Allianz

Education

Allianz Secondary School
Risk Assessment

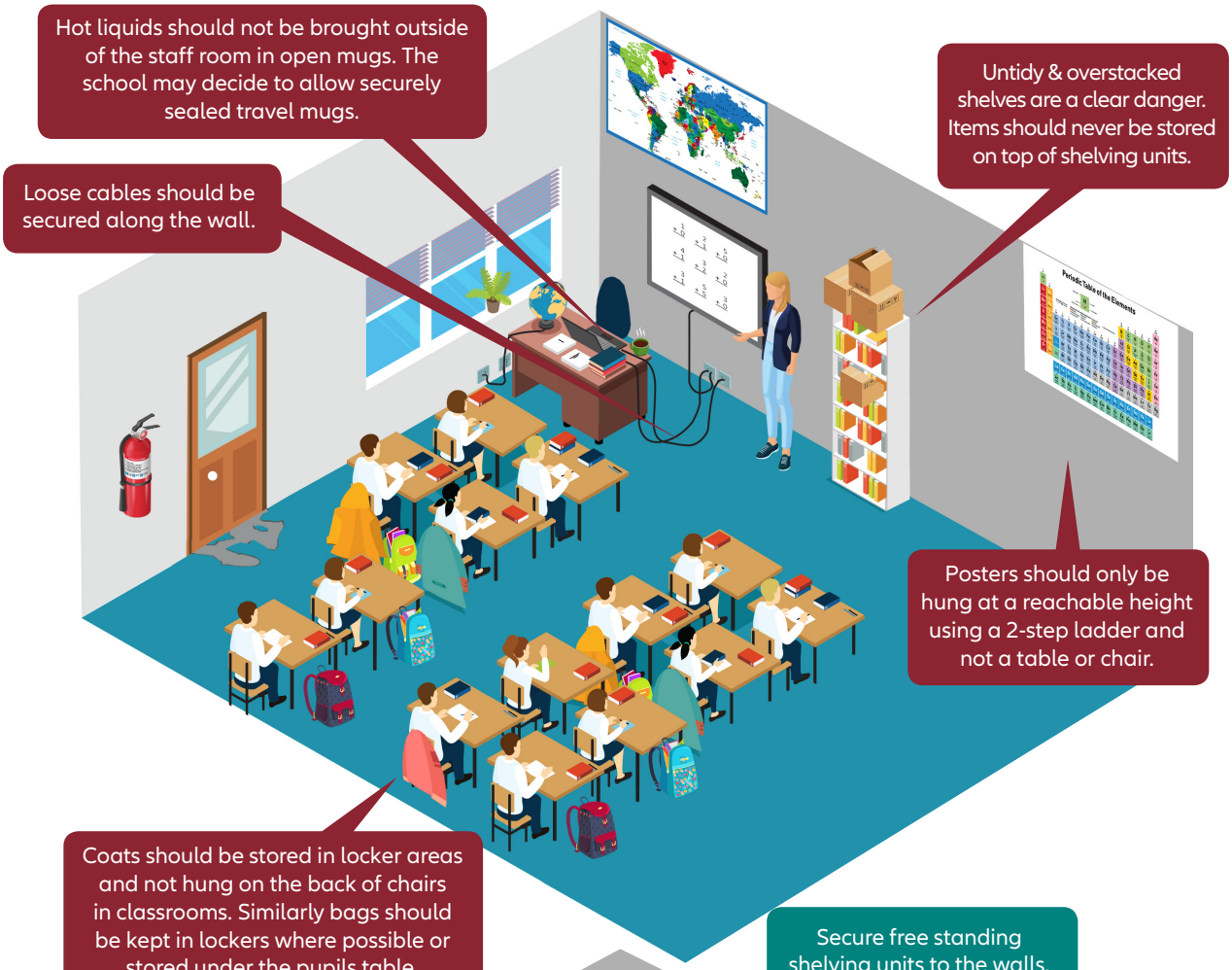
Allianz Secondary School Risk Assessment

