

# **REPORT FOR: Employees' Consultative Forum**

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**Date of Meeting:** 27 October 2010

**Subject:** Evaluation of accident statistics in Children's Services during the period 2009/ 2010.

**Responsible Officer:** Myfanwy Barrett, Corporate Director Finance

**Exempt:** No

**Enclosures:** None

## **Section 1 – Summary**

This report evaluates the accident statistics during the financial year 2009 - 2010. Consideration is particularly given to the number of physical assaults during this period.

### **Recommendations:**

The Forum is requested to:

1. Note the accident statistics in respect of the Children's Services Directorate for the financial year 2009-10;
2. Note that the importance of accurate and timely incident reporting will be emphasised during health and safety training and at the Education Health and Safety Forum and;
3. Note that future annual health and safety reports will contain a more detailed analysis of incidents and trend analysis.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Executive Summary**

- 2.1 This report was requested at the 30<sup>th</sup> June Forum when concern was raised at the number of physical assaults in the Children's Services Directorate as reported in the Annual Health and Safety report and wished to see greater analysis of the incident data. Analysis was therefore performed for the financial year 2009/10.
- 2.2 The data was broken down into incident groups, reportable and non reportable incidents and area where the incident took place. The data revealed that there are four main types of incidents. These are slips, trips and falls, physical assault, hit by a moving/ flying or falling object and physical contact (not assault).
- 2.3 Reportable incidents or RIDDOR reportable incidents are work related incidents or ill health that are required by law to be recorded and reported by the quickest means possible to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Some which are as follows.
  - Death,
  - Major injuries: fracture, other than to fingers, thumbs and toes, amputation, dislocation of the shoulder, hip, knee or spine etc
  - Over 3 days injuries is one which is not major but leads to where an employee or person at work is unable to perform their normal work duties for more than 3 consecutive days. This can include acts of physical violence.
  - Some work related diseases.
  - Dangerous occurrences where something happens but does not result in an injury but could have.
- 2.4 RIDDOR applies to all work activities but not all incidents are reportable. Non reportable incidents can be considered to be minor; non work related incidents do not fall under reportable incidents according to RIDDOR.
- 2.5 The largest group of incidents was non reportable physical assaults, accounting for over a third of all incidents. Analysis of these incidents revealed that the majority of the incident reports had come from one Special School and related to minor incidents such as biting, kicking and scratching.
- 2.6 The number of incidents does not appear to be related to a lack of training. Special Schools receive accredited training. It does however indicate a need for improved corporate reporting in some Special Schools.

## **INTRODUCTION**

- 2.7 This report presents the incident statistics for Children Services' reportable and non reportable incidents (see appendices 1 &2). It shows various incidents that have affected employees in the Children Services Directorate. The data has been compiled from accidents / incidents forms received from the Directorate, to allow for statistical analysis of injuries, ill health and incidents for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.
- 2.8 The classification of the accidents / incidents groups is based on the model used within the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR). Data is broken down into Reportable and Non Reportable accidents/incidents for employees only. This is further broken into schools and non schools.

## **REPORT ANALYSES OF SOME OF THE ACCIDENTS / INCIDENTS**

### **Slipped, Tripped or fell on the same level**

- 2.9 'Slips, trips & falls' incidents account for the largest number of reportable incidents (14) during this period. There is no apparent trend indicating one particularly unsafe workplace with the incidents occurring at ten different sites. Injuries included one fractured elbow but the remainder consisted of minor breaks, e.g. fingers, sprains and bruising, which resulted in more than three days absence.
- 2.10 There were 42 non reportable 'slips, trips & falls' incidents in the Directorate at twenty five different sites, again not indicating any significant trends.

### **Physical assault**

- 2.11 There were four RIDDOR reportable 'physical assault' incidents in schools relating to the following:
- A Learning Assistant at Elmgrove Middle School suffered a back strain while trying to restrain a pupil which resulted in an absence of greater than three days.
  - A teacher at Kingsley High School suffered bruising and swelling to the shoulder after being struck by an agitated student.
  - One teacher at Little Stanmore School was pushed against a classroom cupboard by an agitated student resulting in bruising to the back.
  - A teacher at Roxeth First & Middle School suffering soft tissue damage to the shoulders while trying to restrain and move a student from the thoroughfare.
- 2.12 There were 106 non reportable 'physical assault' incidents within the Directorate, accounting for approximately 35% of all incidents.

2.13 Most of these recorded incidents were from Special Schools with seventy eight incidents submitted by Kingsley High School. Incidents were generally from agitated students and involved conduct including pulling, pushing, scratching, kicking, pinching and biting. There were also a limited number of reports of bites, kicking etc from a variety of other sites including the Firs.

#### **Hit by a moving/ flying or falling object**

2.14 There were 6 'hit by a moving / flying or falling object' RIDDOR reportable incidents in schools. There are no obvious trends with two of the incidents related to concussion after being stuck by a moving door and a belt snapping of a chest press in a gym respectively. Another related to whiplash after a road traffic accident. Of the remaining reportable incidents one related to a fractured ankle after being hit by a moving push bike and the others related to scratches and bruising.

