

5 October, 2001

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Dear Head Teacher

Further CD ROM Safety Advice

Since we last wrote to you in August regarding the safety of using cracked CD ROMs in high speed CD ROM drives, we have continued our research and development activities on this issue. When we wrote to you in August, we stated that we believed that this issue affected computers manufactured by a number of companies and since our letter a number of these companies have also issued safety advice to their customers. I am now writing to outline the further steps that RM are taking, how these will help you in the near future, and the interim steps that we advise you to take.

Further Developments from RM

Our further research has confirmed that the risk of CD ROM fragments being expelled from the computer is small, and to date our research shows that all of the computers that we have manufactured are safe if uncracked CD ROMs are used. We are now concentrating on providing protection for users should a cracked CD ROM be mistakenly used in the drive.

We have been working with the CD ROM drive manufacturer to develop a protective metal shield that users can easily fit into the drive. This is designed to prevent pieces of disk escaping from the front of the drive in the rare event of a CD ROM shattering. We are currently in the final stages of testing this, and the drive manufacturer will begin the first stage of production shortly. We expect to provide these to you during the second half of this term once we have assured its suitability. We can assure you that our full efforts are concentrated on providing this solution to you as quickly as possible.

Further Advice about CD Safety

We would like to reinforce our earlier advice, and also provide additional advice that you may wish to implement.

Users should carefully check all CD ROMs before each use, by holding them to the light to ensure that they contain no cracks, scratches or defects near the inner rim of the disk.

Until the protective shield becomes available, we recommend that you consider whether you can reposition any affected computers so that the CD ROM drive is not positioned at the face level of the users. For example, moving a computer from the top of a desk to stand it sideways under the desk (CD ROM drives can be used horizontally or vertically). As this issue affects computers manufactured by a number of companies, you may wish to consider your actions for other computers with high speed CD ROM drives.

Some of the affected drives can be made safer by slowing them down, which prevents CD ROMs

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shattering in the drive. Although this is only possible on some of the drives you have, we recommend that you consider doing this. This can be done on <x> of your <x> affected computers.

For the software needed to do this, please follow the link that you will find on the website at:

www.rm.com/safety

You will be able to download a file that can check each computer and enable you to modify the appropriate one(s).

Alternatively you can request a floppy disk containing the software by emailing our Advice Line team on safety@rm.com, or calling the RM Support Line on 08709 202202.

Our analysis shows that there is a very low risk of a user being injured by fragments of CD being expelled from the computer, and there have been no reported injuries to date. We believe that you should continue to regard this advice as an important priority for the next half-term until we are able to provide the protective shields for your affected machines.

We will continue to provide updated advice and information through our web site at **www.rm.com/safety**.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rich Girling". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard Girling
Chief Executive