



ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS WORKING GROUP

Minutes of the meeting – Monday, 25 January 2016 @ 14:00
Welsh Government Office, Cathays Park, Cardiff

Working Group Members

- HSE Wales, HM Principal Inspector of Health and Safety, Field Operations Directorate (PI)
- HSE, Team leader, Public Administration and Education team (TL)
- Public Health, Welsh Government (PH)
- Public Health Wales (PHW)

Officials

- Programme Director, 21st Century Schools (PD)
- Head of Capital Funding, 21st Century Schools (HC)
- Policy Lead Asbestos, 21st Century Schools (PL)

Apologies

- HSE, Policy Advisor, Asbestos Policy and Delivery

Programme Business

Item 1: Welcome and Apologies

PD welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Asbestos Management in Schools Working Group and gave an overview of the purpose of the group.

Programme Governance

Item 2: Terms of Reference

PD presented the draft terms of reference for the working group for discussion.

Timing

It was agreed that meetings would be held on a six monthly basis; with the option of additional meetings should issues arise sooner.

Membership

Key stakeholder involvement in the working group was discussed.

The group agreed that the representation on the group was appropriate. It was suggested that the workgroup should be expanded to include representation from head teachers, WLGA and Welsh Government Governance. Consultation with additional key groups such as local authorities, unions, JUAC should also take place at key decision making times, e.g. guidance review.

Action Point 1: PL/PD to contact WLGA, Head teachers Association and Internal Governance Branch, to offer membership to the Asbestos Management in Schools Working Group.

Item 3: Current Guidance Wales

PI suggested that existing guidance could be further simplified. This approach was agreed.

Distribution was discussed and it was confirmed that the Guidance is currently made available on line and that the link is sent to local authorities and school duty holders via the Welsh Government Dysg Newsletter.

Suggestions for simplification of the Guidance included:

1. Bullet pointed checklist or decision making tree to be included in the introduction of the document;
2. Use of a simplified step by step approach;
3. Make more reference to diagrams and survey procedures;
4. Include more links to guidance available online.

PHW asked whether it was possible to gauge the number of stakeholders that have accessed the guidance. PL agreed to explore this point.

Action Point 2: PL to revise guidance on the basis of discussion, and share with working group before next meeting. It was also agreed that the draft version would be shared more widely through consultation.

Action Point 3: PL to gauge the number of stakeholders that have accessed the guidance.

Item 4: Asbestos Review in England

PD gave an overview of the recent review of asbestos management in schools in England, its findings and current Department for Education commitments. TL indicated that she is part of the Asbestos in Schools Steering Group in England.

The Working Group was interested to see the outcome of actions in England, particularly in respect of any sampling to be carried out. It was also agreed that the Welsh Government would continue to remind duty holders of their responsibility to manage asbestos.

Action Point 4: PL to attend the next Asbestos in Schools Steering Group and feed back at the next Asbestos Management in Schools Working Group meeting.



Action Point 5: The Asbestos Management in Schools Working Group to keep a watching brief on developments in England with respect to their work on this subject.

Item 5: Policy Wales

It was agreed that current policy is appropriate, with guidance being updated so that it remains current. The Asbestos in Management in Schools Working Group would consider results and strategies arising from the Asbestos in Schools Steering Group in England to determine whether they should be applied to Welsh schools.

AOB

The working group discussed the availability of cancer-related illness information in Wales. The main sources would be cancer registries (WCISU) and the Department for Work and Pensions. It was also suggested that information might be available from the Health Statistics Wales mailbox.

Policy Lead Asbestos

21st Century Schools and Education Programme

2 February 2016