
UPDATE REPORT ON HEALTH AND SAFETY IN SCHOOLS

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on health and safety management in schools detailing both progress and future actions associated with implementation of the Council's plans for health and safety management.

Summary

2. A number of issues have been addressed during the period under review. The major focus has been to establish the level of safety culture within the schools at both management and classroom level, with the intention of understanding what areas need improving in order to create an incident and injury free environment.
3. Three of Darlington's Schools have achieved the RoSPA safety award, which is the first time that any of the Authorities Schools have achieved this accolade. This is a very notable achievement and it is hoped that several more schools will participate in this initiative in the future.
4. One of the most significant achievements is the improvement of effective communication between the Schools and the safety unit and it is this effective dialogue which is steadily helping to improve the overall safety culture of schools at all levels including Governors individual departments and teachers, via training sessions and school visits. Some schools are operating at a very high standard of safety awareness, and therefore the safety unit are now targeting resources in areas where further improvement could be achieved to ensure consistently high safety standards across all schools.
5. There has been an increase in reportable accidents during the reporting period 2007/08 rising from 6 in 2006/07 to 12. A detailed analysis has been conducted in order to establish a cause for the increase. Slips Trips Fall's and Manual Handling continue to be the main type of reportable accidents. However, the root cause is predominantly as a result of increased reporting awareness and human error rather than a systemic or premises fault. A break down is provided in **Appendix 1**.
6. The largest group of accidents reported to the health and safety unit result from violence at work, although these incidents were not reportable accidents in HSE terms. Human error and behavioural factors are key components in the cause of accidents and the health and safety team are continuing to work very closely with individual schools and their management teams on initiatives to progress a continuous improvement approach to their health and safety culture. This includes targeting areas where there is an increase in reportable accidents.

7. Children's Services and schools have again remained free from action by the Health and Safety Executive.

Recommendation

8. It is recommended that the progress to date and planned actions for 2008/09, be noted.

Paul Wildsmith
Director of Corporate Services

Background Papers

No background papers used in the compilation of this report.

Colin Morrison: Extension 2011

S17 Crime and Disorder	Some actions and information highlighted in the report support reduction of crime and disorder.
Health and Well Being	The report addresses improved health and safety and general health and safety issues in schools.
Sustainability	No specific sustainability issues arising from this report.
Diversity	Diversity issues are incorporated into Health and Safety managers.
Wards Affected	All wards equally.
Groups Affected	Employees and pupils in schools.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not affect the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	Scrutiny report.
Urgent Decision	Scrutiny report.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Action detailed in report supports the Healthy Darlington aspect of the SCS.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis – Reviewing Initiatives set for 2007-2008

1. A new Corporate Health and Safety Policy has been produced and distributed to all schools. The new Policy amalgamates and replaces individual departmental policies. The new Policy is supported by a statement of intent which is now on display throughout the authority. However, schools have still been provided with bespoke Health and Safety Policies which address their individual arrangements.
2. Risk Assessments have been updated for staff across a breadth of subjects and are in the process of being loaded onto Phoenix for schools to access. However, schools are being trained in the process of risk assessment in order to encourage them to take ownership of their own risk assessments.
3. Slips Trips and Falls (STF) are still proving to be a problem area. Time has been spent researching the underlying causes for these accidents. Where faults with premises were identified, recommendations were forwarded and improvements have been carried out. Other causes resulted from a failure to adhere to procedures or the procedures in place were not effective enough. Therefore all schools have been contacted with detailed advice based on recommendations from case studies as well as good practise.
4. The Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) Managing Safely Course is now available for in house delivery and replaces the existing health and safety management course. The course is ideal for Head Teachers and their supervisory staff, including Safety Governors. It's designed to get managers up to speed on the practical actions they need to take to handle health and safety in their teams. The eight modules cover:-
 - (d) Introducing managing safely
 - (e) Assessing risk
 - (f) Controlling risks
 - (g) Understanding your responsibilities
 - (h) Identifying hazards
 - (i) Investigating accidents and incidents
 - (j) Measuring performance
 - (k) Protecting our environment
5. A new system has been implemented which will accurately capture all lost time as a result of accidents.
6. Schools have expressed concern regarding use of transport for school business. Concerns include hiring of transport, use of personal vehicles and direction over who is permitted to drive a minibus. Therefore work is continuing on developing a Corporate Motor Risk Policy. A draft Policy has been produced which when fully developed and implemented will benefit the schools in several ways e.g.:-

- (d) Reduced costs associated with uninsured losses, absenteeism, and lost productivity;
- (e) A reduced risk of harm to drivers and other road users;
- (f) Greater compliance with legislation;
- (g) Improved Corporate and Social Responsibility.

