



Education  
Funding  
Agency

# Asbestos Management in Schools Data Collection Report

February 2017

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the findings from the voluntary asbestos management in schools data collection exercise. The data collection commenced on 29 January and closed on 31 March 2016. Following completion of the online form schools received an automatically generated email offering them specific guidance according to the answers they provided, thus ensuring that schools have been told what they need to do to improve.
- 1.2 The Department for Education does not manage the school estate in England; we provide funding for new school places. We also provide funding to schools and local authorities to maintain their existing buildings. Responsibility for asbestos management rests with the duty holder – whoever it is that has responsibility for the maintenance and/or repair of non-domestic premises, including schools. For the majority of schools, the duty holder will be the employer and this will generally be the local authority, school governors or academy trust.
- 1.3 The department takes the issue of asbestos management in schools very seriously and our policy aims to support duty holders to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Approximately 25% of schools in England responded to the survey and of those, a majority – around 80%, appear to be managing asbestos well and are fully compliant with legislation and guidance. Around 20% were not fully compliant, in that they did not have fully documented plans, processes and procedures in place at the time of the data collection; or did not know if asbestos was present. Advice was provided to address the lack of supporting documentation and presence of asbestos. Of the schools with asbestos present: 98% have an asbestos management survey; 97% have an asbestos register; and 97% report that there are processes and procedures in place. There were 114 schools (around 2%) that initially gave significant cause for concern which we followed up with their respective responsible bodies. All schools have now provided the required assurances on compliance with legislation and guidance in the management of asbestos on their school estate. Schools have also confirmed that where asbestos has been removed this was completed in accordance with health and safety guidance.
- 1.4 We are also publishing [revised and updated guidance](#) for schools and responsible bodies on managing asbestos. In future, we plan to seek written assurance from all duty holders that their schools are compliant with existing legislation and guidance on the management of asbestos in schools.
- 1.5 The department worked with many stakeholders including the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Joint Union Asbestos Committee (JUAC), the Local Authority Educational Building and Development Officers Group (EBDOG), and Multi-Academy Trusts to design and manage this survey and is very grateful for their input. If you would like further information please email us at: [support.capital@education.gov.uk](mailto:support.capital@education.gov.uk).

## Summary of Key Findings

- 1.6 There were 5,592 schools that participated in the data collection (a response rate of 25.2%). All of these received an immediate response providing bespoke advice on management of asbestos. It should be noted that the respondents were not stratified and is unlikely to be representative of the full schools estate. There may be a selection bias towards schools that already manage asbestos well.

## Types of school responding

- 1.7 A greater proportion of schools from Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) and Single Academy Trusts (SATs) participated compared to the proportion of schools with local authorities as their responsible body (see below). These schools may have found it easier to provide the information required as they have recently taken clearer responsibility for their buildings. Many local authorities maintain an asbestos management function for their schools and this support may have limited the response from the school level.

Percentage of each school type that responded:

- 46.0% of Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs)
- 49.0% of Single Academy Trusts (SATs)
- 26.6% of Diocese Schools
- 15.7% of Local Authority Maintained Schools
- 16.0% of Stand Alone Institutions<sup>1</sup>

## Presence of asbestos

- 1.8 Responses on presence of asbestos are in line with the levels we anticipated (based on the department's data on asbestos presence in the school estate).

Of the schools that responded to the data collection:

- 4,646 (83.1%) reported that asbestos was present
- 872 (15.6%) reported that asbestos was not present
- 74 (1.3%) reported that they did not know if asbestos was present

## Management of asbestos

- 1.9 Of the 5,592 schools that responded we found that:

- 2,884 (51.6%) responses either had no asbestos or generally appropriate management arrangements in place

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<sup>1</sup> Including Free Schools but not Independent schools.

- 1,648 (29.5%) responses generally had appropriate management arrangements in place, but their responses indicated a need to take some action to improve, which was explained in the automatically generated advice
- 1,060 (19.0%) responses were not compliant and advice on the action the schools needed to take was set out in the automatically generated advice
  - a subset of the schools - 114 (2.0%) – gave significant cause for concern and were contacted. All 114 schools have provided assurances that asbestos, where it is still present, is being managed effectively and have adequately addressed our concerns. The respective responsible body for each of these schools has been notified, for them to take the necessary action, as the duty holder. This meant that none of the schools had to be referred to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to investigate further

1.10 Of the schools that responded to the data collection saying that asbestos was present (4,646 schools):

- 1,400 (30.1%) have reviewed their asbestos management survey carried out for all buildings which may contain asbestos in the last 12 months
- 2,691 (57.9%) have reviewed or updated their asbestos registers in the last 12 months
- 3,760 (81.0%) have an Asbestos Management Plan
- 4,497 (96.8%) have processes and procedures in place detailing the control measures to prevent disturbance of any known asbestos-containing materials
- 4,599 (99.0%) have processes to ensure that anyone who may disturb asbestos in the school, including caretakers, building contractors and those performing activities such as IT installations, has received information regarding the presence (or potential presence) of asbestos

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Asbestos was extensively used as a building material in England from the 1950s through to the mid-1980s. It was used for a variety of purposes, typically fireproofing and insulation. The use of asbestos in building construction in England was banned in 1999, so any school premises that were built before 2000 may contain asbestos.
- 2.2 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is the primary regulator in the UK for the management of asbestos and is responsible for enforcing the [Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012](#). In order to do this they may carry out a variety of activities, including unannounced inspections, investigations of asbestos exposure incidents and complaints, prohibiting dangerous practices and prosecuting for breaches of the regulations including inadequate control of asbestos. They also raise awareness about asbestos in schools, including by publishing resources.
- 2.3 The HSE's view is that schools, overall, are low risk health and safety environments, similar to offices or retail premises. They focus their inspection resources on higher risk industries such as construction. However, in recent years, the HSE has conducted surveys of a sample of school duty holders to assess their compliance with asbestos regulations. The HSE's advice is that provided asbestos in a school or any other building is in good condition and is unlikely to be damaged or disturbed, it is usually safer to leave it in place and regularly monitor its condition. It is essential that plans are put in place to avoid disturbance; this should be a key aspect within a school's asbestos management plan and shared with anyone likely to disturb asbestos-containing materials.
- 2.4 The Department for Education's role is to support schools in providing a safe learning and working environment for their pupils and staff, and help make sure duty holders are aware of their responsibilities and take them seriously. Since at least the 1960s the department has issued advice and guidance to schools about the use and presence of asbestos on their premises. The department does not have any statutory obligations or liability in respect of the management of asbestos in schools. Duty holders, and in the case of schools this is usually the responsible body, must manage any asbestos present in their buildings.
- 2.5 The department also provides funding to those who are responsible for schools so that they can ensure their school buildings are safe and in good condition.
- 2.6 In February 2015, the department announced over £6 billion of new investment to improve the condition of the school estate. This builds on the almost £18 billion this government has invested in the estate since the last Parliament. As well as addressing poor condition across schools, this

funding ensures that those responsible for schools can deal with asbestos adequately. Over time, as funding allows more school buildings to be replaced and refurbished, we will see a reduction in the number of school buildings with asbestos-containing materials.

