

Durham County Council – Water Safety Information for Schools

The following information advice and guidance is intended to help keep children safe when playing near open water or visiting the beach. Please review and communicate this (as appropriate), with your pupils in the lead up to holiday periods.

This information is provided free of charge from Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA); The Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI) and The Royal Life Saving Society UK, to help reduce water accidents and deaths.

Water Safety – Rivers

During the school holidays, and in particular in hot weather, increasing numbers of children put themselves at risk of drowning. On average 40-50 children drown per year in the UK. To keep yourself safe, when you are in, on or beside water, always follow the Water Safety Code.

The Water Safety Code (RoSPA)

Spot the dangers!

Water may look safe, but it can be dangerous. Learn to spot and keep away from dangers. You may swim well in a warm indoor pool, but that does not mean that you will be able to swim in cold water.

The dangers of water include:

- it is very cold
- there may be hidden currents
- it can be difficult to get out (steep slimy banks)
- it can be deep
- there may be hidden rubbish, e.g. shopping trolleys, broken glass
- there are no lifeguards
- it is difficult to estimate depth
- it may be polluted and may make you ill

Water Safety - Beaches

Staying SAFE at the beach (RNLI)

This lesson plan is designed to give pupils information to help them make safer choices near water. The lifeguard flags outlined in the following link are based on the international standard beach safety code, so knowledge of these is important at any lifeguarded beach around the world.

SHORETHING – Staying Safe at the Beach

<http://rnli.org/safetyandeducation/teachersandyouthleaders/resources/downloadresources/Documents/Beachsafetyassembly.pdf>

Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS)

The RLSS website contains a range of suggested activities for schools. For example, PowerPoint presentations to use in assemblies, lessons plans and films. They also provide a range of free resources such as fliers, posters, balloons to give to all children. You can access the RLSS website at; <http://www.rlss.org.uk/>

Additional Sources of information for Schools

Drowning Prevention Week June 2015 www.drowningpreventionweek.org.uk/schools

Video links

The videos below may be useful for assemblies or lessons on river safety.

For secondary schools:

<http://drowningpreventionweek.org.uk/index.php?/fun-and-games/film-11-to-15-year-olds/>

<http://www.northyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/news/river-safety/>

For primary schools:

<http://drowningpreventionweek.org.uk/schools/primary-schools/>