



London Borough of Merton

CORPORATE GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL STAFF, BUSINESS MANAGERS AND HEAD TEACHERS ON REPORTING ACCIDENTS, INCIDENTS & ACTS OF VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION.

Introduction

As an employer the Council has responsibilities to record **all** workplace accidents/incidents and to report specific accidents/incidents to the enforcing authority, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). There is also a legal requirement to carry out accident/incident investigations and to put in place remedial measures to prevent recurrence.

An accident is defined as:

“Any unplanned event which gives rise to ill health or injury; damage to property, plant, products or the environment; production losses, or increased liabilities.”

Accidents are a major drain on an organisation’s resources in both financial and human terms. As well as the legal requirement to investigate all accidents and incidents, there are sound business reasons for investigating them and preventing re-occurrence even if they do not result in injuries or loss on this occasion.

Accident reporting plays a vital part in assessing the effectiveness of the School’s safety management and is an important tool in monitoring health and safety performance standards across the Council.

This guidance document is split into three sections, each giving detailed information on the different aspects of reporting accidents and incidents. The sections and their contents are as follows:

[Section 1](#) concerns the access to and use of the Accident/Incident Reporting System.

[Section 2](#) contains information on reporting to the HSE as required by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013 and other types of incidents that must be recorded on the Accident Reporting System.

[Section 3](#) provides detailed guidance on accident investigation.

Section 1

Accident/incident recording

All employees and staff involved in an accident or incident at work, including violence and aggression, must report the details on the Council's online accident reporting & incident reporting system available via the Merton Website:

www.merton.gov.uk

From the home page, scroll to the bottom of the page and select 'Services A-Z' then select 'Accident reporting for Merton Staff and Contractors'. This will take you through to the Accident E-Form landing page.

The online report form has been designed to be as user friendly as possible and there is help throughout. It requires the completion of a number of questions that fall into two main parts:

(i) General information about the injured person and the nature of accident.

AND

(ii) The accident investigation. Once a form has been entered onto the system the relevant manager or Head Teacher/Business Manager will be informed via automated email and invited to complete the investigation part of the form.

Accident /Incident reporting to the Enforcing Authority (HSE)

Certain types of accident and incident must be notified to the enforcing authority within prescribed timescales. The Head Teacher or authorised Business Manager is responsible for reporting accidents/incidents under RIDDOR to the HSE from the information provided by the injured person and in accordance with Flow Charts 1 - 3 at the back of this document. During completion of the form, where relevant criteria are met, the Head Teacher/School Business Manager will be provided with a link to report the details to the HSE. More information is available in [Section 2](#).

Accident/Incident Investigation

All Head Teachers are responsible for accident/incident investigation. The main aim of the investigation is to pinpoint the causes of accidents/incidents and take prompt and effective action to prevent recurrence.

If agreed in writing with the Corporate Safety Services Team this task may be delegated to the relevant Business Manager but not to any other member of staff, it should, however, be noted that the Head Teacher will always retain responsibility for ensuring this is carried out.

The accident reporting system guides those undertaking the investigation through the process ensuring they:

- Focus on establishing the facts e.g. what happened; to whom; where; and the outcome
- Focus on how and why, giving the immediate cause or loss, and then the secondary or contributory causes
- Focus on any preventative measures needed to prevent recurrence

More detailed guidance on the investigation process can found in [Section 3](#) and obtained from the Safety Services Section by emailing us at health.andsafety@merton.gov.uk or by phoning 020 8545 3388.

INFORMATION ON REPORTING ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS ONLINE

Completing the online report form

All employees must record the details of their accident, incident, act of violence or verbal abuse onto the online report form. This is the only method permitted for reporting, recording and investigating accidents/incidents. If for any reason the injured person is unable to report it themselves their manager can report the details online on their behalf.

Recording an Accident if you are an Employee

The form is accessible from the Health and Safety for Merton Staff and Contractors page on the Merton Website (www.merton.gov.uk).

If you are unable to enter the details on the system yourself you should inform your manager as soon as possible in order that they can enter the details themselves on your behalf.

