

OPERATE IN THE **SUCCESS ZONE**



MANAGING ASBESTOS IN SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL PREMISES

ADVICE FOR RESPONSIBLE PERSONS

SGS

ASBESTOS IN SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL PREMISES

BUILDINGS BUILT BEFORE YEAR 2000

School buildings that were built before the year 2000 may contain asbestos. It was a very common material used in construction until it was finally banned in all its forms that year.

It was commonly used in insulating materials, cladding and structural elements as well surface finishes. It was used in thousands of products especially during the middle and later periods of the 20th century. Some types are more hazardous than others.

Some types of school premises are particularly likely to contain high-risk asbestos materials. These include those constructed or refurbished between 1950 and 1985. These may be traditionally built premises or system-built designs (CLASP and SCOLA) using prefabricated elements and prevalent asbestos use.

WHAT ACTION SHOULD YOU TAKE?

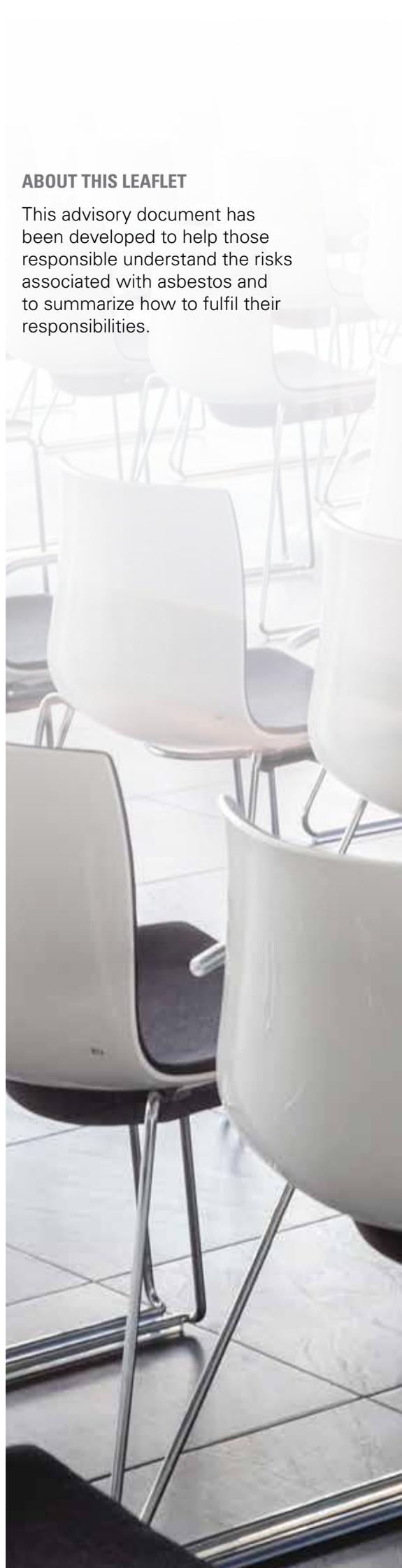
If you have buildings that could or are known to contain asbestos, below are some key actions you need to take:

- **Prepare an asbestos register**
To do this you will need a 'management survey' for buildings in general occupation
- **Deal with any high-risk asbestos areas identified in the survey**
Typically this may involve restricting access to certain areas, sealing or arranging their removal using HSE licensed contractors
- **Prepare an asbestos management plan**
This defines the responsibilities and arrangements needed to protect staff, pupils and other parties from exposure to asbestos
- **Leading on from the past point, control work on the fabric of the building**
This will involve putting in place procedures to ensure that suitable checks for asbestos are made before and during maintenance and refurbishment work
- **Monitor the condition of known asbestos materials and review procedures**
This is important to check that asbestos has not deteriorated and that procedures put into place are effective and being followed.

YOUR COMPLIANCE IS OUR BUSINESS

ABOUT THIS LEAFLET

This advisory document has been developed to help those responsible understand the risks associated with asbestos and to summarize how to fulfil their responsibilities.



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Asbestos is still the biggest occupational health killer in the UK with thousands of new cases being diagnosed every year.

IF ASBESTOS MATERIALS ARE IN GOOD CONDITION AND ARE NOT DISTURBED THEY MAY POSE A VERY LOW RISK.

