BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH

CHILDREN'S SERVICE

Local Code of Practice 27

Finger Entrapment

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Children's Service
Local Code of Practice No 27
FINGER ENTRAPMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

This LCOP establishes a safe system to minimise the risk of finger entrapment in doors. The criteria for management is based on a risk assessment approach which places duties on the LA.

Governing bodies have a duty to ensure so far as their position allows that the premise and plant or substances used in the premise are safe and without risk. Governing bodies also have a legal duty to comply with the LA's directions and to co-operate with the LA so far as is necessary to enable the LA to comply with its statutory responsibility.

It is the responsibility of Premises Controllers (Headteachers in the case of Schools) to carry out the policies agreed and maintained by the LA and where applicable the governing body.

Accordingly it is the responsibility of the Premises Controller to manage the day to day practicalities of this local code of practice.

The LA recommends the arrangements outlined within this code of practice are used by all its educational establishments and added to the Arrangement Section of their Safety Policy.

All employees are under a statutory duty to co-operate with the LA and governing body so far as it necessary to enable these parties to meet legal obligations.

2. SCOPE

To prevent accidents from student, staff and others trapping fingers in doors by establishing and maintaining a safe system of work.

3. MANAGEMENT ACTION

For whoever is responsible for managing a premise or arranging a visit to another premise to ensure suitable control measures have been implement to reduce the risk of finger entrapment.

4. GENERAL

This Guidance note has been written following a number of accidents that have been reported across the LA of children trapping fingers in doors.

In December 2008 a boy received £1,700 compensation after he trapped his finger in a school door. The four-year-old boy from Halifax, was rushed to Calderdale Royal Hospital after the accident at Parkinson Lane School. He was treated and given an X-ray to check the finger was not broken. The

Doctors then told the boys mother to go to Bradford Royal Infirmary for checks for damage to the nerves and tendons in her son's finger.

A soft closure – which stops the door from closing quickly – was latter fitted to the nursery door.

The most recent annual statistics indicate that over 30,000 children under the age of 15 visited UK hospital accident and emergency departments with finger/thumb injuries caused by doors and door frames with more than 1,500 needing some form of surgery. These types of injuries that may result from door incidents range from crushing, bruising and fractures - in the most serious cases – to amputation; however, whatever the outcome, every finger trapping incident is likely to cause pain and distress to a child.

Whist all doors in educational establishments are potentially a risk to children, national trends of previous accidents in schools has shown that classroom doors, toilet entrance doors and toilet cubicle doors represent the highest risk of finger trapping accidents. Young children are particularly susceptible to door trapping injuries.

Trappings that might occur on the latch side of a door can be reduced by a suitable door closure mechanism. Where a trapping hazard on the door hinge side has not been eliminated by design, British Standard BS 7036 Part 4: Item 7.1 recommends 'the use of a finger protection device that either fills the finger trap or minimises the gap so as not to create a finger trap'.

5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

British Standard BS 7036 Part 4
LCOP 19: Management of Health & safety at Work (General Risk Assessment)

6. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT OF DOORS IN SCHOOLS

6.1 Responsibility

Local authority community, foundation and voluntary aided establishments are responsible for maintaining all aspects of their buildings this includes internal, and external door, hinges, latches and other ironmongery.

6.2 Requirements

As with all health and safety hazards a risk management approach is required with the Headteacher having responsibility for ensuring that a finger trap risk assessment is completed with appropriate and timely follow up action taken.

The law requires employers to identify significant hazards and protect people as far as 'reasonably practicable'. This involves weighing up the degree of

risk against the time, cost and effort involved in either eliminating or reducing that risk.

In terms of preventing finger trapping injuries from the hinge side of doors, finger guarding devices are widely available, relatively low cost items that do not necessarily require specialist fitting. If fitted to fire doors guidance should be sought from the supplier, manufacturer or fire specialist to ensure that the device does not effect the integrity or fire rating of the door.

Due to the vulnerability of young children and the potential severity and extent of any injuries they could sustain, it would be very difficult to justify not fitting them to the doors that present a risk in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One settings. **On that basis, LB Barnet would recommend as a minimum standard that finger safety devices must be fitted to protect the hinge side edge of classroom doors, toilet entrance doors and toilet cubicle doors serving foundation and key stage one classes.**

All other areas and other schools decisions regarding door safety should be based on level of risk.

Where older children are involved finger guarding is not mandatory and may not be an appropriate control measure, however, the risk of finger entrapment should still be considered as finger entrapment incidents are known to occur to pupils across all age groups.