2.15 There were 17 non reportable 'hit by a moving / flying or falling object' incidents within the Directorate. Incidents principally involved being hit by volley balls, swinging doors or during physical education activities such as playing football, leading to injuries like bruises, cuts and bumps to the forehead.

#### **Physical contact (not assault)**

2.16 There were three physical contact (not assault) RIDDOR reportable incidents in schools. The reportable incidents relate to teachers being unintentionally knocked over by students and suffering fractures from the resulting falls.

2.17 There were seventeen non reportable physical contact incidents in schools. Over one third of these reported incidents took place at Kingsley High School with the remainder occurring on nine different sites.

#### **Exposure to or contact with harmful substances**

2.18 There were six incidents in this incident group, five of which related to school laboratories. Two of these incidents resulted in short term absence due to the inhalation of gases. The necessary corrective actions were taken in each case and none of these incidents led to long term absence.

#### **Relationship between training, physical assaults and incident reporting in schools**

2.19 Harrow delivers accredited training risk / conflict management training and physical skills etc as per the latest guidance from the Department for Children, Schools and Families. In some schools over a hundred staff have attended briefings around dealing with risk incidents related to behaviour.

- 2.20 There are a number of Schools currently with staff accredited in restrictive physical interventions, including 3 Special Schools & 13 First & Middle Schools.
- 2.21 There are a number of schools where a number of staff have had training in managing challenging behaviour including 2 High Schools & 8 First & Middle Schools.
- 2.22 Shaftesbury, Woodlands & Kingsley Schools all have ongoing training programs, this includes annual refreshers.
- 2.23 The high number of reports from Kingsley School suggests that the corporate reporting arrangements are good in this school.

### **Health & Safety Governance in the Children's Service Directorate**

- 2.24 It was identified in a previous report to ECF (Progress of the Health and Safety Partnership Board and Departmental Safety Group meetings) that the Education Health and Safety forum had not met for a long period. This group has now been re-initiated and will be considering incident data and appropriate learning and training needs including school governor awareness.

### **CONCLUSION**

- 2.25 This analysis considers the five largest incident groups for the incident data during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. Children's Services is the largest directorate with Schools accounting for approximately five thousand employees.
- 2.26 There were thirty four reportable incidents during this period. Over half the reportable incidents relate to either 'slips, trips & falls' or 'hit by a moving/ flying or falling object'.
- 2.27 There were two hundred and twenty nine non reportable incidents during this period. Over 40% of these incidents related to physical assault. Further analysis revealed that the majority of these incidents had taken place at Special School, principally Kingsley High School. This suggests good corporate reporting mechanisms at this school.
- 2.28 The importance of accurate and timely incident reporting will continue to be stressed at the appropriate forums and this is particularly relevant to the Education Health and Safety Forum now that it has been revitalised.

## **Section 3 – Further Information**

- 3.1 None

## **Section 4 – Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The council's health and safety functions and management responsibilities are discharged within existing service budgets.

## Section 5 – Corporate Priorities

- 5.1 Communication and the monitoring and measurement of the Council's health and safety performance have the potential to impact on each of the Council's priorities. The performance implications are included in the main body of the report.

Name: Steve Tingle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of : Chief Financial Officer
Date: 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2010		
Name: Stephen Dorrian	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of : Monitoring Officer
Date: 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2010		

## Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers

**Contact:** Mark Riordan, Interim Health & Safety Lead, 0208 424 1521

**Background Papers:** None.

Appendix 1 – Incident data

Kind of accident	Total	Reportable		Non Reportable	
		April 2009 – April 2010		April 2009 – April 2010	
		Schools	Non - Schools	Schools	Non - School
Slipped, Tripped or fell on the same level	56 (21%)	12 (41%)	2 (50%)	36 (18%)	6 (18%)
Physical assault	106 (40%)	4 (13%)		91 (46%)	11 (31%)
Physical contact (not assault)	20 (8%)	3 (10%)		16 (8%)	1(3%)
Incident with verbal abuse	4 (2%)			1 (1%)	3 (9%)
Incident with threatening behaviour	5 (2%)			2 (1%)	3 (9%)
Handling/ lifting/ carrying	8 (3%)			6 (3%)	2 (6%)
Fell from height (state height in notes)	3 (1%)	1 (3%)		1 (1%)	1 (3%)
Hit something stationary	14 (5%)	1 (3%)		10 (5%)	3 (9%)
Hit by moving vehicle	0				
Incident involving vehicle	0				
Contact with electricity	0				
Contact with moving machinery	0				
Drowning or asphyxiation	0				

Electrical fault	1 (1%)			2 (1%)	
Exposed to or contact with harmful substance	6 (2%)	2 (7%)		4 (2%)	
Exposure to an explosion	0				
Exposure to fire	0				
Hit by a moving/ flying or falling object	23 (9%)	6 (20%)		15 (8%)	2 (6%)
Injured by an animal/ Insect	0				
Trapped by something collapsing or overturning	0				
Other accident (please specify in notes)	16 (6%)	1 (3%)	2 (50%)	11 (6%)	2 (6%)
Incident with accidental property damage	0				
Incident with bomb alert/ suspicious package	0				
Incident with burglary/ theft/ mugging	0				
Incident with faulty equipment	0				
Incident with vandalism	0				
Total Number	263	30	4	195	34



Appendix 2 – Incident group percentages for all incidents