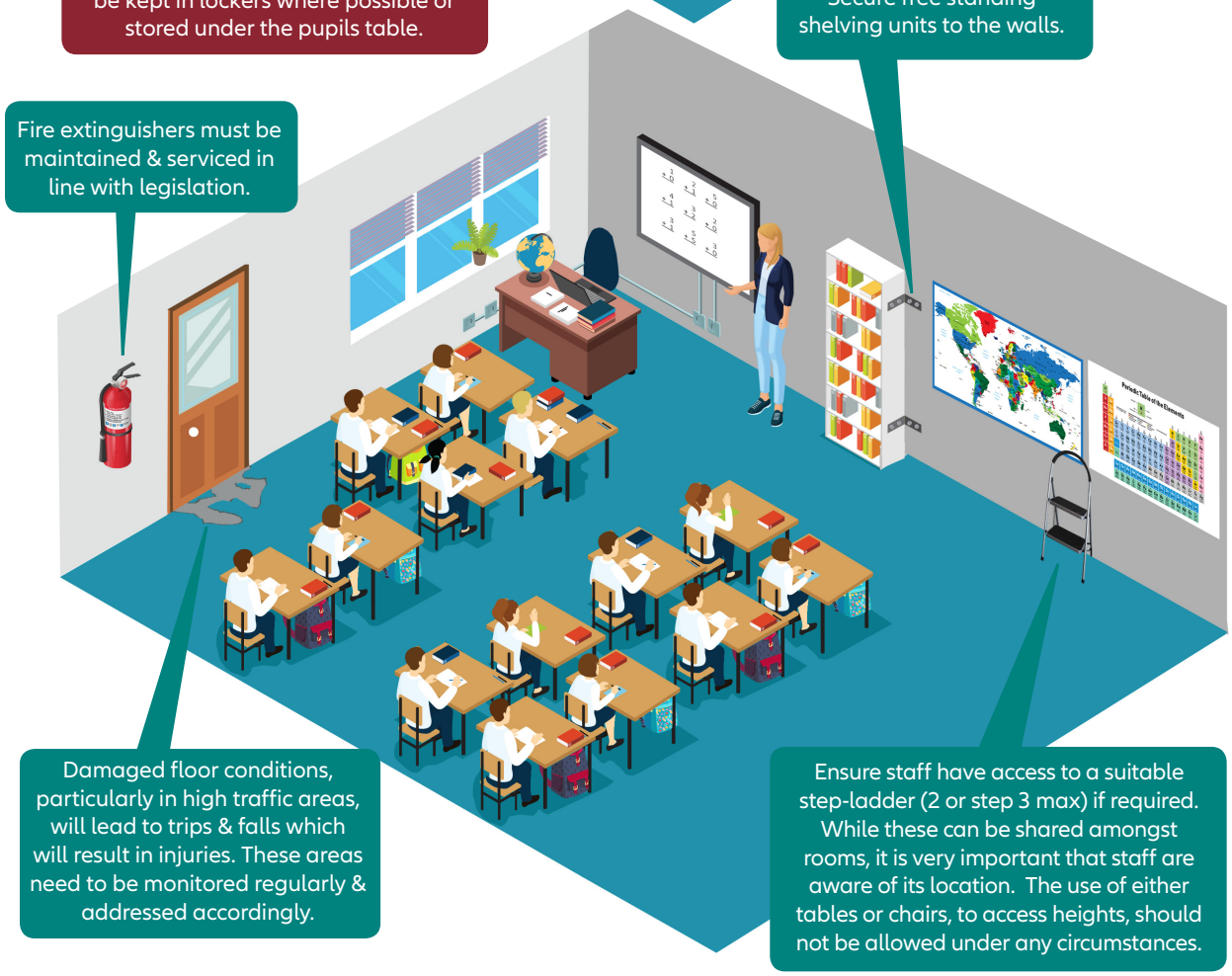
It is a legal requirement for a school to compile a safety statement. The schools board of management have the ultimate responsibility to ensure this is complete and that they create a safe environment for all users of the school. Therefore health and safety should be an ever present item on the board of managements agenda. All members of staff have responsibility for health and safety in the school and the school needs to have processes and structures in place to facilitate staff members to adhere to their responsibilities.

A key component of a schools safety statement and safety structure is the periodic completion of risk assessments. A risk assessment is essentially the identification of hazards and then suitable assessment of these risks with the intention to eliminate, reduce and control the risks. The diagram below illustrates a simple structure schools can implement in order to ensure all areas of the school are reviewed and all staff members are involved.

In this booklet we have identified a number of recurring hazards that we have seen in school settings throughout the country. The following scenarios aim to give schools a flavour of what to look out for and address.

