

Safeguarding

Plug Socket Safety



Plug socket safety is often an area that can cause some confusion in early years settings. Do I use plug socket covers or not?

Ofsted do not have a particular stance on socket covers, they would instead direct providers to the EYFS statutory framework - Safety and suitability of premises: Environment and equipment and Risk assessment. It is therefore important that your practice and provision reflect this.

‘Providers have a duty to understand their obligations under the relevant health and safety legislation’. EYFS Statutory framework.

During an inspection, the inspector will observe the premises and discuss how the provider keeps children safe onsite, which will include risk assessment. It is the responsibility of the provider to determine what risk socket covers may pose in their setting, and how they will mitigate the identified risks.

Sockets that comply with BS1363 have an interlocking shutter mechanism which would not allow the insertion of foreign material into the socket holes. Therefore, it is important you know if your sockets comply.

Recent guidance would suggest that the use of socket covers could further increase risk such as creating a fire hazard or even enabling a curious child to put the cover upside down, opening the shutters and exposing the live pin holes which would present a higher risk of electric shock.

Ultimately it is up to the provider to risk assess and take the necessary safety measures to ensure the early years environment is safe and secure for curious little minds to explore!

TASK

Use the information below to reflect and inform your practice, policies, and procedures.

Department of Education response-<https://foundationyears.org.uk/2016/10/dfe-note-on-the-use-of-electrical-plug-socket-coversinserts-in-early-years-provision-in-england/>

RoSPA- <https://www.rospa.com/policy/home-safety/resources/policy-statements/electricity>

NHS-[CAS-ViewAlert \(mhra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/cas/view-alert)

Blog to consider-[FatallyFlawed](#)

“Providers must ensure that they take all reasonable steps to ensure staff and children in their care are not exposed to risks and must be able to demonstrate how they are managing risks 44. Providers must determine where it is helpful to make some written risk assessments in relation to specific issues, to inform staff practice, and to demonstrate how they are managing risks if asked by parents and/or carers or inspectors. Risk assessments should identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis, when and by whom those aspects will be checked, and how the risk will be removed or minimised.”

EYFS Statutory Framework