



CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE – 15TH SEPTEMBER 2008

SUBJECT: RECENT ASBESTOS INCIDENTS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of two recent asbestos incidents and the subsequent Health and Safety Executive Investigation.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 On June 10th the Caretaker and Network Manager at St Martins Comprehensive, Caerphilly suffered asbestos exposure after drilling through asbestos board.
- 2.2 The employees concerned were carrying out authorised works and installing interactive white boards and projectors throughout the school. They drilled through asbestos board, which was not identified on the type 2 Asbestos Survey that had been carried out by Facciata.
- 2.3 The Asbestos Team assisted with clean-up, decontamination of the room and also arranged for samples to confirm the presence of asbestos and the Education/Leisure Health and Safety Officer carried out a detailed incident investigation.
- 2.4 The incident was reportable to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 and resulted in Steve Lewis, HSE Inspector visiting the school and conducting an investigation.
- 2.5 A further incident took place on 31st July when Contractors engaged to carry out a classroom refurbishment at the Bryn Primary identified an area of ceiling tiles, which appeared to be different to the rest of the ceiling. They removed one tile without breaking and informed the Asbestos Team who visually confirmed the presence of asbestos and all further work was halted.
- 2.6 This incident did not result in an asbestos exposure however again the asbestos containing tiles were not identified on the type 2 Asbestos Survey that had been carried out by National Britannia.
- 2.7 Again the Health and Safety Executive were notified and are carrying out an investigation.
- 2.8 Both incidents highlight concerns with the quality of the type 2 asbestos surveys carried out to assist our compliance with the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulation 2005. As a result of these concerns guidance has been issued for ongoing works and quality checks are in the process of being carried out on 10 premises. Re-surveys have also been commissioned for the two schools affected.

- 2.9 The results of the quality checks will allow us to decide how best to proceed in terms of managing the asbestos risk in all CCBC premises.
- 2.10 The HSE investigation is ongoing. The investigation will focus on the actions of the Contractors concerned but will also consider whether the Authority took all reasonable steps to control the risks.
- 2.11 A further report will be brought when the HSE investigation is completed.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the contents of the report be noted.

Author: Emma Townsend, Health and Safety Manager, Ext 3708
Consultees: Nigel Barnett, Director of Corporate Services
Gareth Hardacre, Head of People Management and Development
Councillor Allan Pritchard, Cabinet Member for Human Resources and Constitutional Affairs