# Teenager pleads guilty to terror-related charges after armed school incident



A police investigation was launched in summer 2023 following the circulation of a photo showing a 17-year-old boy in full combat gear carrying an imitation firearm at his secondary school in Edinburgh. The incident had caused significant alarm among students and parents, leading to a thorough inquiry by law enforcement.

The teenager, who cannot be named due to legal restrictions on reporting the identities of minors, appeared in the High Court in Glasgow where he pleaded guilty to charges including a breach of the peace and an offence under the Terrorism Act. The crimes took place between June 2022 and July 2023. His bail was revoked by Judge Lord Arthurson, and he is set to be sentenced next month.

Prosecutor Greg Farrell provided details about the events leading to the charges. On 20 June 2023, the boy arrived at school wearing military apparel, including cargo trousers, a tactical vest, and a helmet. While at the school, he was photographed carrying an imitation firearm, a snapshot that was later widely shared on social media without his consent. This image resulted in considerable distress among the school community after a concerned parent alerted the police.

In reviewing the teenager's social media presence, police found that he had a TikTok account featuring videos of him in combat gear, along with alarming references to school shootings. Farrell remarked, "One piece of commentary referenced school shootings," indicating a concerning trend in the boy's online behaviour.

Following the incident, the boy was suspended from school, prompting investigators to gather testimony from fellow pupils. Statements indicated that he had voiced a desire to commit a school shooting and demonstrated an admiration for perpetrators of past mass shootings, including the Columbine High School tragedy in 1999.

Classmates recounted how he expressed enthusiasm when discussing school shootings, idolising the shooters involved, and speculating on plans to carry out an attack at his school, which he labelled as "Doomsday." He disclosed plans that included the use of tripwires and pipe bombs, alongside a desire to create homemade firearms utilising a 3D printer. His remarks included intentions to target specific locations within the school, starting from the second floor.

Evidence from the investigation included a host of disturbing materials found on the teenager's electronic devices. Reports stated that his mobile phone contained 65 videos related to Columbine, enriched with music that appeared to romanticise the incident. Further, a journal revealed ominous statements such as, "I can't wait to hold my gun again in my gear. Hoping I'll get a bomb...kills this time. Will be unstoppable."

The boy had previously been flagged under the UK’s Prevent counter-terrorism programme, first for concerns raised by fellow students in November 2022. Although the initial meeting with police appeared to result in constructive engagement, no subsequent action was taken after the boy continued to discuss school shootings. A second referral to Prevent was made in June 2023 following the combat gear incident and its aftermath, with the school’s deputy head teacher highlighting a pattern of alarming behaviour.

During the hearing, his defence advocate, Shelagh McCall, described the boy as "vulnerable" and mentioned ongoing issues that could be impacting his behaviour. However, Judge Lord Arthurson opted not to grant bail. The teenager is expected to be placed in a secure unit for young people or a similar facility deemed safe until sentencing, which has been deferred pending further reports.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2025/02/21/transgender-pro-nazi-plan-school-shooting-edinburgh/> - This article corroborates the details of the incident involving a transgender teenager in Edinburgh who planned a school shooting, idolized Columbine shooters, and was involved in pro-Nazi activities. It also mentions the teenager's guilty plea and the revocation of bail.
* <https://www.vacourts.gov/courts/scv/rulesofcourt.pdf> - Although not directly related to the specific incident, this document provides general legal context regarding court procedures and the handling of cases, which can be relevant to understanding legal processes involved in such incidents.
* <https://www.elc-pa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Weapons-at-School-Rights-Consequences-Act-26-2023.pdf> - This document discusses legal consequences for students bringing weapons to school, which indirectly relates to the broader context of school safety and legal responses to threats like the one described in the article.
* <https://www.courts.michigan.gov/49008a/siteassets/publications/benchbooks/evidence/evidbb.pdf> - This document provides insights into evidence handling and authentication, which could be relevant to the investigation and legal proceedings involving digital evidence like social media posts and videos.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-strategy> - This URL would provide information on the UK's Prevent counter-terrorism programme, which was mentioned in the article as a programme the teenager was referred to due to concerns about his behavior.