If your manager is unable to log onto the system for any reason, or you find their name is not on the manager list for submitting an accident, please contact the Safety Section on 020 8545 3388.

Recording an Accident if you are a Manager

Any accident or incident resulting in a fatality or major injury (as specified above) must be reported to the Corporate Safety Services Team (020 8545 3388) immediately.

You must ensure that an online accident report form is completed within 24 hours of the incident. Ensure the form is fully completed and provides accurate information.

Note: Consider RIDDOR reporting by looking at both the '[Accident /Incident reporting to the Enforcing Authority \(HSE\) RIDDOR](#)' section of this guidance and Flow Chart 2 in [Section 3](#).

Ensure that all accidents or incidents are fully investigated and appropriate measures taken to reduce the risk of recurrence of the incident. Managers can obtain advice and assistance from the Corporate Safety Section where necessary.

Accidents involving non-employees

This includes the following:

- **Pupils**
- **Members of the public**
- **Visitors**
- **Clients**
- **Contractors**

All accidents occurring on Council premises involving a member of the public, pupil, visitor, client, contractor or any other persons affected by the council's activities must be investigated and reported using the online accident reporting form.

If the incident results in a fatality, major injury or injuries needing treatment in hospital inform the Corporate Safety Section on 020 8545 3388 immediately.

Complete an online accident report within 24 hours.

Carry out a full accident investigation and take all reasonable steps to avoid a recurrence

Note: Consider RIDDOR reporting by looking at both the '[Accident /Incident reporting to the Enforcing Authority \(HSE\) RIDDOR](#)' section of this guidance and Flow Charts 1 (Pupils) or 3 (Public) in [Section 3](#), as you may need to report this to the HSE.

Important Notes on Completing the Accident Form

Permissions

There are two levels of access to the Accident Reporting System for schools:

- **Admin:** In most cases, a member of the school's office staff who completes the first part of the form by inputting the accident details then submits it to the relevant Head teacher or authorised Business Manager for investigation and further reporting where necessary.

- **Manager:** Head Teacher or authorised Business Manager who completes the investigation and RIDDOR report where applicable. Managers are also able to fill out the entire form if necessary.

Requesting Access

To request access, navigate to the system homepage, click on 'Request access to the system (New users)' and enter your details in the form. You will need to pick the correct permissions for your role, as outlined above. A member of the team will process the request and you will be notified and sent your login details.

[Home](#) < [Business and consumers](#) < [Health and safety](#) < [Merton staff and contractors](#)

Accident or incident reporting and Potentially Violent Persons (PVP) system

In this section

1. [Accident and incident reporting](#)
2. [Potentially violent person system](#)
3. [School asbestos management](#)
4. [Training](#)

Merton staff, and authorised external parties such as contractors, can use this system to request access and report or investigate accidents/incidents using the relevant links below. You can also reset your password if you are an existing user.

- [Report, view or investigate an accident or incident \(Schools, Merton Managers, Non-Merton users\)](#)
- [Report or view an accident or incident \(Merton Staff with iTrent Payroll Number\)](#)
- [Request access to system \(New users\)](#)
- [Request a password reset or unlock account \(Existing users\)](#)

Resetting your password/Unlocking your account


Your account will be locked after 5 access attempts with an incorrect password, this will require the Safety Services Team to unlock your account and reset your password.

To reset your password for an existing User ID and/or unlock your account, navigate to the system homepage, click on 'Request a password reset or unlock account (Existing users)' and proceed to enter your details. A member of the team will process the request after which you will be notified and sent a new password.

Merton staff, and authorised external parties such as contractors, can use this system to request access and report or investigate accidents/incidents using the relevant links below. You can also reset your password if you are an existing user.

