

ROSPA

*The Royal Society for the
Prevention of Accidents*

MANAGING SAFETY IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Managing Safety In Schools & Colleges

	Foreword	03
	Introduction	04
	Why is Health and Safety in Schools Important?	05
	School health and safety ethics	05
	Legal responsibilities	05
	Responsibility in schools and colleges	06
	Risk assessments	07
	Safety and risk and its links to Ofsted framework	07
	School effectiveness	08
	Accidental Injury Rates in Schools	10
	Safety Management in Schools	12
	Teaching Safely	12
	Teaching Safety	13
	RoSPA Services and Resources for Schools and Colleges	14
	Teaching Safely	15
	Health & Safety Audits	15
	Health & Safety Risk Assessments	15
	Leisure and Water Safety	15
	Managing Health, Safety and Welfare	15
	Policy Development	15
	Ofsted Preparation	15
	Teaching Safety	16
	Safety and Risk Education	16
	Curriculum Development	16
	Pupil and Student Engagement	16
	Training for Schools and Colleges	16
	Definitions	18

Dear Colleague

Managing Safety In Schools & Colleges

Schools are changing. Responsibilities for safety and health management are being refocused. Safety is important and needs to be approached creatively and should not be seen as simply another legal burden or bureaucratic chore. A planned approach to managing risk should be seen as an enabler, not just to prevent accidents and work related health problems to both staff and pupils but to build a culture of sensible risk management, linked to a curriculum where teaching young people can develop their capability to assess and manage risk.

Risk is part of life but accidents do not need to be, so while schools need to make sure staff, pupils and visitors are safe, they also need to make sure that, as the citizens of tomorrow, pupils are helped to become risk aware without becoming unnecessarily risk averse. In this sense 'teaching safely' and 'teaching safety' need to go hand in hand.

As Britain's most established safety charity whose mission is 'to save lives and reduce injuries', RoSPA has had a close involvement in health and safety in schools over many years, through our National Safety and Risk Education Committee. We are a major provider of services that help schools to teach safety topics to children and young people to develop the skills they need to manage their day to day safety and health risks.

This short guide is intended to make schools and colleges aware of their responsibilities and take stock of where they are now in tackling the safety challenges of their organisation.

New opportunities are opening up and old problems need new solutions. RoSPA has a plethora of advice and services to help. Please give us your feedback so we can improve our ability to move this important agenda forward or ring our free helpline if you need some initial advice and assistance.

Kind regards



Tom Mullarkey, MBE
Chief Executive



Introduction

Safety plays an important role in schools and colleges. Ensuring pupil and student safety has been part of the ethical framework for decades. Schools also have legal responsibilities for safety and it is an integral part of the Ofsted framework.

Like other public services, schools and colleges are adapting to a period of considerable change as well as continuing to meet existing challenges. There are new structures and accountabilities, additional parental/public/political concern, alongside worries about excessive risk aversion. There is a new understanding of the benefits of risk-taking as part of young people's development. Safety education and integrating 'risk' within the curriculum is key to this.

Meanwhile, schools have a primary duty to safeguard the staff and young people in their care while at the same time creating the 'risk aware, but not risk adverse' citizens of tomorrow.

In the midst of change, RoSPA has produced this brief guide to help schools and colleges understand the importance of managing health and safety in a proportional and planned way. Our approach is that we should endeavour to make schools as safe as necessary, not as safe as possible.

This guide covers the legal context for health and safety management in schools and suggests a strategic approach which can be used by any educational organisation. It also suggests a whole school approach to 'teaching safely' – ensuring that facilities and activities are suitably safe and 'teaching safety' – preparing children for adult life by teaching them to understand and manage risk.

It is intended as an overview. RoSPA has more detailed guidance on its School & Colleges website www.rospace.com/schoolandcollegesafety/, including specific information on school visits. We also have a range of services that we offer to schools and colleges. You may wish to contact our helpline for some initial help and advice on (0121) 248 2235 or educationhelp@rospace.com.



School health and safety ethics

A systematic approach to managing safety and health risks is important. Ethically, it is the right thing to do. Part of a school's overall values is to keep staff and visitors safe and help pupils to become the 'risk aware, but not risk averse' citizens of tomorrow.

