

Health and Safety Committee Meeting

Health and Safety Officers Report

15th January 2009

1. Work Experience Working Party

Task Group will undertake a review of the vetting and monitoring requirements of the DCELLS Health and Safety Code of Practice for Contracted Provision.

The suggested line out is

Keith Booker

Colin Heffey

Jacky Williams

Barbara Davies Faculty Office (deals with wk exp for H&SC) ?

Gail Dubec Learner Services Neath (agreed)

Andrea Davies Learner Services Afan agreed

Claire Richardson - Hair & Beauty (agreed)

Eifion Hughes Pathways ?

Adele Ottilley Jones (agreed)

However these members of staff will need to be consulted first. Heads of School have been emailed.

2. First Aid Working Party

First Aid Group needs to be set up to discuss and resolve issues with the lack of suitably qualified first aiders in some areas.

- Catering
- Engineering
- HHB
- Evening Cover in general
- Saturday Morning Clubs
- The New Theatre- Performing Arts
- Coleg Pontardawe

Need to establish some form of incentive for taking on the responsibilities associated with being a first aider

Need to establish a senior first aider to be responsible for the upkeep of the first aid room ie ensuring the room is kept tidy and the first aid box kept well stocked and contents in date.

Suggested line out

Jacky Williams
Colin Heffey
Judith Williams
Sonny
Paul Clay
Zoe Harding

3. Fire Marshal Procedures for all Campuses

Estates are trialling walkie talkie type radios so that when the fire alarms sound Estates staff can communicate with each other. This will enable fire marshals to speed up the process of telling staff and learners that they are allowed back into the building etc plus enhanced security.

Fire Marshal procedures are being rewritten for each campus
Training in the resetting of the fire panels is in the process of being arranged for all campuses and has been arranged for Tuesday 20th Jan for Afan staff members

4. New legislation

The Health and Safety (Offences) Act 2008 comes into force 16th January 2009. The act introduces additional penalties for both employers and employees found guilty of health and safety offences. The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 remains the key statute for outlining the duties of employers and employees, however the new act alters the penalty framework set out in section 33 of HASAW allowing greater sanctions to be imposed in both the Magistrates and the Crown courts.

Any individual from the lecture room to the board can now be sent to prison for breaches of health and safety law. Even relatively minor offences tried in the Magistrates court could now result in a £20,000 fine and up to 12 months imprisonment. If the breach is more serious it will be tried in the Crown Court and can then carry an unlimited fine and up to 2 years imprisonment. Until now the only individual imprisoned for a H&S offence was Paul Ellis the schoolteacher convicted of manslaughter following the death of schoolboy Max Palmer after a failed school visit to a plunge pool at Glenridding Beck.

Any employee who has failed to take reasonable care of the health and safety of himself or other persons (learners) or any director, manager or governor who has allowed a H&S offence to occur or which has been caused by his neglect can now face a prison sentence.

5. Hazardous substances – court case

I visited Carpentry workshops at the Neath Campus last week as I had read an article where a teacher had sued a school because he had been subjected to high levels of dust whilst teaching and working with carpentry machinery.

The member of staff had contracted occupational asthma from exposure to wood dust. The council/school was served two improvement notices

1. for failing to provide adequate controls around dangerous substances
2. for not carrying out a COSHH risk assessment

the council was fined also for failing to provide sufficient information and training to staff.

I have requested a meeting with Carl James and Ian Lumsdaine to ensure that we are doing everything that we should be doing and that there is adequate extraction in place in all woodworking areas

6. Accident

May I remind everyone that it is a criminal offence to carry a knife or offensive weapon. It is a defence to be carrying one for educational purposes such as cookery, craftwork etc however the police have stopped a learner at Gwent and he had to provide evidence that he was a learner at the college.

7. Training

Midas minibus training has been arranged for the end of the month. Evac Chair training has taken place at Coleg Pontardawe