- [Report, view or investigate an accident or incident \(Schools, Merton Managers, Non-Merton users\)](#)
- [Report or view an accident or incident \(Merton Staff with iTrent Payroll Number\)](#)
- [Request access to system \(New users\)](#)
- [Request a password reset or unlock account \(Existing users\)](#)

Filling in the form

- The form is divided into 6 pages, or 7 where the incident involves violence or aggression - each page must be completed before proceeding to the next one.
- Details on each page will **only** be saved when the  button is clicked to go to the next page.
- The form can be partially completed and you can return and complete it later; however, the page you are on **must be completed** or it will not save.
- When all the pages have been completed you will be able to review and edit the details you have entered.
- You must then click the 'Submit' button to mark the form as completed.
- After the form has been submitted you will not be able to make any changes.
- The form will then be processed by the Corporate Safety Section

NOTE! Your session will be timed out after 60 minutes and you will have to login again. **Any unsaved data on the current page will be lost.**

For further assistance on filling out the form, the PowerPoint presentation below takes you through the full process of completing the form as an Administrator or Manager:

[Accident Reporting System – Schools Guide](#)

Section 2

Accident /Incident reporting to the Enforcing Authority (HSE) RIDDOR

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) require employers to report certain types of specified accident and incident within prescribed timescales. The accident reporting system has been designed to automatically determine the need for RIDDOR reporting in most cases based on answers to a set of questions in the Specific Accident or Incident Details section of the form. In order to ensure the specified accident or incident is reported to the HSE on time, the Manager responsible for the injured person is responsible for reporting these accidents/incidents to the HSE in accordance with Flow Charts 1 - 3 in [Section 3](#). If there is any doubt as to whether an incident is RIDDOR reportable please contact the Corporate Safety Section on 020 8545 3388.

The types of accident that must be reported are:

- **Any injury resulting in a fatality**
- **An injury to a member of the public, or pupil, that results in them being taken directly to hospital for treatment from a council owned or managed building.**
- **If a member of staff sustains one of the following:**
 - Bone fracture, excluding fingers, thumbs and toes
 - Amputation of arm, hand, finger, thumb, leg, foot or toe
 - Blinding or permanent sight reduction
 - Crush injuries leading to brain damage or internal organ damage
 - Serious burns (including scalding) which:
 - Covers more than 10% of the body
 - Causes significant damage to the eyes, respiratory system or other vital organs
 - Scalping requiring hospital treatment
 - Loss of consciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia
 - Injuries associated with working in an enclosed space leading to hypothermia or heat-induced illness, resuscitation, hospitalisation for over 24 hours
- **Any injury that prevents a member of staff from carrying out their routine work for more than 7 days.**

Injuries causing Incapacity from Work for More Than Seven Days

RIDDOR requires that work related accidents resulting in the employee being unable to do their normal work for more than 7 consecutive days are reported to the HSE.

You should note that where an injured employee returns to work following an accident and, for more than 7 days is employed on work, which is not that person's normal duties, then the injury is still reportable to HSE.

In calculating the seven or more days, the day of the accident is not included but if the period of incapacity extends over the weekend then Saturday and Sunday would be counted.

Managers must conduct an investigation to establish the cause(s) of the accident, take reasonable immediate remedial actions and record them.

As soon as it is confirmed that the employee has been or will be unable to do their normal work for more than 7 consecutive days you must complete an online accident form.

Upon the employee's resumption of their normal duties, inform the departmental personnel section of the total number of days lost as a result of the accident.

Injuries to Pupils and Visitors

The list of specified injuries does not apply to pupils, visitors or any other non-employees. Accidents to pupils and visitors are only reportable if:

- It results in the death of a person and arose out of or in connection with a work activity; or
- An injury arose out of or in connection with a work activity **and** the person is taken directly from the scene of the accident to hospital for treatment (treatment does not include examination and diagnostic tests).

Most common incidents involving pupils do not tend to be reportable under RIDDOR, as they do not arise directly from the way the school undertakes a work activity.

To determine whether an accident arises out of, or is in connection with work, the Manager should consider whether the incident was caused by any of the following factors:

- A failure in the way a work activity was organised – such as inadequate supervision during a field trip.
- The way equipment or substances were used – for example, lifts, machinery, science experiments etc.
- The condition of the premises – e.g. poorly maintained or slippery floors/playgrounds.

