

Safety alert 1

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NOT Socket protectors – You DO NOT need socket covers

Electrical sockets are inherently safe because they already have ‘built in’ control measures. One of the most important being that the live and neutral terminals are covered by a shutter, that only opens when the longer earth pin is inserted. Many of you will recognise the standard plastic 13 Amp electrical socket inserts/cover/protectors that have been sold as ‘safety accessories’. However, electrical socket covers are unregulated and can be the wrong dimensions for UK standard sockets. This can damage the socket leading to the socket shutter no longer functioning i.e. the live and neutral terminals left permanently open. Additionally, children can insert the covers upside down, once again exposing the terminals or snap the cover off leaving the earth pin in place but potentially exposing the live and neutral terminals. No socket covers have been approved for use in the UK.

CLEAPSS advice

- Do not use electrical safety socket covers, they are unnecessary and undermine the inherent control measure built in to UK electrical sockets.
- If your school is currently using covers you should take steps to discontinue their use.
- Where socket covers have been used it is important to ensure that the shutter mechanisms are still working.

If in doubt ring CLEAPSS for further guidance.