Operationally it helps avoid costly accidents, disruption losses and damage to the school's morale and reputation. And, of course, it enables the school to comply with their duties under health and safety law.

Legal responsibilities

The Health and Safety at Work Act of 1974 imposes a duty on all employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of employees and others (such as school visitors and pupils):

'so far as is reasonably practicable'.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations of 1999, which sit under the Act set out a series of further duties which indicate the kinds of things employers should do to meet their overall duty of care. These include having the right policy organisation and arrangements in place, undertaking suitable and sufficient risk assessment and having access to competent advice and of training staff.

Alongside the Management Regulations are a series of further regulations, most of which deal either with managing risks from broad classes of hazards like work equipment, chemicals, electricity and noise or which deal with things like workplace and welfare requirements or personal protective equipment.

Taking reasonable steps to adhere to the law will enable a school or college to defend itself against a claim for damages should an accident occur.

The legal framework is underpinned by the principle of proportionality – taking action that is proportionate to the level of risk ('so far as is reasonably practicable'). So to help schools and colleges work out what they need to do in specific circumstances, regulatory framework is supported by a further series of Approved Codes of Practice (having a status similar to the Highway Code) which give authoritative information on minimum standards of compliance. This includes guidance specific to the education sector.



Key Points

- Rarely can legal compliance be achieved by a series of one-off actions (for example, to tackle specific hazards). It requires a sustained, systematic and organised approach, revisiting risk assessments, checking, acting on new information.
- Although responsibility for health and safety cannot be outsourced or delegated, schools do not have to operate on their own. External support, delivered by expert advisors can help to overcome concerns and import good practice.
- To be successful, a school or college needs to be 'risk led' not 'law led'. They need to focus on their most significant risks, prioritising their efforts and tailoring their health and safety measures accordingly, using the law and guidance as a framework to help achieve consistent and effective control of risks.

Why is Health and Safety in Schools Important?

Legal responsibilities

Key regulations include:

■ The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

These require that schools make suitable and sufficient assessment of the risk to health and safety of staff, pupils and others. If pupils will be involved in an activity where there is an element of risk you will need to show that you have taken 'all reasonably practicable precautions.'

■ The Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999

This requires employers to undertake risk assessments and put measures in place to control the significant risks.

■ The Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007

This states that an offence of corporate manslaughter is committed if the way in which an organisation's activity was managed or organised caused or contributed to the death of a person to whom the organisation owed a duty of care and this amounted to a gross breach of that duty.

■ The Young Person's Safety Act (1995)

This gave rise to the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 and requires certain providers of facilities for adventure activities to be licensed.

Responsibility in schools and colleges

Overall the responsibility for health and safety lies with the 'employer'. The HSE gives the following guidance about who is the employer in different kinds of schools including those managed by local authorities:

In England the LA is the employer in:

- community schools
- community special schools
- voluntary controlled schools
- maintained nursery schools and
- pupil referral units.

In England the governing body is the employer in:

- foundation schools
- foundation special schools
- voluntary aided schools.

In Scotland:

Local authorities have responsibility for the management of devolved budgets and determine to what extent budgets are further devolved to schools. This includes responsibility for health and safety.

In independent schools the proprietor is the employer:

Overall accountability lies with the school employer.

In independent academies:

For independent academies the employer is the school and responsibility lies with the head teacher and governors.

In voluntary controlled schools:

The employer in voluntary controlled schools is the local authority and therefore has overall responsibility for health and safety compliance. Responsibility cannot be devolved. The LA must provide oversight and monitoring.

Risk assessments

Schools and colleges as employers have a legal duty to carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments in accordance with Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 for their buildings and activities including, for example, school visits. The risk assessment should detail any risks associated with a facility or activity and what precautions must be taken to minimise any risk. The HSE guide 'Five steps to Risk Assessment' is a useful starting point but there are other methods that work well, particularly for more complex risks and circumstances.