Examples

If a pupil is taken to hospital after breaking an arm during a school class, after falling over a trailing cable, this would be reportable.

If a pupil is taken to hospital due to a medical condition such as an asthma attack, this would not be reportable.

Injuries from Sporting Activities

Organised sports can result in injuries to pupils that are not connected with how the school manages the risks from the activity.

The Manager must determine whether the accident was caused by the condition, design or maintenance of the premises or equipment, or because of inadequate supervision arrangements of an activity. If an accident that results in an injury arises

because of the normal rough and tumble of a game, the accident and resulting injury would not be reportable.

Sporting injuries will be reportable where:

- The condition of the premises or sports equipment was a factor in the incident, e.g. where a pupil slips and fractures an arm because a member of staff had polished the sports hall floor and left it too slippery for sports; or
- There was inadequate supervision to prevent an incident, or failings in the organisation and management of an event.

Playground Accidents

Most playground accidents due to collisions, slips, trips and falls will not be reportable.

Accidents are only reportable where the injury results in a pupil either being killed or taken directly to a hospital for treatment, **and** the accident occurred out of or in connection with a work activity. This includes incidents arising because:

- The condition of the premises or equipment was poor, such as badly maintained play equipment or surfacing.
- The school had not provided adequate supervision, such as where particular risks were identified but no action was taken to provide suitable supervision.

Dangerous Occurrence

These must be reported even if they do not result in an injury. The types of dangerous occurrences are wide ranging and include things such as building collapse, scaffold collapse, boiler explosion, explosions, chemical escapes etc.

Inform the Safety Section on 020 8545 3388 immediately.

Take all reasonable steps to make the area safe and carry out a full investigation.

Complete an online accident report within 24 hours retaining a hard copy of the form for at least three years.

Accident/Incident Investigation

Managers are responsible for the initial accident/incident investigation. The main aim of the investigation is to pinpoint the causes of accidents/incidents and take prompt and effective action to prevent recurrence. The online system guides those undertaking the investigation through the process ensuring they:

- Focus on establishing the facts e.g. what happened, to whom, where and the

outcome

- Focus on how and why, giving the immediate cause or loss, and then the secondary or contributory causes
- Focus on any preventative measures needed to prevent recurrence

Please also see [Section 3](#) for more detailed guidance on how to undertake an accident investigation.

Acts of Violence at Work

Complete the online accident form including the violence at work section within 24 hours of the incident.

Ensure that all acts of violence are fully investigated and appropriate measures taken to reduce the risk of recurrence of the incident.

Upon employee's return to work you need to consider the number of days the employee was absent from work as a result of the incident. If this exceeds 7 days the incident is reportable under RIDDOR.

Road traffic accidents

Reports relating to road traffic accidents relating directly to work activities must be reported using the online accident form.

Examples include:

- vehicle loading / unloading
- refuse collection
- traffic accidents arising out of construction
- maintenance and repair activities on or immediately adjacent to the road (road line painting, mowing roadside verges etc.) that involve vehicles on public roads.
- Injuries sustained by Council/School employees in a normal road traffic accident such as a collision must be reported using the online accident reporting form.

Confidentiality

Accident reports, investigations and the information contained within them are to be treated in strictest confidence.

Section 3

GUIDANCE ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

What is the purpose of an Accident Investigation?

Accidents, dangerous occurrences, near misses and property damage can have high human and financial costs. They are often the cause of unnecessary misery and can threaten someone's livelihood. The Head teacher is responsible for putting in place arrangements for identifying, recording and investigating ALL relevant incidents. This section aims to assist in implementing a system that will enable a manager to:

- ascertain both the immediate and underlying causes (there is rarely a single cause) of an incident;
- put in place measures to prevent a recurrence (which may need to be done straightaway);
- re-appraise existing risk assessment(s);
- review existing control measures;
- identify activities or jobs causing the greatest number of incidents; and,
- obtain details, which might be needed if the incident becomes subject to an insurance claim or legal action.

