

18 March 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians & Teachers

I hope this letter finds you well, caring for one another and keeping each other safe.

To date the COVID-19 virus has caused much confusion, worry and stress. These are unprecedented, challenging times but as a society, the people of Northern Ireland have faced tough times in the past, we can and will get through this together.

Normally at this time of year as an organisation the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) begin to plan our "Be aware Kids" Child Safety on Farms Campaign. Unfortunately due to the circumstances we find ourselves in this campaign is unlikely to go ahead. Given that we still need to get out our safety message to farmers and their families in any way possible. The Government guidance is being updated on a daily, sometimes hourly basis and as it stands it seems as though the schools will be off for an extended period beginning quite soon.

With the schools off, children and young people will spend longer periods on their farm and we need to ensure children are aware, more than ever about the dangers they could face whilst on farm. We also need to ensure that children are being entertained and educated so far as possible and with that the HSENI website may be able to help.

Primary School children undertake part of the curriculum which is entitled "the world around us" and farm safety could be one component of this. We have a wealth of information and guidance on child safety on our website, please visit the following link to access this guidance and all our resources:
www.hseni.gov.uk/articles/be-aware-kids-child-safety-farms-campaign

There are multiple resources available for both key stage 1 and key stage 2 children, their parents and teachers. Some resources include colouring pages, word search, our video's "Dangerous Playground" aimed at children aged 4 to 8 years old and "Farm Safe" aimed at children aged 8 to 11 and guidance booklets developed and aimed specifically at children.

There is also a farm safety app "Farm Secure" which can be downloaded to a mobile phone or other mobile device, this can be retrieved via the link mentioned above.

We will endeavour to keep farmers updated also via social media, press articles and other means possible to remind everyone of the dangers you face on the farm.

**Health and Safety Executive
Northern Ireland**

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As I said we are facing uncertain times with regards the COVID-19 virus but we cannot risk having farm incidents occur.

Please look after one another.

If you have any queries in relation to farm safety please visit HSENI's website for guidance otherwise do not hesitate to contact HSENI on 0800 0320 121 or alternatively e-mail us mail@hseni.gov.uk

Dr Bryan Monson

Deputy Chief Executive, HSENI

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