



Head Teachers' Site Management  
Guide to Health and Safety in  
**Primary Schools**





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## Introduction

**T**his general guide has been developed to assist the Head Teacher understand and fulfil their duties under health and safety legislation. It draws attention to the main hazards and risks found in schools, and provides information and guidance to safeguard employees, pupils and other persons who may visit the school, e.g. contractors, members of the public.

This guide can be used by Head Teachers as a continual reference guide and by employees to increase their awareness and understanding of health and safety within the school.

This is a general guide aimed at all primary schools within the Council. It is for each Head Teacher to determine which aspects are relevant. It is not possible to cover all aspects for each individual school and Head Teachers should therefore be aware there may be additional hazards/issues at their school.

## Legal Duties

As an employer, the Council has duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (the Act) to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees, and others who might be affected by its undertaking. e.g. pupils. This includes the provision and maintenance of:

- safe and healthy place of work and working environment;
- safe plant, equipment and systems of work;
- safe handling, transport and storage of materials and substances;
- information, instruction, training and supervision to enable employees to recognise and minimise hazards; and;
- adequate welfare facilities.

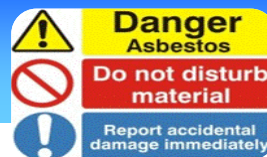
Employees of the Council also have duties under the Act, the most important of which are to take care of their own health and safety and that of others who might be affected by their acts or omissions, i.e. work activities and, also, to cooperate with their employer in all matters of health and safety.

The Council has developed health and safety policies, which can be found via the intranet [on Council Policies](#). In addition further guidance can be obtained from the Department for Education and Skills Wales <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/>.

The Head Teacher must bring these policies and guidance documents to the attention of all employees.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 apply to all work activities and require employers to manage health and safety. Together with the associated Approved Code of Practice, the Regulations make some of the general duties of the Act more specific, such as the requirement to undertake suitable and sufficient risk assessments, and to ensure staff are provided with adequate information, training, instruction and supervision.

The following pages provide information concerning the main health and safety issues likely to be encountered in a school. Reference should also be made to the Department for Education and Skills' guidance on responsibilities.



## Asbestos

Many schools will have or have had asbestos containing materials (ACMs) in various parts of the premises. The Council has a legal duty to control and manage the presence of asbestos in premises under its control. Corporate Estates have undertaken surveys of Council premises and have developed a framework for managing asbestos that includes:

- the identification of ACMs in the premises;
- the assessment of the condition of the ACMs;
- either removal, or management in situ, which would include the development of an Asbestos Management Plan;
- providing information to employees and contractors;
- training for employees where required; and,
- appropriate record keeping.

The Head Teacher must follow the Asbestos Management Plan and will:

- keep the Asbestos Management Plan readily available and use it to manage and control any ACMs that may be present in the premises;
- inform anyone who may work in the vicinity of the ACMs of their presence (e.g. maintenance staff);
- report any ACMs that might, or have become damaged to Corporate Estates for immediate action;
- contact Corporate Estates when any building works are planned, including refurbishments or demolition as well as minor works such as running computer cables, electrical cables, plumbing etc.

If your school has not received an asbestos survey, or as the Head Teacher you have not received training regarding your responsibilities, please contact Corporate Estates.

### Additional Information/Guidance

- [Council Policy - HS24 - Control and Management of Asbestos](#)

## Boiler Rooms

A boiler is capable of exploding if safety controls fail and blocked flues can cause flue gas to leak into surrounding areas, causing damage and risks to life and to health through carbon monoxide poisoning etc.

There have been several boiler explosions recorded in Rhondda Cynon Taf over the last few years, fortunately none of these have resulted in any injuries to employees or members of the public, but have resulted in extensive property damage.

Schools are required to:

- ensure that boiler systems are maintained and inspected on a regular basis (heating systems must be serviced);
- ensure that boiler rooms are free from combustible materials such as wood, paper and document storage, flammable substances;
- ensure boiler rooms are kept locked shut and sign posted to that effect, when not in use;
- ensure wood pellet stores are only accessed by competent/trained personnel (this will usually be specialist contractors or engineers) and subject to a permit to work system.