Safety and risk and its links to Ofsted framework

Ofsted released new guidance in September 2012 'The Framework for School Inspection.'
The guidance outlines key changes including:

- **Inspectors focus sharply on those aspects of schools' work that have the greatest impact on raising achievement**
- **Inspectors engage headteachers, school staff and governors. The views of parents, pupils and staff provide important evidence for the inspection**
- **Inspectors are required to report on the quality of education provided in the school and must, in particular, cover:**
 - the achievement of pupils at the school;
 - the quality of teaching in the school;
 - the behaviour and safety of pupils at the school; and
 - the quality of leadership in, and management of, the school.
- **Under this framework:**
 - Schools cannot be judged as 'outstanding' for overall effectiveness unless they have 'outstanding' teaching
 - An acceptable standard of education is defined as a 'good' standard of education
 - A school that is not yet 'good', but that is not judged 'inadequate', is a school that 'requires improvement.'

Both 'teaching safety' and 'teaching safely' are integral parts of the new framework. In the section 'Behaviour and safety of pupils at the school' inspectors assess:

'whether pupils feel safe and their ability to assess and manage risk appropriately and to keep themselves safe.'

This requires schools to have safety education as part of the curriculum and to get a good or outstanding scores, schools must be able to demonstrate learning outcomes.

In the section 'Quality of leadership in, and management of, the school' inspectors assess whether leaders and managers:

'take steps to promote the safety of all pupils and ensure that they are safe in school.'

This will apply to senior teaching staff, non-teaching staff such as business managers and Governors.



Why is Health and Safety in Schools Important?

School effectiveness

Aiming for high standards of health and safety is the right thing to do and is not just about legal compliance. Achieving and proving excellence in the way health and safety risks are managed have massive benefits for any educational institution. A strong health and safety culture, demonstrated, for example, by being a RoSPA Occupational Health & Safety Award winner, pays for itself many times over in preventing injuries and lost staff time, for example by averting:

- serious preventable injuries;
- work related illnesses like stress and back pain;
- lost workdays due to work-related illness and workplace injury; and
- the cost and disruption of damage-only accidents.

Uninsured losses due to accidents invariably outweigh any accident costs recovered through of insurance. They can include:

- lost staff time;
- sick pay;
- damage or loss of equipment and materials;
- repairs to buildings and facilities;
- additional staff costs, overtime working and temporary cover;
- teaching delays;
- investigation time;
- fines;
- legal costs.

Accident and ill-health costs are like an iceberg: costs that are recoverable are visible but those that are unrecoverable are hidden below the waterline and are many times greater. And when revenue is flat or declining, saving money by avoiding accidents and ill health related absence makes good sense.

Fig 1. The hidden costs of accidents



Because assuring health and safety goes to the heart of the way a school or college is run, an ambitious approach to reducing accidents and safeguarding health speaks volumes about its overall ethos and professionalism. A responsible attitude to safety will not only act as a motivator internally amongst staff and students - who will be reassured that their well-being is of paramount interest – it will also serve to attract new talent. And it also provides a very practical platform for teaching young people how to stay safe by becoming the risk aware - but not risk averse – citizens of tomorrow.

These are all issues that are within the scope of Ofsted inspection as well as scrutiny by other partners such as insurers, professional bodies, and of course parents.

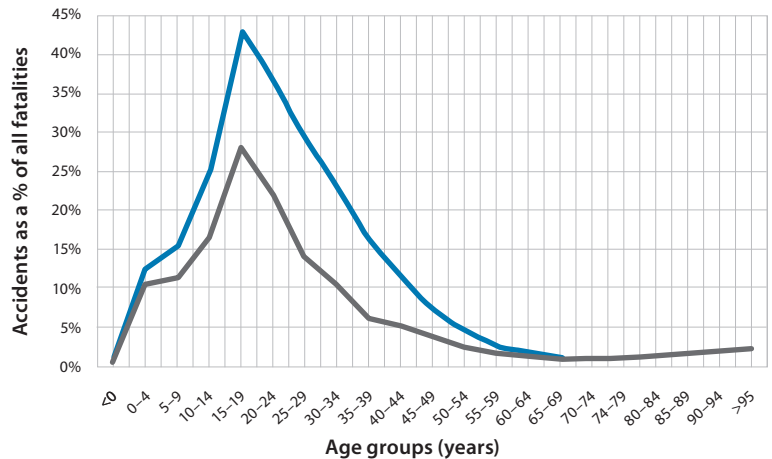


Accidental Injury Rates in Schools

Accidental injury rates in England and Wales amongst young people are comparatively low but still significant. Young people are most at risk from the age of 10 years up to 24 years. For much of this period they are at school or college as illustrated to the right:

