



SUBJECT: Not a Play Ground

RECIPIENTS: All E&E Staff

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REF: HSB 145

Scaffold Fall

A company was sentenced after a boy slipped off a scaffold ladder, falling approximately 10 metres.

The Magistrates' Court heard how the boy was able to climb the rungs of a ladder within scaffolding erected by the company by placing his hands and feet on a ladder where the rungs which were not covered. The boy climbed to the top platform of the scaffold and climbed the uppermost ladder to a height of approximately 10 metres. The ladder slipped, causing the boy to lose his balance and fall to the ground, causing life-changing injuries requiring multiple operations. The boy now has no bladder or bowel control and is only able to walk short distances due to being unstable on his feet.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the security arrangements for preventing access to the scaffolding, especially by children from a nearby school, were inadequate.

The company pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and has been fined £160,000 and ordered to pay £22,310 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, the HSE inspector commented: "The death or injury of a child is particularly tragic and a lot of thought must go into securing construction sites. Children do not perceive danger as adults do. The potential for unauthorised access to construction sites must be carefully risk assessed and effective controls put in place".

"This incident could have been prevented by removal of the ladder completely or installing an appropriately sized ladder guard to cover the full width of the rungs."

If you require further assistance or clarification on the subject please contact:

Corporate Health & Safety Advisers (see George section: Corporate > Information for Working > Risk Management > H&S Advisers)