC) has improved the way it exchanges sensitive emails and documents with external bodies such as schools. We would like you to have the most efficient and smoothest experience of exchanging information securely with us.

SCC uses two different ways of sending secure email. One is called OME and the other is called TLS. The TLS system provides a much smoother way for schools to exchange secure information for schools, but OME can still be used as well.

### TLS (Transport Layer Security)

The TLS system is effectively providing a secure “tunnel” between SCC and your school. Once it’s been set up, emails can be exchanged securely between SCC and your school. Your staff won’t need to do anything to decrypt emails from SCC, and emails that you send to SCC will also be secure. Our IT team can work with whoever supplies your email service to configure TLS on your email system. TLS is a government standard and is free to implement. To request a TLS connection, please contact the Schools’ Incident email box at [schools.incidents@suffolk.gov.uk](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cbicka%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5CMEUAMQWV%5Cschools.incidents%40suffolk.gov.uk)  with an email address of an IT person at your end who we can work with to get the system up and running.

### Older email addresses and Gmail/Hotmail

***Please note that technical reasons mean that not all addresses can have TLS connections set up.*** *For example, if your school is using an older email address (such as talk21.co.uk, or live.co.uk) or the school uses a Gmail or Hotmail address, unfortunately TLS can’t be set up.*

This doesn’t mean that you can’t exchange information securely with SCC, it just means that your school will need to use the system called OME which is described below.

### OME (Office 365 Message Encryption)

If your school either doesn’t have a TLS connection set up, or it’s not possible to set one up, you’ll receive secure emails from Suffolk County Council using the OME system. You’ll know that OME has been used to send the email as tit will be titled **OFFICIAL SENSITIVE** and the message inside will read something like:

*“This email has been sent using Suffolk County Council’s secure email service, because it contains sensitive information…”.*

Your staff won’t be able to access the contents of the email until they download and run the small attachment that comes with the email. This will provide them with a passcode that will enable them to decrypt and read the email.

### Sending secure information to SCC using OME

If your school hasn’t got a TLS connection with Suffolk County Council and you need to send sensitive information (such as an Incident Report Form) to SCC securely, then for each form you’ll need to send a standard email (one per form) to your SCC contact asking them to send you a blank secure email. You then need to reply to this secure email and every email in the subsequent thread will be secure. Please note, information will only be secure if you use the secure thread initiated by SCC - any new sensitive emails that the school needs to send (for instance a new incident report) will need a separate secure email requesting from SCC.

### TLS or OME – you decide

**As you can see, having a TLS connection with Suffolk County Council makes it a lot easier for your school to exchange sensitive email with the council.** Please do contact the Nina Bickerton or Lisbeth Thorsen within Schools’ Health and Safety via schools.incidents@suffolk.gov.uk if you’d like a connection set up (don’t forget to include details of your IT person).

If technical reasons prevent a TLS connection being set up, you can still exchange sensitive content via email with the Council by asking SCC for a secure email to be sent to you and replying to the secure email.

### More details

There are more details about the Council’s approach to secure email on our website. You can find advice and guidance at <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/about/secure-emails/>