The Council has a list of approved suppliers/contractors, and to ensure the boilers are operating safely and efficiently can arrange for the maintenance/inspection/servicing of boilers under a SLA. Contact should be made with Corporate Estates to arrange the maintenance and servicing of boilers.



Four workers employed by a glazing company to replace old windows in a school, were exposed to dangerous asbestos fibres after using a crowbar to remove strips of asbestos insulating board packers in order to install the new windows. The packers were then broken up and dumped on site. The contractor did not ask to see the asbestos register, and the school did not provide the workers with an induction, or any information regarding the location of asbestos containing materials (ACMs). In fact, the school's site manager told the contractors that to the best of his knowledge there were no ACMs in the window area. Both the school and the glazing company were prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive following the incident.



## Communication

It is the Head Teacher's responsibility to ensure that there are clear and effective channels of communication throughout the school. This can be achieved by holding regular meetings with employees and circulating written information to ensure they are kept apprised. Notice and information boards should be kept up to date. Regular supervision must be undertaken with employees.

The Head Teacher must ensure that the HSE's health and safety law poster is completed appropriately and displayed where employees can easily read it. The poster includes basic health and safety information and lets people know who is responsible for health and safety in the school. Current legislation requires the employer to consult with employees on health and safety matters. Consultation involves not only giving employees information, but also listening to and taking account of what they say, particularly when they report problems, and before making any health and safety decisions. The Council's Employee Suggestion Scheme and Hazard Reporting Scheme can assist in this process.

### Additional Information/Guidance

- The Council's Employee Suggestion Scheme
- The Council's Hazard Reporting Scheme



## Control of Contractors

The control of contractors within a school is very important. Contractors in a school environment may be involved in long-term major refurbishment work or everyday maintenance, such as servicing of the heating system, repairing damaged guttering, maintaining the emergency lighting system etc. The Head Teacher should always liaise with Corporate Estates and also follow the Council's Policy HS23 - Managing Contractors, for the planning, selection, appointment and monitoring of anyone undertaking works. This includes:

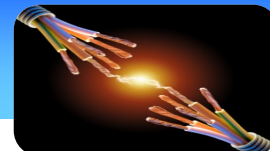
- having clearly identified personnel who are points of contact for contractors and visiting workers;
- having all significant hazards and risks within the school clearly identified;
- exchanging information on hazards and risks.

The Head Teacher will ensure effective communication is established and maintained through:

- regular workplace meetings with contractors;
- providing contractors with copies of appropriate hazard registers, such as the asbestos register;
- informing employees and visitors about hazards in the school;
- having effective signing in and out procedures for contractors;
- informing contractors of emergency procedures e.g. fire evacuation plan;
- sharing findings of risk assessments with contractors;
- asking contractors about the hazards and risks which they are bringing on site (e.g. creating noise, dust, fumes);
- informing employees, pupils and visitors about any possible interference with normal working practices (e.g. re-routing of emergency escape routes);
- monitoring the work against agreed methods.

### Additional Information/Guidance

- [Council Policy HS23 - Managing Contractors](#)
- [Using Contractors - A brief guide - HSE](#)



## Control of Substances Hazardous to Health

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) require employers to prevent or control exposure to hazardous substances, and would include substances listed as very toxic, toxic, harmful, corrosive, irritant and microorganism. Hazardous substances can be solid, liquid, gas vapour, microorganism or carcinogens and can endanger life by being: inhaled; ingested; or absorbed/injected through the skin or mucous membranes. In schools these substances may include cleaning materials, disinfectants and microorganisms. In addition, some of the curriculum activities may involve the use and/or production of hazardous substances and these must also be suitably assessed. CLEAPSS will provide more detailed information. COSHH assessments must be undertaken to assess the risks to health faced by staff, pupils and visitors from these substances, and up-to-date health and safety data sheets should be available for all substances in use.

Staff (and where appropriate pupils) should be provided with adequate information, instruction and training in respect of the safe storage and use of products, first aid arrangements, how to deal with spillages and the requirement for suitable personal protective equipment (PPE). All substances should be stored in their original containers in accordance with manufacturers instructions and kept secured and out of reach of pupils.

