

Health & Safety Schools Newsletter

From: Doug Brady - Health & Safety Advisor

To: All schools

Issue No: Spring Term 2015

Corporate Services

Easthampstead House

Bracknell RG12 1AQ

01344 352288

doug.brady@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

CLEARING SNOW



Don't be put off clearing paths because you're afraid someone will get injured. Remember, people walking on snow and ice have a responsibility to be careful themselves. Don't believe the myths - it's unlikely you'll be sued or held legally responsible for any injuries if you have cleared the path carefully.

If Parents volunteer to carry out snow clearance then the school has a duty of care towards them. Legally this means taking all reasonable steps to reduce the likelihood of them being injured. You will need to carry out a risk assessment on the snow clearing activities, taking into account anyone who may be affected by the work. Make sure all involved are given a copy of the assessment. Pay extra attention to clearing snow and ice from steps and steep pathways - you might need to use more salt on these areas. Use salt or sand - not water. If you use water to melt the snow, it may refreeze and turn to black ice. Black ice increases the risk of injuries as it is invisible and very slippery. When you're shoveling snow, take care where you put it so it doesn't block people's paths or drains.

Make sure you make a path down the middle of the area to be cleared first, so you have a clear surface to walk on. Then shovel the snow from the center of the path to the sides

CHECKLIST FOR CLASSROOMS



How this checklist can help you

Health and safety in a school is about taking a sensible and proportionate approach to ensure the premises provide a healthy and safe place for all who use them, including the school workforce, visitors and pupils. Because written risk assessments are not required for every classroom activity, this checklist is being made available for use as required. It is not mandatory, but is intended as a helpful tool. Schools may choose other ways to comply with health and safety legislation and ensure staff and children are safe.

[Classroom Checklist](#)

FINGER PROTECTION



A gust of wind, a thoughtless moment, a playtime prank – whatever the cause **government** figures show that: over **30,000** children are injured every year by trapping fingers in doors and that more than **1,500** subsequently needed some form of surgical treatment Obviously, nobody would want a child in your care or visiting your premises to suffer such an accident. Under current Health and Safety legislation it is possible for your premises to be fined if practical measures were not taken to prevent such accidents. Victims may also pursue a legal claim for damages. The dangers associated with finger entrapment affect not just young children in schools and nurseries, the elderly and disabled are also particularly vulnerable. Furthermore, any person in a public or commercial place could potentially be a victim of door related accidents.

Details of a recent “HSE” prosecution can be found via the following link: [Finger trap](#)

WOODEN DECKING



Slips and trips are the most common cause of injuries at work. During cold and wet weather, wooden decking can become extremely slippery, even more so if covered in frost or damp leaves. Reducing the risk of accidents on your wet decking will minimise the risk of an insurance claim being made against your school. First of all, keeping your decking clean will help to reduce the amount of Algae and grime that develops on the surface – this is actually what makes the timber slippery when it’s wet, not so much the water itself.

With simple, inexpensive yet effective health and safety solutions, these incidents can be easily avoided. Solutions such as:

- Ensuring a risk assessment has been carried out to help identify any associated hazards
 - **Do not use the decking if it’s covered by frost or snow**
 - Advising members of staff and students to wear sensible footwear
 - Displaying warning signs about the risk of slipping (where appropriate)
 - Clearing leaves, litter, mud, debris and excess water from the decking surfaces
 - Pressure wash and scrub the surface regularly to remove algae and other debris that can add to and increase the slippery conditions. If no “pressure washer” use a bucket and a 'deck brush' (essentially a wire brush on a long handle).
 - Coat and regularly maintain with a suitable “Decking Stain” which provides a tough durable finish and has invisible anti-slip micro beads and an algaecide to help protect the film surface from algae and mould growth.
 - Installing good quality entrance matting
 - Applying yellow hazard tape or paint to identify the decked area boundary
 - Applying anti-slip or high visibility tread directly onto the decking surface
 - Providing suitable lighting
 - Providing and maintaining hand rails
- Please remember that all incidents should be reported to the **Health & Safety Advisers**.

PLAYGROUND AND OUTSIDE SPORT EQUIPMENT



Even though the cold weather has arrived pupils will still want to play on your outside playground equipment.

