

Chapter 30 Organising Events

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Version

The table below shows the history of the document and the changes that were made at each version.

Version	Date	Summary of changes
1.0	13 th August 2012	First issue
1.2	9 th August 2013	Review & change of contact details

1. Introduction:

- 1.1 The aim of this document is to provide the necessary information to enable a successful event that can be safely enjoyed by everyone attending. To achieve this you will need to identify all potential hazards and then decide on what precautions are needed and how these will be implemented.
- 1.2 The principles outlined in this document apply equally to small events involving a few people and stalls, within school premises, to larger events involving several hundreds of people.
- 1.3 What ever the size of the event a risk assessment of the activities planned must be carried out and all necessary actions needed taken. Stall holders and owners of attractions in the event must provide risk assessments to the event organizer so that plans can be made for the safe operation and for dealing with any emergencies that may arise. The planning and precautions will depend on the size of and the risks involved in the event.
- 1.4 If the event is planned to take place in one of Hackney's parks, an application must be made to the London Borough of Hackney's Event Team, and their procedures and terms and conditions of hire followed.

2. Responsibilities

- 2.1 The organiser of the event is responsible for ensuring the safety of all involved in the event and that all relevant legislation is complied with.
- 2.2 The organiser must also make provision for things that may go wrong, so consideration will need to be given to provision of first aid, lost children and emergencies.
- 2.3 If the event involves playing live or recorded music you need permission from the Performing Rights Society. Check with Michael Pegram on 020 8356 2647 if the Trust's agreement covers your event.

3. Planning the Event

3.1 Risk Assessment

3.2 **Organising committee.** The first step is to form an organising committee, this allows a dedicated group to plan and divide up tasks. The size will depend upon the size of the event and the complexity of arranging the event. One member should be identified as an events manager/chair to be in overall charge of the event. Always have an agenda and a record of the decisions made.

3.3 **The venue.** Select the venue depending on the size of the event being planned; consider the size of the crowd and the activities. Consider accessibility, the availability of parking, will it be open to the general public and the times it will be open. This is particularly relevant if in a residential area.

3.4 **Site Facilities.** Look at the facilities on site, i.e. toilet provision, electricity, water fencing required and decide what infrastructure you need to cater for the size of audience you hope to attract. Is it possible to have additional facilities delivered to site or will it be necessary to change the venue?

3.5 **Exhibitors / attractions.** Consider the audience that the event is aimed at; each age group brings its own demands and risks. There is also a need to protect the safety of any person helping or working at the event as well as the audience. Third parties coming to the event, e.g. concessionaires, trade stands, fairground rides, all should have risk assessments and consider it normal practice to be asked for copies of these in advance of the event. They should also be willing to supply copies of safety certificates and public liability insurance up to the value of £5 million. These documents will form part of the overall risk assessment. Create an application form for exhibitors / attractions wanting to attend your event and ask them to submit all documentation you will require with their application. If anyone wants to attend the event without the proper documents be prepared to say no. Remember the responsibility for safety ultimately rests with the event organiser.

3.6 **Consultation and advice.** Make sure that all agencies or emergency services are advised of the event well before it occurs. As well as providing support their advice can be invaluable and is best sought as early as possible in the planning stage. They should be provided with as much information about the event as possible. Some of the services are:

- London Fire Brigade
- The local Police
- The Ambulance service
- Environmental Health Team in Hackney Council

- 3.7 **Lead in times.** Make sure there is enough time to plan and organise the event bearing in mind there may be a need to publicise once the arrangements are in place. It may also be necessary to obtain licences or road closures which can take months to be authorised.
- 3.8 **Event Control.** Depending on the size of the event, it may not be possible for one person to organise. It is a good idea to appoint an event manager and safety officer at a very early stage. It is very difficult to manage the organisation or the event as well as the health and safety elements and these roles may need to be split. The more people involved the easier it is to manage. This is particularly true during the course of the event.
- 3.9 **Event safety officer.** Appoint a suitably competent person to act as the safety officer for the event. This could be someone external to the school if the event is large. Before the event they will be responsible for compiling the risk assessments, emergency procedures and all necessary documentation. During the event they should be located in an easily identifiable area and available at all times.

An important duty of the safety officer is to ensure that there is continuous monitoring of site safety through the duration of the event. This should include the numbers of people on site, any structure, barriers, electrical supplies and installations of other equipment provided. In addition this officer should take care of the welfare and management of any marshals / stewards throughout the event.