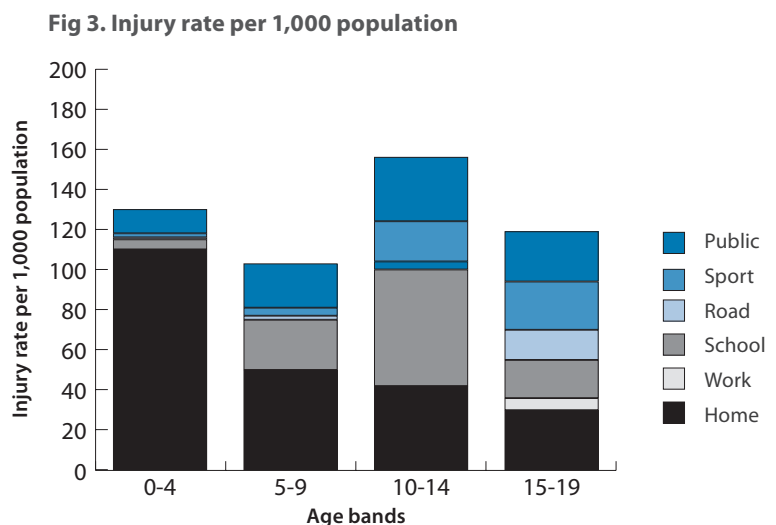
— Female
— Male

Fig 2. Accidents as a % of all fatalities by age group, 5 year average (ONS data England & Wales 2005–2009)



Source: Office of National Statistics England and Wales

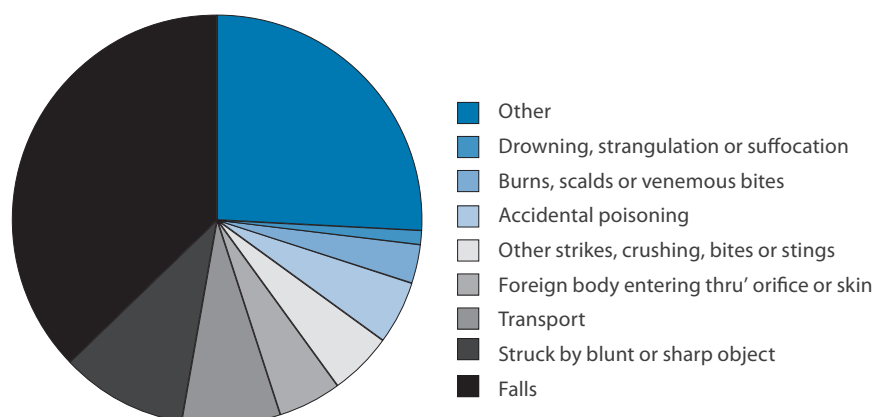
Up until the age of 10, young people are at most risk of injury at home. However, 10-14 year olds are at most risk of injury at school. This risk substantially reduces after the age of 14 years as shown in the chart to the right:



Source: All Wales Injury Surveillance System (AWISS) 2009

The most significant type of injury up to the age of 14 years is falls, as illustrated to the right:

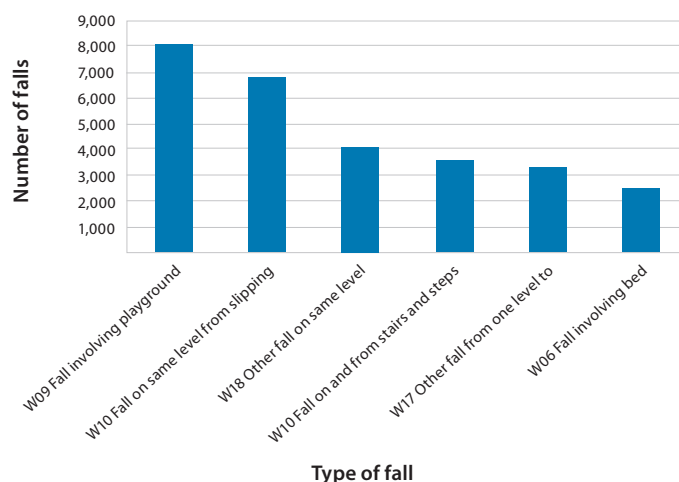
Fig 4. Hospital admissions in England for 0–14 year olds in 2010/11 (HES)



Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) 2010/2011

The chart to the right shows that the most significant number of falls for those aged under 14 years occur at school.

