

H&S INSPECTIONS

# GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS



## LEGISLATION

* Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

## WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

* Nominate appropriate staff members to undertake inspections
* Ensure staff members are competent to undertake inspections
* Plan and develop a regular programme of inspections
* Undertake inspections using a formal checklist
* Record inspections
* Ensure that any remedial action is undertaken by a named individual to a set timescale

## INTRODUCTION

An inspection is a comprehensive formal examination of all or part of a workplace in order to identify deficiencies that create unacceptable risks to health and safety. This will include the identification of unsafe physical conditions and working practices.

## INSPECTION RULES

* Health and safety inspections should be undertaken by persons who are competent to identify the relevant hazards and risks and who can assess the conditions found.
* It is important that inspections involve staff as well as management, as staff will often be aware of the day-to-day hazards that may be present.
* Involving staff and management will also give a clear indication as to the commitment of all to health and safety.
* It is recommended that an inspection be undertaken at least once a term. It is also advisable to undertake an inspection if any major changes take place, for example, if any refurbishment work has taken place.

## INSPECTION CHECKLIST

* Ensure that you have access to all relevant areas
* Remember to look up, below, behind and inside
* Never become predictable, inspect in different ways
* Try to remain objective about the premises
* Talk to those working in the premises

A general checklist is given below. Not all of the questions will be relevant to all workplaces, so those that are not should be ignored. Where necessary the checklist can be developed for each particular workplace.

## INSPECTION REPORT FORM

Workplace Inspected: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date of Inspection: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Inspected by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time of Inspection: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

| **Place where hazard or issue found** | **Description of hazard or issue** | **Action to be taken** | **By whom and when** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Blank cell | Blank cell | Blank cell | Blank cell |
| Blank cell | Blank cell | Blank cell | Blank cell |
| Blank cell | Blank cell | Blank cell | Blank cell |
| Blank cell | Blank cell | Blank cell | Blank cell |
| Blank cell | Blank cell | Blank cell | Blank cell |

**Signature of Headteacher:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Signature of Governor:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## CIRCULATION AND GENERAL AREAS

### Floors:

* Is there evidence of cracks/deterioration/wear?
* Are there missing or loose floor tiles?
* Are surfaces uneven?
* Is carpeting insecure or lifting (especially at edges)?
* Is there excessive slipperiness (eg due to wear or over polishing)?
* Is there evidence of chemical damage?
* Is there rubbish on the floor?
* Are tripping hazards present?
* Are there obstructions of any kind present?

### Ceilings

* Ceilings should be clean and in good decorative order especially in areas where food is handled
* There should be no damp penetration and mould growth especially from leaking roofs (especially around light fittings)
* Loft hatches should be in position to prevent the spread of fire to roof spaces
* Upward opening hinged loft latches should have a catch to prevent falling back
* Check for cracks and holes
* There should be no loose ceiling tiles or crumbling plaster

### Walls

* Are they in good decorative order?
* Check for cracks/holes in plaster
* Check for damp penetration/mould growth
* Check for insecure fixtures – blackboards, whiteboards, mirrors, shelves

### Passageways/Aisles:

* Should be of sufficient width, unobstructed, adequately lit
* Should not have any matting, carpets which constitute a trip hazard
* Should have displays no more than 3m long with gaps of 1m between displays

### Exits and Doors:

* Check that door closers are present where appropriate
* Check that door closers are securely fixed to door and frame
* Check that door closers are functioning effectively
* Doors on main pedestrian routes or in other vulnerable places should be fitted with vision panels
* Doors vulnerable to slamming in the wind should be fitted with a closer
* Safe door stops are provided to doors which need to be held open
* Sliding doors or gates should be fitted with a device to prevent them leaving their tracks
* Doors which swing both ways should have suitable vision panels (consider any person in a wheelchair)
* Check powered doors/gates have mechanisms to prevent trapping injuries and are capable of manual operation in an emergency
* There are no door stops which present tripping hazards
* Fire escape doors are fitted with push bars or push pads and can be readily opened in an emergency
* Intumescent strips on fire doors are in a sound condition

### Stairs:

* Should be of adequate width, in good repair, free from dust/spills, be as even as possible and be non-slip
* Should have handrails provided in good condition
* Should be adequately lit
* Should be free from displays with ‘flapping paper’

