

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **LIFELONG LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **THURSDAY, 19 DECEMBER 2013**

REPORT BY: **DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING**

SUBJECT: **HEALTH & SAFETY IN SCHOOLS**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To provide the Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a summary report on accidents and incidents in schools during the academic year September 2012 to August 2013 and a summary of actions taken by the Council to support schools in achieving healthy and safe learning environments.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 At its meeting of 19 January 2012, Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny requested a report on health and safety in schools. The first report was presented in December 2012; it was subsequently decided to request this report on an annual basis.

2.02 Local Management of Schools requires that school employees, Governing Bodies and the Local Authority work together to ensure that health, safety and welfare objectives are achieved.

2.03 The school is responsible for all areas for which it has control. All school governing bodies have responsibility for health and safety as the direct employer and/or as occupier and body in control of the premises.

2.04 The data presented in this report is based on accident reports from schools provided to the Corporate Health and Safety Unit.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Accidents and Incidents

The total number of number of accidents / incident report forms received for the academic year 1 September 2012 to 31 August 2013 was 2,302. This compares with 3,093 reports received over the same period in 2011/12 (a reduction of 792 accident reports overall).

3.02 **Accidents to Pupils**

For the period 1 September 2012 to 31 August 2013 a total of 2,012 accident reports received related to pupils. This compares with 2,801 recorded for the previous year (a reduction of 789 reports relating to pupils overall).

Primary School pupils: Out of the total pupil figure of 2,012 reports, pupils in primary schools accounted for 1,339. This shows reports to have almost halved in primary schools compared to last year whereby 2,139 were attributed (a reduction of 800 reports).

Secondary School pupils: 475 reports were attributed to secondary schools this academic year compared to 510 recorded for the same period last year (a reduction of 35 reports).

Special School pupils: 198 reports were attributed to special schools this academic year compared to 152 last year (an increase of 46 reports).

3.03 **Accidents to Employees**

1 September 2012 to 31 August 2013 a total of 290 accident reports received related to employees. This compares with 292 recorded for the same period last year (a reduction of 2 reports overall).

Employees in primary schools accounted for 104 (an increase of 16), secondary school employees accounted for 41 (a reduction of 8), and employees in special schools accounted for 144 (a reduction of 10 reports).

3.04 **RIDDOR reported**

The number of accidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) in the academic year 2012/2013 was 104. This compares with a total of 126 reportable for the same period in 2011/12.

Out of the 104 reportable accidents, 3 were categorised as major injuries (fractures), 4 were categorised as over 7 day (incapacitated as a result of injury to continue normal duties) and 95 were categorised as members of the public taken directly to hospital from the scene of the accident for treatment (for the purposes of RIDDOR pupils are classed as members of the public).

The reduction in RIDDOR reportable accidents to the HSE this academic year may in part be due to the change in reporting requirements from incapacitations of three days or more to those of seven days or more.

- 3.05 **Top three Type of Incident categories:**
Pupils: Slip, trip, falls, collision with person, or coming into contact with something fixed or stationary.
- Employees: Physical / verbal assaults, slip trip falls, hit my moving, falling, flying object.
- 3.06 **Top three Type of Injury categories**
Pupils: Aches and pains, scratches and grazes.
- Employees: Bruising, aches and pains, sprains and strains, localised redness.
- 3.07 **Actions Taken**
School accidents and incidents are required to be reported to Corporate Health and Safety regardless of severity of injury. The Corporate Health and Safety Advisor to Lifelong Learning monitors all accident and incident reports, and as necessary, follows up / investigates to ensure causes are suitably identified and appropriate remedial actions implemented to prevent recurrence. Schools have access to key health and safety resources on their dedicated ICT resource website <http://moodle.flintshire.gov.uk/lea>. This includes topical health and safety guidance covering a wide range of typical school activity (curriculum and non-curriculum), model risk assessments, training presentations and key contacts.
- 3.08 **Inspections, maintenance, surveys etc**
A number of statutory inspections and assessments are carried out in schools by in-house specialists or external specialists as appropriate to maintain the necessary standards of safety, including:
- Condition Surveys – Assessment of the physical state of the premises to ensure safe and continuous operation. Condition data collection is necessary to enable repairs and maintenance works to be costed, prioritised, planned and undertaken on a programme basis.
- Suitability Surveys – Assessment which covers teaching and non-teaching accommodation including staff facilities, and has regard to the type and quality of educational facilities to ensure they are 'fit for purpose' in delivering the curriculum and raising standards.
- 3.09 **Audit of Health and Safety Management Systems**
In accordance with the requirements of the Local Authority Health and Safety Policy, all schools are required to undertake a full self audit of their health and safety management systems to review their compliance, utilising the proformas provided by the Authority in accordance with the stated criteria and minimum standards that must be met.

3.10 **Safety Inspections**

All schools are required, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authority Health and Safety Policy, to carry out safety inspections of all areas within their schools, on a termly basis, using the proformas provided by the Authority in accordance with the stated criteria and appropriate minimum standards that must be met. Inspection regimes also exist within individual practical curriculum areas, such as laboratories, and design technology workshops. These are internal inspections carried out to specified criteria in accordance with legislative requirements and best practice.

3.11 **Training**

Governor Training: The annual health and safety briefing for school Governors took place in November 2013.

Annual training for Educational Visits Co-ordinators recently taken place to ensure every school has a competent person for the appropriate planning and approval of school visits using the Authorities on-line 'Evolve' system.

Annual training for school caretakers was undertaken in July 2013, in particular this covered fire safety and school security matters.

3.12 **Asbestos Inspections**

All fan convectors in schools have been identified and inspected for the possibility of any asbestos containing materials over the summer holiday period. No such materials were identified. The 2 year programme for re-inspection / asbestos surveys in schools has commenced.

3.13 **Cleaning**

Facility Services staff have started termly visits to those schools which purchase their services to inspect the quality of cleaning, and the safe storage and use of equipment and chemicals. A training programme which focuses on ten common cleaning tasks has been developed which schools can commission to ensure that their staff clean effectively and efficiently.

3.14 **School Toilets – Good Practice Guide, Welsh Government**

Monitoring of practice and facilities is included in the school National Quality Award Scheme for Hygiene. The survey forms will be used as part of individual school's evidence for submission, and the Healthy Schools Officer will visually inspect. There has been a positive response to this national aware scheme which has prompted schools and their governing bodies to pay increased attention to the provision of quality facilities. In addition, the Council continues to have a programme of school improvement in place which includes school toilet replacement, modernisation. Priority is based on condition surveys.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to note the report and the initiatives taken to improve health and safety in schools.

4.02 Lifelong Learning Overview is requested to recognise the monitoring and evaluation of the practice role of the Corporate Health and Safety Group.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None arising from this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None arising from this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None arising from this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None arising from this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None arising from this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None arising from this report.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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