

Which incidents should be reported to Nina Bickerton – Corporate and Schools’ Health and Safety Advisor

I hope the table below helps (and the guidance on ‘near misses’ at the end). It’s an aide memoire for all maintained schools, to assist them in knowing what to report to me in terms of incidents, and what can be kept in house.

The word ‘significant’ crops up again and again. What is a ‘significant’ incident? I would term these as incidents which may have an ‘aftermath’ (i.e., medical attention, legal claim, investigation, or premises implications). Frequently the injury (if there is one) could be minor but has later consequences.

Remember – just call me if you can’t work it out (01473 260 399) – as I would rather be sending you an email that says ‘thank you for the form but keep this in house’ than one which says ‘why didn’t you report that incident to me that I’ve just heard of via Suffolk Legal?’!!

Type of incident	Person affected	Report in house or to Nina
Playground bruised knees / banged fingers (no further injury) / grazes requiring plasters / no first aid / no premises faults identified	Pupils and / or staff Visitors (e.g., parents helping at events etc.)	In house – keep a log of any small injuries and minor first aid or TLC given – provides evidence that you’ve done something about it.
Playground bumps etc. as above – but premises issue identified , e.g., frayed carpet fallen over / wet floor not mopped / uneven surface in playground / jutting out fence post etc. etc.	Pupils and / or staff Visitors (e.g., parents helping at events etc.)	In house log of first aid and further corporate form to Nina within 5 working days.
Any injury which is more serious than a graze or the above (e.g., head collision / puncture wound / strain / sprain / teeth damage / twist etc. etc.) howsoever caused .	Pupils and / or staff Visitors	In house log of first aid and further corporate form to Nina within 3 working days.
Sports injuries (organised by the school as PE lessons or outside activities – e.g., County Games etc.)	Pupils and / or staff	Level of injury would determine the reporting – if very minor injury and person ‘played on’, then use an in-house report. Follow up with a form to Nina if subsequent information from parents or pupil suggests more serious. If a more serious injury in the first place, e.g., collision of heads, sprain, fracture, etc. then report to Nina. Also definitely report if there are issues with equipment.

Playground equipment related	Pupils and / or staff Visitors (whether allowed on equipment or not)	Please report all these incidents to Nina in addition to in-house logging, irrespective of injury level or stability of equipment.
Any injury (emotional shock included) as a result of challenging behaviour – with intent or not.	Pupils and / or staff Visitors	Level of injury would determine how fast the report should get to me – see further examples below. Essentially – in-house log and form to me as well.
Any injury which causes the person to go home / to doctors / to hospital, howsoever caused and however seemingly minor to the attending staff	Pupils and / or staff Visitors	In house log of first aid and further form to Nina – if to seek medical attention from the site of the incident (e.g., mum took straight to hospital) – form ASAP please, preferably two working days
Any injury or incident which causes a staff member to have seven days off sick as a result	Staff	There's a possibility that a form may not have arisen for some injuries as they are so minor. However, implications of incidents can cause prolonged sickness and as soon as you are aware that the seven days sickness is looming, or as soon as possible afterwards, please fill out a form and send it to Nina.
Any fracture to any part of the body	Pupils and / or staff Visitors	In house log and further form to Nina – within 24 hours please
Any unconsciousness	Pupils and / or staff Visitors	As above
Any need to call the emergency services For instance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire • Injury requiring medical intervention • Unwanted visitor • Assault by pupil to another 	Pupils and / or staff Visitors Premises issues (e.g., flooding / release of gas / fire etc)	In house log of in-house first aid if appropriate and immediate PHONE CALL to Nina on the day (or first thing the next day) plus form within 24 hours.
Any fatality	Pupils and / or staff Visitors	Immediate phone call to Nina. Corporate form within 24 hours at latest and in house form completed.

Incidents on school trips	Pupils and / or staff Volunteer helpers (e.g. parents assisting on trips)	Depending on the level of injury (see guidelines above) NOTE: If you feel that the organised activity is unsafe, or the premises which you have visited are unsafe, or you spot hazards – PLEASE fill in a form and send it to Nina
Near Misses	Pupils and / or staff Visitors Property	Depending on the level of potential harm. See the notes below in terms of examples
Fires which are put out by local extinguishers or those that require no emergency services assistance. May need a visit after the event to approve the building safe.	Property	Form to Nina please and an immediate phone call when the area is safe

Please ensure that you add details of the circumstances of the incident and your own follow up actions. There are areas in the form for this. You must be able to evidence your appropriate response to the incident as a means of proving your diligence after the event.

Near Misses

Another frequently asked question is ‘what is a near miss?’. Referring to the Health and Safety Executive’s guidelines, they say this is *“an event not causing harm, but has the potential to cause injury or ill health”*. I would also add in ‘damage’ to this – so some examples may be:

1. A lorry veering on the road outside your school and nearly colliding with the perimeter fence or buildings, missing pedestrians, or children in the playground
2. An outside activity such as high ropes at an adventure area – one rope fails before or after children partake in the activity, but no one is injured physically or emotionally
3. Someone walks past a wall, and it falls after they have past it
4. Someone sees a carpet edge which has been upturned and can’t rectify it immediately
5. The school has logged the same building concern with their property maintenance frequently with nothing being done, and this time it nearly causes harm or a welfare issue (e.g., a child narrowly misses falling on a pathway which is overdue for maintenance)

I would only need a form for 1, 2, 3 and 5. Example four, with the carpet, should be managed in-house by coning / barriers and getting someone in to complete the maintenance. If someone injures themselves on it after this, then I would want to know (and why!).

Hope this helps – just call otherwise.

Nina.