### Lighting:

* Bulbs and luminaires should all be functioning efficiently ie no flickering
* Check that diffusers are securely fitted and clean
* Check starter motor malfunctions - or excessive noise
* Check exposed or damaged wiring
* Check switches which do not work or show evidence of wear or sparking
* Check cracked or broken switches
* Check switches are adequately labelled and suitably located.
* Check for switches sited in inappropriate locations which are difficult to reach or require walking across the room in the dark to reach them

### Windows:

* Ground floor windows should not open more than 100 mm over footpaths adjacent to the building
* Check for broken or cracked glazing
* Check low level glazing is safety glazing – refer to school surveyor if necessary
* Can windows be opened easily without the need for undue force?
* Are windows clean and capable of being cleaned safely?
* Are hinges, cords or fastenings in a safe condition?
* Any windows vulnerable to forced entry should be secured
* Are curtains and blinds in good condition and functioning properly?
* Have windows at first floor level been fitted with window restrictors which prevent people falling out of them?

## GENERAL PURPOSE CLASSROOMS

### Furniture and Fittings:

* Should be located away from doors and allow free access around the room.
* Cabinets, cupboards, shelves should be stable and fixed where required
* Shelf mountings should be secure and safe condition
* Should be free from loose, worn or broken parts
* Steps provided for high shelf units

### Storage and Housekeeping:

* Items should be stored safely (not too high, no overloading of shelves, cupboards, not on top of cupboards/above head height)
* Floor space should be clear of obstructions
* Furniture, furnishing, equipment and facilities to be clean
* Filing cabinets drawers left open

### Electrical Equipment:

* Appliances, plugs and leads should be in good condition
* Appliances should be ‘PAT’ tested
* Sockets should be in good condition, adequate in number (no overloading), appropriate positions
* Sockets away from sinks and hotplates
* Extension leads should be kept to a minimum/not run across traffic routes/not ‘daisy chained’/not coiled

### Windows:

* Should open easily and safely (where permitted)
* Fastening should be in good repair and clean
* Glass should be free from cracks
* Fitted with blinds/curtains where necessary

### Temperature and Ventilation

* Is heating adequate?
* Do heating controls work properly (taps, switches, thermostats)?
* Are thermostats operational and reasonably accurate?
* Are there any very hot surfaces exposed which could cause burns especially to young children?
* Are hot pipes / heaters adequately guarded/lagged?
* Are warning signs in place, where necessary, warning of hot surfaces?
* Are control valve tops missing exposing tap spindles?
* Is mechanical ventilation working effectively?
* Are there sufficient openable windows to provide adequate ventilation?
* Check areas are not excessively stuffy or hot in sunny weather
* Is there sufficient general ventilation in work spaces (especially if heating by oil or gas or if photocopiers or other office machines are present)?

## SPECIFIC ROOMS (AS ABOVE PLUS THE FOLLOWING)

### Science Laboratories:

* Hazardous materials stored in suitable containers and correctly labelled
* Workbenches kept clear and tidy
* Safety goggles/other protective equipment provided, used and maintained in good condition
* Layout allows safe access, egress and circulation
* Safety rules prominently displayed
* First aid box available
* Asbestos mats replaced
* Local exhaust ventilation/fumes cupboards operating correctly and in good order
* Emergency shut-off/isolating devices easily identified and good working order

### CDT Workshops:

* Hazardous materials clearly labeled and safely stored
* Safety goggles, ear protectors and other protective equipment provided, used and maintained
* Machines adequately guarded and equipped with cut-out devices
* Adequate provision for dust extractors/dust masks/dust clean-up
* Tools safely stored when not in use
* Safety signs and rules prominently displayed
* Layout allows safe access, egress and circulation
* First aid box available

### Food Technology Rooms:

* Hazardous materials clearly labeled and safely stored
* Adequate safety/hygiene clothing provided
* Appliances correctly installed and maintained
* Floors clean and dry
* Washing facilities provided, clean and in good order
* Layout allows safe access, egress and circulation
* Hygiene and safety rules adequately displayed
* First aid box available
* Gas shut-off devices available

