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**Health and Safety**

**Avoiding Finger Trapping**

# Headteachers, senior leaders and premises managers should be aware of the potential hazard of finger trapping from unprotected door hinges and must consider control measures to minimise the risk of injuries occurring. Accidents can occur when pupils' or other individuals’ fingers become trapped in the hinged side of unprotected doors, and injuries can be serious.

## Risk Assessment

Although all doors can pose a potential collision hazard, academies should carry out a risk assessment to identify any significant risks associated with finger trapping in the hinge side of door and consider any precautions required to prevent finger trapping. Particular attention should be paid to the following:

* Doors next to areas where pupils congregate
* Doors which pupils queue beside for lunch or other reasons
* Doors at or near entrances
* Toilet doors
* Doors to changing rooms
* Doors which are susceptible to strong winds
* Doors where incidents have taken place previously (check accident records)
* Heavy doors (with or without door closers)
* Areas used by lettings who accommodate children or vulnerable individuals

Risk assessments should be reviewed whenever there is a change of use in a particular area e.g. altering a classroom to a nursery room, and when designing and developing extensions and new builds.

## Control Measures

Once risks have been assessed, control measures may need to be implemented, for example:

* Installing proprietary finger protection devices on all doors identified as posing a significant risk. This is the most effective and the preferred option where young or vulnerable pupils are present.
* Adjusting or replacing defective door closers to regulate the speed at which doors close.
* Ensuring that all doors are inspected periodically - including door closers and any existing finger protection devices.
* Ensuring that congregating / queueing near doorways is minmised and where this takes place pupils are adequately supervised.
* Also, schools should give regular information to staff and pupils on dangers of finger trapping.
* Communicating with and inducting lettings.

Doors and any devices fitted (such as self-closers) should be visually checked regularly to ensure they are in good condition. Any doors with reported defects should be reported and repaired promptly. Where finger protection devices are installed, they should be visually inspected on a regular basis. The inspections should check for damage or deterioration in the devices so that appropriate remedial action can be taken. In addition to the above checks all staff must report any damaged doors or protection devices as soon as they are identified.

Academies must record their risk assessment of the potential of finger trapping as part of the normal risk assessment processes.