

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

DATE: **THURSDAY, 23RD OCTOBER 2014**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF OFFICER, EDUCATION AND YOUTH**

SUBJECT: **HEALTH AND 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 1 September 2013 to 31 August 2014 and a summary of actions taken by the Council to support schools in achieving healthy and safe environments.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Local Management of Schools requires that school employees, Governing Bodies and the Local Authority work together to ensure Health, Safety and Welfare objectives are achieved.

2.02 The school is responsible for all areas it has control of; school governing bodies have legal responsibilities for health and safety as the direct employer and/or as occupier and body in control of the premises.

2.03 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

3.01.1 Flintshire County Council currently has 94 schools and special units.

The total number of accidents / incident report forms received for the academic year **1 September 2013 to 31 August 2014 = 2584**. This equates to an average of 27 reports per school over the academic year. The current figure compares with 2302 reports received over the same period in 2012/13 (an increase of 282 accident reports overall. Of the total 259 reports related to employees, 2314 pupils, 7 members of the public and 4 contractors).

3.01.2 **Accidents to Pupils**

For the period **1 September 2013 to 31 August 2014 a total of 2314** accident reports received related to pupils. This compares with 2012 recorded for the previous year (an increase of 302 reports relating to pupils overall).

Primary School pupils: Of the total pupil figure of 2314 reports, pupils in primary schools accounted for 1592. An increase of 253 reports from primary schools compared to last year's figure of 1339.

Secondary School pupils: 521 reports were attributed to secondary schools this academic year compared to 475 recorded for the same period last year (an increase of 46 reports).

Special School pupils: 201 reports were attributed to special schools this academic year compared to 198 last year (an increase of 3 reports).

3.01.3 **Accidents to Employees**

1 September 2013 to 31 August 2014 a total of 259 accident reports received related to employees. This compares with 290 recorded for the same period last year (a reduction of 31 reports overall).

Employees in primary schools accounted for 107 (an increase of 3), secondary school employees accounted for 57 (an increase of 16), and employees in special schools accounted for 95 (a reduction of 49 reports).

3.01.4 **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 2013/2014 = 50. This compares with a total of 104 reportable for the same period in 2012/13 (48% reduction).

Of the 50 reportable accidents, 9 were categorised as major injuries, 3 were categorised as over 7 day (incapacitated as a result of injury to continue normal duties), and 38 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 removal of the requirement to report over 3 day injuries and partly due to revised criteria for members of the public taken to hospital for treatment from the scene.

3.01.5 **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 (physical assaults category mostly relates to incidents in special schools where it may be noted they are not intentional acts of violence).

3.01.6 **Top three Type of Injury categories:**

Pupils: Bruising / contusion, aches and pains, minor scratches and grazes.

Employees: Bruising / contusion, aches and pains, sprains and strains.

Of the figure 2584, 246 (9%) reports were of non-injury accidents or injuries.

Further details on accidents and incidents in schools can be obtained directly from individual schools (individual school overview and analysis), or from Corporate Health and Safety Advisor to Education and Youth.

3.02 **Action and Initiatives**

3.02.1 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 Education and Youth 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.

3.02.2 Corporate Health and Safety Advisor to Education and Youth carries out claims investigations relating to school property, accident injuries and ill health, analysing the findings and providing reports for our claims handlers. Schools get the benefit of support and guidance on remedial actions to prevent recurrence.

3.02.3 Schools have access to a wide range of key health and safety resources provided on their dedicated information resources website <http://moodle.flintshire.gov.uk/la>. This includes model health and safety policies, model risk assessments and a wide range of topical health and safety guidance covering both curriculum and non-curriculum activities and environments.

One example of specialist curriculum /health and safety resource provided by the LA is CLEAPSS. CLEAPSS stands for the Consortium of Local Education Authority Practical Science Services,

but is not limited to Science curriculum. It provides general support and advice for all aspects of practical work in schools and colleges in the subjects of Science, D&T and Art, including a cost effective way for the employer to discharge its duties under the H&S at Work Act 1974 and all associated Regulations in these subject areas, namely by providing comprehensive and specific safety guidance and model risk assessments for any hazardous activities carried out by schools in the subject areas. This includes information, advice and training about laboratory and workshop design and working practices, teachers and technicians and their jobs, equipment, tools, materials, living organisms, and practical activities for students, with an overarching focus on health and safety. Their guidance and supporting documentation covers everything from hatching chicks to managing radioactive sources and almost everything else in between. Education continues to fund this resource for schools to facilitate consistent standards to be applied by schools.

3.02.4 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. This would include inspections of Design and Technology fixed workshop equipment, Sport and Physical Education equipment, school boilers, water and gas services, lifts and hoists, asbestos surveys to name but a few. In addition:

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.

NB The LA’s document ‘Scheme for Financing Schools’ sets out the responsibilities for inspection, maintenance, repair and replacements in schools.

3.02.5 On a school by school basis, 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.

A monitoring questionnaire is currently being prepared to send to school Governors to obtain confirmation of their current status of compliance with their health and safety management requirements.

- 3.02.6 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, utilising the proformas provided by the Authority in accordance with the stated criteria and appropriate minimum standards that must be met.

More frequently, inspection regimes exist within individual practical curriculum areas, such as laboratories, and design technology workshops. These are internal inspections carried out to a specified criteria in accordance with legislative requirements and best practice.

- 3.02.7 Annual training for Educational Visits Co-ordinators takes 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 Health and Safety training is provided for school Governors, last provided in November 2013.

Managing Safely (IOSH accredited) training is available for Head teachers along with Risk Assessment workshops, and Accident Investigation workshops.

An audit has recently been undertaken in respect of the current status of training held by Design and Technology staff in schools. This was carried out by an external company DATRUS. All Flintshire secondary schools complied fully with the audit, and where training needs have been identified schools are aware of their responsibility for providing it to the recommended standards required. This would include any refresher training requirements. In this respect DATRUS have advised that they are currently in further liaison with the schools directly and a course on core machines is to take place on 21 October hosted by Maes Garmon. Further courses will be held.

- 3.02.8 Asbestos Management in Schools. Welsh Government issued a new guidance document 'Asbestos Management in Schools' in February 2014. The purpose of this document is to ensure that head teachers, school governors and other members of the school management teams are aware of requirements in respect of asbestos management procedures and legislation. A copy has been added to the school information database earlier in the year and a reminder to schools is currently being prepared and will include a copy to individual schools. From an LA responsibility perspective I can confirm that all schools have been surveyed and all school premises have been issued with a current school asbestos survey containing a register of any asbestos

containing materials, their location and condition. Any asbestos containing materials in our schools have been risk assessed and where appropriate either removed or encapsulated to prevent exposure.

3.02.9 Schools have access to day to day advice, guidance and support from the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor to Education and Youth.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That Members note the information contained within this report.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 N/A

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 None.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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