### Additional Information/Guidance

- [Council Policy - HS3 - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health](#)



## Electricity

Electricity can kill. It can also cause shocks and burns and can start fires. The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 cover the use of electricity in schools. These regulations require employers to maintain electrical systems and electrical equipment within their control. Electrical systems include the lighting and power circuits, and portable electrical equipment such as vacuum cleaners, power tools etc. All work carried out on electrical circuits and equipment such as installation work, inspection, testing and maintenance, must be carried out by a competent person. Fixed electrical installations must be inspected and tested at regular intervals.

All portable electrical equipment must be subject to periodic portable appliance testing (PAT). The frequency of the testing varies according to the appliance and its usage, although it is generally undertaken on an annual basis. You will find stickers or labels on the equipment indicating when it was last inspected and the date when the next inspection is due.

Employees using portable equipment must visually check it prior to use, and report any damage or defects. These include broken plugs, frayed flex, discoloured or overheated cables. Defective or unsuitable equipment should be immediately withdrawn from service and labelled until it is either repaired or destroyed.

Corporate Estates have contracts in place for both fixed and portable electrical equipment. If you are unclear as to when the fixed electrical systems or portable equipment was last checked you should contact Corporate Estates. Schools may have opted out of the PAT testing—if so, Head Teachers must ensure alternative suitable arrangements are made.

Residual Current Devices (RCDs) must be used where required.

**Electrical switch-rooms must be kept free from combustible materials and never used as storage areas.**

### Additional Information/Guidance

- [Council Policy HS10 - Electricity at Work](#)
- [Electrical Safety at Work - HSE](#)



## Fire Safety

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places a duty on the “responsible person”, to ensure that a fire risk assessment is completed and regularly updated. The Council has appointed a consultant contractor who will undertake the assessments and provide a report highlighting any actions required.

**The Head Teacher is responsible for overall management of the day-to-day fire precautions in the school and will ensure that systems and arrangements are developed to:**

- identify any significant findings from the fire risk assessment and implement any actions required;
- check escape routes to ensure they can be used and are not obstructed;
- check the emergency exit devices on doors to ensure they work correctly;
- test fire alarm systems, including weekly alarm tests and periodic maintenance by a competent person;
- test and maintain emergency lighting systems, fire extinguishers, hose reels and fire blankets etc. including periodic maintenance by a competent person;
- record the training of relevant people;
- ensure a coordinated school based emergency evacuation plan is developed;
- where necessary develop personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPS) for staff and pupils; and,
- maintain the fire log book.

**The Head Teacher must also:**

- update the fire risk assessment as required;
- liaise with Corporate Estates on building and maintenance issues; and,
- undertake an annual review of the fire risk assessment.

**The current fire-related maintenance contracts in place and managed through Corporate Estates, include:**

- fire fighting equipment e.g. extinguishers - 1 service per year;
- fire detection and alarm systems e.g. smoke/heat detectors, alarm repeater - 4 visits per year;

- emergency lighting - 4 visits per year;
- gas heating systems - 2 visits per year (summer / winter) (the summer visit will include a gas safety check);
- gas safety check – annual (see reference to gas heating systems above).

The Head Teacher must ensure that the maintenance is undertaken in line with the above contracts. Any discrepancies or uncertainties must be reported to Corporate Estates.

### Additional Information / Guidance

- [Fire Safety Risk Assessment - Educational Premises](#)
- [Fire Risk Assessment - Means of Escape for Disabled People](#)
- [Guidance on Writing Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans \(PEEPs\)](#)







## First-Aid

The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 require all places of work to have first-aid provision. The extent of the provision will depend on a number of factors, such as the types of hazards present, the number of employees, the history of accidents, the proximity of medical services etc. This can be determined by carrying out a first-aid needs risk assessment. The HSE provides guidance to help employers and managers meet their obligations.

The Head Teacher will ensure that there will be at least one member of staff who has undertaken, as a minimum, the Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW) training, on site at all times. When assessing first aid needs, the Head Teacher will also take account of the number of pupils.

The Head Teacher will ensure that sufficient and adequately stocked first-aid boxes are provided and are maintained by authorised staff. The location of the first aid boxes and the names of the staff responsible for their upkeep must be clearly indicated throughout the school.