### Art Rooms:

* Hazardous materials clearly labeled and safely stored
* Kiln-safety cut-out and lock
* Adequate provision for dust extractors/paint vapour extractors
* Adequate protective clothing provided
* Layout allows safe access, egress and circulation
* First aid box available

### Computer Rooms:

* Layout suitable for voice projection, noise, heat, overcrowding and screen glare
* Cables secured, covered and not trailing
* Chairs suitable, desks suitable

### Gymnasia:

* Equipment secure, in working order and good repair
* Wooden equipment free from splinters
* Equipment stored safely

### Changing facilities

* Are all taps working efficiently?
* Are all shower nozzles clean and functioning efficiently?
* Are all wall tiles in a sound condition?
* Are shower floors non slip?
* Are water temperatures safe?
* Are clothes hooks in safe condition?
* Are shoe lockers in safe condition?
* Is the seating sound and appropriately secured?

### School Office/Admin Areas:

* Workstations adequate/meeting legal requirements
* Equipment such as guillotines adequately guarded

### Staff Room:

* Electrical items brought in by staff checked for safety
* Adequate seating, clean with adequate ventilation
* Non-smoking provided
* Clean hygienic facilities for making hot drinks
* Suitable facilities for new/expectant mothers

### Kitchens:

* Adequate safety/hygiene clothing provided
* Appliances correctly installed and maintained
* Washing facilities provided, clean and in good order
* Layout allows safe access, egress and circulation
* Floors clean and dry
* Hygiene and safety rules adequately displayed
* First aid box available
* Gas shut-off devices available

### Toilets:

* Adequately ventilated
* Adequately lighted
* Adequately maintained
* Adequately cleaned,
* Free of unsanitary odours
* That cisterns flush readily
* Cistern chains have handles and can be reached by pupils
* That there are no blocked WCs
* That there are no cracked or damaged WCs
* There are no damaged/cracked wash hand basins
* That hot water is available
* That soap is available
* That there are no dripping/running taps
* That there is no damaged pipe work
* Appropriate facilities are available for disabled employees/pupils
* That cubicle partitions and doors are in sound condition?
* That floors are clean and dry
* That hand dryers are functioning safely and serviced regularly
* That sanitary bins are available and emptied regularly ( female toilets )

### Caretakers/Cleaners Stores

* Items are stored in a secure and logical manner
* Floor space is not cluttered
* Are appropriate warning signs provided for any hazardous substances stored there?
* Are flammable substances stored in a signed lockable metal cabinet?
* Check there are no unlabelled or damaged bottles or containers
* Check that risk assessments are available for work involving hazardous substances
* Is cleaning equipment in a sound condition and safely stored?
* Check door is kept locked and it signed “to be kept locked shut”

### Medical Room

* Are medicines securely stored?
* Are hand washing facilities adequate?
* Is there a covered waste bin for dressings?
* Is a sharps box available?
* Is a first aid box available?
* Is a bed available?

## INSTALLATIONS, SYSTEMS AND PREMISES

### Water:

* Are drains blocked?
* Are sinks blocked?
* Are there water leaks from pipework?
* Are drinking water supplies labelled “drinking water”?
* Are non-drinking water taps labelled “not drinking water”
* Are any taps leaking/dripping and requiring new washers or replacement?

### Electric:

* Are trailing leads or socket blocks used excessively owing to shortages of electrical sockets?
* Are trailing leads being used linked together?
* Are any leads trapped under furniture?
* Are there any cracked or damaged electrical sockets?
* Are any electrical sockets positioned where they might be splashed with water (eg. too near sinks)?

### Electrical Intake Cupboards

* Check they are free of clutter
* Check switch gear is readily accessible and operable in an emergency?
* Check switch gear is clearly labelled showing the areas that the switches control
* Check residual current devices clearly labelled to indicate the area they control

### Gas:

* Check gas guards ( if fitted ) operating correctly
* check emergency gas cut off buttons ( if fitted ) accessible and operating effectively
* Check that stop cocks are clearly labelled and can be easily operated
* Check that stop cocks are readily accessible in an emergency
* Check gas pipe work correctly colour coded and labelled
* Check any gas pipework vulnerable to damage is adequately guarded
* Check gas taps do not leak and are they operate easily
* Check gas taps are not blocked, eg by chewing gum, paper etc

