December 2016

As this will be our final newsletter of the year, we would like to wish all of our schools and academies a happy, healthy and safe Christmas and New Year.

In this edition there is advice on:

- Christmas Decorations
- Salad Bars
- Watch Your Step
- Portable Goal Posts
- Infection Control Poster
- Slapped Cheek
- Cases of Interest
- Salad Bars
- Health & Safety Training Courses
- Health & Safety Training DVD

Christmas Decorations (All Schools)

With Christmas approaching, it will soon be time for the Christmas decoration to be put up around the school so here are some safety tips to consider.

Decorations

- Keep decorations away from fire or heats sources such as light fittings and heaters.
- Wax candles are not advisable, battery/LED candles with a flickering flame are a much safer option.
- If staff are working at height, make sure this has been risk assessed and staff work safely. Ladders or step ladders used should comply with BS EN 131.

Lights

- Modern LED fairy lights are the safest option as they will not become hot whilst lit and they are also more energy efficient.
- Ensure the lights have been Portable Appliance Tested (PAT).
- Check the condition of the wires to ensure they have not been damaged whilst being stored.
- Ensure lights are turned off at the end of the day.
- If extension leads are used, they must be fully unwound to prevent the lead overheating. Multi plug adaptors should not be overloaded with numerous appliances as this can cause the plug in the wall socket to overheat and possibly cause a fire.
The following link highlights the importance of not overloading AMP/Watts to multiple plug adaptors – Electrical Safety

**Salad Bars (All Schools)**

Salad Bars have become a common feature in school dining halls and they are a great way to encourage pupils to eat healthy. Sometimes though, as pupils are helping themselves to the food, there is a risk that some food items will be dropped. As this increases the risk of slips, a reminder may be needed to staff and pupils of the importance of clearing up spills immediately to prevent accidents occurring.

**Watch Your Step (All Schools)**

We are relaunching the ‘See It Sort It’ campaign with a new poster that can be displayed in the dining hall. Schools will be sent a copy with guidance to issue to managers and lunchbreak supervisors. The guidance can be used for new staff and also for annual refresher training for existing staff. If required, specific H&S training can be arranged through Integra H&S. Please contact 3224 for further details.

**Portable Goal Posts (All Schools)**

A recent accident at a local school resulted in a pupil breaking an arm after a portable goal post toppled and hit him. The goal post had not been anchored or secured to the ground as advised by Association for Physical Education (afPE).

All schools are therefore advised to check that goal posts are being used safely and that guidance from ‘Safe Practice in PE, School Sport and Physical Activity’ is being followed (page 194).
Infection control poster (All Schools)

South Gloucestershire Councils Public Health Team have produced a new infection control poster which provides at a glance advice on actions required to prevent the spread of infections in schools and childcare settings.

The information is be based on the guidance provided by Public Health England (PHE),

We have been advised that the poster is due to be posted out to schools this month.

Slapped Cheek (All Schools) - Guidance for pregnant staff

We have been advised of a number of outbreaks of slapped cheek in schools and pregnant members of staff need to be aware of the following advice which has been produced by the Councils Public Health Team.

Some infections, if they are contracted in pregnancy, can affect the health of the mother and baby. In very rare cases, the baby may suffer serious harm and this may result in permanent disability or even death. The NHS Choices website provides clear and up to date information on infection risks in pregnancy and practical measures that can be taken to reduce those risks: http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/pregnancy-infections.aspx

Although the greatest risk of exposure is within the community or household setting (i.e. outside of work), pregnant women in schools may be more vulnerable than other pregnant women to contracting infectious diseases because they are in contact with large numbers of children. The Health and Safety Executive has published detailed guidance for employers regarding their legal responsibilities to assess, prevent and control infection risks for new and expectant mothers. Guidance published by the National Union of Teachers applies this guidance more specifically to a school setting.