The immediate priorities after an incident are to treat the injured, deal with the immediate emergency and make the workplace safe. However, during any rescue, subsequent clearing up and investigation it is important that as much care as possible is taken to avoid the destruction of any evidence that an Inspector from the enforcing authority might require during their investigation.

What are the Key Points in Accident Investigation?

The main aim of any accident investigation is to pinpoint the causes of an incident or accident and take prompt and effective action to prevent recurrence. The key points a manager should consider during the investigation are:

- The organisation: including relevant policies, standards, procedures and rules;
- The job: including where relevant, the substances, procedures, equipment and premises in use; and,
- Personal factors: including people's behaviour, suitability and competence to carry out the work.

Managers must examine incidents and accidents in sufficient depth so that immediate causes and the underlying failures of systems for managing health and safety are identified. As well as immediate and early remedial action managers may need to make longer-term changes. Improvements might include:

- Giving training in manual handling techniques
- Substituting a washing-up solvent with something less hazardous
- Changing a procedure or other system of work
- Instituting health surveillance
- Providing an interlocking guard on a piece of machinery and,
- Amending the health and safety policy and risk assessments.

Which incidents need Investigation?

Managers should be guided by the significance of the incident when deciding what to investigate and on the type and depth of the investigation. They should consider not only the actual consequences but also the potential outcome. The more serious the event or the greater its potential to cause harm, then the greater the effort to be applied.

Incidents needing investigation include:

- a) all injuries, dangerous occurrences and cases of occupational ill health;
- b) fires and spillages; and,
- c) near misses and property damage - incidents of this type, which can also cause loss and may be potentially very serious, merit investigation; the remedial action taken may help prevent an injury in the future.

How does a Manager find out about such incidents?

A positive safety culture is likely to encourage people to report incidents including near misses. Managers might consider regular checks of other sources such as first-aid treatment and health records, maintenance reports etc. to help identify incidents.

Managers should consider notifying Directors/Assistant Directors/Heads of Service as appropriate regarding some types of accident or incident so that decisions can be taken about any immediate remedial action and about the nature of the investigation (it may be necessary for a formal accident investigation to be carried out).

Who should undertake the Investigation?

Managers are required to investigate, with help as appropriate from the Corporate Safety Section. The level of management involved will generally be related to the actual or potential significance of the injury, ill health or loss, but in most cases, there will be an immediate inspection, possibly by the supervisor who can ensure that important evidence is not lost.

Safety Representatives

Are entitled to carry out inspections where there has been a reportable accident or dangerous occurrence or where a reportable disease has been contracted. Managers may be present during these inspections and should provide reasonable facilities for independent investigation by Safety Representatives and private discussions with the employees they represent.

Under normal circumstances a joint inspection between employers and Safety Representatives will be carried out.

Training

Accident Reporting and Investigation training is available online. For further details please contact the Safety Section on 020 8545 3388 or at health.andsafety@merton.gov.uk.

Checklist for Incident Investigation and Reports

Managers should use the following checklist to structure investigations and written reports. The online accident reporting system must be used for reports of all incidents in Merton.

Obtain basic facts

- names of injured/ill employee(s)/witnesses/people early on the scene
- condition of plant
- substances in use or present
- layout
- place, time, conditions
- injury/ill health/damage/process disruption
- make use of camera, sketches, measurement to record the undisturbed scene

