

Selecting A Contractor

The following questions can be used to assist in the process of selecting a competent contractor:

- Does the contractor have an up-to-date Health and Safety Policy?
- Are the main health and safety responsibilities defined within the contractor's organisation?
- Does the contractor have adequate Employer Liability Insurance and Third party and Public Liability Insurance?
- Does the contractor have access to professional advice on health and safety?
- Has the contractor any written safety procedures or reference manuals?
- What health and safety training has been provided by the contractor for his site manager, supervisors and operatives?
- Has the contractor previously worked in schools and does he understand the particular risks?
- Does the contractor have membership of or accreditation by a Trade Body?
- What is the contractor's system for the maintenance of plant and equipment?
- Does the contractor have a system for the reporting and investigation of accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences?
- What is the contractor's system for assessing the competence and resources of his subcontractors? (if applicable)
- Are the contractor's risk assessments and method statements applicable to the work he is going to carry out in your school? Has he taken into account the presence of children in an occupied building?
- Ask for documentary proof of the above items as applicable. The questions below may be helpful:

QUESTIONS FOR CONTRACTORS

- What experience do you have of working in schools?
- How familiar are you with the potential hazard in schools?
- Have you worked on this type of project before? What are the main problems?
- Can you provide existing risk assessments or safety method statements for a similar job?
- Can you supply references from previous, similar projects?
- Do you have a health and safety policy?
- Has the HSE ever taken action against your activities?
- What are your health and safety procedures?
- Will you provide a Safety Method Statement for this job?
- What safety checks do you make on equipment and materials?
- Are you a member of a trade/professional body?
- How do you ensure your subcontractors are competent?
- How do you prepare them for working safely while on site?
- What health and safety training do you provide? Ask for certificates of competence and attendance at training.
- How is information about health and safety passed on to staff and subcontractors?

- Can you show us your training programme and records?
- How do you plan to supervise this job?
- Who will be responsible for supervision on site?
- How are changes, which arise during a job, dealt with?
- If you identify a problem, what action do you take concerning your staff or subcontractors?
- Will you report accidents, incidents or near misses to us?
- Can you provide certificates of employer and public liability insurance?