- 2.7 In March 2015, the department published a [review](#) of its policy on asbestos management in schools. 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](#).
- 2.8 In January 2016, the department launched a data collection in response to the review. The aims were to collect more data about how asbestos is managed in schools, to raise awareness in schools of the importance of asbestos management and to help build an understanding of how the department can support schools better in the future.
- 2.9 We consulted with stakeholders on the proposal for the survey, including with local authorities and JUAC. As a result of their advice we asked head teachers for information directly in order to improve the quality of the information provided.
- 2.10 In May 2016, the school responses to the data collection questions were shared with their respective responsible body. This enabled the department to meet the commitments made under the 2015 review, that is: to collect data on the management of asbestos in schools and to share the data with responsible bodies to enable them to take any necessary action to ensure that their schools are compliant with current legislation and guidance. It provided responsible bodies with unprecedented information about the way in which their schools' approach the management of asbestos.

### 3. Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 The policy goals of gathering this data were:
  - to improve the evidence base on the management of asbestos in schools
  - to inform future policy thinking
  - to promote the importance of good asbestos management in all schools and provide bespoke advice to schools responding to the survey to enable them to improve their practice
- 3.2 The results from the survey also enabled the department to engage with respondents and address any concerns raised.

## 4. Methodology

- 4.1 We informed all responsible bodies about this non-mandatory asbestos management in schools data collection. We encouraged head teachers (or their equivalents) in all maintained schools, academies, university technical colleges, studio schools, sixth form colleges and free schools to participate in the data collection exercise. Previous non-mandatory data collections (on other topics) managed by the department had a response rate of 10%. The response rate for this data collection was 25.2%.
- 4.2 It should be noted that although the response rate was higher than the typical response rate to departmental non-mandatory data collections, there is likely to be a non-response bias. The voluntary nature of this exercise may mean that schools that already manage asbestos well are more likely to answer.
- 4.3 The data collection focused on the schools' management arrangements and did not gather information on the amount or condition of asbestos present in a school. The questions were informed and approved by the department's Asbestos in Schools Steering Group (ASSG) and by the Star Chamber<sup>2</sup>. A copy of the questions and a synopsis of school responses are contained in section 6 of this report. The quantitative analysis and synthesis of the data provided the test of the hypothesis that asbestos is effectively managed in schools.
- 4.4 The data were collected through an online tool established on the GOV.UK website. There were ten questions with closed answers. The questions were designed to be easy to understand and so that schools could respond with answers listed for selection using a checkbox which allowed either tick boxes, 'Yes', 'No' or 'Don't Know', as the possible responses depending on the question. There was also a facility to include dates for some of the questions. Free text entries were allowable if the respondent ticked 'other' as a tick box response. The answers provided generated an immediate response which included guidance for the schools completing the data collection.
- 4.5 Schools were able to enter information and were identified by their Unique Reference Number (URN). School information was cross-checked with EduBase and the individual completing the information was asked to verify that the information presented was correct.
- 4.6 To identify whether schools which responded were managing asbestos appropriately or not, a scoring system was developed. Each of the answers provided was given a score and the scores were combined to provide a total

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<sup>2</sup> Star Chamber is one of the main vehicles in the Department's drive to reduce bureaucracy impacting on local authority children's services (including education) and schools. It was formed in 1999 to review existing and proposed data collection exercises originating from within the Department and re-launched in October 2006 with a wider remit and enhanced powers.



score for the school. The potential score for each answer ranged from 0 to 10, depending on the severity of the concern that they raised. Annex A sets out the questions and the scoring system.

- 4.7 Schools that scored 0 (that is, no responses of concern) either had no asbestos or were considered to have generally appropriate management arrangements in place. Responding schools were placed in the following categories:
- Scores 0-4: generally appropriate management arrangements in place and not a cause for concern. Some of these schools may have some room for improvement in their behaviours that was pointed out to them in the feedback they received following the survey.
  - Scores 5-9: generally appropriate management arrangements, but need to take action to improve. These schools may be missing one piece of important documentation or process (for example some of these schools said they had an up to date asbestos register but not an asbestos management plan). They were advised to correct omissions as soon as possible through the feedback they receive following the survey.
  - Scores 10+: these schools' responses indicated they were not compliant. They either did not know whether or not asbestos was present or had two or more pieces of important documentation or processes missing. As well as providing feedback, we have contacted their responsible body to alert them to the deficiencies in their asbestos management. In the case of standalone academy trusts we contacted the school directly to ask them to provide written confirmation that they have completed the actions required.
- 4.8 A subset of schools scoring 10+ were designated as 'significant concern': these schools had answered 'Don't Know' to Question 1, or had answered 'Yes' to Question 1 and 'No' to having an asbestos survey and asbestos register or had scored 25 or more. These schools were either unsure if their buildings contained asbestos, had not conducted an asbestos survey or were missing several important, legally-required pieces of documentation or processes. Therefore, as well as receiving feedback following the survey, the responsible body for these schools was informed of the poor results and asked to provide evidence to the department that it had taken remedial actions. In the case of standalone or small academy trusts, we contacted them directly
- 4.9 We amended the responses to correct for the errors only. That is where the school stated that the answer provided at the time of the data collection was now known to be incorrect. We have not included amendments based on actions taken by schools or responsible bodies to address (or plan to address) their compliance with legislation or guidance, as part of our raising a significant concern with them about their response.

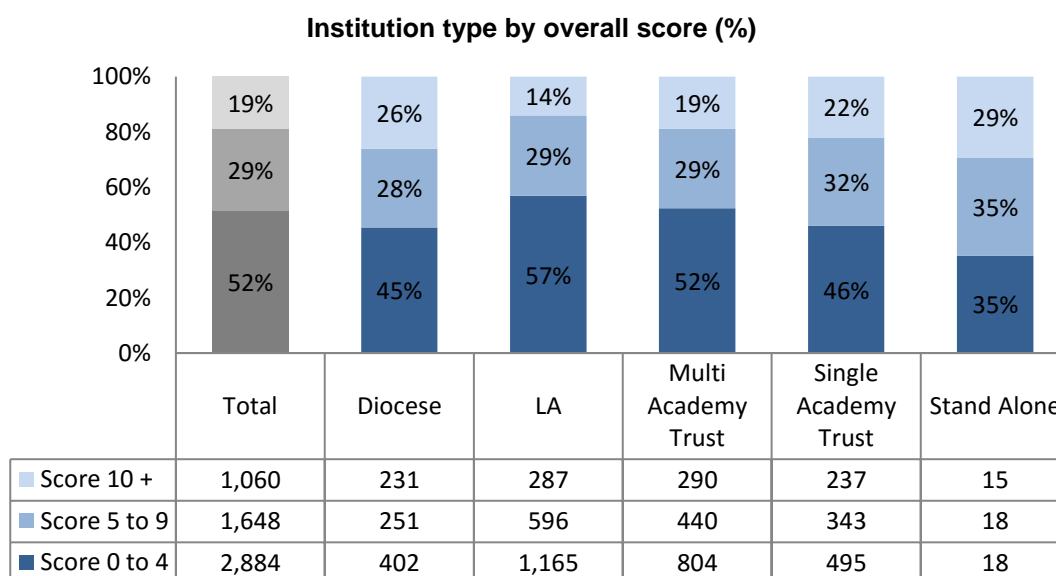
## 5. Findings

- 5.1 The data set out below is divided into school responsible body constituencies, ie Local Authority, MATs, Diocese, Stand Alone and SATs. Broadly speaking there is no significant variation in level of concern, by geography, type of responsible body or phase of education.

### Relationships between answers to different questions

- 5.2 We examined whether there was any relationship between the answers given to different questions. The correlations were weak showing that the answer to one question would not be very useful in predicting the answer to another question. The questions were designed to be standalone questions with little overlap and limited relationship. There was also no apparent relationship between the answers provided and the type of school, responsible body, phase or region.