### Boiler Rooms

* Check the area is clear of clutter, old furniture and any flammable or combustible material
* Check that any moving parts eg. pulley drives are appropriately guarded
* Check that the fuel safety cut-off is present and operational
* Check that a carbon dioxide fire extinguisher is available
* Check that no smoking signs are displayed
* Check that ventilation is adequate and that door ventilation slats are not obstructed
* Check that the door is kept locked and signed “to be kept locked shut”

### Security:

* Do gates/fences prevent unauthorized access and in good repair
* Clear signage directing visitors
* Exit doors and windows secured/capable of being secured
* Waste and recycle bins away from premises and in secure area
* Security lighting adequate for entrances and footpaths etc
* No signs of vandalism/graffiti

### Asbestos:

* Asbestos in good condition
* Asbestos signs in place

## FIRE & FIRST AID

### Fire Alarms & Fighting:

* All fire fighting equipment maintained, unobstructed, in position, identified and appropriate for purpose
* All detection/alarm equipment maintained, unobstructed, in position and appropriate for purpose (eg call points, detector heads)

### Fire Doors and Escape Routes:

* Clear of obstruction, well fitting, closing properly/no unauthorized blocking open or ‘hooked’ open, in good condition
* Routes clear of obstruction/unauthorized storage/displays kept to a minimum
* Final exits clear of obstruction, signed (inside and outside)
* Assembly points clearly signed
* Doors open in direction of travel

### Plans and Procedures:

* Fire notices up-to-date and clearly positioned
* Fire signage in good condition, in appropriate positions and free of obstruction

### First Aid Boxes and Signs:

* First aid notices current and posted in appropriate places
* First aid boxes well stocked (as per contents sheet) and easy to locate

## OUTSIDE AREAS

### Playgrounds:

* Surfaces in good condition/appropriate for equipment
* Are there significant cracks in surfaces?
* Is there loose gravel on surfaces?
* Check there are no significant holes?
* Check that no areas are significantly worn or smooth
* Check for loose, raised or crumbling curves around the edges
* Are areas adequately drained in wet weather?
* Check for excessive litter
* Check for dog faeces
* Check for raised manhole covers
* Check for other tripping hazards
* Check that drains are not excessively below surface level
* Check for low walls which could cause trips and injury

### Fixed Play Equipment

* Check it is it stable and firmly secured to the ground?
* Check it is not likely to topple over
* Check it is appropriate for the age groups using it?
* Check it is constructed of approved materials?
* Check it does not have sharp edges
* Check for the presence of wood rot
* Check for evidence of excessive corrosion
* Check that there are no protruding bolts or screws which could cause injury
* Check equipment is in good decorative order?
* Check there is adequate space adequate space around each item of equipment?
* Check equipment does not flex excessively?
* Check equipment is structurally sound?
* Check the safety surface is of an approved type complying with BS(EN) 1177 and is in sound condition?

### Fences, walls and gates:

* In good condition and state of repair

### Roof, Guttering and Pipes:

* Are these sounds and well maintained
* No signs of leaks (eg mildew on walls)

### Stairs:

* Should be of adequate width, in good repair, free from dust/spills, be as even as possible and be non-slip
* Should have handrails provided in good condition
* Should be adequately lit

### Paving:

* Car park areas and play areas well separated and sign posted
* Paving in good condition, no rising, free from damage and cracks
* Free from root damage

### Refuse Storage Areas

* Are refuse skips chained sufficiently away from the building to prevent abuse by vandals?
* Is a system in place to ensure bins re-chained after refuse collection?
* Is refuse adequately contained to prevent access of birds and animals?
* Is there excessive smell?
* Are there excessive flies?
* Is there evidence of access by rodents or birds?
* Is there rotting decaying material?
* Is there bursting or damaged rubbish bags?
* Is there dangerous materials or articles open to abuse by pupils or vandals?

### Environmental Areas/Ponds

* Is the area adequately fenced off?
* Is there a lockable gate?
* Are the edges of pond clearly visible?
* Is the pond no deeper than 700 mm at deepest point?
* Check for excessive algal growth in water
* Is the pond reasonably weed free
* Check for known hazardous plants
* Is grass and other vegetation under reasonable control?
* Are warning signs indicating the presence of unfenced water displayed?
* Are signs present to indicate that the area is for use only under supervision