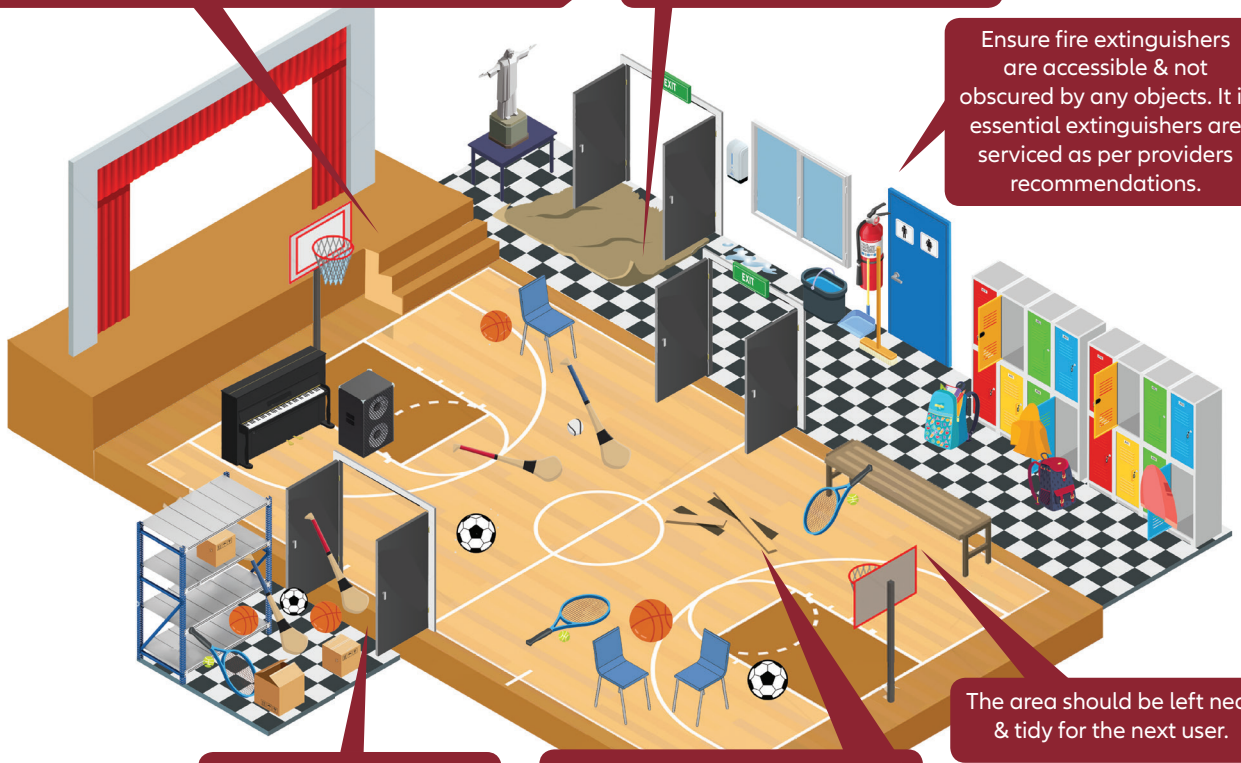
Classroom

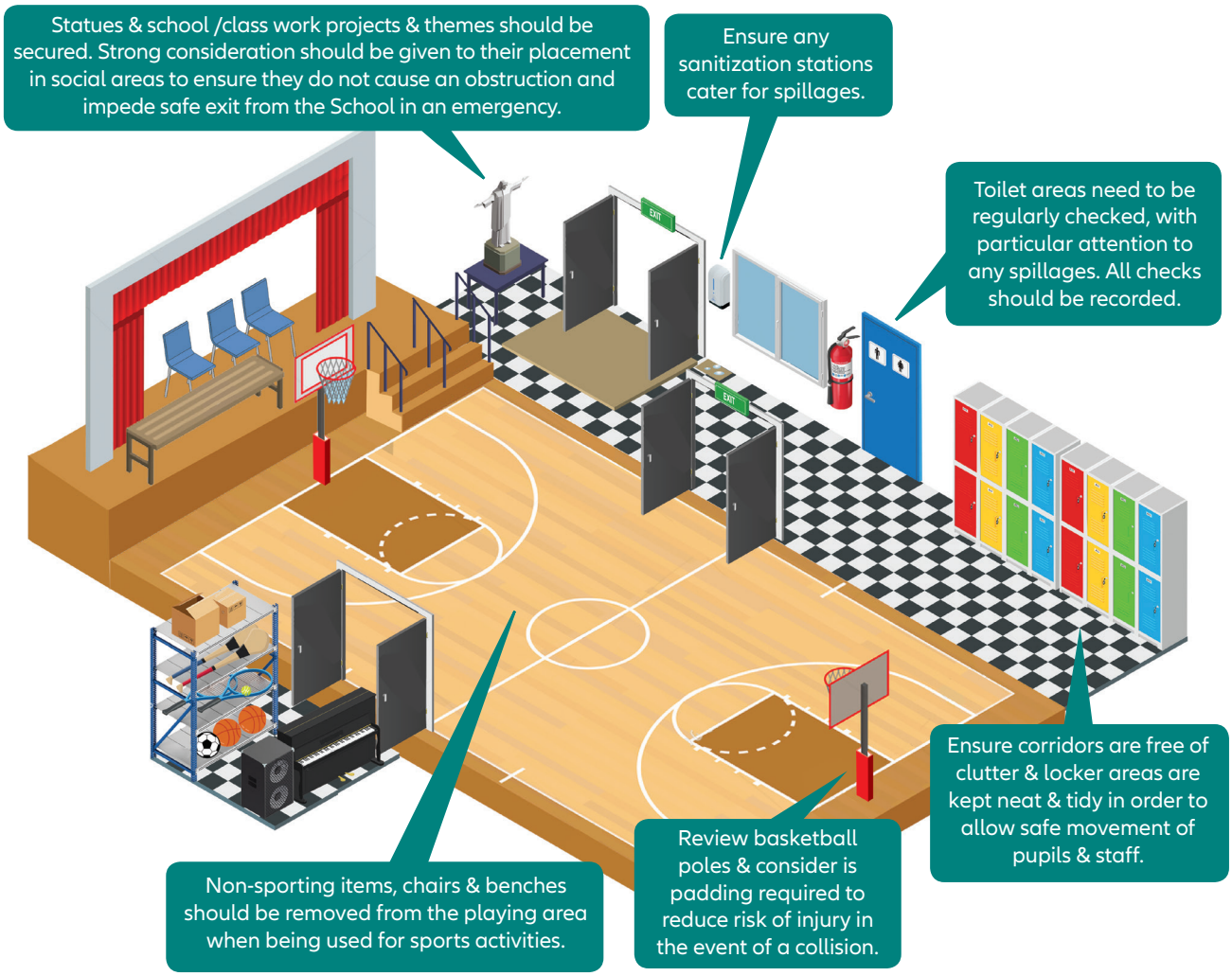

Hot liquids should not be brought outside of the staff room in open mugs. The school may decide to allow securely sealed travel mugs.
Loose cables should be secured along the wall.
Untidy & overstacked shelves are a clear danger. Items should never be stored on top of shelving units.
Posters should only be hung at a reachable height using a 2-step ladder and not a table or chair.
Coats should be stored in locker areas and not hung on the back of chairs in classrooms. Similarly bags should be kept in lockers where possible or stored under the pupils table.


Secure free standing shelving units to the walls.
Fire extinguishers must be maintained & serviced in line with legislation.
Damaged floor conditions, particularly in high traffic areas, will lead to trips & falls which will result in injuries. These areas need to be monitored regularly & addressed accordingly.
Ensure staff have access to a suitable step-ladder (2 or step 3 max) if required. While these can be shared amongst rooms, it is very important that staff are aware of its location. The use of either tables or chairs, to access heights, should not be allowed under any circumstances.

