

Water Cooler 'Point of Use' Guidance for Schools



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‘Point of Use’ water cooler guidance

This toolkit aims to guide schools towards best practice in providing and managing Point of Use water cooler supplies within the context of a ‘whole school’ water policy.

Term	Meaning
POU	Point of Use - The term used for devices that are located at the point where the water is used e.g. taps, faucets, water coolers
POU water coolers	Point of Use Water Cooler - The industry term for watercoolers that are plumbed directly into the mains water supply, and not requiring bottles. They are the dispenser of choice for school pupils, and have shown numerous advantages over more traditional water facilities.

Foreword

Joe Harvey, Health Education Trust

In schools, 'good hydration helps to reduce tiredness, irritability, and increases concentration. It contributes to a more settled and productive learning environment'. (House of Commons written answer by Ann Keen – Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, DOH – 16/07/2007).

This guidance has been written and produced by the Health Education Trust, an independent charity, and is based on a clear recognition of the benefits outlined above and the substantial additional health benefits described within the document. Jointly they offer a rationale and urgency for action to ensure that all children in our schools should have 'easy access to free, fresh, chilled drinking water throughout the school day'. (Turning the Tables 2005).

Water coolers can play an important part in offering a solution to schools within the framework of a carefully planned water policy. Many individuals and organisations from education, public health, the water and water cooler industry and the voluntary sector have contributed to this guidance. Our hope is that this guidance will help ensure that the highest standards possible prevail in the selection, provision, installation and maintenance of water coolers in schools.

Furthermore, while the guidance is aimed specifically at schools there is no doubt that it can be usefully adapted and applied to other public institutions such as leisure services, hospitals and prisons.

Easy access to free, fresh drinking water throughout the day – surely not too much to ask from all our schools for all our children?

Acknowledgements:

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Finally, grateful thanks to the National Governors' (NGA) and Howard Plastics.

**This guidance will be updated and amended as new evidence, educational ideas or technical innovation requires.*

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Executive Summary

Provision of free, fresh drinking water is expected under Government School Food Standards (DfES 2006). Provision of water within schools is a necessity to protect the health and assist the hydration of children and staff. It is important that water is free and fresh, and presented in an easy to use and hygienic way, and preferably chilled.

10 key points

1. Regular fluid intake can protect against the effects of poor hydration, which includes poor concentration, tiredness, urinary problems and headaches. Mains water, being a freely available drink, can positively contribute to fluid intake, protect health and assist in obesity management.
2. Free, fresh, preferably chilled water should be available at all times of the day, and its provision will contribute to achieving Healthy School Status.
3. Schools should have a water policy as part of their Whole School Policy approach to Food and Nutrition. Enhanced water provision through POU water coolers can be introduced as part of that Whole School Approach.
4. Balance concerns of providing an extra water facilities (ie spillages) with the potential benefits of improved concentration and health etc. and work to overcome concerns as part of a Whole School Approach.
5. Explore, as part of a Whole School Approach, how water will be delivered to pupils: reusable sports bottles; disposable water bottles; or disposable cups
6. A minimum of one water cooler per 200 pupils and staff is advised to avoid queues and pupil frustration.
7. Source mains fed water coolers that are pupil friendly and will not easily be damaged.
8. Discuss water cooler maintenance with your Point of Use supplier, and designate and train staff to maintain the water cooler's cleanliness.
9. It is recommended that schools should rent water coolers, but other options (e.g. purchasing or initiatives by community stakeholders like local water companies) should be considered, and will depend on the individual school requirements and commitment to maintenance.
10. Tap water is supplied by the local water company, and is monitored and regulated by the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI). It is safe to drink and of high quality. Point of Use water coolers must comply with the Code of Practice on cooler provision and servicing as set by the European Point of Use Drinking Water Association (EPDWA).

1.0 Background

The Government School Food Standards (DfES 2006) were introduced in September 2006 in England following two reviews into the eating habits of children at school (Nelson 2004a, 2004b).