Records should be kept by the first-aiders/appointed persons of all treatments administered, and should include the name of the injured person, date, time and circumstances of the accident, and details of the injury sustained. This information must be recorded on the incident / accident form—HS5(A).

### Additional Information/Guidance

- [Council Policy HS9 - First Aid at Work](#)
- [First Aid at Work - Guidance on the Regulations - HSE](#)
- [First Aid at Work - Your Questions Answered - HSE](#)

## General Working Environment

The Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 stipulate minimum standards for school premises. Schools are also covered by the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. Factors covered by these regulations include:

- floors and stairs;
- doors and windows;
- temperature, space, lighting and ventilation;

- toilet, washing, changing and rest facilities.

### Floors and Stairs

As many of the accidents in schools are as a result of slips, trips and falls, it is important that, where possible, floor surfaces are non-slip and kept free from obstructions, and holes and defects in floor coverings are repaired promptly, particularly those on staircases.

Stairs should be maintained in a safe condition, well lit and kept free of obstructions.

### Doors and Gates

Each year a number of finger-trapping accidents are reported to the Health and Safety Team. Finger-trapping incidents can result in serious injury and as such a finger-trapping risk assessment must be undertaken for all doors and gates and necessary measures implemented to control the risks (guidance is available in the Council's document Managing the Risk from Finger Trapping in Doors and Gates). Care should be taken when choosing doors to ensure their design does not inhibit movement by staff and pupils. Glass doors and patio windows must be fitted with toughened or safety glass or covered with a protective film that prevents glass from shattering. They must have a conspicuous mark or feature sufficiently obvious that people will be unlikely to collide with them.

### Windows

Risk assessments must be undertaken on all windows that are accessible to pupils, can be opened and are large enough to allow people to fall out, and where assessed as necessary windows must be fitted with restrictors. Window restrictors should also be fitted to windows at ground floor level that open outwards. The restrictors must be checked on a regular basis.

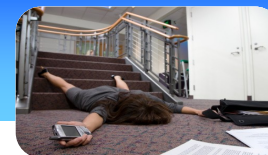
### Temperature, Space, Lighting and Ventilation

The temperature of the school needs to be suitable to ensure all occupants are comfortable. The Head Teacher must ensure that lighting and ventilation are suitable and adequate.

### Staff Facilities

Accommodation should be provided for any employee's own clothing that is not worn during working hours and for special work clothing that is not taken home.

Appropriate changing and toilet facilities should also be provided for staff.



## Outdoor Health and Safety

Steps and paths in the yard and outdoor areas should be kept in good condition and free from obstructions that could lead to tripping hazards.

Steps should have a suitable handrail, and paths that are used in the hours of darkness should be provided with lighting .

It may be necessary to establish whether any garden ponds, greenhouses, balconies etc. pose a substantial risk to pupils and visitors. A risk assessment should be undertaken which may identify the need to provide some protection against falling into or over these. Garden furniture such as benches and tables must be free from defects.

The Head Teacher should ensure that appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is issued to, and worn by staff when undertaking outdoor work activities e.g. grass cutting, hedge trimming etc. The Head Teacher should also ensure that appropriate training is provided.

Where the use of pesticides is necessary, only pesticides that are approved for use in the UK should be used. Any person using pesticides should be competent and should have received sufficient instruction, training and guidance to use pesticides safely.

Petrol-driven equipment should be filled outdoors and not in a confined space such as a shed or garage. Petrol should only be kept in containers that are designed for that purpose.

Safe systems of work must also be developed for clearing snow and gritting activities, and suitable personal protective equipment made available. Prior to the onset of winter the Head Teacher should carry out a pre-winter inspection of pipes, guttering, traffic routes to identify possible hazardous areas and prioritise routes for gritting.

### Additional Information/Guidance

- [Council Policy HS12 - Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare](#)
- [Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare - A Short Guide for Managers - HSE](#)
- [Health and Safety Guidance Sheet - Snow and Ice Guide for Managers](#)

## Incidents/Accidents

It is the responsibility of all employees to report incidents and accidents that occur on Council premises or which arise from work carried out on behalf of the Council. Incidents and accidents must be reported on the Council's Incident/Accident Investigation and Injury Record form HS5(A).