Risk Assessments will be required to ensure that **adequate** levels of supervision are in place.

When planning to purchase any new equipment consideration must be made to the age range of pupils who will have access to the equipment. The installer should provide the technical specification for the equipment which will include the intended age range that the equipment is designed to be used by. Signs may/will be required to inform staff, pupils, visitors and any intruders of relevant safety information including age limits.

It is essential that staff who are given responsibility for moving and assembling physical education equipment are given suitable training for safe lifting techniques.

Setting up of equipment like netball posts must not be carried out by pupils and they should be kept clear of equipment until it is securely in place

As well as an annual certified detailed inspection carried out by a **competent** person, in-house checking will be required so as to prevent injury from damaged or unsafe equipment. Regular operational inspections by site maintenance team/ site controller/caretaker should take place to check the operation, stability, wear etc of the equipment. The results of the inspection should be recorded which should be available for examination if required.

Play areas require routine documented visual inspections to be carried out by the site staff or playground supervisor to identify any hazards for example: vandalism, weather damage, broken glass etc. The frequency of these visual inspections will be determined by such factors as the security of the site and the location of the play areas.

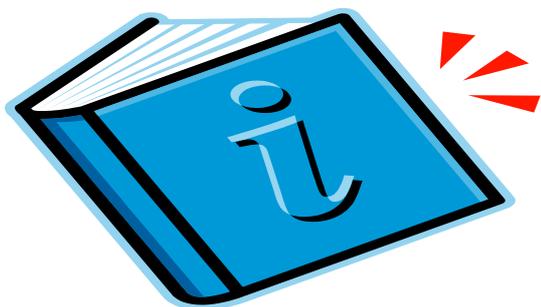
Please get in contact me if you require any further assistance with this matter.

Further information can be found using these links:

[Physical education and organized games](#)

[Schools health & safety](#)

SCHOOLS HEALTH & SAFETY



Information and documentation relating to a variety of Health & Safety topics can be found on the School Management page:

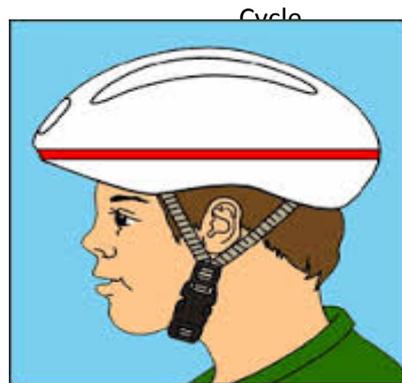
- Health & Safety Advisers Contact details
- Corporate Health & Safety Manual
- Schools Health & Safety Manual
- School Health & Safety Newsletters

The Paper copies of the Manuals are out of date and no longer need to be retained.

All information is available electronically using the following link:

SCHOOLS HEALTH & SAFETY

CYCLE HELMETS



RoSPA recommends that cyclists wear a cycle helmet that meets a recognised safety standard.

Cycle helmets, when correctly worn, are effective in reducing the risk of receiving major head or brain injuries in an accident. They do not guarantee protection, nor prevent accidents from happening in the first place, but wearing a cycle helmet is a simple, low cost and effective way that individual cyclists can protect themselves.

A cycle helmet cushions the head in a fall, providing a last line of defence between your head and the ground.

It reduces the force of an impact before it reaches your head and brain. The hard outer shell spreads the force of a blow over a wider area than the initial impact site.

Choosing a cycle helmet:

- Try the helmet on before buying it
- Make sure you like the type and style
- Check it has a CE mark and meets at least one recognised Standard: BS EN1078:1997 (European Standard) Snell B.95 (American Standard)
- Make sure it fits comfortably and securely
- Check that the straps are easy to do up and adjust
- Ensure it stays in place on the head when the straps are fastened
- Make sure it does not obstruct vision
- Ensure it does not cover the ears
- Check that it is well ventilated
- Ensure it comes with clear advice for the user.

Remember:

Helmets do not prevent accidents. An accident can still be very serious, even when wearing a helmet. So be just as careful, look around for traffic, dress brightly and follow the rules of the road.