The importance of water is highlighted in these standards, which follow on from the recommendations made by the School Meals Review Panel in Turning the Tables: transforming school meals (SMRP 2005):

- **“children and young people must have easy access at all times to free, fresh drinking water in schools”**

The National Healthy School Status (point 2.10), says a healthy school:

- **“has easy access to free, clean and palatable drinking water, using the Food in Schools guidance”**

The Welsh Network of Healthy Schools guidance (Autumn 2007) states:

- **‘water must be readily available free of charge throughout the school, throughout the school day, and such sites must be physically divorced from the toilets’**

1.1 Fluid requirements and consumption

There are no agreed recommended daily fluid requirements for children in the UK, however the US National Academies Food and Nutrition Board, (reported in Forrester 2005) outline recommendations for different age groups for total daily fluid needs (from drinks):

	9-13 years*	14-18 years*
Boy (litres/day)	1.8	2.6
Girls (litres/day)	1.6	1.8

* Water intake should be higher in warm weather or when the child is exercising

Children’s water consumption is sometimes low with many factors contributing to this including not recognising symptoms of mild thirst, poor water facilities, limited drinking opportunities, and limiting fluid intake to avoid school toilets! (See Food in Schools 2005 for further details).

*** Although total fluid intake is important, there is also a need for pupils to drink at regular points throughout the school day.**

1.2 Poor Hydration

Poor hydration can cause a range of symptoms including headaches and tiredness, which could in turn affect concentration levels. Health problems associated with poor hydration include constipation and continence problems. For detailed information visit: www.wateriscoolinschool.org.uk and www.waterforhealth.org.uk (see ‘Medical Facts’).

1.3 Benefits of drinking water

Much work has been done in providing robust scientific studies on the benefits of regular water consumption, and for all age groups the evidence is overwhelming (Food in Schools 2005). Regular water consumption:

- provides low cost refreshment throughout the day.
- promotes good health and wellbeing.
- reduces tiredness, irritability caused by thirst.
- can have a positive effect on pupils' concentration throughout the day.
- demonstrates to parents' and to the local community that the school values pupils' health and wellbeing.
- raises awareness of the importance of adequate fluid.
- supports the management of obesity

*** Enhanced water provision contributes to a more settled and productive learning environment, as well as helping to instil good habits (Food in Schools 2005)**

For further information see - 'Wise up on Water' www.waterforhealth.org.uk

1.4 Why choose Point of Use?

To encourage children and young people to drink adequate water at school, drinking water needs to be a pleasant experience rather than one to be endured or avoided. Mains-plumbed water coolers are popular with pupils as they provide fresh, palatable and chilled water from the same modern and attractive facilities routinely enjoyed by adults in offices.

(Drinking water in schools, Brander N (2003) 7th – 13th January, Nursing Times, 50-51)

When considering sourcing POU water coolers, explore how your school meets the following criteria for **good water provision** and how POU water coolers would help achieve all of these points: (www.wateriscoolinschool.org.uk)

Do you.....	Tick
ensure a good quality mains water within the school?	
provide water free of charge?	
provide sufficient numbers of water outlets?	
permit access to drinking water throughout the day?	
ensure that nobody is denied access to water by reason of any disability?	
ensure that hygienic, modern and preferably chilled water sources are available and maintained?	
avoid drinking water supplies in toilet areas?	
promote good habits of water consumption, particularly while exercising or in warm weather?	
ensure water is dispensed from facilities that promote a positive image and are a long term sustainable solution?	

1.5 The importance of school toilets

To encourage pupils to drink enough water, it is essential that toilets are kept clean, stocked, in good working order, private, and accessible at any time throughout the school day. (www.bog-standard.org)

2.0 School Water Policy

2.1 Provision of water in schools

The consumption of water during lessons is increasingly common in UK primary schools, with water bottles frequently being allowed on desks and taken to PE and sports. Access and availability of water in secondary schools is generally more limited and so this needs to be addressed urgently. This toolkit is particularly aimed at all schools where water provision is too often inadequate and poorly planned. This toolkit applies equally to primary schools, however, where improvements in provision are still needed

Current facilities in secondary schools may be out-dated, inadequate, inappropriately located and uninviting to use. Many rely on traditional water fountains, taps in toilets or the sale of drinks via vending or over the counter.

- **Fountains** are not recommended as they are difficult to keep in a hygienic condition, do not encourage children to consume adequate fluid intake and are not chilled.
- **Taps** fed from the mains supply provide fresh drinking water. They are however rarely bespoke or chilled, and clean drinking vessels may not be supplied.

*** The sale of bottled water over the counter or through vending machines should never be seen as an alternative to free and accessible supplies of fresh water to pupils.**

As a result an increasing number of schools are installing modern water coolers at a number of points around the school to provide their pupils with chilled and refreshing water. In the majority of schools, pupils use the water coolers to fill up personal water bottles.