### Assessed quality of management of asbestos based on overall data collection responses



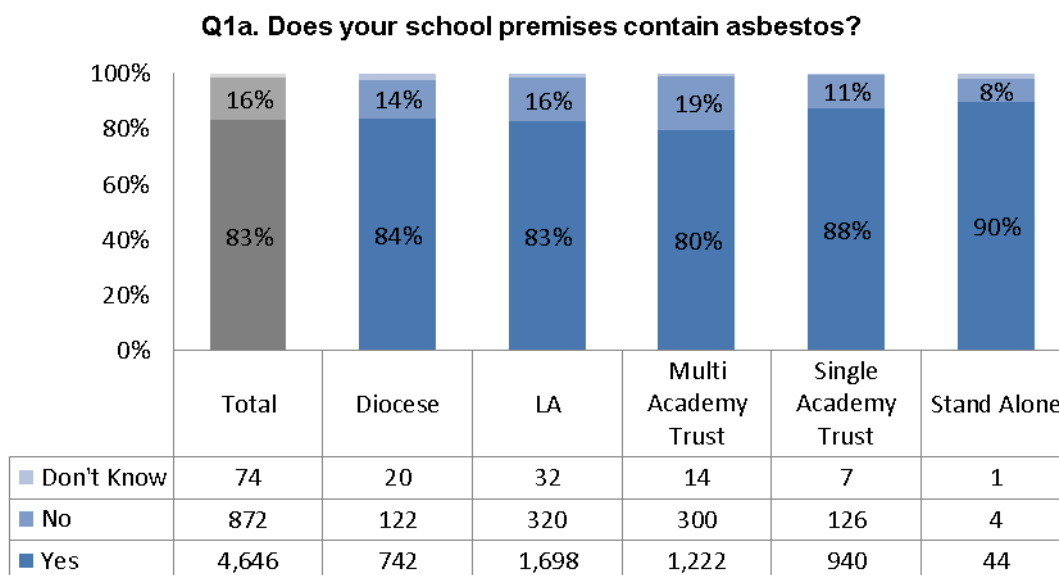
Note: Percentages on all bars may not add up to 100% due to rounding to zero decimal places.

- 5.3 We assessed the 5,592 responses based on the score attained using the methodology described above.
- 5.4 The responses from 2,884 (52%) of schools scored low (between 0 and 4). These schools were assessed to have generally appropriate management arrangements in place and not a cause for concern. This subset includes 850 (18.3% of responding schools) which did not have asbestos present.

- 5.5 The responses from 1,648 (29%) of schools scored medium (between 5 and 9). These schools were assessed as needing to take action to improve and were given bespoke advice.
- 5.6 The responses from 1,060 (19%) of schools scored high (10 or more). These schools were not compliant in terms of their management of asbestos.
- 5.7 The responses from 114 (2%) of schools that scored 10 or more initially gave rise to significant concern. We directly contacted these schools and informed their responsible bodies. We are following up to ensure they have plans in place to address the concerns their responses raised.
- 5.8 The follow-up responses from the schools that initially gave rise to concern have adequately addressed our concerns by providing assurances on compliance with legislation and guidance on the management of asbestos in their school estate. The respective responsible body for each of these schools has been notified, for them to take the necessary action as the duty holder.

## Presence of asbestos in schools

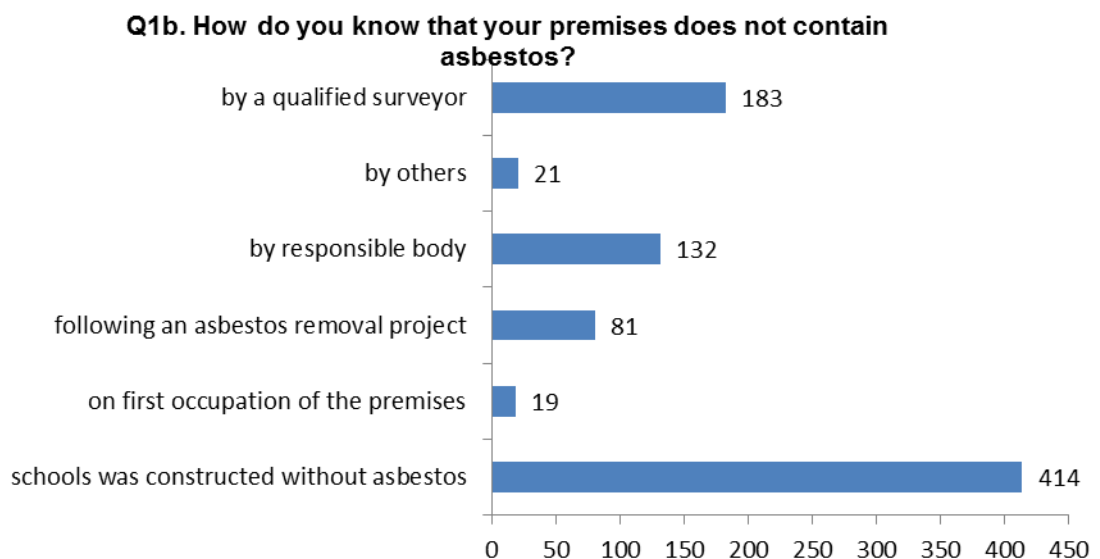
- 5.9 Of the 5,592 schools that responded to the data collection, 872 schools responded with 'No' to the presence of asbestos; and 74 schools responded with 'Don't Know'.



- 5.10 Responses on presence of asbestos are in line with the levels we anticipated. Where schools responded 'Don't Know' to this question, they were automatically scored 10, raising cause for concern, and followed up<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> As part of the analysis all schools that entered 'Don't Know' were raised as a significant concern and challenged. There were initially 75 schools that responded with 'Don't Know', regarding the presence of asbestos. It transpired that 1 school response had been an error.

- 5.11 Based upon the age of the school estate, we can estimate that a majority of schools in England contain some asbestos, although the exact amount is unknown. If it is undamaged and managed safely, the presence of asbestos in school buildings does not pose a significant risk.
- 5.12 It is recommended that where it is known that no asbestos is present in a school constructed pre-2000, a written record is made to this effect.
- 5.13 If asbestos is present then an Asbestos Management Survey should be carried out to determine the level of risk, as described in the [HSE guidance](#).
- 5.14 The data collection indicated that there were a number of ways in which schools were aware that there was no asbestos present. We have greatest confidence in there being no asbestos present where the school was constructed without asbestos, especially when the school was constructed after 1999. Where the confirmation was made by a suitably qualified surveyor again we are confident that the assessment would be accurate.
- 5.15 When a school answered 'No' to the presence of asbestos, this was scored as an appropriate answer (0) provided that the answer to question 1b 'How do you know ...?' was one or more of the following:
- the entire school was constructed without asbestos
  - confirmed by a survey by an appropriately qualified surveyor
  - confirmed following an asbestos removal project
  - confirmed by the responsible body