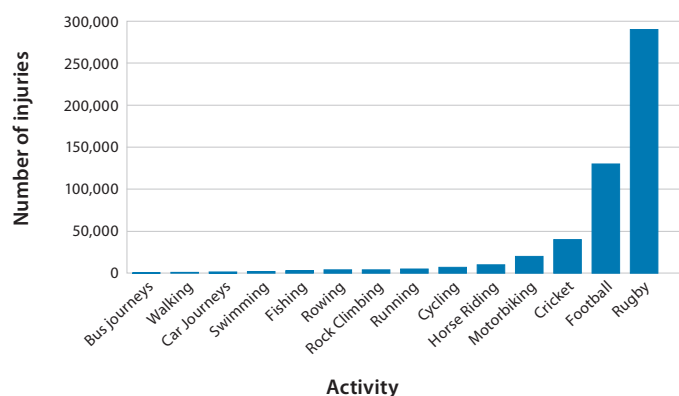
Fig 5. Top 6 falls for 0–14 year olds, 2009, excl unspecified: 69% of 40,979 total



Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) 2009

This chart illustrates the injury rates of particular sport and leisure activities many of which are run in schools and colleges.

Fig 6. Leisure injuries per 100 million hours of taking part

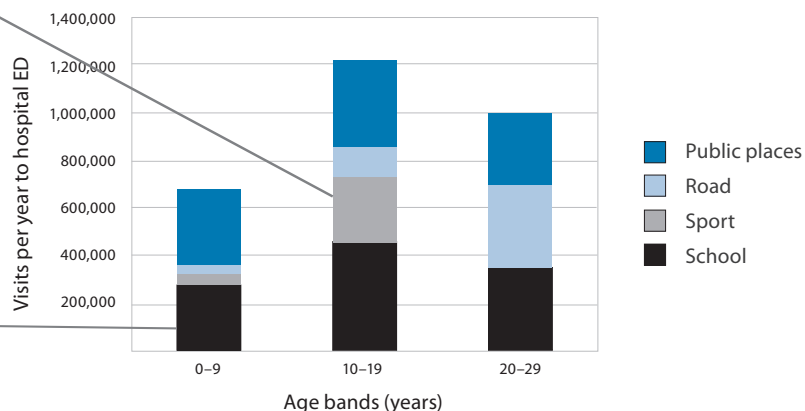


Source: VECG 2009

11% (723,840) of 10-19 year olds visit ED as a result of an injury sustained while at school &/or in sport and a further 8% on the road or in public places (parks, shopping centres etc.)

5% (317,022) of under 9 year olds visit ED as a result of an injury sustained while at school &/or in sport and a further 6% on the road or in public places (parks, shopping centres etc.)

Fig 7. Visits to hospital Emergency Departments (estimates for England & Wales, 2010)



