

Press release: School visits to talk water safety

The visits to schools around Marston-on-Dove, followed a number of reports over recent weeks of children playing on weirs, which are often used by the Environment Agency to monitor river flows.

During the talks schoolchildren heard about the dangers of the water around weirs, some of which are not always obvious, including strong underwater currents and sudden changes in water depth. They were also given information about how they could avoid these risks by taking note of warning signs, not walking or climbing on weirs and avoiding swimming near weirs, locks, bridges or other structures on rivers.

Emma Smailes, Operations Manager from the Environment Agency said:

We know that children love to explore the outdoors, especially during summer holidays, and we want to help them remain safe whilst doing so. That is why we felt it was important to talk to the children directly to remind them of the potential dangers when playing near structures in rivers.

We would also encourage parents and guardians to speak to their children, teenagers and young adults to warn them about the dangers and basic safety points when out having fun.

David Walker, Leisure Safety Manager from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents said:

At this time of year it's especially important for parents to have a conversation with their family about the risks of open water, particularly in the areas where it's prevalent.

Many of the risks aren't obvious, such as weirs, and the effects of cold water shock. It's important to think about this in advance so that if, on the rare occasion, you see someone in trouble or get into trouble yourself, you know what to do.

If you want to go for an outdoor swim, it's always best to go to supervised sites such as lidos. Programmes such as the Swim Safe scheme give children the experience of swimming in open water, teaching them about how to stay safe in a controlled environment

More information about water safety is available from [The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents](#)