



Health and Safety

Report

1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021

Introduction

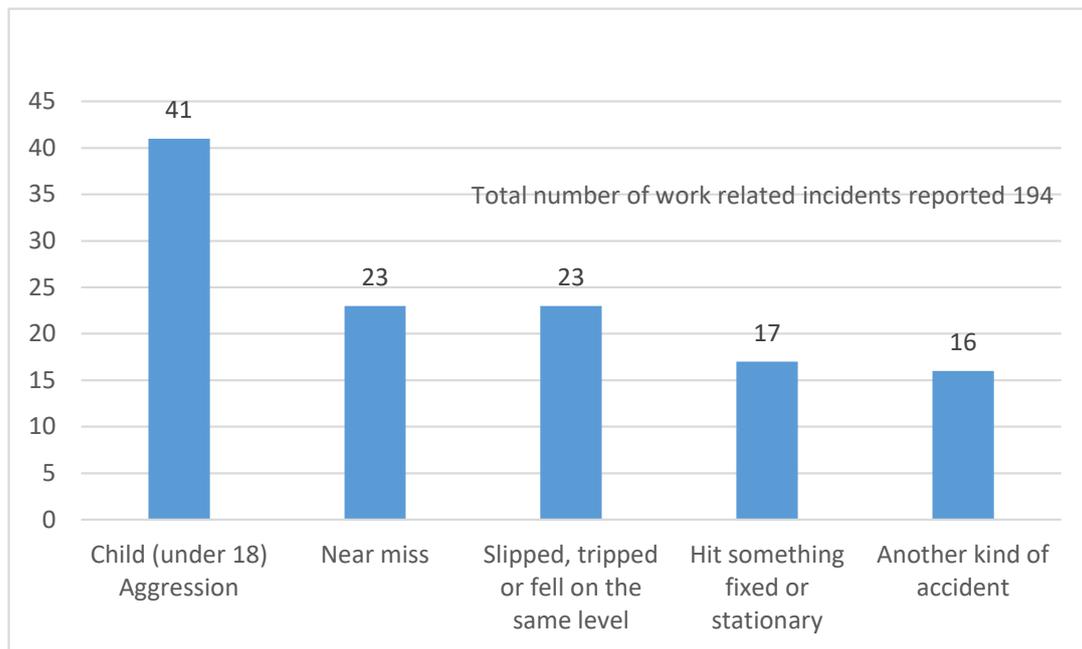
1. The last report produced covered an 18-month period from 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19 and its associated variants which continue to impact services and communities. Consequently this annual report will cover the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 but will be slightly amended to avoid any duplication but will allow for some comparison of incident data.
2. The Shared Health and Safety Service has continued to deliver services and to respond to requests for support and assistance throughout the pandemic. This has included undertake a significant number of inspections of council workplaces to ensure they are Covid Secure - this included unannounced visits, monitoring and providing advice and guidance to colleagues to support the organisation to continue to deliver services. This has also included developing template risk assessments, in consultation with public health colleagues, to support managers implement COVID controls in what has been a fast moving environment.
3. In addition the service has continued to consider other health and safety risks in particularly in relation to construction related activities as these have continued through the pandemic. One particular achievement has been the launch of a new health and safety incident reporting and risk assessment system (B-Safe) across the council and this is now being widely used.

Key areas of Health and Safety Work in 2020/21

4. The Corporate Health and Safety Policy was reviewed and revised to recognise the risks from COVID-19 and the new management structure. This was approved by the newly appointed Chief Operating Officer and Corporate Management Team for issue on 1st April 2021 ready for the new financial year.
5. COVID-19 has continued to dominate the work of the service for most of period covered by this report with 45 Covid Secure inspections of CYC occupied premises taking place by the team. These inspections were supported by numerous support calls, visits and advice over the year. This also involved responding to any requests for information from the Health and Safety Executive.
6. The service has also been supporting a number of significant construction projects across the council. This involves working closely with procurement to ensure health and safety has been included in any project tender documents, thereby ensuring health and safety is considered at the design stage to minimise risk not only during the construction phase but once the facilities become operational. Construction activities, including designing and planning, continue to be a priority.

