



Education
Funding
Agency

Asbestos in schools data collection

Guidance on completing the online form

January 2016

Summary

About this guidance note

This guidance is to support the '[Asbestos in schools – data collection exercise](#)'. It aims to support headteachers in completing the online form. This guidance has been produced by the Department for Education and is non-statutory.

Expiry or review date

This advice will be withdrawn following the end of the data collection exercise in March 2016.

Who is this advice for?

This guidance is for headteachers (or their equivalent) in all maintained schools, academies, university technical colleges, studio schools, sixth-form colleges and free schools.

Background

In March 2015 the department published a [review of its policy on asbestos management in schools](#). This survey follows on from an action in the review to collect more data about how asbestos is managed in schools. This will help to raise awareness in schools of the importance of asbestos management and help us to understand how we can support schools better in the future.

As a result of the review, the department also published advice for school leaders, governors, local authorities and academy trusts on how to manage any asbestos they had within their buildings, entitled '[Managing asbestos in your school](#)'. The guidance built upon the work done by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the explanatory memorandum and other supporting documents relating to the [Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012](#).

Data collection survey questions

The survey questions have been designed to be as clear as possible. This guidance note is to help you understand the reason we are asking the question, where the information can be found and where to look in existing guidance for further information. You may find it helpful to have a copy of your asbestos management documentation survey in front of you.

Your responses should reflect the position at your school on the day you submit the survey using the [online form](#). The closing date is 29 February 2016.

Question 1a - Do your school premises contain asbestos?

and

Question 1b - How do you know your school premises do not contain any asbestos?

The majority of schools built before 2000 used asbestos in their construction. Where the asbestos is clearly identified and appropriate plans are in place, this need not present any difficulties for the school or those who work within the building.

If you have been informed that the school was constructed without asbestos, you should hold written evidence to this effect. If you are in any doubt then an appropriate survey (most likely a 'management' type survey as described in the HSE guidance, '[Asbestos management survey](#)'), should be carried out to determine if there are (or is a risk of) any asbestos containing materials within any of the buildings.

More information can be found on page 7 of '[Managing asbestos in your school](#)'. Useful information can also be found on the [HSE website](#).

Question 2 - Who is responsible for managing asbestos in your school?

Legislation defines the duty holder responsible for managing asbestos. This is typically the employer. Page 6 of the '[Managing asbestos in your school](#)' guidance helps to clarify this for different types of schools. For this question we are asking you to identify who has responsibility for day to day management of the risks associated with any asbestos present in your building(s).

Question 3 – Has your school had an asbestos management survey carried out for all buildings which may contain asbestos (ie a nonintrusive survey to inform your day to day management of asbestos)? Please provide the date of the last 'management' survey for the school.

The asbestos management survey is the main tool by which schools identify any asbestos containing materials during the normal occupation and use of the school premises. The survey should be conducted in accordance with HSE guidance. Page 7 of the '[Managing asbestos in your school](#)' guidance provides some additional detail and the HSE publication '[Asbestos: the survey guide](#)' contains guidance about the requirements of asbestos surveys.

If your school has a more recent refurbishment or demolition survey, you should indicate the date in your answer.

Question 4 - Do you have an asbestos register for your school? Please provide the date it was last reviewed and/or updated.

One of the outputs of the management survey is a register which records the location and condition of the asbestos in your building. The register should be reviewed regularly (annually is recommended). It should be updated whenever work is carried out which affects its contents.

Question 5 - Do you have a written asbestos management plan for your school? Please provide the date it was last reviewed and/or updated.

Your asbestos management plan (AMP) is made up of;

- the information in your up to date asbestos register
- your rating of the risk of any identified asbestos, given the location and context
- your plan to manage the presence of asbestos and activities which happen near it to ensure the safety of building occupants.

Details of how to make an assessment of risk, including the factors you should take into account, can be found on page 8 of the '[Managing asbestos in your school](#)' guidance. An example scoring system, created by the HSE, can be found on their [website](#). An example AMP can be found on the [HSE website](#).

Question 6 - Are there processes and procedures in place detailing the control measures to prevent disturbance of any known asbestos containing materials?

Generally speaking, if asbestos in your school building is in good condition and is unlikely to be damaged or disturbed, then it is usually safer to leave it in place and regularly monitor its condition.

For this reason, it is essential that plans are in place to avoid disturbance and this should be an important part of the school's AMP. Information on this and the other main elements can be found on page 9 of the '[Managing asbestos in your school](#)' guidance.

Question 7 - Do you have a process to ensure that anyone who may disturb asbestos in the school, including building contractors and those performing activities such as IT installations, has received information regarding the presence (or potential presence) of asbestos?

Precautions should be put in place to ensure anyone employed by the school, or who comes to carry out any work on the premises, does not start before they are given the information about any asbestos present. The information should be supplied well in

advance of work starting so that the correct precautions can be implemented. Detail on the factors that need to be taken into account are given on page 11 of the '[Managing asbestos in your school](#)' guidance.

Question 8 – Does your school have a caretaker or facilities manager?

and

Question 9 - Which school staff have you made aware of the asbestos risks identified in the asbestos register?

Most teachers and school staff are not directly involved in managing the buildings or carrying out repair or maintenance work. Where staff may be at risk of exposure to asbestos, they will need to know the location of any asbestos containing materials (ACMs) and how they can be damaged or disturbed. For example, by pupil's work being pinned to walls or through unruly behaviour of pupils. You must instruct all staff to report damage or deterioration of school fixtures or fittings that could lead to the release of asbestos fibres.

Question 10 - Which members of school staff, if any, have undertaken asbestos awareness training?

It is essential that you make sure all relevant staff and other workers in your school receive the right information, instruction and training and are clear what precautions they should follow. This will include caretakers and maintenance staff, and could include any member of the school staff that may damage ACMs. The level of training/information given will vary depending on the level of work to be undertaken. Appropriate plans for communicating the risk should form part of any AMP:

Awareness training – this is for staff whose work could expose them to asbestos while carrying out their everyday tasks. Awareness training is not sufficient for staff planning to carry out any work on ACMs.

Training for work with asbestos that does not require a licence from HSE – this is for staff who plan to carry out any work on ACMs where the likelihood of exposure is much higher, eg installing cables in areas containing undamaged asbestos materials.

Training for asbestos work that does require a licence from HSE – this includes most work on asbestos insulation, asbestos insulating board and lagging, including sealing and removal. Licensed contractors must carry out most work with these higher risk ACMs.

All responses should be made via the [online form](#). The closing date is 29 February 2016.

Further information

Useful resources and external organisations

[HSE guidance on asbestos in schools](#)

[HSE asbestos management checklist for schools](#)

[Department for Education 'Managing asbestos in your school'](#)

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