Source: RoSPA/AWISS & HES 2009

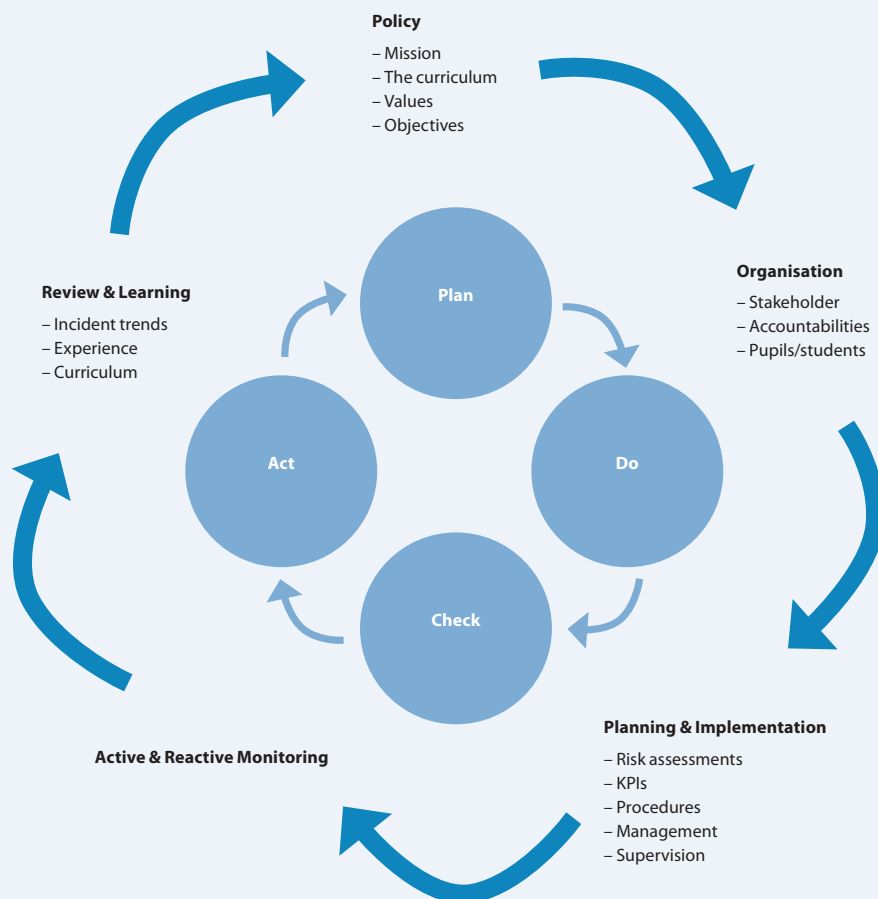
Teaching safely

Safety should be a continuous planned process, an integral part of the management of any school or college.

The organisation should have clear policies, an understanding of the main stakeholders involved with health safety, clear plans and monitoring mechanisms. It is also crucial that information is used to review and learn from and so as to improve future arrangements as part of 'schools' approach to continuous improvement.

The diagram below illustrates the health and safety management process:

Fig 8. School health and safety management process



Source: RoSPA 2012

The starting point for effective health and safety management is a clear policy setting out the objectives of the school or college and identifying, areas for improvement.

This policy should also be informed by and understood by the key stakeholders in the school or college including pupils and students.

From this, a clear plan for improvement and action can be developed with associated key performance indicators. A system of monitoring the plan is needed, which is directly informed by risk assessments, to ensure the school or college is on track.

Crucially time and space need to be made to review the effectiveness of health and safety plans and to learn from experience. Lessons learned need to be fed into the policy and future improvement plans.

Teaching safety

Fig 9. How young people learn about risk



Source: RoSPA 2012

Schools and colleges play a crucial role in preparing children and young people to be able to recognise and manage risk. For this reason RoSPA has actively campaigned for 'risk' education to be part of the statutory curriculum in science, PE, design and technology and art. We fully support the inclusion of risk education as a core element of PSHE education and to promote the active involvement of young people in risk assessment and risk management, according to their developmental capacity, in any activity on or off site in which they are involved for the first time. In this way pupils and staff can maximise the benefits of sensible risk taking while continuing to keep themselves as safe as necessary, not as safe as possible.

Working with key stakeholders including the PSHE association RoSPA has developed 10 principles for effective safety education:

1. Encourage the adoption of, or reinforce, a whole school approach, within the wider community

2. Use active approaches to teaching and learning (including interactive and experiential learning)

3. Involve young people in real decisions to help them stay safe such as risk assessments for school visits

4. Assess children and young people's learning needs

5. Teach safety as part of a comprehensive personal social and health curriculum

6. Use realistic and relevant settings and resources

7. Work in partnership

8. Address known risk and protective factors.
An understanding of risk and protective factors can help those designing and delivering safety education resources to focus on wider aspects of injury prevention and personal safety

9. Address psychosocial aspects of safety e.g. confidence, resilience, self esteem, self sufficiency.
Psychosocial risk and protective factors are individual characteristics that may predispose children to injury, or to being a victim of bullying, violence or abuse

10. Adopt positive approaches which model and reward safe behaviour, within a safe, supportive environment

RoSPA Services and Resources for Schools and Colleges

RoSPA has been at the forefront of health and safety for nearly a century and has developed an extensive knowledge base to help schools and colleges 'teach safely' – ensuring a safe environment for pupils and students, and, to 'teach safety' – preparing pupils and students to be able to recognise and manage risk in their lives.