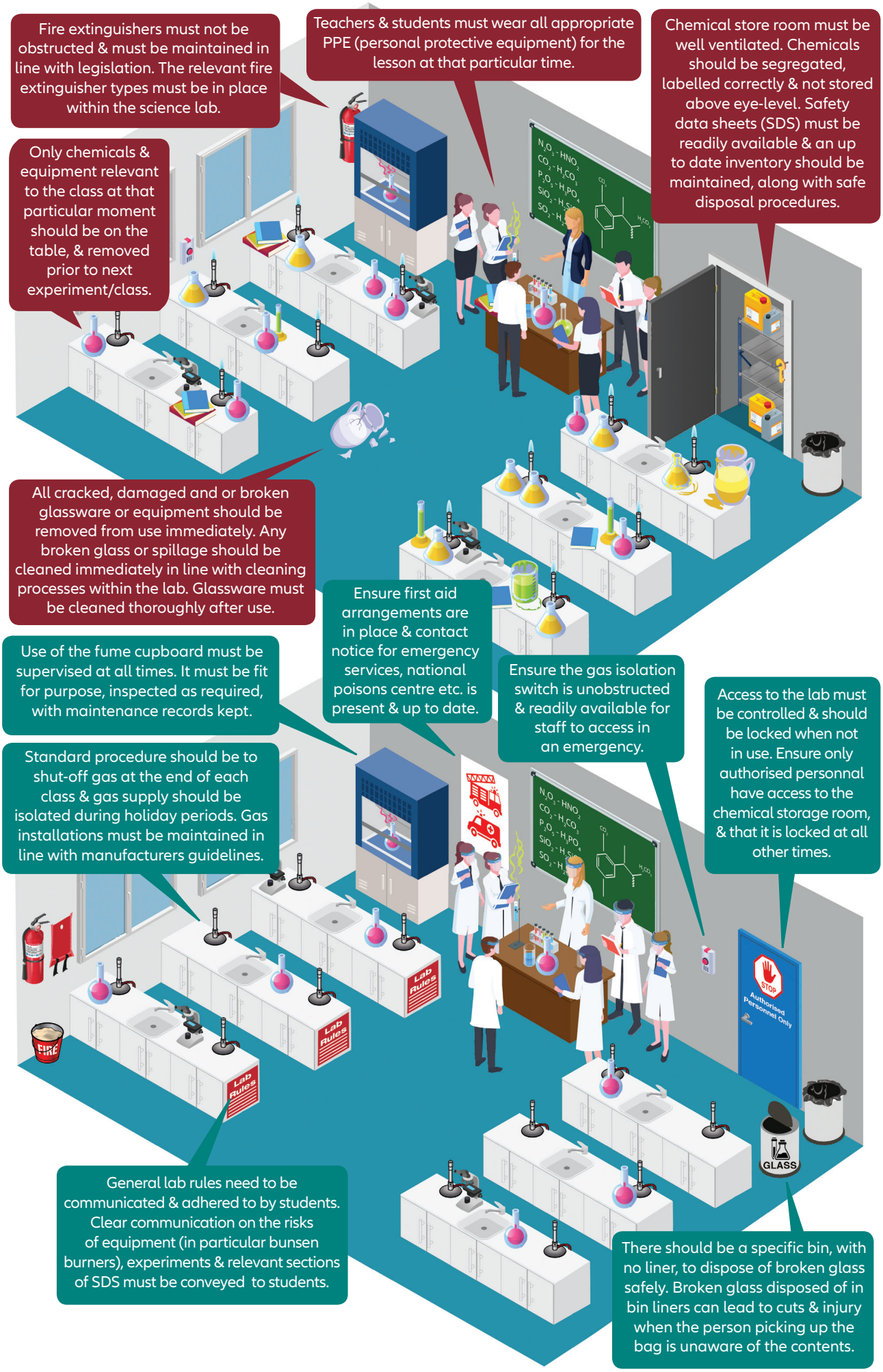
Staffroom & office area

Sports hall & corridors

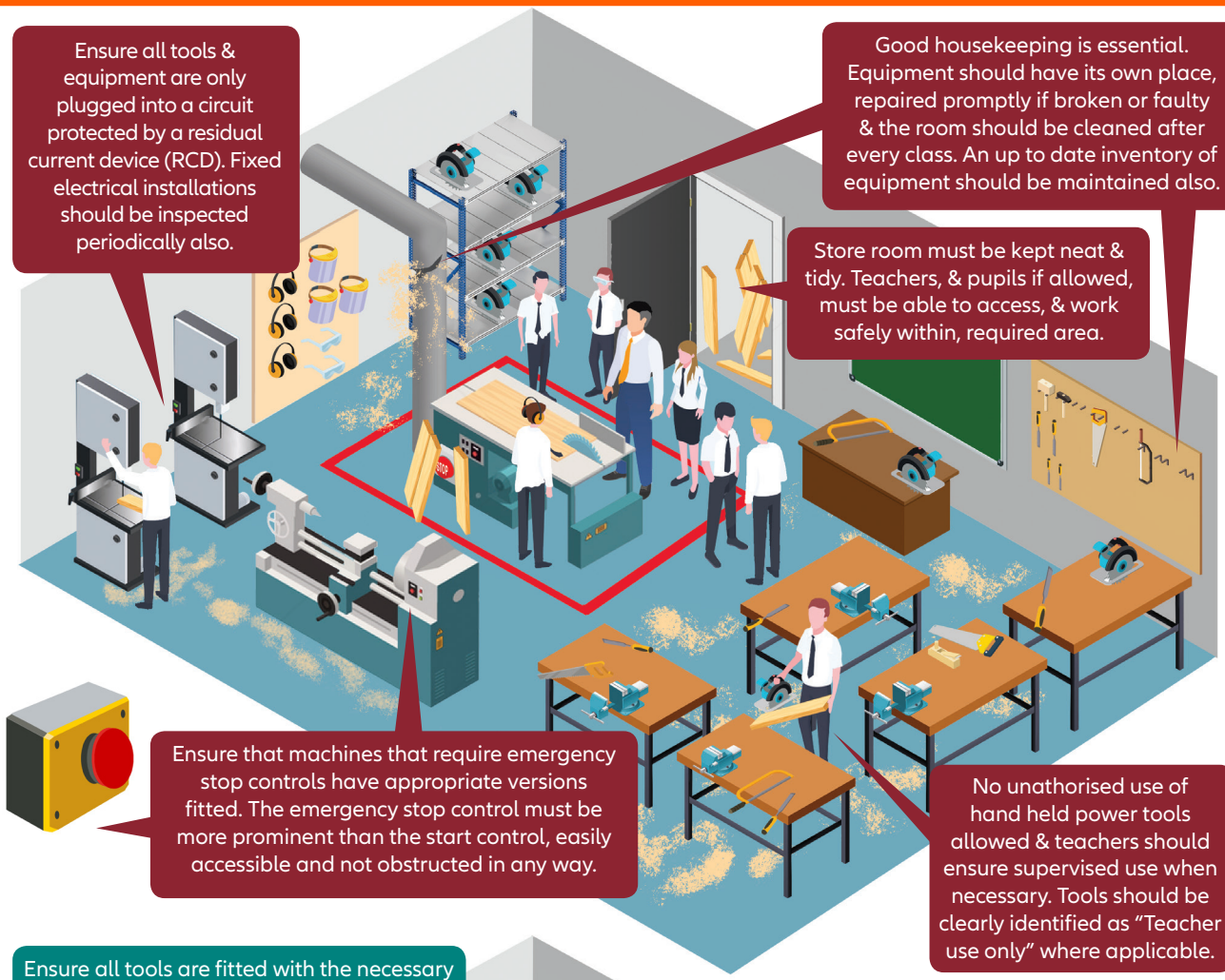


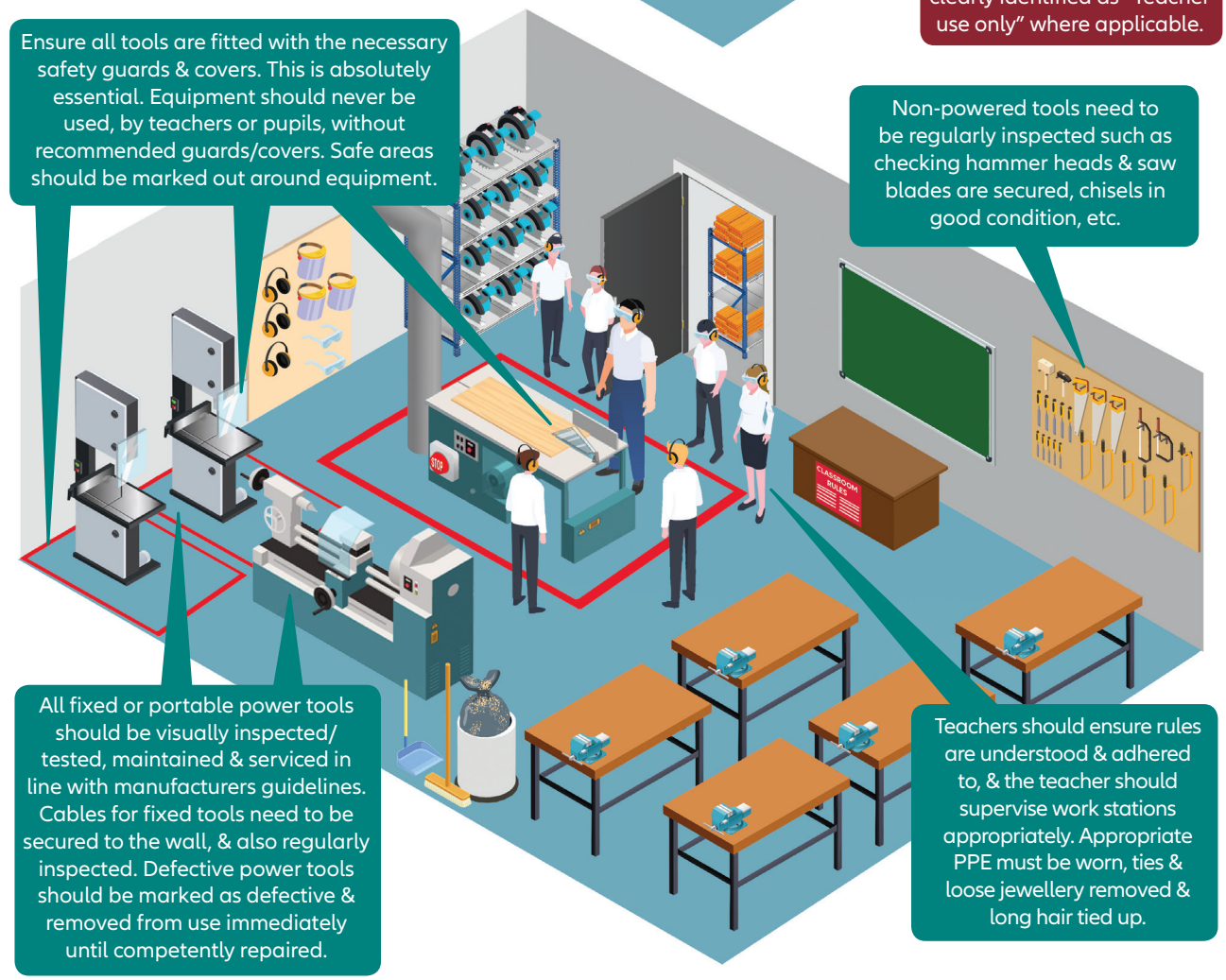


Science classroom



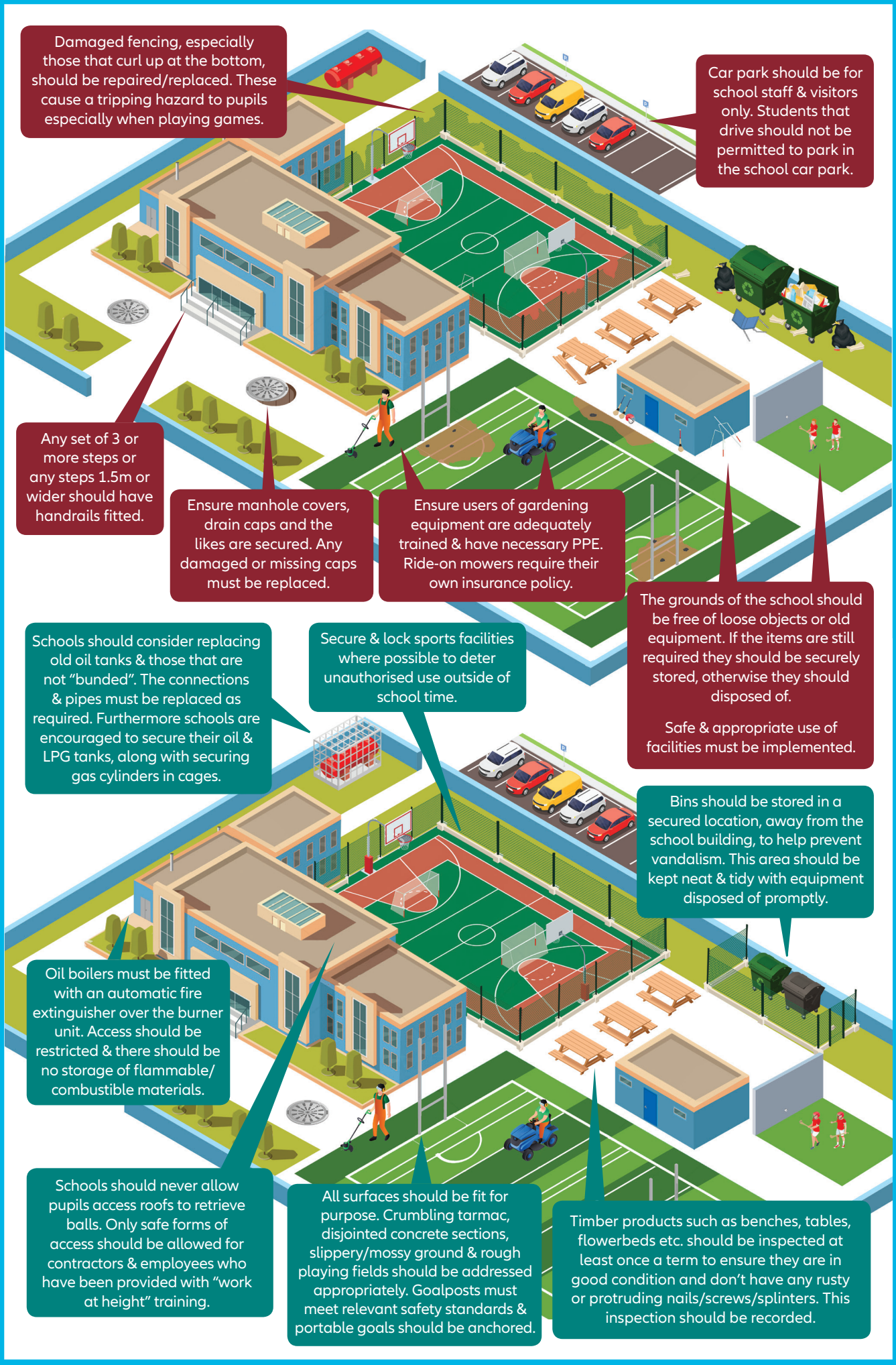
Woodwork / engineering classroom





Art classroom

School grounds



Other areas to consider:

Safety statements: The school has a legal obligation to have a written safety statement in place and to implement and monitor any safety measures identified in the safety statement. The safety statement must be up to date and available to all and should include risk assessments. It should show that hazards have been identified with risks assessed and eliminated or controlled. The Health and Safety Authority have free-to-access guidelines in relation to safety statements, risk assessments and also provide on-line training modules, www.hsa.ie.

