

Safety of Schoolchildren. Rochdale Council Cemeteries.

I am writing to you with regard to the safety of children who may walk through a cemetery to and from school or who may live near or regularly enter one of our cemeteries. As you may be aware in recent years in a Glasgow cemetery a tragic accident resulted in an 8 year old child being crushed and killed and 2 other children seriously injured when a memorial stone collapsed on top of them whilst they were playing in the cemetery, apparently climbing a tree. This has highlighted the need to raise awareness again with local schools about the dangers posed by unstable memorials in cemeteries.

Incidents of this nature are thankfully rare. The council has a programme of inspection and repair of memorials in place within its own cemeteries aimed at reducing the risks posed by toppling memorials. Children are of course welcome to walk through the cemetery but for their safety they should stay on the pathways and not take short cuts over the grave plots between headstones. By keeping to the proper pathways and following a few common sense guidelines the risk to children whilst walking through the cemetery can be kept to a minimum.

I would be grateful if you could bring to the attention of your pupils and parents the following do's and don'ts when walking through the cemetery.

Do's

- DO- Keep to the proper designated roads and pathways within the cemetery
- DO- Be aware of and give way to traffic in the cemetery
- DO- Watch out at entrance and exit gates for vehicles entering and leaving the cemetery
- DO- keep to the speed limit and be aware of pedestrians when driving through the cemetery

Don'ts

- DON'T - leave the proper pathways or take short cuts across grave plots between headstones
- DON'T - touch or interfere in any way with any memorial headstone in the cemetery
- DON'T - play in the cemetery or climb trees, fences, gates etc.
- DON'T - enter or remain in the cemetery after the closing time

For Information the council operates cemeteries at;

DEARNLEY CEMETERY, Arm Road, Littleborough

DENEHURST CEMETERY. Sandy Lane. Rochdale (Opening September 2015).

HEYWOOD CEMETERY, Rochdale Road East, Heywood

MIDDLETON OLD CEMETERY, St Leonards Street, Middleton

MIDDLETON CEMETERY and CREMATORIUM, Boarshaw Road, Middleton

ROCHDALE CEMETERY and CREMATORIUM, Bury Road, Rochdale

The same advice applies to other similar areas such as churchyards and closed cemeteries.

Please get in touch if I can be any further help to you.