However if they are disturbed, they can release fibres that when inhaled can result in a number of often fatal ill-health conditions including asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma.

The most likely way ACMs will create a risk in schools is when they are disturbed or damaged through maintenance, repair or construction activities. School caretakers are a particular group at risk due to the nature of their work, e.g. drilling, fixing and other contractors may be at risk while undertaking maintenance or installation work. If asbestos is disturbed during such work, there is a risk that fibres will be released and create risk to others in the school.

The majority of schools, particularly those built before year 2000 contain some asbestos. As long as appropriate steps are taken, it should not pose a risk to staff, pupils and visitors.



TYPICAL ASBESTOS MATERIALS FOUND IN SCHOOLS...

- Soffits
- Ceilings
- Pipe lagging
- Roofing materials
- Tiled flooring
- Bunsen burner mats
- Fume cupboard linings
- Toilet cisterns

CASE STUDY - SGS DMW ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY LTD, 2010

An example of CLASP column in a school which has been worked on for an electrical installation:

1. Column clad with asbestos board in system-built design (CLASP) school
2. Column showing joints between asbestos casing and columns,
3. Asbestos board to to CLASP columns seen from above ceiling void
4. Electrical installation in CLASP column in school music room



If the presence of asbestos is found to be low risk, you still need a plan to manage this risk.



Damaged asbestos board



Asbestos roof tiles



Asbestos pipe insulation



Asbestos corrugated roof



Asbestos floor tiles



Sprayed asbestos coatings

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING THE RISK?

The Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR) 2012 place the responsibility of managing asbestos risks in premises with the 'duty holder'.

In practice this will be the person or department with the responsibility for maintenance and upkeep of the premises. For some schools this may be the local authority. For others it will be governors or trustees.

Even if the schools do not hold direct 'duty holder' responsibilities detailed later in this document, persons employed within the school will still have responsibilities for ensuring that asbestos is safely managed.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?

1. PREPARE AN ASBESTOS REGISTER

In practice for most schools the only way of identifying asbestos risks and create a register is to commission a survey.

There are different types of survey. The one designed to identify asbestos risks for buildings in general occupation is referred to as a management survey. This should detect any asbestos that could be disturbed in the general use, maintenance and cleaning of the building. The surveyors will need to access all areas within reason, including above ceiling voids and store rooms etc. You will therefore need to help the surveyors gain access to these parts by providing them with keys and showing them around the building. Surveys of classroom areas are normally only done while they are not being used for teaching.

An important thing to bear in mind is that if you are carrying out major works on a building you will need a refurbishment or demolition survey. This type of survey is designed to detect asbestos that may be concealed in cavities, partitions etc. The methods used are intrusive so you should expect some damage to decor and building fabric. You will also need to assist the surveyor if any services need isolating and arranging it to be done outside of normal working hours, weekends or holiday periods. If there will be gap between the survey and the work, ensure the surveyor has included for making good.

Note that you may not need to survey buildings where you have strong evidence that they were constructed after 2000.

2. APPOINT A SURVEYOR

There are lots of companies offering asbestos surveys. However HSE guidance strongly recommends that you select one who is accredited by the UK Accreditation Service (UKAS) to ISO 17020.

There are many quality accreditation types and standards that companies may use to promote their services. However only surveying companies accredited by UKAS to ISO 17020 have been assessed against the relevant technical standards. To check this, search under 'inspection bodies' on the UKAS website: www.ukas.com.

It is important to check when receiving quotes from surveyors whether the cost of sample analysis is included within the survey. Some surveying companies (particularly those who do not have their own in-house laboratories) charge 'per sample taken' as they need to bear the cost of outsourcing the analysis work. It is important that you confirm whether this the case or not if you want cost-certainty.

OTHER QUESTIONS THAT ARE WORTH CHECKING INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Have you checked that they have adequate insurance including public liability and professional indemnity in case anything goes wrong?
- Has the surveyor got experience of working in educational premises? References can help to confirm this.

