



School Health & Safety Newsletter

Spring 2018

A warm welcome to the spring edition of the school health and safety briefing which contains a variety of issues aimed to raise your awareness of safety issues, changes in legislation/guidance as well as detailing the resources at your disposal to effectively manage health and safety within your school.

Can you please ensure that the contents of this newsletter are disseminated to relevant staff.

The Health and Safety Team value your input and if you would like to comment on this newsletter or would like a particular health and safety issue to be included please don't hesitate to contact us on 03000 265781 or hsteam@durham.gov.uk

Visits to Hamsterley Forest

Throughout the year, a number of DCC school pupils visit Hamsterley forest take part in outdoor activities such as walking, camp building etc. Any schools planning a visit whether it is arranged through a third party learning provider / organiser, or it is a school led visit need to ensure that the Forestry Commission are aware of it, so they know which groups are present in the area.



Please use the email below to notify the forestry commission team of any upcoming visits. richard.gilchrist@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Further information is also available on the Hamsterley Forest webpage. [Learning in Hamsterley Forest \(England\)](#)

Water Safety for Children and Young People

As the summer time approaches, increasing numbers of children will potentially put themselves at risk of drowning when playing in local watercourses. According to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), on average 40-50 children drown per year in the UK.

The Health and Safety Team is actively promoting water safety in our schools and have produced the following [Water Safety Fact Sheet](#). Please can we ask that you to share this information with pupils in assembly this summer term.



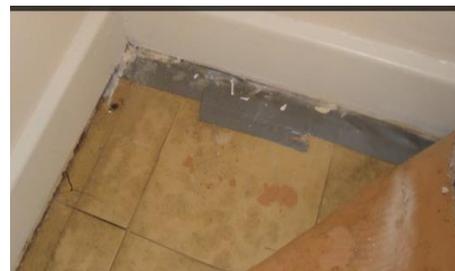


Asbestos Awareness Training

In 2015, the online asbestos training was originally issued to schools across the County Durham. Due to the importance of this training, particularly when managing asbestos containing materials on school premises, we are now requesting school Head Teachers, Premises Managers and Caretakers to refresh this on a 3 yearly basis, as a mandatory requirement.

We would ask that you check local training records for when the asbestos e-learning course was last undertaken, and 3 years from this date arrange to complete the course again.

You will need a new log in to undertake the refresher module. This can be obtained by contacting Joanne Walker in the Learning Development Team via email with the relevant employee names, email address and payroll references. Email: Joanne.walker@durham.gov.uk.



Asbestos Management Assurance Process

On 21st March 2018, a communication was sent out to DCC schools via email in relation to obtaining information on asbestos in their building. Schools have been requested to log onto the Asbestos Management Assurance Process (AMAP) portal, a link was attached on the email sent. Information required to be completed on the portal will include the age of building, if any asbestos is present, who the responsible person for the building is, and if there is an asbestos management plan in place, etc.

This follows an exercise completed by the Education Funding Agency in 2016/17 where they issued a survey to all schools in England in order to obtain data on how they manage asbestos in their building. Overall there was a 25% response rate to this survey. Due to the low response rate DCC's Education team have now been tasked by the Department for Education to collate information from all schools in County Durham as part of an Asbestos Management Assurance Process.

If when taking part in the process you have any queries in relation to any of the questions concerning asbestos in your school, please do not hesitate to contact the health and safety team for further advice.

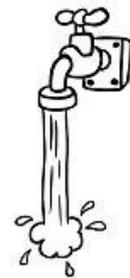


Legionella

The legionella training course is available on the extranet for any new premises staff such as Caretakers to complete. This course can be accessed by going to the 'useful links' section on the health and safety extranet page. Link to training: [Legionella](#)

The legionella team have created a monitoring form for premises staff to record any flushing of unused outlets undertaken on a weekly basis, i.e. outside taps, showers, accessible toilet etc. This form can also be used to record flushing of water outlets such as sinks, and pupils toilets that takes place over the summer holidays when the school is closed for significant period of time.

Link to monitoring form on extranet: [Document Library - Legionella](#)



Infection Control

Winter 2017/18 saw a number of reports in relation to infections / viruses in schools such as the winter vomiting bug.

The health and safety team have uploaded the most recent Public Health England guidance in relation to infection control in schools on the extranet page under biological hazards. This guidance includes recommended time periods a pupil should be absent from school for certain infectious conditions such as chicken pox, measles etc. Link to biological hazards on extranet page: [School HS Policies and Procedures Manual - Biological Hazards including Sharps](#)



Where an identified outbreak of a virus has occurred at a school an infection control clean is required to be undertaken. The cleaning support team have advised that where a full infection control clean is required Head Teachers / Business Managers should liaise with caretaker / cleaners asap to plan this. In order to carry out this type of clean effectively it should be undertaken when the school building is unoccupied by clubs, or staff working late etc.

Further infection control cleaning information and support is available via the the cleaning support team.

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Electrical Distribution Boards

During health and safety audits, the team have come across combustible items being stored in electrical cupboards, directly next to the electrical distribution board. Items found have included cardboard boxes from cleaning materials, paper towels, stationary or general teaching resources such as arts equipment and textiles. In the event of a fault with the electrical equipment these items could prove to be a good source of fuel for a fire. When considering where items are being stored, where possible try to avoid electrical cupboards, if they have to be stored in this area, ensure any combustible items are a minimum of 1 metre away from electrical distribution boards.



Fire Extinguishers

In 2017, Peterlee Fire Company took over the DCC annual maintenance contract for fire extinguisher equipment. As part of this contract Peterlee Fire Company should be contacting schools (who have this contract in place) directly to arrange an annual visit, however recent fire audits have identified a small number of schools where the maintenance visit is overdue. This appears to have been caused by a delay in premises information being forwarded. If any school finds themselves in a position where the fire extinguisher annual maintenance is overdue, they should contact Peterlee Fire company on 0191 586 6633, in order that this can be completed at the earliest opportunity.

Resilient Durham

DCC Civil Contingencies Unit offer a range of products and training packages to schools to help them deal with emergency situations. This can include scenarios such as security breaches, lock down procedures, dealing with loss of power, severe weather events, and helping develop continuity plans etc.

The current charges for provision including a full assessment of the school, advice, a plan and training for staff is £600 for primary schools and £1200 for secondary schools. Further information can be obtained by contacting the Civil Contingencies Unit on Tel: 03000 265402 or Email: ccuenquiries@durham.gov.uk.