

Safe use of Trampolines

In the past twelve months there has been a noticeable increase in the use of trampolines in schools, unfortunately accompanied by a corresponding increase in claims notifications. The main causes of injuries are:

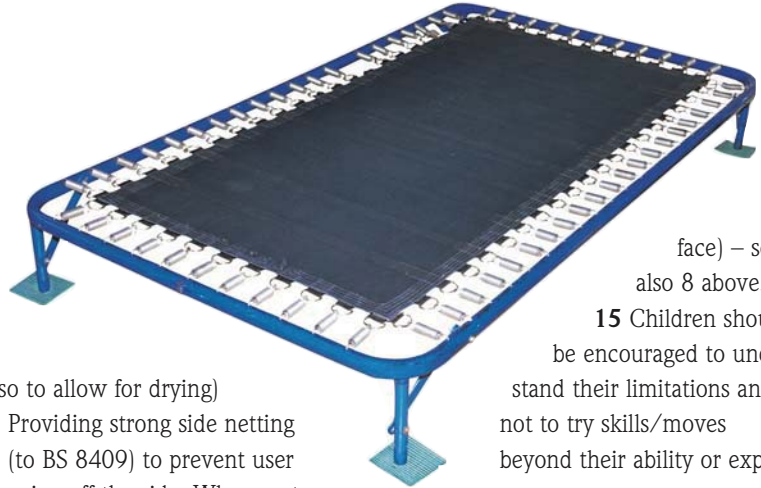
- bouncing/falling off the trampoline onto the ground
- being hit by other children
- falling awkwardly

Many of these accidents could be avoided by effective adult supervision.

Consequently use of trampolines must not be permitted without appropriate adult supervision.

In addition to the provision of effective supervision, the following guidelines should be observed:

- 1 As a significant number of injuries occur when more than one child is on the trampoline, use should be restricted to one child at a time.
- 2 Children under 6 are particularly vulnerable and it is recommended that a minimum age of at least 6 applies in respect of children using trampolines.
- 3 The area around the trampoline should be clear of objects and the trampoline should not be near fences, trees, or other school equipment.
- 4 Use a frame pad that fully covers the entire spring system and ensure that this is securely fixed against movement.
- 5 Ensure a minimum fall height if a child comes off the trampoline. This can be accommodated by:
 - Setting the trampoline in the ground (but you need to allow for good air flow both to enable the trampoline to work properly



face) – see also 8 above.

15 Children should be encouraged to understand their limitations and not to try skills/moves beyond their ability or experience.

and also to allow for drying)

- Providing strong side netting (to BS 8409) to prevent user going off the side. Where netting is provided this should extend to a height of 5m above the trampoline surface.
- 6 Ensure that the ground around the trampoline has an impact-attenuating surface that meets the HIC requirements of BS EN1177. The surface should extend for 2.5m all round the trampoline. (BS EN1176 requirement for a fall height from 3m).
 - 7 If the trampoline is raised above the ground then measures should be put in place to prevent children not using the trampoline from entering the impact area and especially from going under the trampoline.
 - 8 Users should be required to remove all watches, jewellery etc (including ear studs etc). Clothing should not have any hard or sharp points (buckles, toggles etc) or anything that is going to catch. They should not wear hard shoes and any socks should be non-slip.
 - 9 Where a facility is required for use by more than one child at a time an inflatable unit rather than a trampoline is recommended.
 - 10 Never allow a child to exit the trampoline by bouncing off.
 - 11 The area under the trampoline should be kept free of litter etc at all times.
 - 12 Food and drink should be kept well away from the area.
 - 13 On raised trampolines children should be encouraged to get on and off the trampoline with their stomach facing the trampoline.
 - 14 If outdoors, muddy footwear should be removed before entering the area (this includes impact-attenuating sur-

16 The following should be checked regularly and certainly before first use:-

- Wear on the bed for damaged or thin areas
 - Loose stitching or damaged breaks in webbing
 - Uneven or high tension
 - All springs or cables should be in place and undamaged with any hooks facing downwards. Stretched springs or cables should be replaced immediately
 - Frame pads should be checked for damage and security of fixing
 - Impact attenuating surfaces should be checked for damage and cleanliness
 - Joints, chains and leg braces should be checked for security and possible damage
- 17** Damaged equipment should be taken out of use **immediately**
- 18** It is recommended that children should not be allowed excessive time on the trampoline without a break. Untrained users do not have the muscle strength for long periods. 90 seconds is a recommended maximum time for usage without a break.
- 19** All trampolines manufactured from 2001 onwards should meet BS EN 13219:2001 Trampolines.
- 20** When not in use trampolines should be secured to prevent unauthorised use.

The implementation of procedures in relation to the use of Trampolines by schools based on the forgoing will, we feel, have a positive impact on the number of claims arising from such equipment.