Fig 10. RoSPA health and safety services for schools and colleges



- ① Transport and car parking safety
- ② Minibus driver safety, school visits safety
- ③ Overall facilities safety and risk assessment
- ④ Workplace safety for staff: slips and trips, manual handling, working at heights, lone working
- ⑤ Legal: accident investigation, expert witness
- ⑥ Teaching safely training for teachers
- ⑦ Specialist playground safety
- ⑧ H&S training for school management staff and governors
- ⑨ Specialist sports and leisure facilities safety

RoSPA Safety Education Membership

RoSPA Members not only support accident prevention your school will benefit in many other ways too:

- Access to free advice and information from our Schools and Colleges Helpline and Infocentre
- Latest news and views in our termly Safety Education journal
- Use of the RoSPA Members' logo to demonstrate your commitment to safety
- Access an exclusive web zone and e-bulletin
- Unique discounts and big savings

RoSPA Academies Safety Award

This specialist award is part of RoSPA's Annual Occupational Health & Safety Awards.

With establishments having moved or in the process of moving from LEA control, maintenance of a healthy and safe environment for students and staff will now be of great importance to governing bodies and even more so to the principals and senior management teams responsible for day-to-day running.

This award will recognise the best performance by an entrant from this rapidly expanding part of the education sector.

Teaching safely

Health and Safety audits

We will work with you to devise a solution to suit your needs:

- Quality Safety Audit - RoSPA's flagship quantitative audit. It is uniquely flexible and tailored to meet the needs of your organisation. It follows the Health and Safety Executive's HSG65 guidelines, the over-arching guide on the essential philosophy of good health and safety management.
- 'Triple A' Audit – designed for schools and colleges that require an assessment of the effectiveness of their health and safety management arrangements. This is a modular audit enabling you to start at your chosen level and select particular aspects of your health and safety system.
- Compliance Audit - to determine whether your organisation complies with the Occupational Health and Safety Management System 18001 standard. Should there be any shortfalls, we advise you on how best to remedy them.
- Health and Safety Review - an ideal first audit for any organisation, or part of an ongoing audit cycle.
- Independent In-House Audit - your own audit system conducted and verified by an independent RoSPA consultant.

Health & Safety Risk Assessments

We can help you meet to your legal duty to carry out 'suitable and sufficient' health and safety risk assessments. Whether you need assistance with the risk assessment process, spotting hazards, or want an on-site transport or noise assessment, we can help.

Leisure and Water Safety

If your organisation has sport and leisure facilities or areas of open water we have experts who can help you find solutions to managing them safely. We recognise these can be high risk areas and focus on safety solutions that ensure they also remain accessible as places for students and the community to enjoy or benefit from physical activity.

Managing Health, Safety and Welfare

Whether you need assistance writing health and safety policies, or would like your own training courses professionally approved we can help. RoSPA's consultancy packages can provide a number of different health and safety services and advice including:

- Health and safety policy/procedure review
- Getting the basics right - this is an ideal starting point
- Retained consultant - help you need, when you need it
- Health and Safety tender specification assistance
- Safety training needs analysis
- Accident investigation and expert witness - determine immediate and underlying factors
- Stress and violence in the workplace
- Contractors' safety
- Student work placements.

Policy Development

RoSPA can help you update and develop your health and safety policies including your facilities, activities, school transport and external school visits.

Ofsted Preparation

RoSPA assists schools and colleges with preparation and background work for Ofsted inspections. This is designed to ensure that schools are able to provide good quality information on their health and safety arrangements for Ofsted inspectors and to help secure a positive inspection outcome.



All our consultants are members of the Occupational Safety and Health Consultants Register

Teaching safety

Safety and Risk Education

We employ one of the country's leading experts in this field. We can help either by training your colleagues on how to effectively teach safety to students or deliver safety and risk training directly to students. We can also assist you to embed safety and risk education into the day to day running of your school or college.