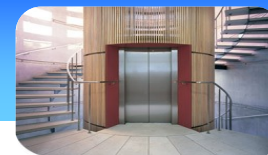
Certain incidents/accidents are also reportable to the Health and Safety Executive under The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). Therefore, the following are reportable if they arise 'out of or in connection with work':

- accidents that result in the fatal injury of an employee or member of the public e.g. pupil;
- accidents that result in an employee suffering a major injury e.g. fracture, dislocation;
- accidents that result in an employee being absent from work or unable to do their normal duties for more than seven days;
- accidents that result in a member of the public suffering an injury and being taken to hospital for treatment directly from the scene of the accident;
- an employee diagnosed with one of the specified work-related diseases; or,
- one of the specified 'dangerous occurrences' – these do not necessarily result in injury but have the potential to do significant harm.

In the event that a work-related accident occurs the Head Teacher/site manager must ensure the health and safety team are notified in line with the time-scales identified in the Accident Reporting Arrangement Guidelines.

### Additional Information/Guidance

- [Council Policy HS5 - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences](#)
- [Accident Reporting Arrangement Guidelines - May 2012](#)
- [Reporting accidents and incidents at work - A brief guide to RIDDOR - HSE](#)



## Legionella

Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal type of pneumonia, which is contracted by inhaling tiny airborne droplets or particles containing viable Legionella bacteria. Although healthy individuals may develop Legionnaires' disease, the elderly, smokers, alcoholics, and those with cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory or kidney disease would be more at risk. Legionella bacteria are common and can be found in water systems, wet air conditioning plant, whirlpool baths and hydrotherapy baths. Corporate Estates have undertaken Legionella Risk Assessments of the water systems within the schools and developed a site specific Legionella Risk Assessment/Site Log Book.

The Head Teacher will follow the Legionella Risk Assessment/Site Log Book and will ensure:

- the Log Book is kept updated and readily available and use it to manage and control the water systems in the building;
- the monthly temperature monitoring is carried out as instructed in the Log Book;
- weekly flushing is undertaken of any low-use water outlets as instructed in the Log Book and record actions accordingly; and,
- they record the findings and report any failings to the Legionella Team for investigation/rectification.

If your school has not received a Legionella Risk Assessment, or you as the Head Teacher have not received training regarding your responsibilities, please contact Corporate Estates.

## Passenger Lifts

All lifting equipment, including passenger lifts, must be inspected at regular intervals by competent persons. Corporate Estates have contracts in place for the examination and maintenance of lifts. The Head Teacher should ensure these examinations are undertaken, and that designated employees carry out basic lift related checks i.e.

- check that there are "do not use the lift in the event of a fire" signs on the outside of the lift (unless the lift is specifically designed to be used in the event of a fire);
- if the lift is fitted with an emergency telephone, bell or other device, check to see it is functioning correctly and can be heard where assistance is available;
- check the inside of the lift to ensure there is a notice explaining what to do in an emergency.

Where lifts are used to transport individuals with mobility difficulties between floors, procedures must be in place to safely evacuate these individuals in the event of an emergency, e.g. fire.



### Additional Information/Guidance

- [Thorough Examination and Testing of Lifts - HSE](#)
- Council's Safety Bulletin - Lift Breakdowns -14 February 2012



## Playground Equipment

Playgrounds and play equipment are common place in many of our schools. Play equipment helps children develop physical coordination, strength and flexibility, as well as providing recreation and enjoyment.

Children will inevitably have accidents in the playground and on play equipment. Schools must minimise the risks by ensuring play equipment is installed and maintained inline with the relevant British Standards and by competent contractors.

British Standard BS1176 governs the design, manufacture and installation of playground equipment, and whilst British Standards are not legally binding, they represent best practice and would be considered in the event of a personal injury claim.