2.2 Whole School Approach to water policy

All schools should have a water policy that is part of their whole school policy on food and nutrition. Research has shown that developing an effective water policy alongside improved water provision, results in water being consumed more regularly (Food in Schools 2005).

It is important to educate the whole school about water requirements; benefits of consumption; and sources. The following activities can be taken to improve the understanding of children, staff and parents:

- setting up a School Nutrition Action Group to include staff, caterers and pupils www.healthedtrust.com.
- reinforcing messages during assemblies.
- discussing with class councils and during class tutorials.
- exploring during PSE classes.
- displaying posters around school – classrooms, dining rooms, other eating areas and near point of use coolers. Posters could be designed by pupils.
- sending out informative newsletters to parents and governors.
- making leaflets/information sheets available for pupils.
- children being shown how to use POU coolers and where they are located.

2.3 The importance of parental influence

There is a need to educate parents and governors on the benefits of drinking water (see p5) and parents on the the use and care of re-usable water bottles. Parental influence is significant in terms of the propensity of children to drink water. As role models, parents should be targeted with the benefits of drinking water and given guidance as to how they can encourage their children to drink more water at school, within and outside the home and during exercise. If water bottles are used at school, parents need to encourage their children to take the water bottle to school and to clean it at home between uses.

3.0 Key concerns

3.1 Water cooler selection

Where to source POU water coolers

Qualified operators are outlined on the European Point-of-use Drinking Water Association website www.epdwa.org and the British Water Cooler Association website www.bwca.org.uk

Which type of POU water coolers?

Discuss your requirement with the water cooler supplier and operators to ensure that your chosen cooler can meet the rigours of school life and have a high chilling capacity. See cooler features (appendix 2.0).

How many POU water coolers?

To avoid queues and pupil frustration it is advised that there is a minimum of 1 point of use water cooler per 200 pupils and staff. NB: This will depend on the chilling capacity of the cooler, the layout of the school and when pupils are allowed access (if access is restricted to peak times then the ratio above may well be insufficient to maintain a chilled supply).

Are POU water coolers regulated?

The tap water supply is monitored and regulated by the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI). It is safe to drink and of high quality. Point of Use water coolers must comply with the Code of Practice on cooler provision and servicing as set by the European Point of Use Drinking Water Association (EPDWA). See appendix 1.0 for further details.

Where should the coolers be located?

- Location should reflect the need for easy pupil access, proper supervision and regular maintenance.
- POU water coolers must not be sited in toilet areas

Should water coolers be purchased or rented/leased?

The choice to purchase, rent or lease water coolers will depend on individual school requirements: the size and type of school; the existing plumbing network; and the preferred location. Discuss the options with POU water cooler operators.

Although some schools rent bottled water coolers, in the majority of situations these are not recommended. While they are initially cheap to install and do not require mains water pipework, they have far higher on-going costs, produce environmental waste and are onerous to maintain as they require the commitment to change, store and lift bottles as and when required.

*** The general recommendation of this guidance is that schools should consider renting water coolers as this arrangement will normally cover a regular maintenance and sanitisation program which may be more difficult for schools to manage rigorously if it is their sole responsibility.**

3.2 Water cooler installation

In order to ensure trouble free installation, it is recommended that you follow the checklist below (**Water is Cool in School** booklet for schools www.wateriscoolinschool.org.uk)

Water cooler installation checklist	Tick
Ideally, have inspection of current water supply by qualified body (some regional water companies can do this for a charge or check with your LEA) to confirm that the water supply is from the mains and potable	
Clarify expectations of the company and any school input at the start	
Establish a single point of contact in the school and company	
Ensure regular dialogue via telephone or fax/email	
Request a thorough site visit prior to installation	
Conduct a risk assessment prior to installation	
Select practical and open locations for dispensers in partnership with installers, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wide corridors (avoid obstructions and fire exits) - Common rooms - Dining halls & assembly halls - Class rooms (away from electrical equipment) - Adjacent to admin and staff areas - Adjacent to changing rooms & gymnasiums (providing hazards are minimized) - Not in toilets, science labs or IT suites, under any circumstances 	
Establish details for the installation, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - schedule - specification of machines and any piping/electrical installations - what, where and how the installation will take place - immediate and on-going costs 	
Appoint the site manager as key point of contact for the installation	
Children should be given instruction in how to use water coolers correctly	

3.3 Managing behaviour and risk

Teachers may have concerns about the impact of increasing water provision in schools, which can range from concerns about water fights to maintaining good hygiene. Careful management and consultation with pupils can avoid and tackle these issues. (Food in Schools Toolkit)

Balancing concern and benefit: (Water is Cool in School Booklet for Schools www.wateriscoolinschool.org.uk).

