

Date 14 June 2024

Dear Enfield Headteacher,

Each year an average of 400 people drown in the UK. Almost two-thirds of all fatalities happen at inland waters such as canals, rivers, lakes, quarries and reservoirs. In 2023, London Fire Brigade (LFB) attended over 160 calls to people in water including 13 incidents where a person sadly died.

You will be aware of the tragic deaths of two boys who drowned in the River Tyne earlier this year. In London we have been working with the family of 14-year-old Brian Sasu who died in similarly tragic circumstances in July 2022. Brian visited a popular swimming spot at Tagg's Island in Richmond after schools closed early on one of the hottest days of the year. After jumping from the bridge into the water below he went missing and an extensive search and rescue operation began. Sadly, Brian drowned, and his body was found the next day.

Following this tragedy, Brian's family have bravely come forward as supporters of the 'Respect the Water' campaign and are working with LFB to raise awareness of the importance of water safety education and the installation of vital lifesaving Public Rescue Equipment (PRE) along waterways in London.

It is crucial that all agencies work together to prevent these deaths and there are some key actions that you can take to help protect lives in your school community.

Water safety education

Water safety education is an essential part of preventing these deaths. As we approach warm weather and summer holidays please share information about water safety with your residents, especially on channels targeting young people and through the schools in your borough. You can find our safety messaging [here](#).

LFB offer a water education course for schools, which we would recommend to all, especially to schools close to waterways. Schools can request a session through our website [here](#).

Installation of vital lifesaving Public Rescue Equipment (PRE)

All local authorities should carry out a risk assessment of the high-risk waterways and swimming spots in your borough. This should be carried out by a competent person and should look at the equipment already provided, its ongoing maintenance, and if there is a need for new or improved items such as:

- Throwlines and bags
- Lifebuoys and life rings
- Ladders and steps
- Grab chains and hand holds

Please could you share this risk assessment with me to make sure that LFB are aware of the risks and can work with you to reduce them.

Borough Risk Management Plan

LFB's Borough Risk Management Plan sets out how we will protect the people and places in Enfield, you can see it [here](#). Your risk assessment of high-risk waterways and swimming spots in the borough will be used to inform the plan to help best protect Enfield.

Thank you for your continued support in helping to keep our waterways and communities safe and I look forward to hearing from you to discuss.

Yours sincerely

James Ryan
Borough Commander for Enfield