

CORPORATE SAFETY COMMITTEE – 10TH JULY 2003

SUBJECT: FIRE AT TRINITY FIELDS SCHOOL, YSTRAD MYNACH

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of the recent fire at Trinity Fields Special Needs School.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 At approximately 9.45 a.m. on Tuesday, 10th June, a fire occurred in a cloakroom at the school.

2.2 Extensive damage was caused to the room and the adjoining toilet and changing area.

2.3 Heat and smoke damage was also caused to an adjacent classroom, the connecting door to which had been left open.

2.4 The cause of the fire will not be known until the report of the Fire Investigation Officers has been received.

2.5 All pupils and staff were safely evacuated from the building and taken to the staff canteen at Ystrad Fawr, where they remained until arrangements could be made for the pupils to be taken home.

2.6 Regular tests of the fire alarm system, and automatic fire doors and fire drills are undertaken at the school. It is considered that the speed of evacuation of the pupils, all of whom have disabilities, was largely due to the knowledge and experience, gained by staff during fire drills.

2.7 Following the event, it was found that one pair of fire doors had failed to operate. The cause was investigated and found to be a defective electrical relay.

2.8 It has been recommended that all such relays at the school are checked regularly and, if appropriate, maintained or changed. In addition, since similar fire doors are fitted to other premises, the checks should extend to all fire doors of this type. Property Division has been urged to make the necessary arrangements as quickly as possible.

2.9 During the fire, three smoke detectors were severally damaged, requiring replacement before the fire alarm system could be reactivated. This work was carried out on the following day.

2.10 The fire affected area was sealed off from the remainder of the premises so that the school could re-open whilst remedial work is undertaken.

2.11 Pupils were re-admitted on Monday, 16th June, however, the classrooms on either side of the seat of the fire remained closed until the results of air tests were known.

2.12 This measure was considered necessary since a number of the pupils suffer from respiratory problems and could have been affected by particulate matter, resulting from the fire, which

may still be in the air in the general area.

2.13 Following a verbal report that the air quality was satisfactory, classrooms were re-opened on 18th June.

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