Although schools may fear that personal water bottles will lead to mess, disruption and endless trips to the toilet, evidence from Government Departments and reports from schools show that these fears are largely unfounded and the benefits greatly outweigh any disadvantages. Many schools report that the pay off is considerable in terms of improved relationships with pupils, better concentration in class, calmer behaviour and happier, healthier children.

Table 1: Managing behaviour and risk

Concerns	Comments
Children will misbehave	Schools that have established a programme from the beginning have reported few problems other than initial silliness by a minority, but this soon settles down.
Children will need to use the toilet more frequently	The bladder normally adjusts to an increased intake of water within a few weeks; therefore more frequent visits to the toilet happen only in the initial periods. Frequent toileting is healthy and should be encouraged as it helps prevent kidney problems, urinary ailments and bedwetting.
Books and work will be spoiled due to spillages	It is important to use only purpose-made non-spill bottles. Schools that have used them report no problems. Also children quickly become accustomed to taking care. For younger children, bottles can be kept in crates at the side of the classroom provided regular water breaks are scheduled. Absorbent matting could also be fitted around water coolers (Food in Schools 2005).
Children will fiddle with bottles during lessons	Some children might fiddle with their bottles during lessons but they might be kinaesthetic learners who could actually benefit from fiddling with their bottles as they learn.
Bottles will become mixed up and cause a hygiene problem	Each child's bottle should be clearly marked with the child's name using a permanent marker and re-marked regularly to avoid confusion.
Children may put other drinks in their bottles	Transparent bottles will minimise this risk and regular spot checks can be made. Involving pupils and parents from the outset and regularly promoting the reasons and benefits for water will also help avoid this.
* Establishing a 'Whole School Approach' helps minimise initial concerns.	

4.0 Operational management and maintenance issues

*** Point of use water coolers, if adequately maintained and cleaned, can supply a very valuable free source of chilled water to all.**

It is essential for health and hygiene that the coolers are regularly maintained and sanitised. The cooler supplier should carry out this maintenance procedure at the beginning of each term, but no less than once every 6 months. It is the responsibility of the site manager responsible for risk assessment (usually the headteacher) to ensure this is carried out within the correct timescales.

Environmental Health Officers may also carry out random checks to ensure the quality of the schools water infrastructure and report any problems, based on previous microbiological results and maintenance histories

4.1 Hygiene

It is very important to keep water coolers clean: designate and train a member of staff to manage the cleaning of the POU water cooler:

- If the cooler is fitted with a drip tray, then empty the drip tray at least daily
- The drip tray should be damp-wiped weekly using a non-abrasive cleaning agent; or it can be washed in a dishwasher
- Ensure the external surfaces of the cooler are kept clean. The taps and water cooler panels should be wiped down weekly with a food-standard antibacterial surface cleaner (do not use any bleach or unsuitable cleaning liquids). Peroxide sprays provided by EPDWA suppliers are eminently suitable. Staff carrying out these weekly duties must wash their hands, wear one-use plastic gloves and use one-use cloths. They must not undertake these tasks if they are unwell or have gastrointestinal symptoms.
- In the interest of hygiene, anyone using the water cooler must ensure that drinking receptacles, such as cups and bottles, are clean.
- It is advisable that the cooler is adequately flushed through at the beginning of each school week; and definitely after any period of holiday closure
- Coolers should be checked monthly for the build-up of lint or dust in the ventilation grilles on the cabinet. There should be no obstruction within 20cm of these grilles. Grilles will be cleaned as part of normal maintenance, but please contact your maintenance engineer if the ventilation grilles become congested with dust or lint which is not easily removed from the outside of the cooler

Treat the water cooler as you would any other piece of electrical equipment, and leave on or turn off for any holiday period in line with your normal practice.
(Welsh Assembly Government 2006)

Filters should only be used where there is a need to improve the aesthetic nature of the water, and not be used to treat unsuitable (non potable) water. If filters are used they should be changed ever 6 months (EPDWA 2005).