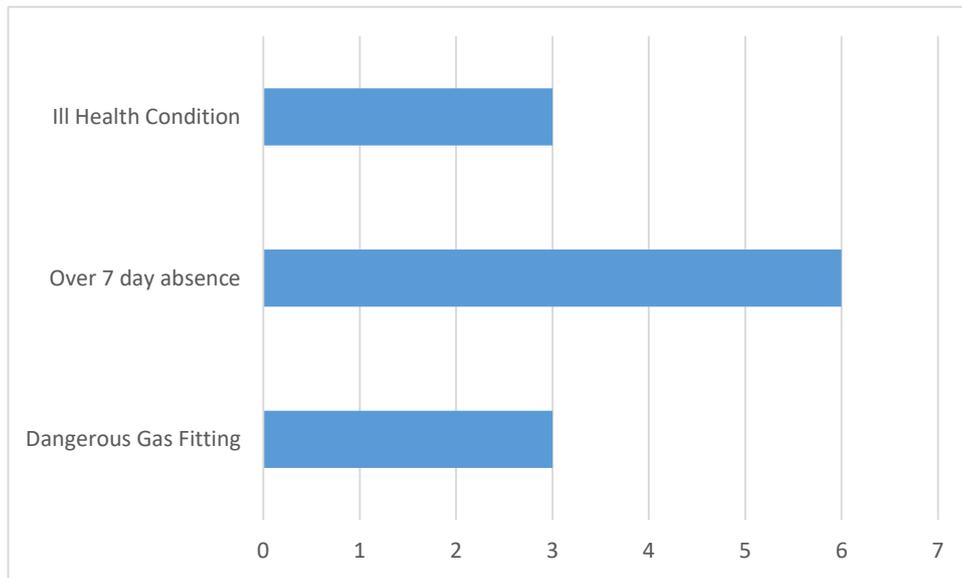
Accidents and Incidents

Table 1 - Top Five Work Related Incidents by Nature Apr 20 – Mar 21



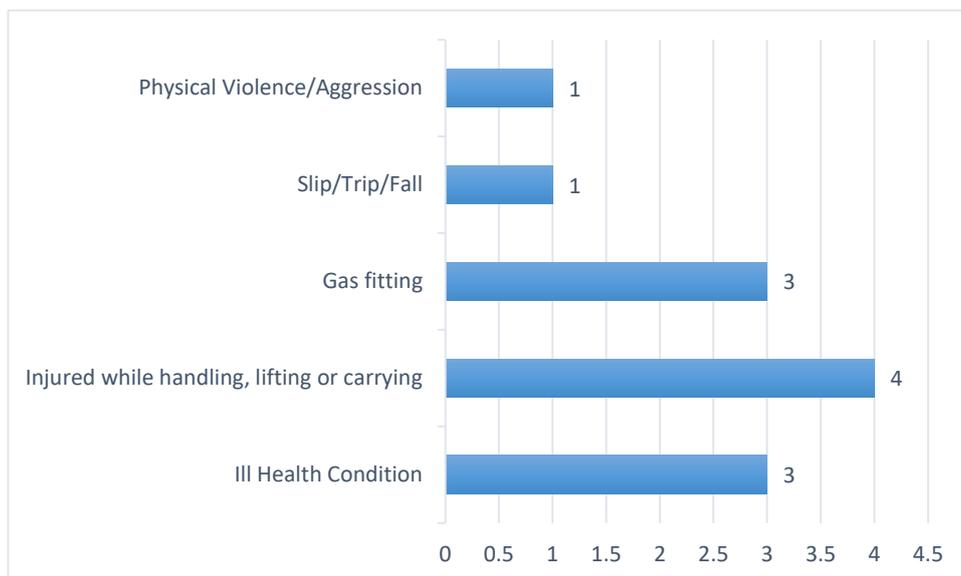
7. Table 1 shows the top five accidents by cause across CYC over the last financial year. A new system of reporting incidents (B-Safe) was introduced on 1 September 2020 - it is expected to take some time for staff to become used to the new system however it is positive that incidents are still being reported as there were 129 work related incidents reported from 1 September 2020 to 31 March 2021 so it is hoped that any issues due to the change in system will be minimal. In addition there has been a lot of work done to encourage reporting of incidents so it was pleasing to note that 23 near miss incidents were also reported. It is essential that these incidents are reported as they provide learning opportunities in order that control measures can be improved. Some of the near miss incidents included a number of close road traffic collisions.
8. Child aggression continues to be one of the highest causes of incident reported which demonstrates the role children's social care colleagues have been providing to some of our most vulnerable young people. Each incident is investigated to determine how such risks can be managed and these influence care plans and strategies.