Brief outline of key objectives for 2008/09

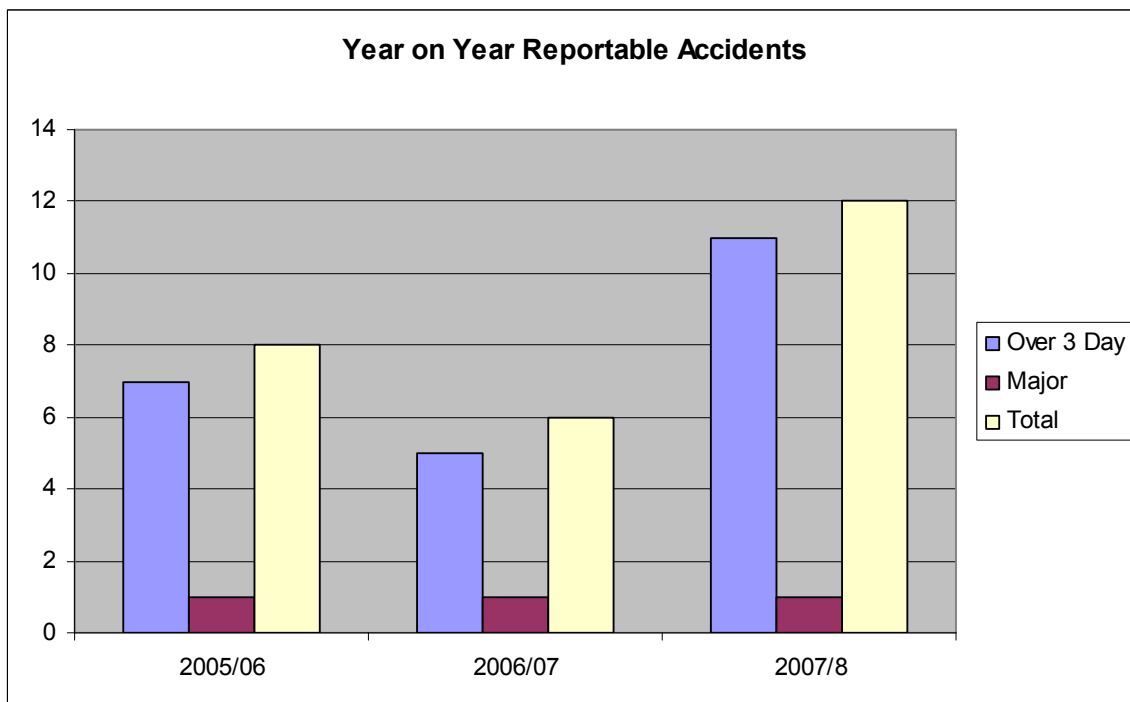
7. One of the areas identified for improvement, via the annual review, is the issue of human behaviour. Accident investigations suggest the cause of a considerable number of accidents can be attributed to behavioural traits. In order to identify the reasons for this, a study is being undertaken to gauge the perceptions of health and safety across the authority. Understanding perceptions will help understand behaviour and culture within the organisation and assist with the implementation of strategies to address these problems within Children's Services.
8. Carry out a Review of the risk assessment procedure to consider behavioural aspects as part of the selected control measures.
9. Continue to embed/reinforce health and safety management systems across the schools.
10. Deliver IOSH Managing Safely course for managers and supervisors.
11. Develop and implement a transport policy and guidance document which helps schools manage their transport requirements. Considerations include; who can drive school transport, use of personal vehicles for school business and selection guidelines when hiring transport from external providers.
12. Encourage more schools to attempt the RoSPA Safety awards in order to achieve nationally recognised standards of safety awareness.
13. Complete the second phase of school audits to establish the level of progress made since recommendations were implemented and identify schools requiring closer attention.
14. Continue to undertake audits across the schools to ensure compliance with health and safety management systems.
15. Continue to further encourage near miss reporting throughout Children's Services.

Outcome of Consultation

16. This is not applicable to the Scrutiny report.

Impact on Looked After Children

17. This report does not have a specific impact on Looked after Children, other than the Health and Safety guidance and assistance that is provided to all schools.



Childrens Services - Employee Reportable 07-08

