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## Should steel grills be used to protect from vandals ?

(26/01/2012)

SIR Isaac Newton's former school, The King's School in Grantham is facing a 'constant threat of vandalism', and is planning to install steel grills on its windows to protect the pupils and staff.

The King's School library, in Church Street, Grantham, which was built in 1497, has been targeted several times by vandals over the last two years.

Assistant bursar John Kendall MBE submitted the planning application for the steel grills to South Kesteven District Council.

He stated: "The need has arisen to protect pupils and staff from harm of flying glass whilst studying and working in the library building due to the constant threat of vandals breaking the windows."

The application continues: "In 2010 it became apparent that the school's library building was suffering from attacks of vandalism, mainly by having windows broken, along with other incidents, such as theft from roofs.

"Lately these attacks are happening more frequently and commonly through the day, when the school is in session. This building is clearly a sensitive area due to its age, history, importance, location and listing, however, after consultation with the police and with some near misses of injury, it has been decided that something of a permanent nature had to be done to protect the students and staff from possible harm by flying glass."

The grills, which will be especially designed for the school if planning permission is approved, will consist of steel mesh with a steel border, which will be secured to the building with small brackets and held in position with masonry screws. They would be painted black.

They would be of similar design to those used on St Wulfram's Church and Grantham House.

Mr Kendall continued: "The window grills to be manufactured, we believe will not be overly obtrusive but will guarantee a safer environment, continued use by students of this wonderful building and protect the original windows from irreparable damage."

A planning application has also been submitted to replace sections of the roof of the building, which is expected to cost around £350,000.

Bursar Peter Kirkbride said: "It's not vandalism on the roof it's just getting on a bit, some of the tiles have started to crumble. It was Sir Isaac Newton's school and is valuable heritage for the school, Grantham and the nation. We are working hard to keep the building running."

The roof is to be repaired with Colyweston tile to match the original roof slates but this is expensive.

The school has put in a bid for an English Heritage grant and fund-raising has started.

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