

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION
BY DEPUTY J.A. HILTON OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 23rd FEBRUARY 2016**

Question

- (a) Can the Minister confirm that all staff are informed of the presence of asbestos in their schools during their induction?
- (b) Given that recent communications stated that 'policies and procedures do recognize that we have a duty of care to inform staff that there is asbestos containing material in some of our buildings and how they are managed', and that, 'If there is a request from the staff as to the exact location of the asbestos the site team highlight these areas using the survey plans', can the Minister advise whether staff are only made aware of the location of asbestos in their schools if they specifically ask?
- (c) Are those schools which have asbestos subject to regular fibre monitoring?
- (d) Can the Minister advise why the Education Department has not made a commitment to remove asbestos from schools in a phased, controlled way, given that, in October 2015, the All-Party Parliamentary Group in Occupational Safety and Health stated that 'the time has come to put in place regulations requiring the safe, phased and planned removal of all asbestos that still remains in place across Britain' and recommended that this should happen in schools by 2028?

Answer

(a) The induction process for all new staff includes a health and safety element that requires the management of asbestos to be highlighted if applicable. The policies and procedures are devised and updated centrally at the Education Department but the induction process is delivered by the schools' management teams on site. As the induction is an automatic requirement, it is highly likely staff have been informed where necessary but, without conducting a survey of all staff, it is not possible to confirm this absolutely. All health and safety issues are regularly monitored and reviewed as part of the Department's audit programme.

Unless changes to a facility are expected to involve work that might disturb the fabric of the building, the presence of asbestos presents no significant risk to staff. Should managed/encapsulated asbestos need to be disturbed for building work, the States' corporate policies and internal procedures would be followed to ensure staff are safe. There are clear systems in place to ensure that no one is exposed and these apply to contractors as well as school staff.

(b) The duty of care is addressed by the processes currently in place and the information regarding the exact location is available to all staff in the site log books located in the reception at every school where this is applicable. Existing staff should already be aware and new staff are given the information during their induction if necessary.

(c) Regular air monitoring for asbestos fibre levels would only be completed when it has been identified by the asbestos management plan for the premises, which is prepared by an asbestos specialist, that regular reassurance air monitoring is required.

I am advised by Jersey Property Holdings that there is no requirement for regular air monitoring within the current asbestos management plans for the schools. The asbestos management plan for each school is

reviewed at least every 12 months to ensure that the management processes remain effective and the arrangements are being properly implemented.

(d) The States of Jersey continues to comply with current Jersey asbestos health and safety legislation, primarily the Management of Exposure to Asbestos in Workplace Buildings and Structures Approved Code of Practice (ACoP 8, revised 2015) and the Asbestos-Licensing (Jersey) Regulations 2008.

Any proposed change to the current Jersey asbestos health and safety legislation would be a matter for initial consideration by the Health and Safety at Work Inspectorate.

Asbestos containing materials have been removed from the majority of the schools if the material is located within the property and it is foreseeable that users could come into contact with it. This was a significant undertaking by the States of Jersey. Asbestos management plans are in place for each school which proactively manage any remaining asbestos containing materials. The asbestos management plans for each school are reviewed at least every 12 months to ensure that the condition of asbestos containing materials has not changed, the management processes remain effective and the arrangements are being properly implemented.