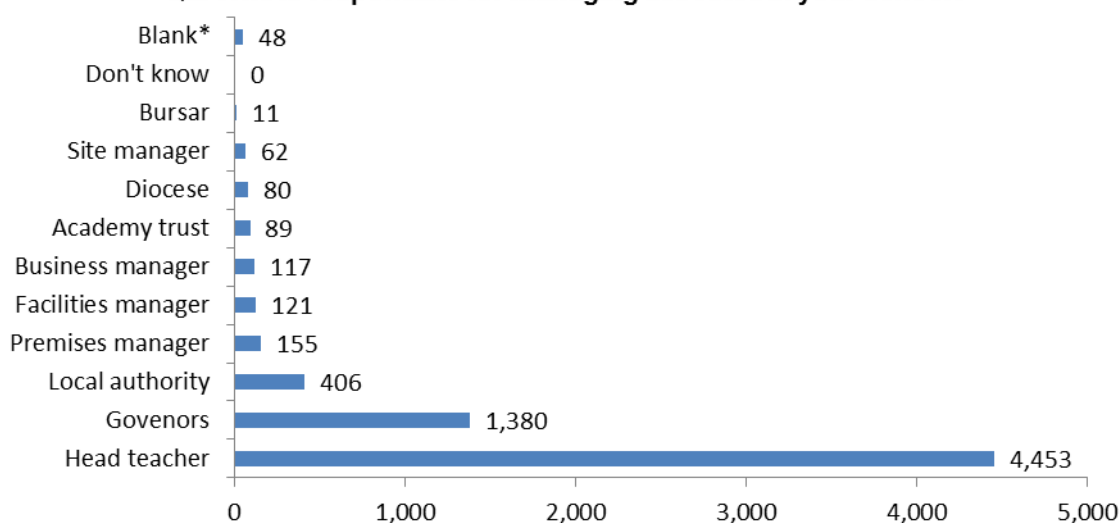


Note: 0.4% of responses were excluded as they were not valid.

## Responsibility for managing asbestos in schools

- 5.16 The findings in this report in relation to Question 2 onwards are based on the 4,646 school that reported the presence of asbestos in their premises.
- 5.17 Under Regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, the primary responsibility for managing asbestos in a school lies with the duty holder. The duty holder is anyone who has responsibility for the maintenance and/or repair of a building. Typically, for community schools, community special schools, voluntary-controlled schools, maintained nursery schools and pupil referral units, the employer is the local authority. For academies, free schools, voluntary-aided and foundation schools, it will be the school governors or academy trust. For independent schools, it may be the proprietor, governors or trustees. Where responsibility for maintenance is shared, the duty holder responsibility may also be shared.
- 5.18 The aim of Question 2 was to identify who in schools has the day to day responsibility for managing the risks associated with the presence of asbestos in school buildings.
- 5.19 Of the schools 4,646 schools that responded to this question, 4,453 (95.8%) identified the Head teacher as one of the individuals with the day to day asbestos management responsibility. 1,380 (29.7%) schools identified the Governors as the individuals with day to day asbestos management responsibility. No schools indicated that they 'don't know' although 48 (1.0%) did not respond, which could indicate that they do not have anyone in place with the specific responsibility for managing asbestos.
- 5.20 As multiple entries could be selected (eg the Head teacher and the Business Manager), the figures should not be seen as exclusive – they, therefore, total more than 4,646.

## Q2. Who is responsible for managing asbestos in your school?



Note: \*Blank entries include those schools that did not enter any information in response to this question, yet said "yes" or "don't know" to question 1.

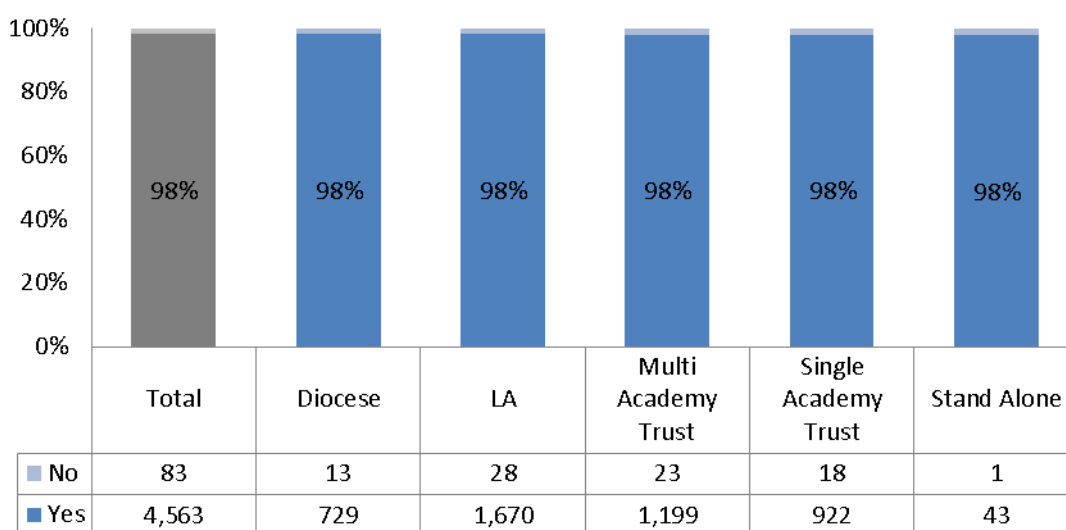
## Compliance with legislation and guidance

5.21 Day-to-day management of asbestos present in a building in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 requires duty holders to carry out a management survey of their building, create a register of easily accessible asbestos-containing materials and to write a management plan detailing the procedures for monitoring the condition of asbestos-containing materials. In pre-2000 schools, there is a possibility of 'hidden' asbestos that might not show up on an asbestos management survey (which is non-invasive). It may only show up on a refurbishment and demolition survey (which is invasive). When more intrusive work is planned then a more invasive refurbishment and demolition survey may be needed.<sup>4</sup> Any survey should be conducted in accordance with HSE guidance. Questions 3 to 5 investigated compliance with these requirements.

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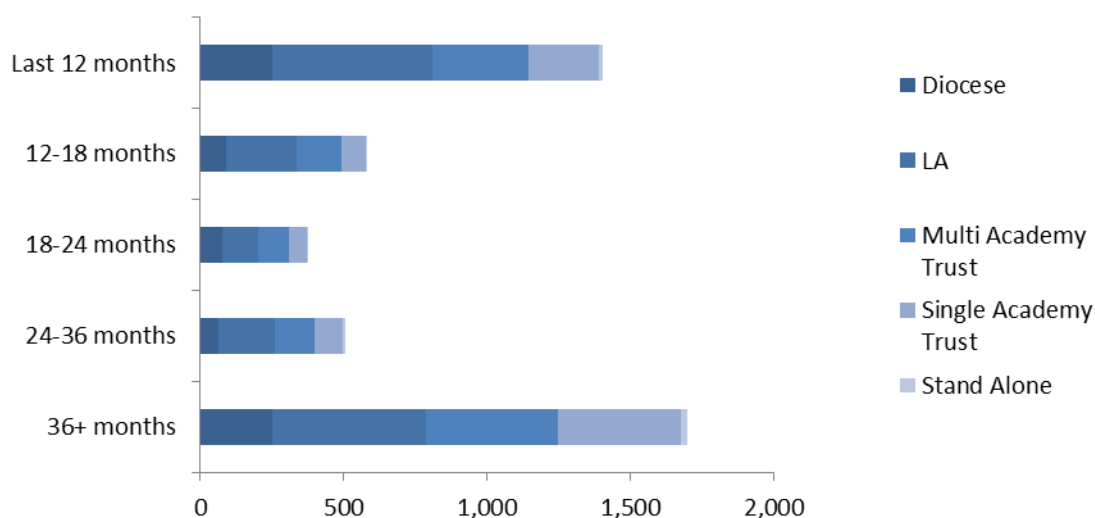
<sup>4</sup> This data collection exercise simply asked whether a school had an asbestos survey. The distinction between a management and a refurbishment and demolition survey is however, important. What might seem minor works, for example new IT installations, could involve much drilling through walls whilst school is in session, releasing fibres from ACMs otherwise concealed within the school fabric. In these circumstances, duty holders need to be aware of the distinction and not rely only on the management survey.