6.3 A finger trap risk assessment – the approach

A systematic inspection of each internal and external door should be carried out to determine the degree of risk and what further action is required to eliminate or reduce the level of risk. It can be helpful to observe pupil activity during the inspection and seek input from other members of staff.

A finger trap risk assessment template has been developed for your use to help identify whether a door is considered a high, medium or low risk. The template is provided in Annex 1.

6.4 Factors to be considered

- Review your school accident records to establish any doors that may have been involved in previous finger trapping incidents or near misses.
- Check the condition of the door, frame, and hinges.
- Check the areas where finger entrapment could occur i.e. both door jamb and leading edge.
- Ensure fire doors and emergency exits are not compromised with additional safety devices.

- Are there doors that should be fitted with closure mechanisms?
- Check that all doors already fitted with self-closures have a two stage closing action i.e. rapid initial and then slow final close and are regularly maintained. Closers leaking oil are likely to be unserviceable and need to be replaced.
- Take into account the age group and other characteristics such as special educational needs, behaviour and disabilities of pupils in determining the level of risk.
- Consider areas where the children are not supervised e.g. toilets and where pranks by children could occur.
- Think about circulation routes and queuing areas such as the dining hall.

Particular attention should be paid to the following:

- Heavy doors (with or without dampening mechanisms)
- Fire doors
- Design of doors e.g. metal and timber doors without rounded edges
- Doors next to areas where pupils congregate
- Doors which pupils queue beside for lunch or other reasons
- Doors near entrances
- Doors that are susceptible to slamming from strong gusts of wind
- Areas used by after-school clubs or community use, particularly if these involve younger children
- Is there a notice board or some other attraction behind or adjacent to the door?
- Changes to layout of rooms including toilets, which may introduce new hazards

6.5 Determining the risk

Having identified the risk factors during the inspection, each door should be given a risk rating of either high, medium or low. The judgment should take into account the age group of the children exposed to the risk and any special educational needs, the likelihood of harm occurring and the potential severity should that harm be realised. For further guidance on the risk assessment process and evaluation of risk, refer to the risk assessment in Annex 1 and LCOP 19.

6.6 Risk control measures

The following measures should be considered to help prevent finger trapping incidents:

- try to reduce or remove the need for pupils to gather near the doors
- ensure that essential equipment is not positioned adjacent to or immediately behind doors e.g. a paper towel dispenser
- give regular briefings to pupils on the dangers of finger trapping
- ensure that all staff aware of the hazard of door entrapments and their role in being vigilant and reporting defects and near miss incidents
- fit finger safety devices on doors that pose a risk
- consider risk factors when replacing or refurbishing doors

6.7 Review the assessment

The assessment must be recorded, retained and reviewed periodically, an annual review would be appropriate, particularly in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One settings. The assessment should also be reviewed if anything has changed or following an incident or near miss.

7. Checks after installation

For both new and existing door safety devices in educational establishments a system should be put in place for regular brief visual inspections to check for damage or deterioration so that appropriate remedial action can be taken if necessary. In addition, all staff should be encouraged to be vigilant for and report damaged devices. Establishments should take opportunities to talk to children (as appropriate to their age and understanding) about the trapping hazards which doors pose, the purpose of the safety devices and the need to tell staff if they see any of these damaged.

8. New and refurbished classrooms and toilets

In all new classrooms or major classroom refurbishments, toilet entrance doors and toilet cubicle doors in foundation and key stage one schools, the risk of finger trapping should be designed out at the planning stage. Where this is not possible, finger guarding devices must be fitted.

9. Product information

To assist schools, list of commercial suppliers of door hinge finger guarding devices is enclosed. The LBB are not in a position to endorse these products.

It should be noted that not all types of doors will accommodate such devices, therefore, it may be necessary to seek specialist advice.

Company
Waverley Design and Engineering Services
86 Derwent Road

Tettenhall
Wolverhampton
West Midlands WV6 9ET
Tel/Fax 01902751684
Mobile: 07831443110

Contact

Andrew Warren, Designer/Consultant

Products and Services

Slide Safe finger trap guards. Suitable for single and double leafed doors of any material. Specifically for sliding doors. Can be used on the inside and outside of doors. Trap guards are made of super tough nylon. Materials and construction meet relevant standards.
Twelve months guarantee. Five year life expectancy. Item can be reused. Spare parts for the trap guards are available.
Device can be fitted by competent school staff. Tools required = phillips screwdriver. (Seek advice from Andrew Warren for hollow timber doors.)
Implementation of controls: Dependant on devices recommended and whether fitting is required.

