



15 December 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Water safety

You will all have heard the devastating news that 4 boys lost their lives this week in Solihull in an incident which took place on frozen water.

Before we break up for Christmas, I would like to share with you the resources we have used in school with your child regarding water safety and also a message from our link police officer, PC Harris and ask you to go through these with your child.

Message from PC Harris

Despite the recent tragedy, there appears to be a trend to throw lifebuoy rings onto local frozen lakes, ponds and canals. People are then presented with the temptation to try and retrieve them. We believe this is being done by children and for the safety of all, this really has to stop.

Resources used in school:

<https://www.wmfs.net/safety/winter-water-safety/>

The link is to the Royal Life Saving Society website. It gives water safety advice, and educates on the dangers of playing on frozen water.

The information relates to the dangers of going onto frozen canals, lakes, reservoirs, ponds, open water etc. The initial five points that are highlighted are:



Teach children not to go on the ice

Teach children not to go on to ice under any circumstances.



Keep dogs on their leads

Keep dogs on their leads when near ice and don't throw sticks or toys onto the ice.



Only use well-lit areas

Time your walks to make the most of the daylight. If you need to walk when it's dark, only use well-lit areas and avoid waterside routes.



Don't go on the ice to rescue a dog

Don't go onto ice or into the water to rescue a dog. Move to somewhere where the dog will be able to climb out and call them towards you.



Keep back from the edge

If you do walk near water, stay away from the edge.



Also included on the website are:

What to do if YOU fall through ice:

- Stay calm and shout for help
- Spread your arms out across the surface of the ice in front of you
- First check if the ice is strong enough. If it is, then kick your legs to propel yourself forward
- Lie flat and use your arms to pull yourself over the ice towards the shore
- If the ice on the water breaks, try to make your way to the bank or shore, breaking ice in front of you as you go
- If you find yourself stuck and unable to escape, wait for help. Stay as still as possible to conserve your energy. Bring your arms close to your sides and keep your legs together, while keeping your head out of the water
- When you're safely out of the water it's important to go to a hospital for a check-up.

What to do if you see SOMEONE ELSE fall through the ice:

Shout for help, **call 999 or 112** and – if the incident involves inland water – ask for the fire service

- Do not go on to ice to attempt a rescue
- Call out to the casualty and encourage them to stay calm
- To try to reach the person from the bank, use a rope, pole, tree branch, clothes tied together or anything else that can extend your reach
- Lie down flat on the bank, to avoid slipping or being pulled in
- If you can't reach them, try sliding something that floats – like a football or large plastic bottle – to them, to help them float
- If the casualty is too far away, **DO NOT** try to rescue them yourself.
- Wait for the emergency services to arrive. Continue to calm and reassure the person.

After the casualty has been rescued from the ice or water:

- Ensure the ambulance service are on their way
- Lay the casualty flat. Begin CPR if necessary and you know how
- Keep them warm with clothing and blankets and try to shelter them from the cold
- Leave them in their clothes until you reach a safe, warm location
- Don't rub their skin, never apply hot water bottles and do not give them alcohol
- Keep the casualty wrapped up, so they gradually warm up.

Wishing you all a safe and happy holiday.

Nicola Raggett
Headteacher