**Q3. Has your school had an asbestos management survey?**



5.22 83 (1.8%) of schools with asbestos present do not have a management survey. The lack of compliance in percentage terms is evenly spread across all institution types.

**Q3b. When was the last 'management' survey for the school?**

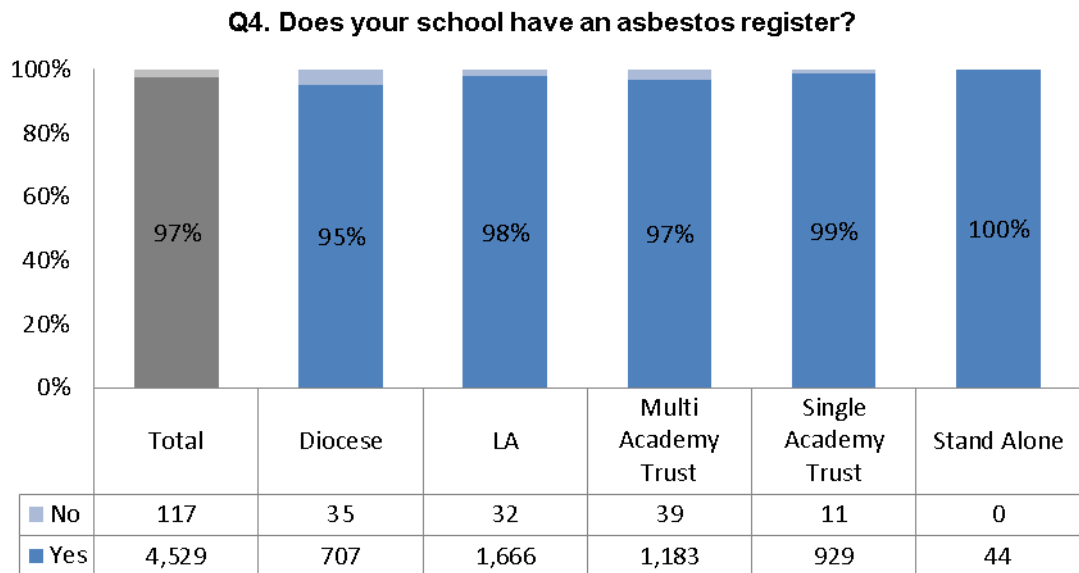


Note: 0.3% responses were excluded as they were not valid.

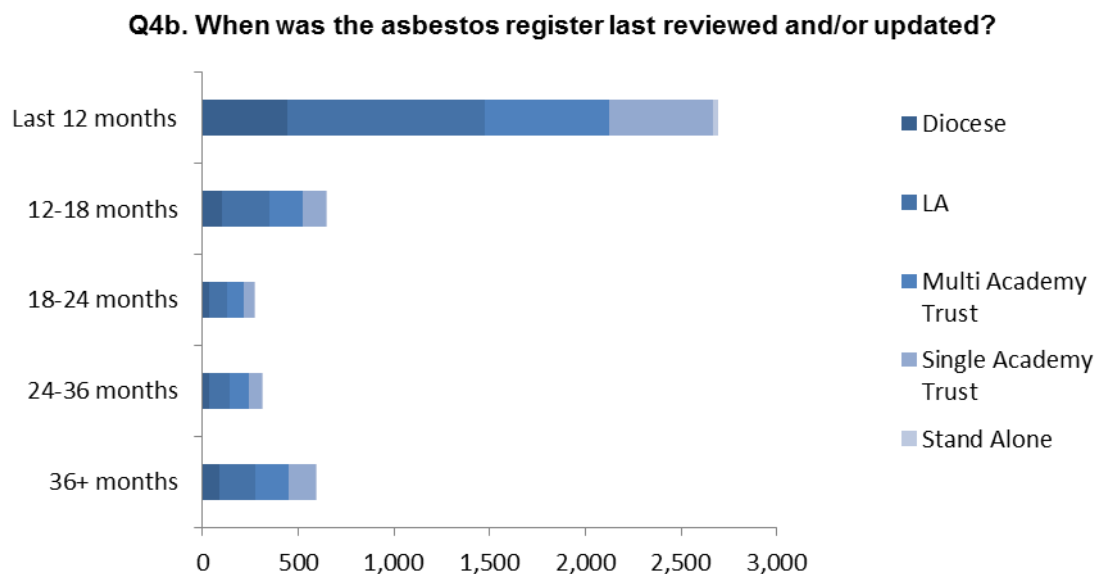
5.23 Of the schools that responded to the question, 1,400 (30.7%) had had a survey within the last 12 months, 1,456 (31.9%) between 12 month and 36 months; and 1,695 (37.2%) had not had a survey in the last 36 months.

5.24 Where schools were challenged on non-compliance as part of the significant concerns follow-up, 4 schools stated that they had located the documentation and were now compliant. This was not treated as a data error as the point at which the documentation was located was after the data collection had closed. The results suggest that the data collection itself survey itself has had a positive impact and has improved compliance.

5.25 One of the outputs of the management survey is a register which records the location and condition of the asbestos in the school building. The register should be reviewed regularly, at least annually is recommended and when there is reason to believe circumstances have changed for example, work carried out that affects its contents.



5.26 Analysis of the data indicated that 97.5% of schools with asbestos present have an asbestos register.

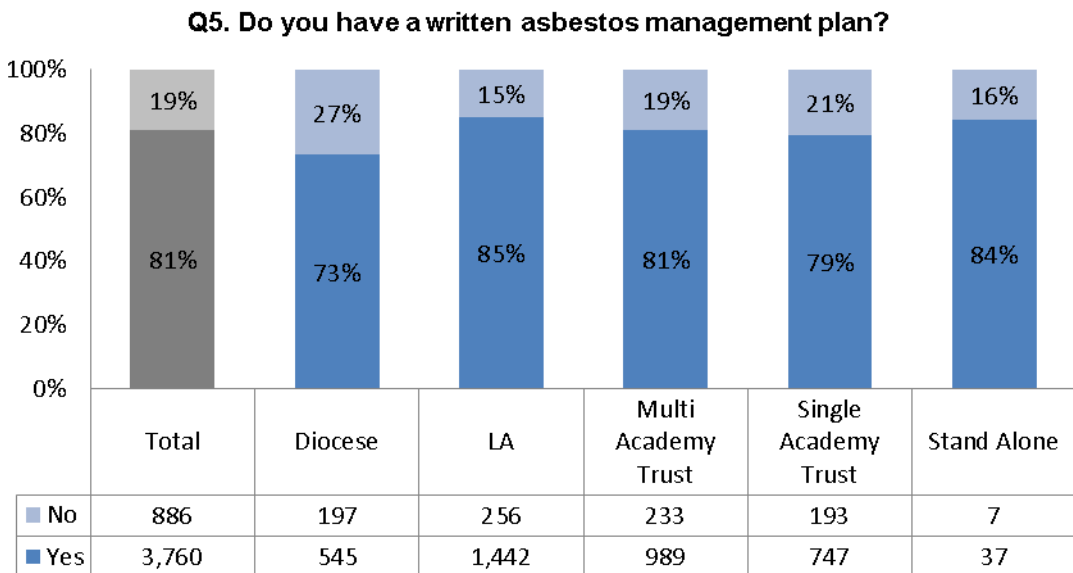


Note 0.2% responses were excluded as they were not valid.