Public Heath England infection control guidelines for schools and other childcare settings provide detailed and evidence-based recommendations on this topic – key considerations are reproduced below:

- **Chickenpox** can affect the pregnancy if a woman has not already had the infection. Report exposure to midwife and GP at any stage of exposure. The GP and antenatal carer will arrange a blood test to check for immunity.
- **German measles** (rubella). If a pregnant woman comes into contact with german measles she should inform her GP and antenatal carer immediately to ensure investigation. The infection may affect the developing baby if the woman is not immune and is exposed in early pregnancy
- **Slapped cheek disease** (parvovirus B19) can occasionally affect an unborn child. If exposed early in pregnancy (before 20 weeks), inform whoever is giving antenatal care as this must be investigated promptly
- **Measles** during pregnancy can result in early delivery or even loss of the baby. If a pregnant woman is exposed she should immediately inform whoever is giving antenatal care to ensure investigation

In summary, if a pregnant member of staff develops a rash or is in direct contact with someone with a potentially infectious rash, this should be investigated urgently, according to PHE guidelines, by a doctor.
**Cases of interest (All Schools)**

**School fined for safety failings at summer camp**

A School in Canterbury, has been fined for safety failings at a summer activity camp. Canterbury Crown Court heard a seven year old boy was at a summer activity camp run by St Edmunds School. Whilst taking part in a scheduled swim he got into difficulties and struggled for over three minutes before becoming motionless in the water.

The lifeguards noticed he was in trouble and retrieved him. He regained consciousness after CPR but did develop pneumonitis as a result of the incident.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident, which occurred on 1 August 2014, found that the lifeguards were not effectively managed and monitored to ensure that they were constantly vigilant.

Two out of the three lifeguards did not hold a current, in date lifeguard qualification St Edmunds School Canterbury, of St Thomas Hill, Canterbury, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, and was fined £18,000 and ordered to pay costs of £9669.19.

For further information on managing health and safety in swimming pools visit: [http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg179.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg179.htm)

**Environmental Services firm fined over electrocution of worker**

A company providing environmental services has been prosecuted after a worker was killed during asbestos removal work at a Welsh High school.

Newport Magistrates Court heard how the 26-year-old father from Gwent had accessed a ceiling void at Cwmcarn High School on 19 July 2013 to create an enclosure to contain the asbestos during its removal. While he was cutting plastic sheeting he cut into a live electric cable and was electrocuted.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found that Caswell Environmental Services Ltd had not taken adequate steps to ensure that the electrical supply at the school was isolated before the work was undertaken.

Caswell Environmental Services Ltd of Lynton House, Tavistock Square, London were found guilty in their absence, to breaching Sections 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974. In sentencing the Judge considered the fact that the company was now in liquidation and delivered a total nominal fine of £10,000 with £1,000 in costs.
Health And Safety Training (all schools)

Under health and safety law, employers must ensure that any individual performing a task on their behalf has the competence to do so without putting the health and safety of themselves or others at significant risk. One way of assisting with this is by training. If any of your staff require training or refresher training on the topics listed below, please book a place by visiting CPD on-line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Event</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H&amp;S Skills for School Business Managers - FULL</td>
<td>8th December 2016 – All Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asbestos Awareness Course</td>
<td>11th January 2017 – AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H&amp;S Awareness Training for School Caretakers</td>
<td>19th January 2017 – All Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Risk Assessment Training</td>
<td>24th January 2017 - AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legionella Awareness Course</td>
<td>21st February 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Visits Co-ordinator refresher training - (NEW)</td>
<td>22nd February 2017 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administering Medication</td>
<td>9th March 2017 - AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Safety Awareness for School Senior Leaders</td>
<td>9th May 2017 - AM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First Aid – Various courses and dates. See [CPD on-line](#) for further details.

Health & Safety DVD Library (all schools)

Subscribing schools are able to borrow the DVDs for use on inset days and staff training. The DVDs are 10 – 20 minutes long and can be requested via the Schools Health and Safety mailbox. They are available to loan for a defined period and a waiting list is kept for popular DVDs. The DVDs available are:

- Working at Height
- Asbestos
- COSHH (Hazardous Substances)
- Health and Safety in the Office
- Manual Handling (new edition)
- Legionella