Company

Finger Shield Safety (UK)
The Old School House
Lind Street
Manchester
M40 7ES
Tel 01612725500
Fax 01612727000
Email: info@fingershield.co.uk
www.fingershield.co.uk

Contact

Paul O'Carroll, General Manager

Products and Services

Fingershield devices. Suitable for single and double leafed doors of any material. Not ideal for rising hinged doors. Can be used on the inside and outside of doors. Devices are made of new PVC but are not transferable from one door to another as they are fixed – NB: Advertised as easily removable. Available in 9 colours.
Ten year warranty.
Device can be fitted by competent school staff. Tools required = screwdriver or drill (for metal surfaces)
Device can also be fitted by company for additional cost.
Implementation of controls: Dependant on number of devices recommended and whether fitting is required.

Company

Safety Assured Limited
Innovation House
385 Cheapstow Avenue
Homchurch, Essex RM12 6AU
Tel 01708855777

Fax 01708855125
Email: Info@fingerprotector.com
Website: http://www.fingerprotector.co.uk

Contact

Steve Webb, Managing Director

Products and Services

Finger Protector. Suitable for single/double leafed doors, single/double action doors, fire doors and rising hinged doors of any material. Constructed from window grade PVC. Available in three colours.
Twelve months guarantee. Five year life expectancy. Item can be reused. Spare parts for the trap guards are available.
Device can be fitted by competent school staff. Blunt knife needed. Device secured by adhesive (already on device.)
Device can also be fitted by company staff.
Implementation of controls: Dependant on number of devices recommended and whether fitting is required.

Company

Boewood Prevention Limited
PO Box 44
Newtown
Powys SY16 1WD
Tel 01686622228
Fax 01686622451
Email: mike@doorsafety.co.uk
Website: www.doorsafety.com

Contact

Mike

Products and Services

Fingagards. Suitable for single and double leafed doors of any material (NB: Will need to use more substantial fixings for non wooden doors. Not suitable for rising hinges or doors opening beyond 90 degrees. Can be used on the inside and outside of doors. Fingagards are made of polypropylene. Available in four colours.
Twelve months guarantee. Five year life expectancy.
Device can be fitted by competent school staff. Tools required = hammer. Item is nailed to door which prevents reuse.
Device can also be fitted by company staff (additional cost involved).
Implementation of controls: Dependant on devices recommended and whether fitting is required.

Company

Fingersafe GB Ltd
3-5 Southbourne Grove
Westcliffe-on-sea
Essex SS0 9UW
Tel 01702479474
Fax 01702474397
Email: info@fingersafegb.com
Website: www.fingersafegb.com

Contact

Chris Yoemans

Products and Services

Fingersafe Door Safety System. Suitable for single and double leafed doors of any material. Also suitable to one way and two way doors. Can be used on the inside and outside of doors. Devices are made of new PVC.

Main item can be reused if door is changed. However new fixings will be required. Spare parts available if needed. Suitable for doors opening beyond 90 degrees. Life expectancy dependant on door use. Two year warranty (fair wear and tear.)

Device can be fitted by competent school staff. Tools required = screwdriver and a drill. (Craft knife may be required.)

Device can also be fitted by company for additional cost.

Implementation of controls: Dependant on devices recommended and whether fitting is required.

Annex 1: FINGER TRAP RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

School:	**Date of assessment:**
Assessor:	**Date of review:**

Note for foundation stage and key stage one areas in LBB educational establishments:

As a minimum standard, finger safety devices should be fitted to all classroom, toilet entrance and toilet cubicle doors.

	Factors to be considered **Tick to indicate as a factor**												
Door location	Fire door?	I –internal E - external	Self closure?	Heavy door?	Congregation / queuing area?	Near entrances	Unsupervised area?	Susceptible to gusts of wind?	Other?	**Risk rating** **H** = high **M** = medium **L** = low	**Action required?** yes or no	**Action taken**	**Date completed**

Annex 1: FINGER TRAP RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Finger Trap Risk Assessment Checklist continued

	Factors to be considered **Tick to indicate as a factor**												
Door location	Fire door?	I –internal E - external	Self closure?	Heavy door?	Congregation / queuing area?	Near entrances	Unsupervised area?	Susceptible to gusts of wind?	Other?	**Risk Rating** **H** = high **M** = medium **L** = low	**Action required?** **Yes or No**	**Action taken**	**Date Completed**