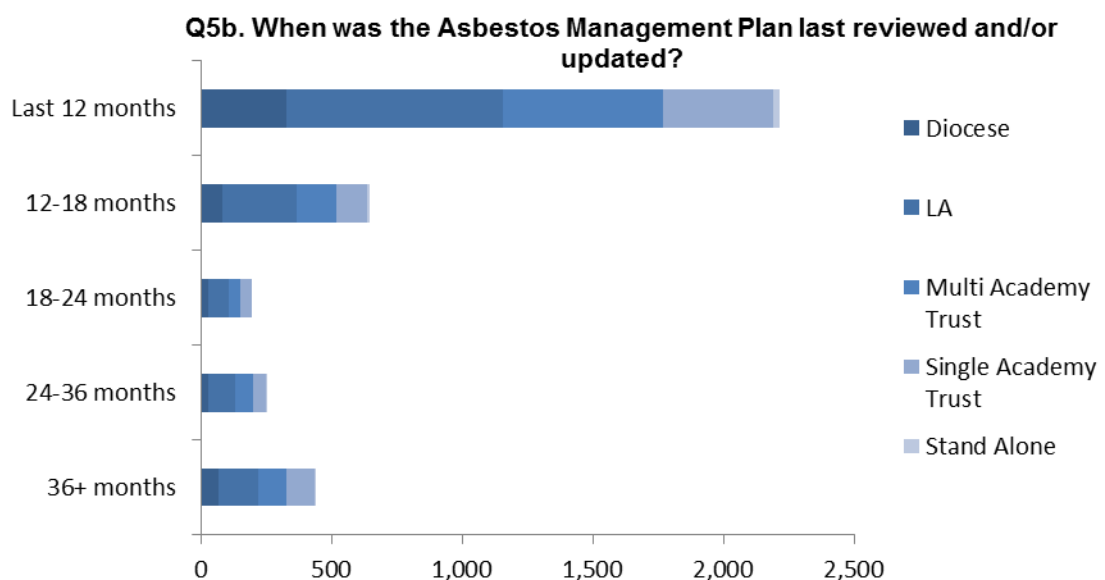
5.27 Of the schools that responded to the question, 2,691 (59.6%) had had a survey within the last 12 months, 1,230 (27.2%) between 12 month and 36 months; and 597 (13.2%) had not had a survey in the last 36 months.



5.28 The Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) is the school's thought through and recorded plan for the management of any identified asbestos types and locations. School staff can use the AMP to manage the presence and risks associated with the presence of asbestos, to ensure the safety of school building occupants.



5.29 Analysis of the data indicated that 886 (19.1%) of school with asbestos present do not have an AMP. In percentage terms, schools with Diocese as the responsible body were the least compliant. Given the small sample size the variance is not significant.



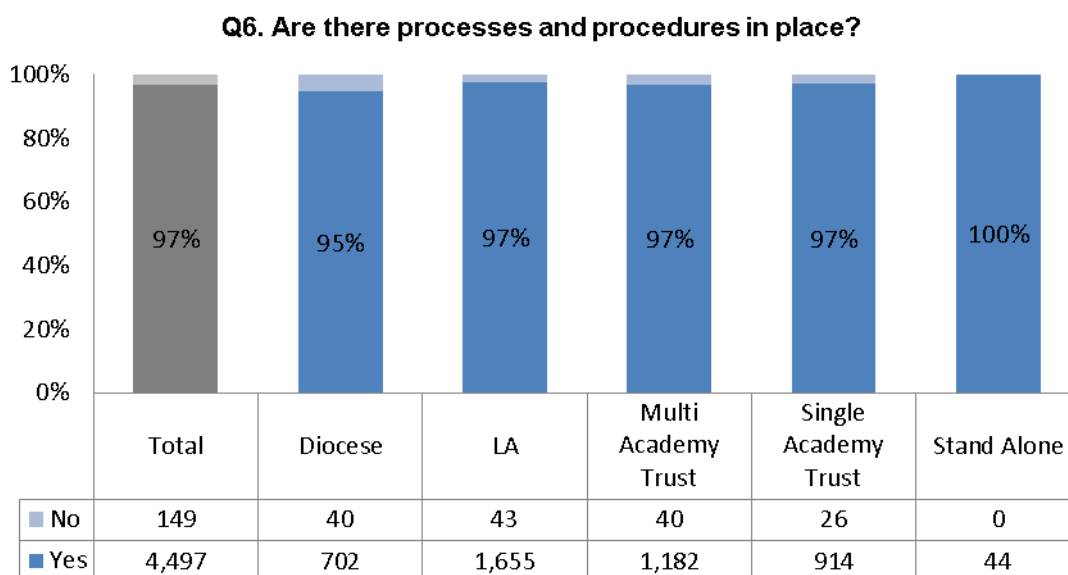
Note: 17.1% responses were excluded as they were not valid.

5.30 Of the schools that responded 'Yes', 2,213 (59.0%) have reviewed their asbestos management plan within the last 12 months; 1,095 (29.2%) have had their asbestos management plan reviewed within the last 12-36 months

and 442 (11.8%) had not had their management plan reviewed in the last 36 months.

## Control measures for managing asbestos

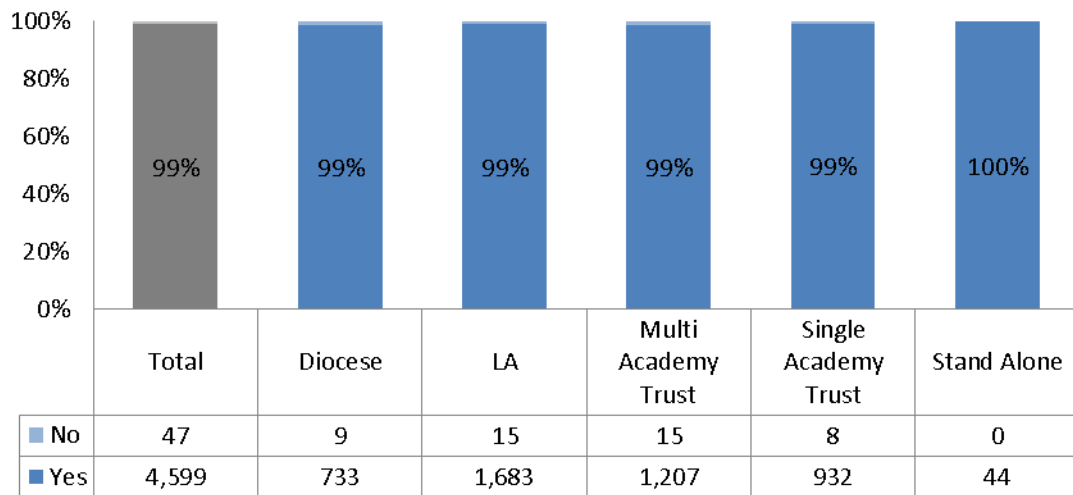
- 5.31 If asbestos in a school building is in good condition and is unlikely to be damaged or disturbed, then it is usually safer to leave it in place and regularly monitor its condition. For this reason, it is essential that plans are put into place to avoid disturbance and this should be a key aspect within the school's AMP.
- 5.32 The obligation to manage asbestos falls to the duty holder. In order to help schools fulfil their responsibilities, the department's asbestos management guidance offers advice on duty holders' responsibilities. This includes examples showing where asbestos is commonly found, advice on recording its location and condition, the associated risks, the legislative framework, advice on training and what to do if things go wrong.
- 5.33 Questions 6 and 7 enquired whether there were processes and procedures in place to prevent disturbance of asbestos in the education estate and to ensure that anyone who may disturb asbestos has received the necessary information.