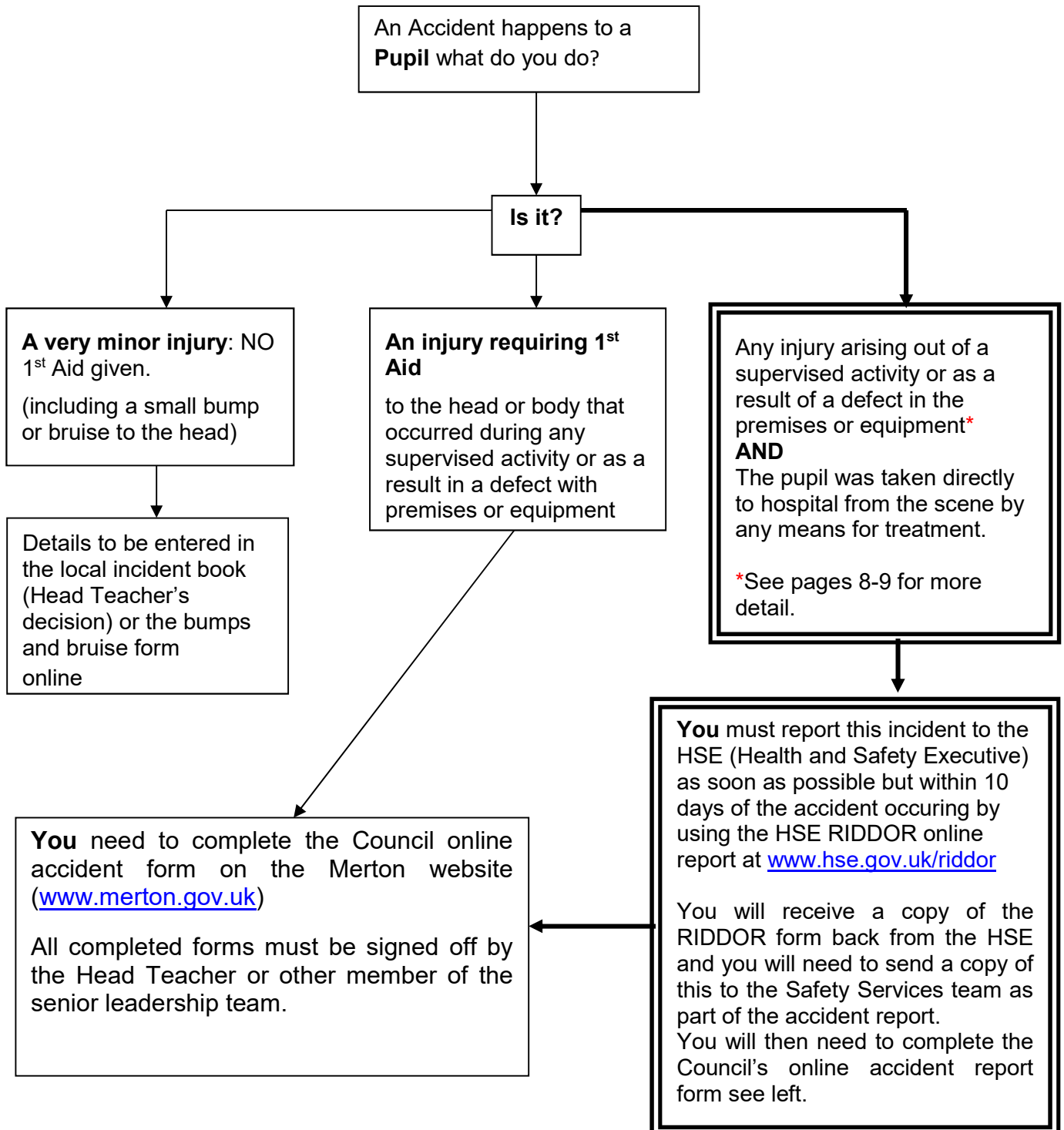
Establish the circumstances

What was being done at the time and what happened?

- immediate causes
- events leading up to the incident
- competence, e.g. what instructions and training were given before the event and how much experience in the job did the people involved (including managers and supervisors) have?
- what were the established methods of work and procedures?
- behaviour and actions of individuals
- role of supervision and management and,
- has something similar happened before?