- 3.10 **Emergency procedures.** Plans should be in place (as part of the risk assessment process) detailing how an emergency would be dealt with. Consider,
- personal accidents
 - Missing children
 - Fire
 - Crowd disturbance
 - Bomb scares
 - Adverse weather conditions, such as gales, thunder and lightning.
- 3.11 **Stewards and Marshalls.** To ensure the safety of every one attending an adequate number of competent stewards who are aware of the safety and emergency procedures should be on site throughout the event. A suitable number would be one per 100 people under 15 or one per 100 people over 15. If catering for mixed age groups, use the ratio for the youngest. It may be necessary to have larger numbers of stewards depending on the layout and type of people coming to the event.
- 3.12 **Communications.** Communications on site can be vital, particularly in the case of an emergency, but also to ensure that stewards can ask for support if needed. By providing a personal radio link or mobile phone to the stewards the efficiency

of the event can be improved. If providing a mobile phone, ensure that it is used only in relation to the event and not used for personal calls.

According to the size and type of the event, consideration should be given to providing a public address system or loud hailer. Public announcements improve event safety and deal with issues from lost children and people separated from carers to site evacuation.

- 3.13 First Aid.** It is essential that qualified first aid services are present at the event with depending on the size of the event, ambulance cover. The St John's Ambulance or Red Cross will provide the service and will advise on the level of cover required based on estimated numbers attending. Be aware a charge is likely to be made for their services.

If the event is small enough it may be possible to source the first aid provision from within the staff on site. Confirm with the insurance section on any necessary insurance cover needed. All first aiders must have current first aid certificates.

Make sure that the basic services required for first aid are available, e.g. water and light and make sure that a designated area is clearly marked.

4. Infrastructure and site facilities

- 4.1 Preparation and condition of site.** Check the site to make sure it is suitable for the proposed event. Consider likely dangers to the public and staff during the set up of the event. This could include the erection / placing of any staging, infrastructure or rides as well as vehicle movement. Will the site or part of it need to be closed or cordoned off during set up?

Will the site be suitable to give stability and safety to any staging or similar, especially in bad weather such as high winds? Are there any obvious hazards such as unfenced holes, drops, ponds, water or unsafe structures that it would be best to keep the public away from? Will the event be during the hours of darkness and require the site to be lit, perhaps including emergency lighting. Will it be necessary to keep visitors away from parts of the site? E.g. the interior of school buildings. If the building is being for toilet facilities what precautions are to be taken to prevent unauthorised access to the rest of the building?

- 4.2 Structures.**

If a marquee is erected, ensure that all stakes and pegs are highly visible and fenced off. Use a reputable company that is covered by public and employers liability insurance and ensure that the marquee is certified flame retardant. Fire extinguishers will need to be in place and exit and entrances signed.

Any staging must be erected in a safe manner and be suitable for its intended use.

Consider how to eliminate trip or other physical hazards (sharp edges/points) from components of any staging, structures or event equipment.

Make sure that structures and installations do not obstruct any entry or exit points from the event site, including emergency exits.

- 4.3 Barriers and fencing.** The need for barriers/fencing on the site and around any attractions and equipment must be carefully assessed and re-assessed during the course of the event. The type and design of fencing/barriers must be fit for purpose, i.e. selected according to the nature of the event and the people attending the event, including small children. Single rope barriers may not be acceptable.
- 4.4 Toilet Provision.** There should be an adequate number of toilets on site and how many needed is based on the number of people expected to attend the event. A rule of thumb is one toilet per 200 people but additional provision should be made for people with disabilities. Ideally it is best to use the toilets already on site or in the building, if these are not available the toilets are best connected to mains services. However event cubicles are also suitable for sites without ready access to electricity and water. Make sure that they are regularly serviced and remain clean and hygienic throughout the event. The toilets should be suitably located and adequately signed. If the event continues into the evening, there must be adequate lighting to and inside them.
- 4.5 Rubbish – clearance and safe disposal.** The public and those putting on displays will create rubbish, often in considerable quantities some of which may be hazardous. Organisers must therefore make the necessary arrangements to deal with this problem. There should be litter bins available throughout the site, and extra bins positioned near to high waste producing areas, such as food stalls.

It is the responsibility of organisers to dispose of all trade waste so a reputable contractor should be contacted to ensure this. It should also be a condition of attending the event that all commercial operators take away and dispose of their own waste. Do not leave a skip on site after the event if possible due to the fire risk.

- 4.6 Electrical supplies, installation and Equipment.** There are numerous hazards arising from any electrical supply and this is especially the case when running outside events. A safe means of temporary supply for external use must ensure:
- All the wiring must be installed by a suitably competent electrician in a safe manner, who should give a written certificate to prove that this has been done.
 - The supply should be protected by a suitable earth fault device – Residual Circuit Device (RCD) of maximum 30 m amp per trip.