3. PLAN THE SURVEY

To get the survey you need, it is vital that the survey is planned correctly and that there is clear understanding between yourself and the surveyor regarding the purpose of the survey.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS THAT NEED CONFIRMING IN WRITING BEFORE THE SURVEY GOES AHEAD ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- Has the purpose of the survey been confirmed and what type is required?
- What is the scope of the survey? Is it the whole building or just one part you need inspecting?
- Have you agreed on the survey format? Will an electronic copy be sufficient or do you need a printed copy?
- Do you have any building plans of the areas that need marking up by the surveyor to help show any areas where they have found asbestos? If not, do you require the surveyor to draw them up for you?
- Has the surveyor confirmed they have done a risk assessment to ensure they can carry out the work safely?
- Have you made arrangements to grant the surveyor access? This is likely to require someone being available to let them in, provide keys to locked rooms and contact details if the work is being conducted outside of standard school working hours.
- If the work carried out is a refurbishment or demolition survey have you agreed what standards of repair and making-good are required? This is particularly important for any areas to be re-occupied by staff and pupils in the interim prior to building work.
- Have you agreed on how the recommendations will be presented? Will you require a consultation session after completion of the survey to ensure you understand any priorities and action identified?

DEALING WITH HIGH RISK ITEMS - ACTION PLANNING?

Not all samples taken will necessarily test positive for asbestos. In fact, good surveyors take samples of materials that are probably not asbestos but could be confused as being so due to their appearance.

If materials test positive for asbestos, but are in good condition and unlikely to be disturbed, the recommendation may be to leave them alone (subject to ongoing monitoring and management).

Examples of where surveyors may recommend action include the following:

- Asbestos materials that are in reasonable condition currently but are vulnerable to damage. An example would be doorway panels in corridors that could be accidentally damaged or even deliberately vandalized. The recommendation may be to protect these materials with over-cladding or to remove and replace.
- Asbestos lagging or residues to service areas such as plant rooms and ducts. These may not pose a significant risk to teachers and pupils due to their location and infrequency of use. However they could pose a high risk to maintenance staff and contractors. Note that if asbestos removal was done many years ago it is unlikely to have been carried out to modern standards. It is common for surveyors to find debris and residues remaining after the previous removal attempts. Dealing with this work can be expensive. However there may be systems of work that you can adopt including the use of training and protective equipment to allow urgent maintenance and repair work to proceed until such time that the risk can be removed. Ask the surveyor for further advice.
- Urgent risks. Very occasionally, a surveyor will identify situations where the risk is so great that urgent action needs taking. This may include taking areas or rooms out of general use. Ensure the surveyor knows who to contact should an urgent situation be identified during the inspection and that they are able to provide guidance necessary to control the risks.

At the end of the survey you will probably have a list of asbestos locations identified by the surveyor. It can be helpful to prioritize them using numerical scoring systems. These are defined in guidance document HSG 264 and are as follows:

- Material assessment – this scores the asbestos by its type, condition and surface treatment, giving you a number between 0 (no risk) and 12 (very high risk). This should be prepared by the surveyor.
- Priority assessment – this uses the accessibility, occupation and type of area to determine how likely it is that people will come into contact with the material. Input from the duty-holder will be necessary to calculate this.

Other systems may be used by surveyors to help duty-holders prioritize their asbestos.

SGS DMW USE A SIMPLIFIED NUMERICAL RATING:

1	High risk – Act immediately
2	Medium risk – Action required
3	Low risk – Manage the risk
4	No Asbestos – No action

PREPARE AN ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Once you have identified where the asbestos is, you will need to prepare a written management plan. The purpose of this is to ensure that there are procedures in place so that people are warned of its presence and do not accidentally disturb it. The plan also needs to document ongoing procedures for managing risk in the longer term, also accounting for your action plan.

MAKE PEOPLE AWARE OF THE RISK

This is one of the most important parts of the plan. In most instances, asbestos will only put people at risk if it is disturbed and fibres are released.

There are a number of ways in which you can do this including the measures below.

- **Warning labels** – but beware the risks and downsides of relying on labels
- **Keeping an on-site copy of the management plan** – ensuring that anyone doing work on the building reads it and signs to confirm. This is often referred to as a 'permit system'. You need to ensure that nominated site staff understand the process and are able to assist and monitor any contractors coming onto site. You also need to ensure the system works out of normal working hours.