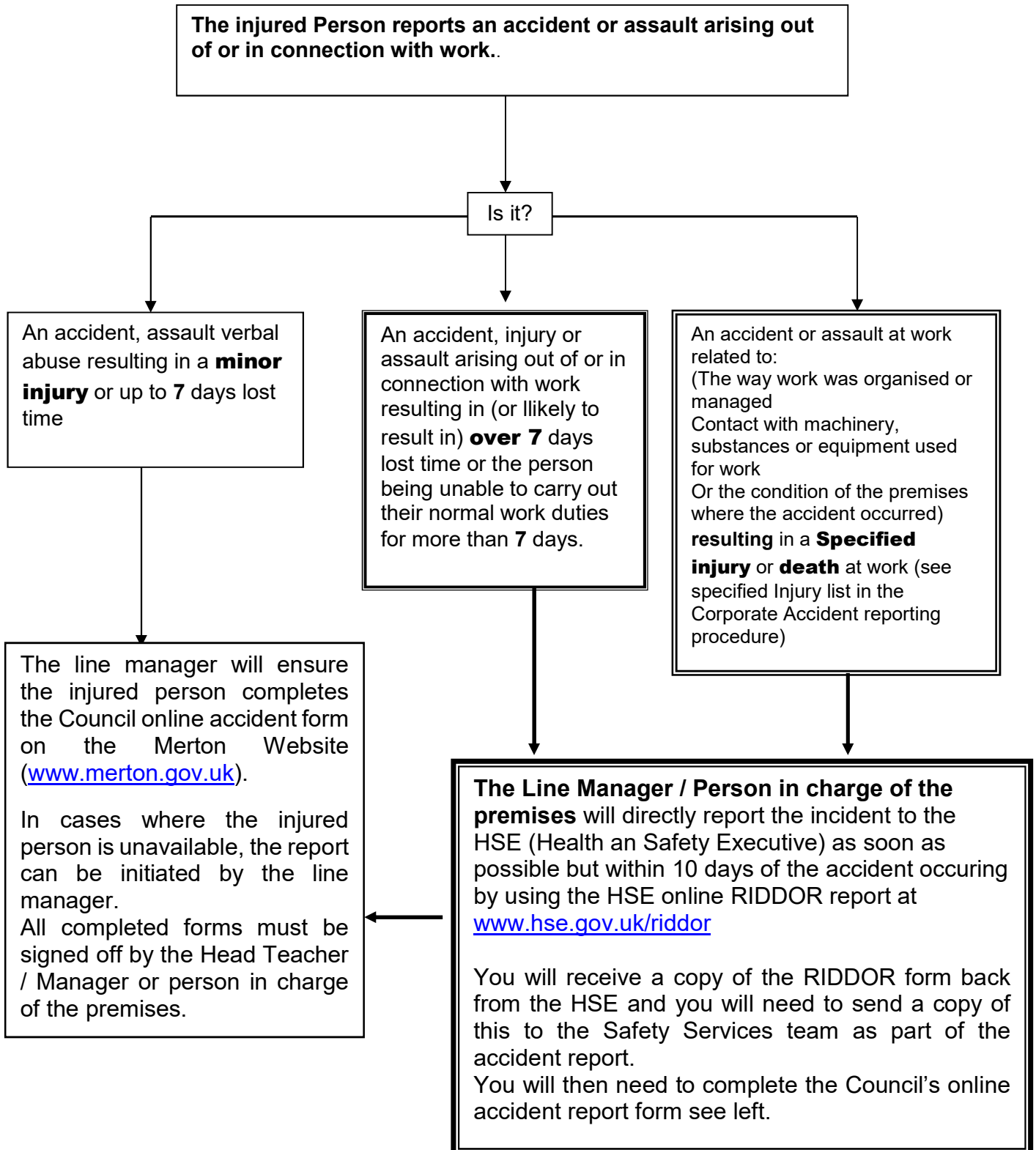
FLOW CHART 1

Accident reporting procedure for accidents involving PUPILS



FLOW CHART 2

Accident Reporting Procedure for accidents and incidents relating to MEMBERS OF STAFF (including school staff), SELF-EMPLOYED PERSONS and CONTRACTORS working on our premises.



FLOW CHART 3

ACCIDENT and RIDDOR Reporting Procedures for accidents occurring to MEMBERS OF PUBLIC, visitors and others.

