

Schoolchildren asked to play it safe with trams



Hundreds of children in Edinburgh's West End are being asked to play it safe this summer and stay away from tram construction sites. Project staff paid visits to two City primary schools in the last week to educate pupils on the potential danger which they could face if they stray onto construction sites.

The summer safety road show visited Roseburn Primary School on Monday 18 June 2012 and Balgreen Primary School on Tuesday 26 June 2012, taking the message to more than 500 children. Construction equipment including a mini excavator, dumper truck and safety bus was taken to playgrounds where construction staff explained the hidden dangers of playing on or near construction sites.

Across the UK last year 17 children were injured on construction sites while there was one fatality, according to the latest figures from Health and Safety Executive. Potential danger areas include falls from scaffolding, excavations and machinery, storage of materials or being knocked down and seriously injured.

City of Edinburgh Council Transport Convenor, Lesley Hinds, said: "There has been a great response from the pupils across this series of events.

"Even if children see people playing around tram works, it is always best to tell an adult and not to try and get involved by trying to warn friends or other children, by themselves.

A spokesman on behalf of the Infrastructure Contractor said: "Educating children about the machinery and work processes we

have highlighted why playing on or near construction sites can be dangerous.

“We are currently in the middle of a busy phase of construction and the construction equipment on site should not be seen as playthings.”

As part of the road show children spent an hour being shown around the construction equipment and safety bus by construction staff involved in the project. Pupils were also given the opportunity to enter a poster competition which has ‘safety first’ as its central theme. The winners will be taken on a visit to the new Tram Depot at Gogar where they will get the chance to see the new Edinburgh Trams up close.

Avril Wilson, head teacher at Balgreen Primary School said: “The pupils enjoyed finding out more about the trams from the construction staff that are helping to build it.

“Our school is near to the new line and I hope all of the children have taken away the positive message that it is better to watch from a safe distance.”