

Teacher Resource for Classroom Safety



Cords – are there cords across any part of the floor where a student or a teacher could trip on? Many smart boards were installed not in the same proximity as an electrical outlet; thus requiring an extension cord. Just remember, extension cords should never be plugged into another extension cord or power bar. This could create an electrical fire. All extension cords are meant to be a temporary fix for the current problem and should never be left on the floor. When finished using the extension cord, it should be taken off the floor and put away until the next time you need to use it. If any cords in a classroom are a permanent arrangement, then it needs to be taped to the floor. This alleviates the potential of a tripping hazard for all, as well as the upset custodial trying to clean the floor every night with an entanglement mess to deal with.

Heaters – are there any items up against any baseboard heaters? Remember any heater that you can touch and it feels hot, should not have anything up against it, especially baseboard heaters. This could create an electrical fire.

Exits –are there any items blocking an exit? Remember the way you place the desks or other items in the room is all important. Exits of any kind should never be blocked no matter how small the item is.

Extinguishers/Pull stations—are there any items blocking a fire extinguisher or a pull station (this would apply in portables)? Remember extinguishers, and pull stations should never be blocked no matter how small the item is.

Monitors - are they at eye height; is the brightness adjusted to prevent eye strain; can the monitor be swiveled to reduce reflection from sunlight; does the room have blinds or window filters to reduce reflected sunlight on screens; is it in a safe position and will not be knocked off by a pupil walking past; for children with poor eyesight is the monitor adjusted for large fonts; is light from the room reflecting on the screen, if so how do you stop it; do you have fluorescent lights in the room (the flickering of the computer screen and together with that of fluorescent lights can occasionally cause an epileptic fit); have you considered a large monitor, interactive whiteboard or a projector for demonstrating how to use the computer?

Mouse - is the mouse the right size for your pupils (do you need a smaller size for younger pupils?); is it suitable for right and left handers; do you have desk space to move the mouse to the left or right hand side of the computer; have you told the children that they can move the mouse to the other side of the keyboard (many left handed children suffer in silence); do you use tracker balls to assist more clumsy children; do the children need wrist supports?

Chairs - are they adjustable to the height of your benches and the height of your pupils; do they give back support?

Benching - is it at the right height for the height of your pupils; is there enough space allocated for the number of pupils using each computer; are there any sharp edges?

Room - is there space for pupils to work away from the computer; is there enough space in the room to accommodate all the pupils in your class at once; is there sufficient ventilation; is the room secure? Is there enough space for pupils to walk around desks and get to the door in case there was a fire?

Supervision - are you able to supervise all your children when all or some of them are working on the computers? In some schools small computer suites (not big enough to take all the class) are situated away from the classroom. How will you supervise all the children? Can you make use of a classroom assistant or a parent?