Table 2 - RIDDOR Notifiable Incidents by Reason for Apr 20 – Mar 21



9. As explained in previous reports some of the more serious incidents are notifiable the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under the provisions of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) Table 2 show the notifiable incidents by reason with Table 3 providing more detail on the cause.

Table 3 RIDDOR Notifiable Incidents by cause for the last financial year



10. As explained in the previous interim report for the period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2020 the impact on normal operations due to COVID makes meaningful comparisons with earlier years very difficult. In 2018/19 there were 34 RIDDOR notifiable incidents in 2019/20 this was 10 and for 2020/21 this was 12. Until such time as there is some consistency as to current operations it will be difficult to identify trends.

Performance of the Health & Safety Service

11. The Shared Health and Safety Service continue to monitor council activities and undertake formal inspections to identify any areas of concern. This work has been severely affected by COVID-19. However work in areas of high risk have continued with over 62 Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) completed across the corporate workplaces during the period of this report (see Table 4). Due to their risks some buildings have a FRA each year so will have had more than one assessment during the period covered by this report.

Table 4 - Summary of inspections and audits of CYC Properties

Type of Visit	Number of Visits*
School H&S Inspections (documentation checks)*	48*
School Fire Risk Assessment Reviews	22
COVID Secure formal H&S visits	45

*This visits were undertaken virtually due to COVID-19 as some visits brought forward and some delayed depending upon risk

National Issues

12. The Fire Safety Act 2021 has now received Royal Assent which is part of the government's strategy to introduce improvements in the wake of the Grenfell tragedy. To support this the government has introduced the Building Safety Bill which is currently now going through the approval stages of Parliament. In preparation for some of the potential impacts of these, a CYC Fire Safety Management Strategy is being considered by officers and will shortly be submitted to Corporate Management Team for approval.
13. A briefing was provided to head teachers on the current position and advised to be prepared for further tightening of guidance in the future especially when they are planning any alterations now. A key consideration being the installation of Fire suppression systems (sprinklers) with one local authority having three significant fires in schools in one year. The session also covered the planning and control of "hot works" during refurbishment and maintenance operations which remains an area of concern and a significant cause of premises fire across the country.

Looking forward to 2021/22

14. As COVID vaccinations continue to roll out and the associated COVID controls relax the team is preparing to respond to the other demand for works. For example there is expected to be particular demand to complete construction works in the summer although, there remain some supply chain issues within the construction industry particularly around sourcing materials and labour. This will

need to be monitored closely as projects may continue when pupils return to schools in September.

15. One issue when there may be pressures on labour supply, due to pent up demand, is to use inexperienced and/or young workers in the delivering projects so officers from the Shared Health and Safety Service will continue to be visiting sites to monitor standards.
16. As COVID controls are relaxed there is an expectation that more public events will be held and as the team support the Safety Advisory Group as one of the consultees. There is a risk that more applications are received and with short timescales prior to event which may place pressure of the service to provide advice to the Group as to whether such events should go ahead.