Schools must ensure that any playground equipment is:

- installed by a competent contractor to the relevant British Standards;
- subject to a post-installation inspection and certified as meeting the required standards;
- formally inspected on an annual basis by a competent contractor;
- regularly visually inspected (weekly/monthly) to ensure there are no obvious defects, i.e. protruding fixings, loose parts etc., and this could be done by the caretaker/handy person;
- risk assessed on installation, taking into consideration, age restrictions, supervision, use in inclement weather etc.

Where required, appropriate safety surfacing should be laid beneath the play equipment in accordance with the relevant standards. Therefore play equipment with a fall height of:

- less than 600mm does not require any specific safety surfacing;
- between 600mm and 1.5m requires impact absorbing surface such as grass or bark to a standard depth, or synthetic safety surface;
- Greater than 1.5m requires synthetic safety surface.

### Additional Information / Guidance

[ROSPA - Playground Safety](#)

## Slips, Trips and Falls

Most slips occur when the flooring or ground is wet or contaminated. Most trips are due to poor house-keeping. These types of accidents are seen by many as inevitable and many people may not take them seriously. However, the statistics prove that slip, trip and fall accidents cost employers and the NHS millions of pounds each year, notwithstanding the pain and suffering of those injured. The solutions are often simple and cost effective. A suitable assessment of the risks should identify the necessary control measures. For example:

### Internal Areas

- floor surfaces should be kept free from obstructions and holes and defects repaired promptly, particularly those on staircases;
- handrails should be fitted on stairs;
- stairs should be maintained in a safe condition, kept free of obstructions and well lit;
- spillages should be cleaned up immediately.

### External Areas

- steps and paths in outdoor areas should be kept in good condition and free from obstructions that could lead to tripping hazards;
- changes in surface levels such as on ramps and steps should be clearly marked and lighting should be suitable and sufficient;
- steps should have a suitable handrail, and paths that are used during the hours of darkness should be provided with lighting.

The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring local rules are developed, introduced and enforced around topics such as:

- reporting and dealing with spillages etc.;
- etiquette for proceeding in the corridors, e.g. keeping to the left, no running etc.;
- safe use of stairs and steps.

### Additional Information / Guidance

[Preventing slip and trip incidents in the Education Sector - HSE](#)



## Traffic Management

Every year about 70 people are killed and 2500 seriously injured in accidents involving vehicles in the workplace. Being struck or run over by moving vehicles are the most common causes of these accidents. Vehicles likely to be encountered include contracted transport vehicles, cars, refuse/recycling vehicles, delivery vehicles etc. Additionally, there may be occasions where building or refurbishment works may impact on the regular traffic management arrangements at the school. It is therefore essential that a risk assessment be undertaken to identify the potential hazards and to ensure that appropriate control measures are adopted.

The risk assessment should take into account items such as the type of vehicles accessing the grounds; reversing vehicles; access for emergency vehicles; parking; pedestrian routes; pupils and visitors; unsecured gates etc. Control measures could include: speed limits; adequate lighting; separate access/egress for pedestrians and vehicles; clearly marked and/or designated parking bays; assistance for reversing vehicles; close supervision of pupils; one way systems; restricting times of access for vehicles etc.

### Additional Information/Guidance

- [Council Guidance - Managing Traffic Safety](#)
- [Workplace Transport Safety - A brief guide - HSE](#)



## Visitors

Visitors to a school could include parents, maintenance contractors, contracted transport providers, and other visiting Council employees. To protect visitors from harm, it will be necessary to know they are on site. The simplest way of recording visitors' presence is by using a register and/or issuing a visitor's badge. Where practical, visitors must sign in and out indicating who they are visiting, the time they arrived and the time they leave.

Whenever necessary/practical, visitors must be informed of the risks to which they may be exposed whilst at the school and of any emergency arrangements, including the location of assembly points. Where an emergency arises, measures must be taken by the Head Teacher/site manager to ensure the visitor is accompanied to a place of safety. Adequate supervision must be maintained while the visitor is at the school. Where disabled persons access the school, the responsible person must ensure, where necessary, that personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) are developed for these individuals.