Sanitisation should be carried out at the beginning of each school term. Peroxide spays and/or proprietary wipes used to clean the water cooler taps throughout the term should be provided supplied by the water cooler supplier (EPDWA 2005).

5.0 Water bottle policy

*** Pupils will need to use water bottles to drink from.**

Explore, as part of a Whole School Approach, how water will be delivered to pupils: reusable sports bottles; disposable water bottles; or disposable cups. Options are outlined in the table 2 below, with the preferred option being reusable sports bottles. Consider options for children who forget or lose their bottles e.g. spare bottles or disposable cups held at the school office.

Table 2: Options for water delivery from POU coolers within schools

Features	Considerations
Reusable sports bottles	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easily removable durable lid with deep thread allows for repeated removal for cleaning. Large bottle neck facilitates easy and efficient cleaning. Thick walled bottle allows repeated re-use and long life span and the ability to withstand dishwasher temperatures. Approval to BSEN71 and 90/128/EEC standards is relevant where there is use by children and food is being contained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That there is sufficient area on the bottle to write a child's name to denote ownership and prevent cross-contamination. The purchase of permanent marker pens for identification and, (especially in primary schools), carrying crates for storage.
Disposable water bottles	
Plastic bottle of varying sizes with a sports cap or a screw on cap.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent research has suggested that continued use of disposable water bottles might cause bacterial contamination, although contamination could be the result of not washing them properly. Bottles should be used for a limited time only.
Disposable cups	
Easy to use and require no cleaning (just throw away).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing costs including the creation of litter; a need to keep cups stocked at coolers; contents easily spilt; cups only carrying low volume of water; and are not easily portable. Have negative environmental considerations.

5.1 Reusable sports bottles

It is **recommended that purpose-made sports-style bottles are used**, which are of strong construction. These can be purchased from a number of manufacturers and can be bought in bulk for schools at a reduced cost. Consider contacting your local water company, as many already have education programmes which include the provision of water bottles for free, or at a reduced cost.

5.2 Guidance on keeping bottles clean

- Bottles should only be used for water.
- It is preferable for children and parents to take responsibility for cleaning the bottles daily at home. Wash the bottles daily in warm soapy water, open the sports caps and wash thoroughly, rinse the bottles and caps, and leave the bottles to air-dry upside down in a hygienic place; or wash them in a dishwasher if the bottles are suitable.
- If the school prefers to take responsibility, then the above advice should be followed. Ensure that hands are well washed before handling the bottles, and that each child's bottle and cap are washed separately and returned to them. It would be advisable to discuss appropriate procedures with the local Environmental Health Department, and to record agreed procedures within the school's Health and Safety policy.
- Once a week, the bottle and the cap should be soaked in a solution of Milton as per label instructions. Rinse both the bottle and the cap again and leave the bottle sealed. Soaking in Milton is not necessary if bottles are washed in a dishwasher.
- Rinse the bottle and the cap again before filling for use.

'Think Water' toolkit outlines step by step advice for setting up a water-bottles-on-desk scheme. <http://www.learning.wales.gov.uk/pdfs/think-water-e.pdf>

6.0 Resources and contacts relating to regulation, supply and maintenance

Bog Standard campaign for better toilets for pupils - (run by ERIC see below)
www.bog-standard.org
British Water Cooler Association
www.bwca.org.uk
The Drinking Water Inspectorate
www.dwi.gov.uk
Education and Resources for Improving Childhood Continence (ERIC)
www.eric.org.uk
European Point of Use Drinking Water Association
www.epdwa.org
Food in schools
www.foodinschools.org
Health Education Trust
www.healthedtrust.com
Water is Cool in School campaign – (run by ERIC see below)
www.wateriscoolinschool.org.uk
Water Regulations Advisory Scheme
www.wras.co.uk
Water UK
www.water.org.uk <ul style="list-style-type: none">- To find Water UK members visit – http://www.water.org.uk/home/our-members- The medical evidence fact sheets on water for kids - http://www.water.org.uk/home/water-for-health/resources/wise-up---children-web.pdf- The medical evidence facts database for hydration - http://www.water.org.uk/home/water-for-health/medical-facts

7.0 References

Department for Education and Skills (2006) Nutritional standards for school lunches and other school food.

www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/healthyliving

European Point of Use Drinking Water Association (EPDWA) (2005) Guidelines for the provision of coolers in schools www.epdwa.org

