

Design and Physical Environment

Area: Dry Activities **Category:** Operations

Introduction

This guidance provides information on specific elements of the design and physical environment of dry leisure operations. Topics covered are those that CIMSPA members have previously asked for advice on. The guidance provided is not intended to be exhaustive and will be reviewed and added to from time to time by CIMSPA.

How to use the guidance notes

Operators have a legal requirement to manage health and safety. Employers must protect the 'health, safety and welfare' at work of all their employees, as well as others on their premises. This guide has been produced to help operators do this.

If the content of these guidance notes relates to aspects of your operation, it is recommended that you review your risk assessments, policies, procedures, safe systems of work and training to ensure the content provided has been considered.

CIMSPA and their contributors provide no warranty as to its accuracy or completeness. Should you wish to seek further understanding or justifications for the information covered, additional associated resources are listed at the bottom of this guidance note.

This guidance note covers:

- Finger entrapment and door guards
- Glass back squash courts
- Retractable seating
- Balconies and falls from height
- Curtain flame retardancy

RD Docs for Guidance

Finger entrapment and door guards

Fingers can get injured between the door edge and frame and in the door jamb. Finger guards to prevent entrapment in doors are generally located based on risk assessment and typically where there is a large throughput/congregation of young children. For example, in a busy soft play area or the entrance into changing areas and toilets. Some areas might occasionally present an increased risk e.g. if a hall is used extensively for holiday activities for young children. The level of supervision should also be taken into consideration. Door closers should be checked to ensure they are operating correctly.

Glass back squash courts

Glass must be toughened, 12mm thick and comply with the relevant British Standard BS 6206:1981 Specification for impact performance requirement for flat safety glass and safety plastics for use in buildings. The World Squash Federation Court Specification for a standard height glass wall (2130mm) must also be met.

England Squash & Racketball recommends that glass walls should be inspected at least once a year by a qualified person and all fixings checked and tightened up if required.

More information on maintaining glass back court panels is available on the England Squash & Racketball website.

Retractable seating

Retractable (telescopic sometimes called bleacher) seating is the most common type of tiered spectator seating in sports halls. When not in use, it packs into a narrow vertical unit that can either be fixed at the back against a wall, into a recess or can be movable on wheels (or by other systems, depending on loadings and intended flooring). When in use the seating unit is pulled out to form a stepped tier with either integral benches or fold up seats for spectators.

The design of retractable seating should meet various standards. These include:

- **BS EN 13200-1:2019- Spectator facilities. General characteristics for spectator viewing area.**
- **BS 5867-2:2008. Fabrics for curtains, drapes and window blinds - Flammability requirements Specification.**
- **BS 5852:2006 Methods of test for assessment of the ignitability of upholstered seating by smouldering and flaming ignition sources.** <https://shop.bsigroup.com/>
- **BS 9999: Code of practice for fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings**
- **BS EN 12727:2016 Furniture. Ranked seating. Requirements for safety, strength and durability.**

Retractable seating should also have UKCA/CE marking. These standards set out a variety of design requirements which considers hazards such as fire, falls from a height, entrapment and protection from hazards associated to the activity.

In addition to the above, the following guidance should help managers to appraise their own situation in a risk assessment of retractable seating:

- **The specific guidance of manufacturers/suppliers should be used to inform risk assessments and operational procedures.**
- **Access restrictions when not in use, ensuring gates can be secured and not left open. Consideration should be given to parental supervision.**
- **Ensuring there are no gaps between adjacent units. Fixings should lock units closely together or be provided with closure plates. The units should not be mobile when in use.**
- **Combustible items including litter should not accumulate under the tiers of seats. There should be a safe working practice for cleaning under the structure.**

- Layout drawings approved by the licensing authority should be available and used when the seating is erected.
- The storage of mobile units has been properly considered to avoid obstructing circulation or other storage.
- Relevant information and warning signs should be in place.
- Staff training is an important element in the management and prevention of risks that should be recorded. This should include the setting up, inspections and storage of the seating and should consider risks such as manual handling. Work instructions should be in place as well.
- There should be an annual inspection by a competent person under PUWER regulations with records kept and documented inspection following each set up.

Balconies and falls from height

Often there are tables and chairs in these areas in balcony areas and due to children using such areas there is a risk that they may climb up on tables and chairs resulting in an increased risk of them going over resulting in a fall from height. To reduce the risk so far as reasonably practicable, the hierarchy of risk control should be applied whilst considering the time, cost and inconvenience. This should consider:

Eliminate - Remove the tables and chairs from the area.

Substitute - Change the table and chairs design – consider fixed seating set back from the balcony rail as opposed to moveable chairs. This is the preferred option as it removes the ability of children to climb.

Engineering controls - The balcony barriers should meet building regulations and be of the appropriate height, however increasing the height above should be considered.

Administrative controls - Consider the monitoring of the area and the practicalities of how often this can be done. Consider if the area can be secured when it is not being supervised.

Administrative controls - Warning notices/parental advice, remembering that the risk group is younger children who should be with a parent anyway. This on its own is not ideal as the consequences of a child 'getting away' from their parent could be severe.

Curtain flame retardancy

Curtains such as sports hall divider curtains and stage curtains should be fire retardant. This should have been identified and checked in the fire risk assessment.

Normally there should be some form of documentation pertaining to the curtains, the flame retardant treatment given and a re-treatment date. The treatment would need to be re-applied at intervals specified by the company who last applied it. The duration for which a treatment remains effective will vary with the product and cleaning of drapes/curtains. Additional information can be found in British Standard BS5867.

Useful Resources

England Squash – Technical information sheet number 6

<https://data.englandsquash.com/files?fileName=f5c484bd-b279-4768-8871-2045dbe8675e.pdf>

Hierarchy of risk controls -

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height/step-by-step-guide.htm>

Public Health England -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)

<https://www.cdc.gov/mrsa/community/index.html>

BS EN 13200-1:2019- Spectator facilities. General characteristics for spectator viewing area.

<https://shop.bsigroup.com/>

Fabrics for curtains, drapes and window blinds - Flammability requirements. Specification BS 5867-2:2008.

<https://shop.bsigroup.com/>

BS 5852:2006 Methods of test for assessment of the ignitability of upholstered seating by smouldering and flaming ignition sources.

<https://shop.bsigroup.com/>

BS 9999: Code of practice for fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings

<https://shop.bsigroup.com/>

BS EN 12727:2016 Furniture. Ranked seating. Requirements for safety, strength and durability.

<https://shop.bsigroup.com/>

BS 6206:1981 Specification for impact performance requirement for flat safety glass and safety plastics for use in buildings

<https://www.thenbs.com/PublicationIndex/documents/details?Pub=BSI&DocID=71904>

CIMSPA professional standards library:

<https://www.cimspa.co.uk/education-training/professional-standards/professional-standards-library/>

These guidance notes have been produced by Right Directions in partnership with CIMSPA.

For more information on physical environment or any other topics, please email Right Directions: info@rightrightdirections.co.uk or give us a call for a chat: (01582) 840098

RD Docs for Guidance