### Additional Information/Guidance

- [Council Policy HS15 - Visitors in the Workplace](#)



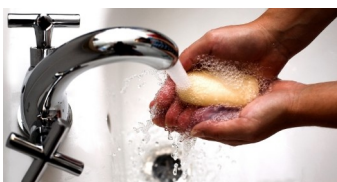
## Water Temperatures and Hot Surfaces

Hot water is a real danger to the pupils (especially infants and those with certain disabilities) as they may not be able to react appropriately or quickly enough to prevent injury from hot water, so consequently the risk of burns and scalds is high. Also, a number of accidents have occurred that resulted in serious injuries, although, these have mainly occurred when people were taking a bath. Therefore, any bathing/shower facilities in the school must be fitted with Thermostatic Mixing Valves (TMVs) that are set to limit the temperature at the outlet to 43°C for baths and 41°C for showers and wash-hand-basins. However, the Head Teacher must still ensure that regular checks of the water temperatures are undertaken by staff to ensure the TMV's are working correctly.

Injuries have also resulted from contact with hot pipes or radiators due to the high temperatures of circulating water in heating and hot water systems. Where there is a risk of someone sustaining a burn from such a hot surface, then the surface should not exceed 43°C when the system is running at the maximum design output. It is likely that radiators and associated pipe work within the schools have already been guarded to prevent such incidents in high-risk areas. However, there may be areas of the school, for example staff areas, that still have exposed radiators and pipe-work. These areas should be identified and risk assessed. Additionally, when refurbishments/maintenance work takes place and there is a need to remove the guarding, the Head Teacher must ensure appropriate control measures are adopted.

### Additional Information/Guidance

- [Education \(School Premises\) Regulations 2012](#)



## Work Equipment

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) require the risk to people's health and safety, from equipment that is used at work, be prevented or controlled. Generally any equipment which is used at work is covered by PUWER. Work equipment in a school environment includes items such as, shredders, stepladders, trolleys, and photocopiers.

Work equipment provided must meet the requirements of PUWER, and in doing so it must be:

- suitable for use, and for the purpose and conditions in which it is used;
- maintained in a safe condition; and
- in certain circumstances, inspected to ensure that it is, and continues to be, safe for use.

Any inspection/maintenance must be carried out by a competent person and records kept. Where appropriate, employees will be expected to undertake visual inspections of equipment before use, and report to their line manager, any defects noted.

Risks created by the use of the equipment must be assessed, and eliminated where possible or controlled.

Employees using work equipment must receive adequate training, instruction and information for the equipment they are using.



### Additional Information / Guidance

- [Providing and using work equipment safely - A brief guide - HSE](#)
- [Lifting equipment at work - A brief guide - HSE](#)
- [Council Policy HS21 - Work Equipment](#)



## Work at Height

In the last six years there have been five deaths and over three thousand injuries in the education sector due to falling from height.

Most major injuries in schools are caused by 'low' falls i.e. below two metres, and involve stairs, falls from desks/chairs (while putting up displays etc.), stools while closing windows/storage etc. and falls from ladders while carrying out repairs and maintenance work.

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 require that:

- where possible work at height should be eliminated by using other means e.g. long-handled poles to clean windows/retrieve balls;
- all work at height is properly planned and organised;
- all work at height takes account of weather conditions that could endanger health and safety;
- those involved in work at height are trained and competent;
- the place where work at height is done is safe;
- equipment for work at height is appropriately inspected with records kept;
- the risks from fragile surfaces are properly controlled; and,
- the risks from falling objects are properly controlled.

Any work at height needs to be properly planned and organised:

- evaluate whether the work can be undertaken from ground level;
- ensure you have the right access equipment for the job—consideration should be given to hiring suitable equipment for specific jobs, i.e. mobile scaffold towers;
- ladders etc. should be visually inspected before each use and more formally on a monthly basis (recorded);
- staff should be fully trained and competent to use any such equipment;

- for low-level access, kick step-type stools and properly designed low steps with handrails should be considered;
- ensure staff are trained and competent to use any work at height equipment.

A detailed risk assessment should be undertaken where significant factors are present, such as, appreciable height, bulky loads, lone working, inclement weather etc.

### Additional Information / Guidance

- [Work at Height - The Basics - HSE Guidance](#)
- [Safe use of ladders and stepladders - HSE Guidance](#)
- [Top tips on ladder and stepladder safety - HSE Guidance](#)