Training records: Records of all training carried out should be maintained and kept up to date for each individual staff member.

School security: Schools should regularly review security measures to prevent unauthorised members of the general public accessing the premises either by vehicle or foot. Gates should be locked after school, and signs should be put in place discouraging members of the public accessing the school.

CCTV: Some schools may need to consider CCTV to help prevent trespassing and vandalism. Where CCTV is installed, appropriate signage advising same must be clearly visible, and the school should have a CCTV policy in place.

Control of contractors: School management should require any contractor employed by them to provide written confirmation that they are in possession of suitable and adequate liability insurance cover. A minimum limit of indemnity of €6.5 million is recommended for Public Liability and €13m for Employers Liability. Formal risk assessments and supporting method statements should be requested from contractors for any significant contracts and/or contracts involving significant hazards. For work involving any application of heat, school management or project management must request a copy of the contractors written Hot Works Permit. This should set out necessary safety precautions to be taken.

Emergency lighting: Schools should consider the need to install emergency lighting. Existing systems need to be inspected and maintained to ensure they remain in line with current regulations. All exits from the building must be clearly identified with the appropriate signage.

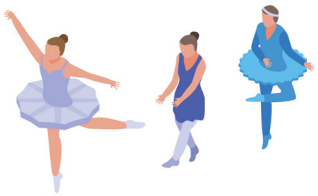
Its recommended to run a fire drill every term in order to practice a safe exit in the event of an emergency and identify any potential issues. Results should be recorded.

Fire doors: Where fire doors are installed, schools will sometimes clip open in order to facilitate the free flow of students and to assist those students with physical difficulties etc. The school should discuss this process with the fire wardens and look to install magnetic clips connected to fire alarms or procedures to a ensure the doors close in the event of a fire alarm activation.

Fire detection and prevention: Schools should consider automatic fire detection and alarm system if not already in place. Any defects or faults with existing systems should be addressed without delay.

