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# West Sussex County Council fined as school technician loses finger in Bench Saw

## Description

On the 13th of June 2022, tragedy struck at The Forest School in Horsham. Adi Soday, a 29-year-old technician in the design and technology department, suffered a grievous injury: his right index finger was severed by a circular bench saw. He had been using the machine to prepare materials for a DT lesson when the incident occurred. Despite his familiarity with the saw, having operated it numerous times before, Mr. Soday had never received formal training on its safe operation.

Immediately upon feeling a sharp pain in his finger, Mr. Soday instinctively powered down the saw. To his horror, upon looking down, he discovered his severed finger lying on the workbench. This shocking and traumatic event highlights a critical failing in workplace safety protocols at The Forest School.

Following a thorough investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), it was revealed that West Sussex County Council, responsible for the school's oversight, had neglected its duty to ensure Mr. Soday received adequate training for the equipment's safe usage. This neglect directly contravened Regulation 9 of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.

Consequently, West Sussex County Council pled guilty to the charges brought against them. The council was fined Â£16,000 and directed to cover additional costs totaling Â£4,294.60, along with a victim surcharge of Â£190. This legal action culminated in a ruling at Brighton Magistrates' Court on the 3rd of July 2024.

HSE Inspector Russell Beckett condemned the council's oversight, emphasizing that proper training is paramount, especially when handling high-risk machinery like circular bench saws. He pointed out that had Mr. Soday received adequate training, this tragic incident could have been averted entirely.

The prosecution was led by HSE enforcement lawyer Iain Jordan, supported by HSE paralegal officer Imogen Isaac. Their efforts underscore the HSE's commitment to upholding workplace safety standards across Britain, ensuring that preventable accidents such as Mr. Soday's are minimized through rigorous enforcement and education.

## CATEGORY

1. West Sussex

## POST TAG

1. Accident
2. Adi Soday
3. Bench Saws
4. Cutting Equipment
5. Health
6. Health and Safety
7. Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

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  9. Injuries
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  12. Severed Finger
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