- The correct type of connectors for external conditions. Cables that are of the correct standard with no damage to the covering.
- Supply cables must be positioned safely, in order to ensure they are not liable to physical damage, either through door openings, across the surface of walkways or roads.
- Cables are to need positioned in such a way to ensure they do not cause trip or other hazard.
- The safety standard of any installation should be that of the latest edition of the IEE Wiring Regulations.
- Any generator should have a certificate with it to show that it is electrically safe. A safety fence must surround the working parts of the generator. Ant fuel should be stored safely.

Any electrical equipment used at an event must be in a safe condition and be suitable for that type of use. E.g. In the open air where it may be subject to adverse weather conditions. Rubber matting should be used to protect cables from weather and to prevent ripping.

- 4.7 **Entry and exit by the public, including road vehicles.** Entry by the public needs to be controlled and entrances and exits clearly marked. It may also need signs in the street to direct people to the event. Where vehicles are being allowed on site their entrance must be separate from those used by pedestrians. If car parks are being provided they need to be designed and supervised to control risks such as reversing vehicles. Hazards occur where pedestrians and vehicles are mixed and these should be properly controlled. There needs to be provision for emergency vehicle to gain access to the site.

5. Specific activities and attractions:

- 5.1 **Fairground and juvenile amusement rides.** If the event includes fairground and children's rides it is the duty of the organiser to ensure they are operated safely. Every fairground ride must supply a copy of all current mechanical inspection certificates, a risk assessment and proof of £5 million public liability insurance. It is good practice to have a complete list of all equipment that is being supplied to the event so that documentation can be checked against it.

All fairground and amusement rides must be under the control and supervision of a competent adult at all times. During times of high use it may be necessary to increase the level of supervision and support.

Once the equipment is installed it is essential that the attraction is inspected to ensure there are no obvious hazards. Detailed technical assembly checks are the responsibility of the ride owner. It is generally necessary to have spare fencing available at the event to create barriers around rides and generators, where this has not already happened.

- 5.2 **Bouncy Castles.** If the event is to include a bouncy castle or any other inflatable, you will need the owner/operator to provide a copy of all current

inspection certificates, a risk assessment and proof of £5 million public liability insurance. Additionally:

- Check the condition of the inflatable to ensure that it is well maintained and in a safe condition.
- A safety mat (minimum 1" thickness is supplied at the entrance.
- It is securely fixed to the ground with guy ropes and long stakes or mooring straps and these are clearly marked and fenced off.
- The electrical apparatus or generator is fenced off.
- The inflatable is supervised by a competent adult at all times.
- No children using the equipment are higher than the height of any walls.
- The inflatable is operated as per manufacturer's and operator's guidelines.

5.3 Barbecues / hot food retail outlets and similar. These present hazards from the use of or storage of fuel, from naked flames and hot components. Any catering outlet, must provide the organiser with copies of their risk assessments, £5 million public liability insurance their registration documents and food hygiene certificates.

5.4 Firework displays. For major firework or pyrotechnics show there is a need for specialist advice, either from the fire service or specialist company. All these displays should be operated by a company that is a member of the British Pyrotechnists Association. Check the Company or Firers registration at www.bpa-fmq.org.uk. They should also hold a current license certificate and £5 million public liability insurance indemnity. They must provide a detailed risk assessment for the display.

The organiser is responsible for obtaining the necessary permits prior to the event.

All firework displays must meet the defined criteria by the Civil Aviation Authority if close to an airfield.

Detailed guidance is available in HSG 124 – Giving your own firework displays.

It is possible for organisers to fire their own display using category 1, 2, or 3 fireworks, but the guidance in HSG 124 must be followed.

If the firework display is only intended for under 100 spectators then it should be sufficient to follow the instructions on the fireworks, but safe distances quoted in HSG 124 must be followed.

5.5 Bonfires. If a bonfire is a crucial part of the event, the detailed guidance in HSG 124 must be followed, please download from here <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg124.htm>

5.6 Musical entertainment / performances or dancing. This type of entertainment may require a licence. Advice should be sought as early as possible from the Council's environmental health department.

6. Risk assessment:

- 6.1 A risk assessment of the event must be carried out, and be a proportionate response to the hazards and the size of the event. The assessment is a careful examination of what, in the event could cause harm to people attending or working at the event. The aim is to make sure that no-one is hurt or becomes ill as a result of the activities. The Risk Assessment lists all potential hazards then assesses the level of risk before and after remedial measures are in place. Every component of the event needs to be subject to this level of examination. If a risk remains high even after the remedy is in place it is advisable not to include this as an element of the event.

Detailed procedures and risk assessment forms are available in Chapter 2 of the Health and Safety Manual, available at:

<http://trustnet.learningtrust.co.uk/Healthandsafety/Pages/home.aspx>

7. Further advice and assistance:

- 7.1 Further advice and assistance is available from the London Borough of Hackney's Health and Safety Team (Education) on 020 8356 2278