- 5.34 Of the 4,646 responses that stated their premises contained asbestos, 4,497 (96.8%) said they had processes and procedures in place to prevent disturbance of asbestos in the premises.

5.35 No maintenance or other work that may result in exposure to asbestos should be carried out unless it has been ascertained whether asbestos is or may be present, what type it is, what material it is and what condition it is in. Precautions should be put into 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.

**Q7. Are there processes in place to ensure that anyone who may disturb asbestos has received the necessary information?**



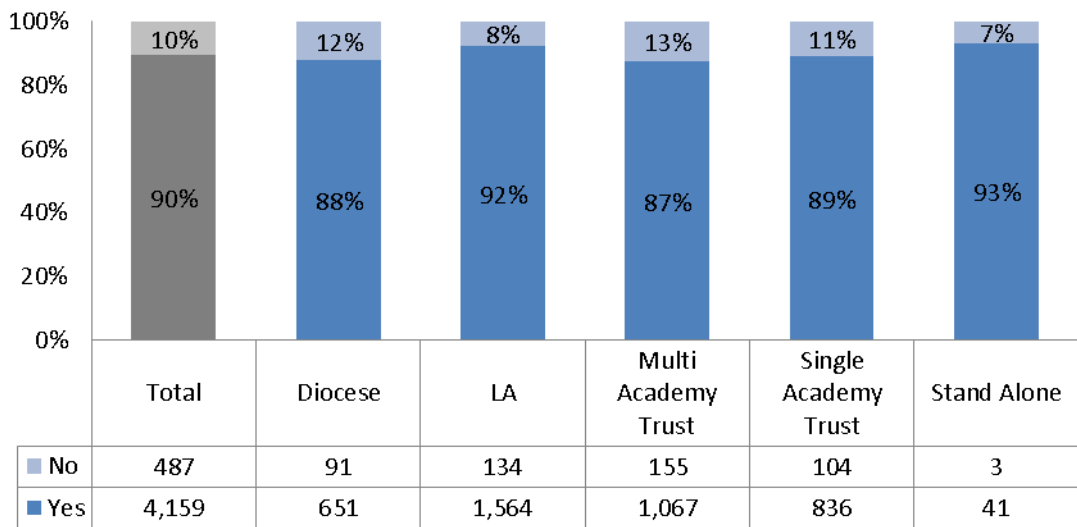
5.36 Of the 4,646 responses that stated their premises contained asbestos, 4,599 (99.0%) have processes in place to ensure that anyone who may disturb asbestos in the school, including building contractors and those performing activities such as IT installations, has received information regarding the presence (or potential presence) of asbestos.

### Asbestos training for school staff

5.37 The employer must provide adequate information, instruction and training for those employees most likely to disturb asbestos eg school caretakers. They must also ensure all those liable to disturb asbestos are aware of the location of asbestos in the building, and this might include external contractors. Most teachers are not directly involved in the management of buildings and/or in carrying out maintenance work and should not in the course of their day-to-day duties be liable to disturb asbestos material. There is therefore no need for all teachers to require training, but they must be made aware of asbestos presence as they are often well-placed to spot any damage to ACMs.

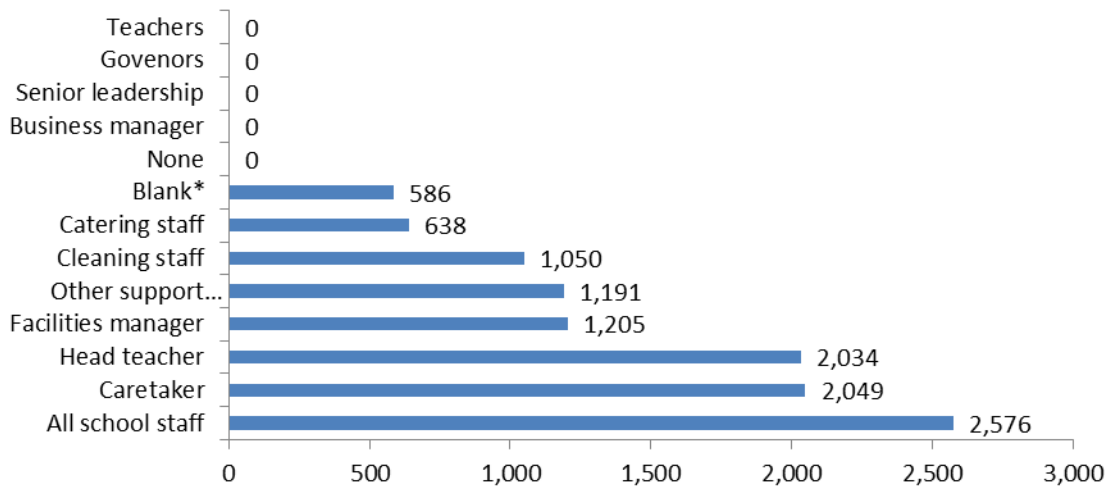
5.38 Question 8 asked whether the school had a caretaker or facilities manager and questions 9 and 10 asked which staff the school had made aware of asbestos risks and which staff, if any, had undertaken asbestos awareness training.

**Q8. Does your school have a caretaker or facilities manager?**



5.39 Of the 4,646 responses that stated asbestos was present, 4,159 (89.5%) have a caretaker or facilities manager.

**Q9. Which school staff have you made aware of the asbestos risks identified in the asbestos register?**



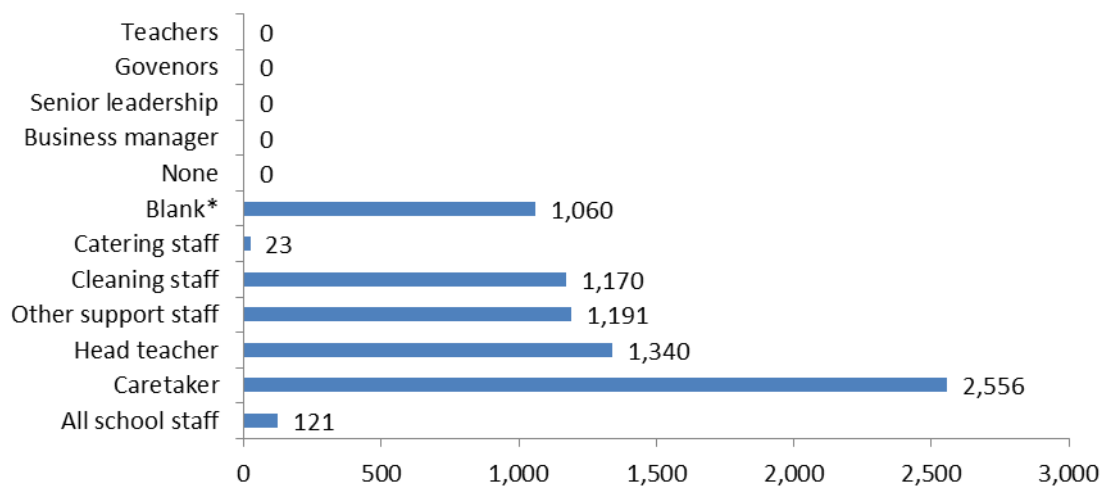
Note: \*Blank entries include those schools that did not enter any information in the response, yet said “yes” or “don’t know” to Q.1, i.e. those schools that either had asbestos in their premises, or didn’t know if their school buildings contained asbestos.