Curriculum Development

Our safety education experts can assist you with integrating safety education into the curriculum.

Pupil and student engagement

RoSPA provides help and advice for schools and colleges on pupil and student involvement. This can include, for example, getting pupils and students to carry out their own risk assessments for activities, science projects or external visits.

Training for schools and colleges

RoSPA offers a comprehensive training portfolio for schools and colleges. The training is mostly delivered on site, although from time to time we offer open courses at different geographical locations.

RoSPA's training portfolio includes:

- **Installing Effective Safety Education** – a course for teachers and those involved with safety education – 1 day.
- **Minibus Driver Training** – ensure driver safety with our training course and RoSPA National Minibus Test – 1 day.
- **IOSH Work Placement Assessors Course Risk Assessment** – designed to enable those organising work placements to have the knowledge to be able to assess a workplace in terms of health and safety to determine its suitability as a work experience placement.
- **Introduction to Health and Safety** – aimed at school business managers and governors who have responsibility for health and safety – ½ or 1 day.
- **Risk Management and Legal Responsibilities for Governors and Senior Managers**
- **Introduction to Risk Assessment** – aimed at business managers or teachers with health and safety responsibilities – 1 day.
- **Working at Heights** – aimed at those using theatre equipment.
- **Leisure Facilities Safety** – including swimming pools and playgrounds – 1 day.
- **Running a School Trip Safely** – 1 day.
- **Teaching Safety** – how to embed safety education in your school or college.
- **COSHH/ REACH/DSEAR for Schools** – 1 day.
- **Asbestos and Legionella Awareness** – ½ day each or 1 day open courses.
- **NEBOSH National General Certificate for Schools** – aimed at school business managers, caretakers maintenance managers etc. – 10 days.
- **IOSH Working Safely** – basic training for teachers and facility staff – 1 day.
- **Stress Awareness and Management for Teaching Staff** – ½ day.
- **Stress Management for Schools and Academy Management** – 1 day.

For further information or to get some initial help or advice contact our Schools and Colleges Helpline on 0121 248 2235 or educationenquiries@rospa.com



Definitions

- AALA Adventure Activity Licensing Authority
- AfPE Association for Physical Education
- CLOC Council of Learning Outside the Classroom
- COSHH Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
- DfE Department for Education
- DSEAR Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmosphere Regulations
- DSI Department for Skills and Innovation
- HSE Health and Safety Executive
- HSWA Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- ISA Independent Safeguarding Authority
- LA Local Authority
- LEA Local Education Authority
- NGB National Governing Body (sports)
- NUT National Union of Teachers
- OEAP Outdoor Education Advisors Panel
- Ofsted The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
- OSHCR Occupational Safety and Health Consultants Register
- PSHE Personal Social Health and Economic Education
- REACH Registration Evaluation Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals
- RoSPA The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

RoSPA's Education and Leisure Team can be contacted using the details below:

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

RoSPA House
28 Calthorpe Road
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 1RP

Tel: 0121 248 2235
Fax: 0121 248 2001
Email: educationhelp@rospa.com
Twitter: www.twitter.com/rospa
Facebook: www.facebook.com/rospa
Blog: <http://safetygonessane.wordpress.com/>
YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/rospatube

Visit: www.rospa.com/schoolandcollegesafety/

November 2012



RoSPA Headquarters:

28 Calthorpe Road, Edgbaston,
Birmingham B15 1RP

Telephone: +44 (0)121 248 2000

Fax: +44 (0)121 248 2001

Registered Charity No. 207823

VAT Registration No. 655 131649

RoSPA Scotland:

Livingstone House,
43 Discovery Terrace,
Heriot-Watt University Research Park,
Edinburgh EH14 4AP

Telephone: 0131 449 9378

Fax: 0131 449 9380

RoSPA Wales:

2nd Floor,
2 Cwrt-y-Parc,
Parc Ty Glas,
Cardiff Business Park,
Llanishen,
Cardiff CF14 5GH

Telephone: 02920 761306

RoSPA Northern Ireland:

Nella House, Dargan Crescent,
Belfast BT3 9JP

Telephone: 028 9050 1160

Fax: 028 9050 1164

www.rospace.com

