



[Home](#) > [Education, training and skills](#) > [Pupil wellbeing, behaviour and attendance](#)
> [Health, safety and wellbeing in schools](#) > [Health and safety: advice for schools](#)

[Department
for Education](#)

Guidance

Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools

Updated 5 April 2022

Applies to England

1. Responsibilities

Pupils should be safe in school and when undertaking out of school activities. The risk management to keep them safe should be proportionate to the nature of the activities.

Teachers should be able to take pupils on exciting school trips that broaden their horizons. Pupils should be able to play freely in the playground and be able to take part in sports. Read the [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\) guidance on children's play and leisure](http://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/childs-play-statement.htm) (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/childs-play-statement.htm>) for more information.

The employer or, in the case of independent schools, the proprietor, is accountable for the health and safety of school staff and pupils. The day-to-day running of the school is usually delegated to the headteacher and the school management team. In most cases, they are responsible for ensuring that risks are managed effectively. This includes health and safety matters.

Schools must appoint a competent person to ensure they meet their health and safety duties. A competent person is someone with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to give sensible guidance about managing the health and safety risks at the school.

This can be someone appointed directly by the school, one or more of its staff, or the employer can arrange support from outside the school. In most schools, the senior leadership team can manage risks. Read [further guidance from HSE](http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/faqs.htm) (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/faqs.htm>).

The [Association for Physical Education \(AfPE\)](http://www.afpe.org.uk/) (<http://www.afpe.org.uk/>) can offer advice on insurance for PE teachers.

As COVID-19 becomes a virus that the country learns to live with, the government is moving away from stringent restrictions on everyone's day-to-day lives towards advising people on how to protect themselves and others, alongside targeted interventions to reduce risk.