5.40 As staff may be at risk of exposure to asbestos, they will need to know the location of any asbestos-containing materials and how they can be damaged or disturbed – for example, by work still being pinned to walls even though it is easily avoidable and simply should not be done - or through unruly behaviour of pupils. Staff should be instructed to report damage or deterioration of school fixtures or fittings that could lead to the release of asbestos fibres. The findings were that for the schools that responded to this question:

- 2,576 (55.5%) had made all school staff aware of the risk of exposure to asbestos.
- 2,049 (44.1%) had made the Caretaker aware of the risk of exposure to asbestos.
- 2,034 (43.8%) had made the Head teacher aware of the risk of exposure to asbestos.
- 1,205 (25.9%) had made the Facilities Manager aware of the risk of exposure to asbestos.

5.41 As multiple entries were allowed these figures should not be seen as exclusive.

**Q10. Which members of school staff, if any, have undertaken asbestos awareness training?**



Note: \*Blank entries include those schools that did not enter any information in the response, yet said “yes” or “don’t know” to Q.1, ie those schools that either had asbestos in their premises, or didn’t know if their school buildings contained asbestos.

5.42 Of the schools that responded to this question, in 2,556 (55.0%) of schools, the caretaker had undertaken asbestos awareness training. In 1,340 (28.8%), the head teachers had undertaken asbestos awareness training. From this analysis other school staff had also undertaken asbestos awareness training too. This could be in conjunction with the Caretaker and/or Head teacher.

5.43 As multiple entries were allowed these figures should not be seen as exclusive.

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1 As a result of the data collection, the department has improved the evidence base on management of asbestos in schools, promoted awareness of the importance of good asbestos management in all schools and provided bespoke advice to all schools responding to the survey to enable them to improve their practice. It should be noted that due to the voluntary nature of the data collection the analysis cannot present a complete picture of the management of asbestos in schools.
- 6.2 The department is publishing at the same time as this report updated guidance to schools and responsible bodies on managing asbestos. In future, we plan to seek written assurance from all duty holders that their schools are compliant with existing legislation and guidance on the management of asbestos in schools.
- 6.3 The analysis has revealed some gaps in the management of asbestos in some schools in terms of the documentation associated with asbestos management. While the responses for those with processes and procedures in place tended to be better these alone do not provide adequate assurance. In order to manage asbestos in schools effectively, it is essential that all relevant staff and other workers (for example, external contractors) in a school should receive the right information, instruction and training, and are clear on the process and what precautions to follow. The management of asbestos should also be appropriately documented with reasonable and proportionate audit trails to provide the necessary assurance that asbestos is being managed effectively.
- 6.4 It is critically important that all duty holders ensure that the schools within their responsibility which have or may have asbestos contained in any of their buildings have:
- a senior member of staff or member of the governing body designated as responsible for the management of asbestos;
  - an asbestos management plan which is updated annually, or when there is reason to suspect circumstances have changed;
  - an asbestos management survey and asbestos register
  - processes and procedures in place detailing the control measures to prevent disturbance of any known asbestos-containing materials noting that some asbestos might be hidden in the fabric of the building (see para 5.21 and accompanying footnote).
- 6.5 A school's asbestos management plan must detail the procedures for staff to follow in the event of an asbestos incident, and the plan must be communicated clearly to all staff. Unless the incident is very minor, any asbestos incident should be notified to HSE. This is a legal requirement under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).

- 6.6 Responsible bodies (as duty holders) should ensure that schools under their control provide evidence to them, to demonstrate that they are compliant with current legislation and guidance on asbestos management.
- 6.7 The issue of asbestos in schools is a serious one and the government is supporting those who are legally responsible for managing asbestos in schools. The Health and Safety Executive is the lead regulator on managing asbestos and advises that as long as asbestos is in good condition, well-managed and unlikely to be damaged or disturbed, it is not a significant risk to the health of teachers and pupils during their daily activities.
- 6.8 The government has an ongoing programme of work to rebuild, expand and maintain the education estate. The department directly funds the removal of asbestos through schemes such as the Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP) and provides capital funding for asbestos management and removal where appropriate for schools that have identified that asbestos is in poor condition or poses a high risk of deterioration. Over time it is expected that this programme of work will eradicate asbestos in the education estate.

# 7. Further Information

## Useful resources and external organisation

7.1 The government allocates funding for maintenance works, including work on asbestos, differently, depending on the status of your school.

7.2 If a school is local authority maintained, a voluntary aided school or in a larger multi-academy trust, money is allocated to the body responsible for maintaining the school.

7.3 Key resources

- [EFA Guidance - Managing asbestos in your school](#)
- [HSE asbestos checklist](#)
- [HSE asbestos checklist frequently asked questions](#)
- [HSE asbestos advice](#)
- [HSE RIDDOR webpages](#)
- [National Association of School Business Management](#)
- [Joint Union Asbestos Committee](#)
- [United Kingdom Accreditation Service](#)



## Annex A: Methodology for Data Collection Scoring

*The question, possible response and associated score in brackets.*

1a) Does your school premises contain asbestos?

- Yes (0)
- No (0)
- Don't Know (10)

*If the respondent answered No' to Question 1 then they are presented with Question 1b (below) and the data collection ends.*

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

- The entire school was constructed without asbestos (0)
- Confirmed by a survey by an appropriately qualified surveyor (0)
- Confirmed following an asbestos removal project (0)
- Confirmed by responsible body (local authority, diocese, academy trust etc. (0)
- Confirmed on first occupation of premises (5)
- Confirmed by others (5)

*If the respondent answered 'Yes' or 'Don't Know' to Question 1 then they are presented with Questions 2 to 10 (below):*

2. Who is responsible for managing asbestos in your school?

- Governors (0)
- Head teacher (0)
- Local Authority (0)
- Diocese (0)
- Academy Trust (0)
- Business Manager (0)
- Bursar (0)
- Don't Know (5)

3. Does your school have an asbestos management survey (i.e. a non-intrusive survey to inform your day to day management of asbestos) for all buildings which may contain asbestos?
- Yes (0)  
*to be presented with date selection mechanism:*
    - Less than 3 years old (0)
    - Greater than or equal to 3 years old (2)
  - No (5)
4. Do you have an asbestos register for your school?
- Yes (0)  
*to be presented with date selection mechanism:*
    - Less than 1 year old (0)
    - Greater than or equal to 1 years old (2)
  - No (5)
5. Do you have an Asbestos Management Plan for your school?
- Yes (0)  
*to be presented with date selection mechanism:*
    - Less than 1 year old (0)
    - Greater than or equal to 1 years old (2)
  - No (5)
6. Are there processes and procedures in place detailing the control measures to prevent disturbance of any known asbestos-containing materials?
- Yes (0)
  - No (5)
7. Do you have a process to ensure that anyone who may disturb asbestos in the school, including the caretaker, building contractors and those performing activities such as IT installations, has received information regarding the presence (or potential presence) of asbestos?
- Yes (0)
  - No (5)
8. Does your school have a caretaker or facilities manager?
- Yes (0)
  - No (5)

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

- Teachers (0)
- Caretaker (0)
- Business manager (0)
- Senior leadership (0)
- Head teacher (0)
- Governor(s) (0)
- All school staff (0)
- Cleaning staff (0)
- Catering staff (0)
- Other support staff (0)
- None (5)

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

- Teachers (0)
- Caretaker (0)
- Business manager (0)
- Senior leadership (0)
- Head teacher (0)
- Governor(s) (0)
- All school staff (0)
- Cleaning staff (0)
- Catering staff (0)
- Other support staff (0)
- None (5)



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