

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref KW/05089/17

Dawn Bowden AM
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24 November 2017

Dear Dawn,

Thank you for your letter of 14 November in respect of the Asbestos Management in Schools Working Group in Wales. For ease of reference I will address the issues you raise in the order in which they appear in your letter.

Working Group

The Asbestos Management in Schools Working Group currently comprises Welsh Government officials, representatives of Public Health and the Health and Safety Executive. The function of the Working Group is to review the current guidance for Wales and update when required; review and discuss the ongoing work of the English Government with respect to asbestos management in schools; and make recommendations where appropriate for new policy strands in this field.

The terms of reference for the Welsh Asbestos Management in Schools Working Group differ from those for the Department for Education (DfE) in England Asbestos in Schools Steering Group and this reflects the complementary role of the two groups. As asbestos in schools presents similar problems in both England and Wales, we are satisfied that the work carried out in England will provide the Welsh Government with enough information to take any appropriate action.

When developments occur the Welsh Ministers will consider the implications for Wales with respect to guidance and policy decisions.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Most recently, the Working Group has agreed that they would consult with all relevant stakeholders, including unions, early in 2018 on revised Asbestos Management in Schools guidance for Wales. A further meeting will be held with these key stakeholders to discuss their responses.

My officials will write shortly to make stakeholders aware of the forthcoming consultation and to arrange a meeting to discuss this matter.

CPG Meeting - January 2018

As we will have only begun our consultation process shortly before your meeting, I suggest that it would be more appropriate for my officials to forward you a written update.

House of Commons PAC Report Recommendation

Members of the Working Group, including my officials, continue to monitor developments in England, most recently at the November DfE Steering Group meeting.

At the Asbestos Management in Schools Working Group meeting in Cardiff on 16 November it was agreed that development plans in England, and their relevance to Wales will be considered. In the meantime, my officials continue to review the information held on this issue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams'.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM

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Cabinet Secretary for Education