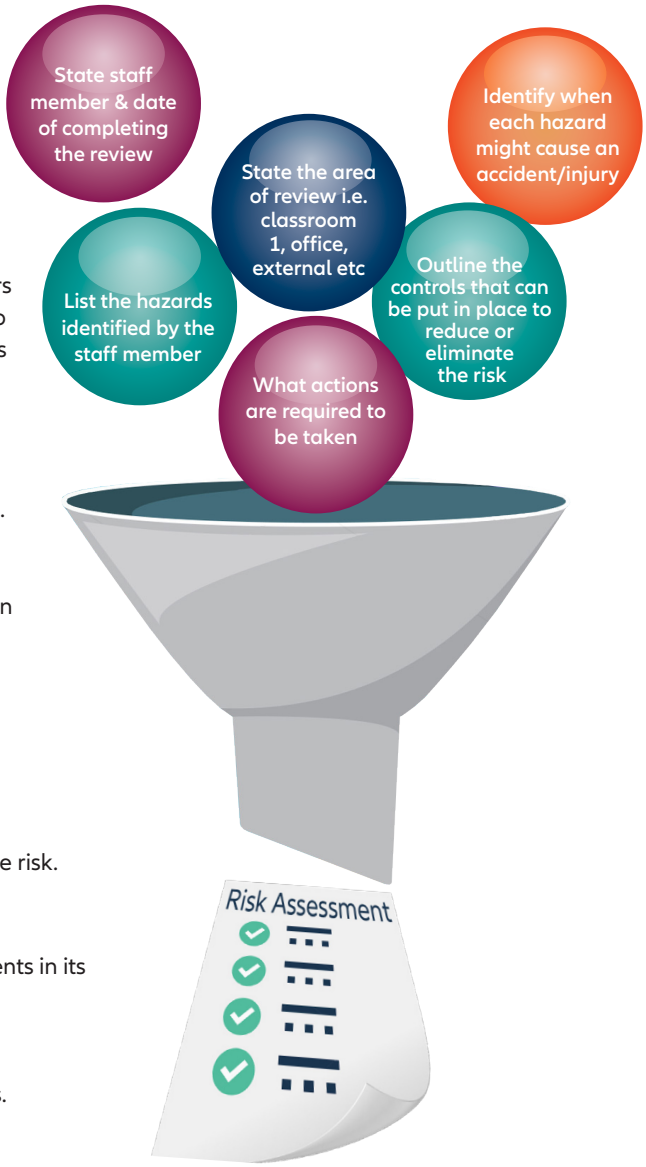
Fire extinguisher training: Staff members should be trained how to use fire extinguishers at the school and shown the correct type of extinguisher to use on the different types of fires. In the event of a fire, staff should only use the extinguisher when safe to do so, and prioritise their own safety.

Third party providers: The school should ensure that they have confirmnation of adequate insurance for all third party providers (travel, catering, IT, cleaning etc.). Confirmation from their insurers should be produced and examined by the school annually to ensure the necessary insurances are in place.



Third party use of school facilities: School management must ensure that all external groups who use the school facilities (e.g. the sports hall, classrooms, sports facilities) have suitable liability insurances in place. Copies of insurance documents for each group should be requested on an annual basis, along with written confirmation the group have their own child safeguarding procedures in place if dealing with minors (do not request a copy of the procedures). It is best practice for schools to have lease agreements in place with all third party users.

Completing a risk assessment



Completing a risk assessment may seem daunting to a teacher or staff member who has not completed one previously. Ultimately staff members are best placed to complete the risk assessment as they are the ones who know the school building best, its quirks, its nuances and how staff, pupils and visitors interact with it.

Providing a template to staff members to complete the risk assessment is a simple but important step. A standard template adds consistency throughout the school if all staff members are completing the same form.

There is no correct or incorrect format or template to completing a risk assessment but there are essential components that should be included in your template.

- State the area of review i.e. classroom 1*, office, external etc.
- State staff member and date of completing the review.
- List the hazards identified by the staff member.
- Identify when each hazard might cause an accident/injury.
- Outline the controls that can be put in place to reduce or eliminate the risk.
- What actions are required to be taken.

The HSA website has lots of useful information and sample risk assessments in its dedicated Education section, https://www.hsa.ie/eng/Education

*Where individual risk assessments are completed on classrooms, its acceptable to combine these into one risk assessment identifying all risks.

A simple example is as follows:

Area: Classroom 1	Date: xx/xx/xxxx	Staff member: John Doe	
Hazard identified	**Who is at risk & when**	**Controls**	**Action required**
Mat at door is upturned & torn	Anyone entering the room is at risk of tripping	Remove the mat immediately as it cannot be repaired	Mat to be removed, disposed & replaced. All staff to be aware of the danger damaged mats pose, and notify a nominated person if they identify an issue

Area: External	Date: xx/xx/xxxx	Staff member: Jane Doe	
Hazard identified	**Who is at risk & when**	**Controls**	**Action required**
Discarded & broken equipment left unsecured on site	Pupils/Staff may be injured if in the area. Vandals may use to damage or access the buildings.	Process in place to ensure discarded/broken equipment is secured & then removed promptly.	Process is communicated as required & continually adhered too.

We hope you find this guide to be helpful and useful when completing your own risk assessment.
If you have any questions please contact your local Allianz representative
(details can be found at https://www.allianz.ie/products/schools/schools-insurance/Localrepresentatives.html).
If you are insured through an insurance intermediary, please contact them for assistance.

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