

Rowsley Village Hall

Bouncy Castles & Play Equipment

Summary: It is the responsibility of the **hirer** to make sure public liability insurance is in place, especially if they are supervising the use of the castle/play equipment and not the supplier. **Rowsley Village Hall** does not provide any insurance for the use of bouncy castles and cannot accept any responsibility in the event of any accident.

Many village halls do not allow bouncy castles, and here's why. What happens if a child has a fall and hits their head, possibly with long term injuries? Who is responsible for supervision, and whose insurance covers the accident? Public liability insurance is what is needed, provided by, either:

- the trustees of the Village Hall (the **hall**), or
- the **supplier** of the bouncy castle, or
- the **hirer** (i.e. the person who hires the hall and hires the bouncy castle).

The hall insurance doesn't cover use of bouncy castles, mainly because there will be no-one from the hall present to supervise. The **hall** is only responsible for advising **hirers** that they must put appropriate arrangements in place.

Any responsible **supplier** of a bouncy castle must have insurance, but often their public liability insurance will only cover their own liabilities and so will only apply if they themselves are present to supervise the use of the castle.

The **hirer** must make sure that the **supplier** has insurance and find out what cover is provided if the castle is not being supervised by the **supplier**.

If the insurance cover for the hirer applies only when the castle is supervised by the **supplier**, then the **hirer** is responsible for insurance and for proper supervision. Proper supervision means supervision by an adult over 18. Letting teenagers supervise toddlers will not be allowed by any insurance.

Insurance for a one-off event can be purchased.

Because it's complicated, you can see why many halls find it easier not to allow bouncy castles.

However, because we have the space to allow bouncy castles, and because many hirers appreciate being able to have bouncy castles for their parties, the trustees have decided to allow bouncy castles under the following conditions:

When booking, the **hirer** must declare on the booking form that they intend to have a bouncy castle. This declaration will imply a commitment to make sure that:

- The bouncy castle will be supervised at all times by an adult (over 18).
- Public liability insurance will be provided either by the **supplier** or the **hirer**.

Before the actual booking, the **hirer** must confirm that insurance is in place, and must be prepared to provide evidence for this to the booking manager.

The **hall** reserves the right to prohibit the use of the castle, or even to cancel the booking if appropriate evidence is not provided on request.

Please understand that these arrangements are being introduced so that the **hall** trustees and the **hirers** can be sure that proper insurance is in place enabling **hirers** to run a happy event, knowing that they are properly insured.

Supervision and Safety Instructions

These are basic instructions for supervision and safety which must be followed:

1. The castle must be adequately secured;
2. Soft matting covering hard surfaces must be placed adjacent to the front or open sides;
3. Care must be taken to protect the hall floor.
4. There should be responsible adult supervision, always paying close attention to the children at play during its use;
5. The number of children using the bouncy castle must be limited to the number recommended in the Hire Company's safety instructions. There must be no overcrowding;
6. A rota system for different age or size groups should be operated together with the observance of any age limit of users.
7. All children must be made to remove footwear, hard or sharp objects such as jewellery, buckles, pens and other similar pocket contents.
8. Eating while bouncing or performing acrobatics must not be allowed.

Additionally, the **hirer** should ensure that the Hire Company (the **supplier**):

1. Fully complies with the Health and Safety Executive Guidance Note PM76 – “The Safe Operation of Inflatable Bouncing Devices” (this important guide deals with all aspects of safety);
2. Employs suitably experienced and trained adult personnel, where the Company are responsible for setting up, operation and supervision of the bouncy castle;
3. Provides written evidence of a current Public Liability Insurance Policy with a Limit of Indemnity of at least £5 million. This insurance is to cover the liability of the Hire Company. **Note that this is unlikely to extend to cover the hirer of the equipment.**
4. Provides written instructions about the safe setting up, operation and supervision of the equipment, and that the name and address of the manufacturer or supplier is clearly marked upon it.