Food in School (2005) Water provision. www.foodinschools.org

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School Food Trust (2006) Transforming School Food. A report on the development and implementation of food standards for school foods other than lunch. www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk

School Meals Review Panel (2005) Turning the tables: transforming school food. A report on the development and implementation of nutritional standards for school lunches. www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/food.php

Water is Cool in School campaign www.wateriscoolinschool.org.uk

Welsh Assembly Government (2006) Think Water: Guidance on water in schools. Welsh Assembly Government. <http://www.learning.wales.gov.uk/pdfs/think-water-e.pdf>

Appendix 1.0

Regulations relating to supplying, fitting and maintaining a safe point of use water supply

Tap Water in the UK

Tap water from the mains supply is strictly monitored and regulated to meet stringent Government and EU standards. It is safe to drink, and is of extremely high quality. UK tap water has to meet quality standards in excess of bottled drinks, and yet it is inexpensive, costing schools around a penny for fifty glasses of water.

Provided you are drinking fresh, mains supplied tap water, there is no need to filter or treat your tap water. However there is considerable evidence that chilling tap water and, in some locations, filtering it to improve its taste and appearance, results in a product that is far more attractive to children. Because of this water coolers and, (where appropriate), filters have a useful role to play in encouraging children to drink more water.

The local water company is responsible for the mains water supply to the school. The Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) regulates public water supplies in England and Wales and is responsible for assessing the quality of drinking water in England and Wales, taking enforcement action if standards are not being met.

Uptake of drinking water in schools can be maximised when mains fed taps are clearly labelled as providing drinking water.

Point of Use water coolers

Regulations on supplying, fitting and maintaining a safe point of use water supply can be found via the Water Regulation Advisory Scheme website www.wras.co.uk.

It is advised that the POU cooler supplier visits the school site to discuss with teachers and/or caterers their requirements: number of coolers; where coolers could be positioned, based on individual requirements, mains water supply and drainage; features of coolers; benefits of coolers; and rental or purchasing options.

All water coolers and related equipment must comply with the schools health and safety requirements.

A service telephone number should be fitted to the cooler and a paper copy of the service jobsheets should be left at schools for their records (Welsh Assembly Government 2006).

The UK based European Point of Use Drinking Water Association (EPDWA) sets tough standards of water cooler provision and servicing for its members and operates a Code of Practice for the Provision of Watercoolers in Schools, visit www.epdwa.org.

Point of use coolers and their installation should meet the recommendations set out by the European Point-of-use Drinking Water Association (EPDWA 2005):

- Suppliers to be EPDWA members.
- Coolers to be proofed against airborne contamination – that is with sealed reservoirs with an air filter or pressurised direct chill piping.
- Coolers to be CE marked for electrical safety.
- Cooler water contact surfaces should be made of materials approved for water contact use and certified thus.
- Hot tanked coolers not to be installed where children have access.
- It is recommended that drip trays be fitted with a drain.
- Coolers only to be sanitised and serviced by accredited hygiene trained staff.
- Filters (where required) changed at least every 6 months.

- Coolers to be sanitised at the beginning of each term and more frequently if volume of use dictates.
- Installation only to connect to a designated drinking water supply.
- Qualified installers only to be used.
- Installations to be protected against backflow and leakage.
- Installation pipework must avoid areas where the feed supply could become warm (over light fittings/hot water pipes etc). Avoid excessive use of microbore piping.

Appendix 2.0

Features of POU water coolers

To maximise effective and efficient operation POU coolers should:

- be robust to prevent damage.
- be attached to both the wall and the floor to prevent vandalism, and should contain security covers to protect all water and electrical connections.
- be as simply and durable as possibly, with no fragile or protruding pieces; touch button rather than taps.
- contain a protected water dispensing nozzle to reduce the risk of bacterial contamination.
- be plumbed into the mains water supply and not the water storage tank.
- be regularly maintained (water supply, drainage and electricity).
- be plumbed into the schools drainage system to remove excess water and avoid flooding.
- supply chilled water only.
- have a space under the dispenser spout large enough to fill a bottle.
- have clear, highly visible instructions for use.

Because of the high quality of mains water in the UK filters are not necessary but where needed, they can improve water aesthetics. Filters should not be used to treat non-potable water (i.e. not designated as drinking water). (EPDWA 2005).

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