

SCHOOLS — ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT

1327. Hon Alison Xamon to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the Auditor General's April 2015 report, *Asbestos Management in Public Sector Agencies*, and to page 21 of the report which indicates that the Department of Education was working with Building Management and Works to identify whether risks similar to those experienced at Willetton High School in 2014 were present in other schools, and I ask:

- (a) have similar risks been identified at other schools; and
- (b) if yes to (a), please advise:
  - (i) at which other schools similar risks have been identified;
  - (ii) the nature of these risks; and
  - (iii) any actions taken to mitigate these risks?

**Hon Sue Ellery replied:**

- (a) Yes.
- (b) (i)–(iii) In addition to Willetton Senior High School, the Department of Education has confirmed that the following schools have low-density fibreboard ceilings.

Braeside Primary School  
Duncraig Senior High School  
East Kenwick Primary School  
Illawarra Primary School  
Kalamunda Primary School  
Maida Vale Primary School  
Oberthur Primary School  
Orange Grove Primary School  
Poynter Primary School  
Waddington Primary School  
West Greenwood Primary School  
Woodlupine Primary School

According to the Asbestos Containing Materials Registers for each of these schools, the low-density fibre board has been identified as low risk. The risk assessments have been carried out by a competent person, as defined by the national Code of Practice for the Management and Control of Asbestos in the Workplace, and are based on location, condition and likelihood of disturbance of the material.

Each school also has a copy of the Department's Asbestos Management Plan 2015, which provides school principals with information and guidance to manage asbestos related issues that arise from time to time.

The Department has committed \$6 million over 2018–19 and 2019–20 for the remediation of asbestos-containing materials considered to be a high priority, such as low-density fibre board. This program commenced in the July 2018 school holidays with the removal of low-density fibre board at Braeside and Kalamunda Primary Schools.

Given the limitations on the removal of asbestos from buildings being restricted to school holiday periods, the Department committed smaller projects to be undertaken during shorter breaks and large projects being undertaken during the December/January holiday periods. Currently within Western Australia, there are only four companies operating with unrestricted licenses to remove asbestos that tender for this type of work.

The remediation/removal of asbestos-containing materials from schools can only occur during school holidays while staff and students are off-site and the Department is working with the Department of Finance – Building Management and Works to develop the program for asbestos remediation for 2018–19 and 2019–20.