- **Online registers** – many companies including SGS DMW can host your asbestos survey on a web portal, allowing access to contractors and anyone who needs and is authorized to use it. The information can be accessed at any time over a computer or smartphone, making it very useful if needed out-of-hours.

ASBESTOS REMOVAL AND CERTIFICATION

If asbestos is in poor condition, in a position making it vulnerable to damage or in an area that will be refurbished or demolished, it will need to be safely repaired or removed. All work on asbestos except low-risk tasks requires an HSE licensed contractor.

Higher risk work normally requires the issue of a re-occupation test certificate issued by an analyst before pupils, staff and third parties can re-enter the area. HSE strongly recommend that the analyst issuing the certificate is directly appointed by the dutyholder rather than further down the supply chain in order to ensure independence and impartiality.

If not carried out correctly, work on asbestos poses a high risk to staff pupils and third parties.

While work on asbestos is proceeding you may need air monitoring to ensure that fibres are not being released into areas occupied by pupils, staff and third parties.

After asbestos has been safely removed, the resulting material will be classed as hazardous waste. Although the removal contractor is classed as the waste producer, you still have responsibilities under environmental legislation to ensure that is responsibly disposed of. Ensure you are provided with a copy of the waste consignment note signed or stamped by a permit-holding consignee authorized to accept the waste for disposal.

IN AN EMERGENCY

If things go wrong, for example if known or suspected asbestos is disturbed:

- Stop all work in the immediate area
- Remove all persons from the area and adjacent areas where airborne fibres could spread
- Get urgent advice from a specialist

For details of how to access the SGS DMW emergency line please contact:

 +44 (0)1902 791565

 sgsdmwsafety@sgs.com

TRAINING AND COMPETENCY

If you or members of staff are involved with the management or coordination of work that could disturb asbestos, you are strongly recommended to have asbestos awareness training.

For further details contact SGS DMW on:

 +44 (0)1902 791565

 sgsdmwsafety@sgs.com

Alternatively you can find a provider from these asbestos training associations:

IATP

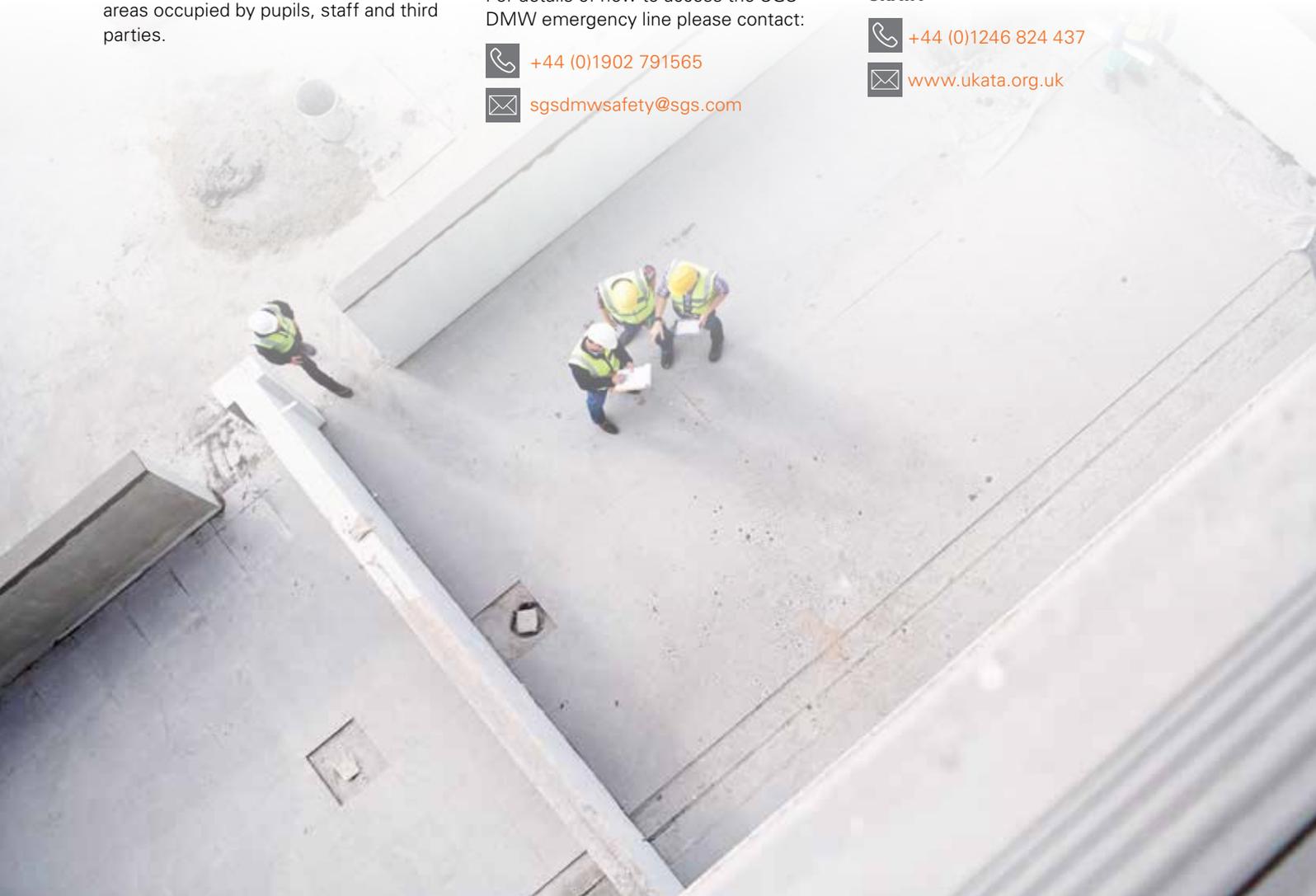
 +44 (0)800 865 4287

 www.iatp.org.uk

UKATA

 +44 (0)1246 824 437

 www.ukata.org.uk



KEEPING UP TO DATE AND COMPLIANT

Once you have a reliable asbestos register and a robust plan detailing all the steps required to control asbestos risks, you need to periodically check if it is still fit for purpose.

The plan itself will need to be reviewed to account for any changes. Key factors include these below:

- Organizational structure change. For example conversion to academy status leading to changes in roles and responsibilities. Checks are required to ensure that the plan reflects the current structure and that responsibilities remain allocated.

- Changes to legal requirements. The law and best practice is constantly evolving. You need to review your plan to check it still meets current law and guidance.
- Effectiveness. If there are known incidents where people have been put at risk, this suggests that the plan is not fit for purpose and needs to be reviewed. Is the mechanism to make asbestos information still suitable? Have there been any instances where contractors or staff did not follow the plan and work carried out without making the necessary checks? Every element of the plan needs reviewing.

When you update the plan, it is important to record the date and any changes identified during the review. The frequency of review will depend on how effective your measures have proven to be. Any changes to the structure of the organization or serious incidents should trigger an immediate review. If no changes have occurred and the procedures appear to be effective, an annual review may be sufficient. This can be a stand-alone exercise or combined with any wider organizational reviews as long as it remains suitable and sufficient.

FOR FURTHER ADVICE...

SGS DMW Environmental Safety offer a full compliance service for schools and educational establishments.

We operate across the UK and offer the following services:

- Asbestos surveys of buildings (ISO 17020 accredited)
- Testing, analysis and air monitoring (ISO 17025 accredited)
- Asbestos training (IATP members)

KEY REFERENCES

This booklet should be read in conjunction with official guidance detailed below:

- Managing Asbestos in Your School. DOE. March 2015
- L143: The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.
- HSG 227: Managing Asbestos in Buildings
- HSG 264: Asbestos: The Survey Guide

- Williams, W (2011). An Investigation into the Comparative Levels of Background Air/Fibre Levels in System-Built and Non-System-Built Municipal Premises Containing Asbestos. (Dissertation). University of Wolverhampton. Available for download on the HSE website - Health & Safety Executive: www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos

WHY CHOOSE SGS?

SGS is the world's leading inspection, verification, testing and certification company. We are recognized as the global benchmark for quality and integrity. With more than 94,000 employees, we operate a network of more than 2,600 offices and laboratories around the world.

We offer asbestos services in the UK and also in many countries across the globe.

CONTACT US TODAY FOR A NO OBLIGATION QUOTE:

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VERIFICATION, TESTING AND CERTIFICATION COMPANY.**

WHEN YOU NEED TO BE SURE

