

## Appendix 1

### Report from the JUAC Asbestos Survey and the Asbestos Management in Schools Survey

In the autumn of 2013, members of the Joint Union Asbestos Committee carried out surveys regarding asbestos in schools; the JUAC Asbestos Survey was aimed at union members and safety representatives in schools, receiving 1353 responses, the vast majority from teaching assistants, and the Asbestos Management in Schools survey was carried out amongst school leaders, receiving 1312 responses.

Both the JUAC Asbestos Survey and Asbestos Management in Schools Survey indicated a level of confusion throughout the school workforce surrounding the responsibility for the management of asbestos.

Large proportions of the JUAC Asbestos Survey respondents (the majority of which was teaching assistants) had no awareness of processes surrounding and management of asbestos found in their schools. This is reflected among school leaders where there is a lack of clarity concerning the role of duty holder and the respective responsibilities of the duty holder, school leadership, governing body and local authority.

This confusion and lack of clarity is a product of the lack of training on asbestos received by the school workforce, again at all levels. Just 57.1% of school leaders had received training on asbestos despite the large proportion (97.3%) of school leader responders indicating their school held responsibility for managing contractors on site for day to day repairs, 16.6% of school leaders in maintained schools indicated a member of their governing body had received training rising to 18.2% in non-maintained schools despite the governing body being a duty holder for asbestos management in non-maintained schools..

The lack of training received by school leadership teams appears to be magnified amongst school staff where nearly 90% of respondents indicated they had not received asbestos awareness training, with 97% of respondents having no awareness of the Department for Education online asbestos awareness package.

The following pages give the full reports of these surveys.

## **JUAC Asbestos Survey**

In the autumn of 2013, the Joint Union Asbestos Committee (JUAC) undertook an electronic survey of members and safety representatives in schools in order to gauge to what extent asbestos is being well managed in our schools. The findings are particularly pertinent given the current DfE review of asbestos policy for schools. JUAC would urge the DfE to give careful consideration to the evidence that has emerged from this survey, when making decisions about the future direction of asbestos in schools policy.

A total of 1353 responses were received, the vast majority from teaching assistants, indicative of high levels of concern among this group of staff.

Set out below are the key findings.

### **Presence of asbestos**

Only nine per cent of respondents indicated that asbestos was not present in their school. 39 per cent of respondents said that it was but the majority (52 per cent) were not sure. It is unacceptable that over half of the respondents did not know whether asbestos was present, and this suggests major deficiencies in systems of management. Given that we know that at least 75 per cent of schools do contain asbestos, the fact that so many people should be 'in the dark' is very worrying. How can staff seek to avoid disturbing asbestos if they do not even know it is there?

Respondents were asked if they had seen a copy of their school's asbestos management plan. Only 16 per cent said 'yes'; 80 per cent said 'no' and 4 per cent said there wasn't one. Again, this information must be accessible to staff if they are to play their part in keeping their school safe.

### **Responsibility for managing asbestos**

Asked whether it was clear which member of staff in their school was responsible for day-to-day management of asbestos, 26 per cent of respondents replied 'yes' and 74 per cent replied 'no'. This is an issue of communication which needs to be addressed. Not only does there need to be someone designated with this role, but staff need to know to whom concerns should be addressed, otherwise they may fail to report them at all.

### **Confidence about asbestos management**

Only 19 per cent of respondents were confident that asbestos was well managed in their school. The majority were not sure (60 per cent) while 21 per cent were not confident. This lack of confidence is hardly surprising given the lack of awareness about asbestos management responsibilities generally.

### **Asbestos awareness training for those without responsibility for managing asbestos**

Nearly 90 per cent of respondents had not received asbestos awareness training. Only 8 per cent had received training or information on how to avoid disturbing asbestos in their school. (For the remaining respondents - 4 per cent - the question was not applicable because they had responsibility for asbestos management.)

### **Training for those responsible for asbestos management**

For the vast majority of respondents (94 per cent) this question was not relevant. For the approximate 6 per cent for whom it was an issue, just over two thirds felt they had not received adequate training, while just under a third were satisfied. For those with

asbestos management responsibilities, training on how to carry out their role is essential. The findings of our survey suggest that this is not being delivered in the majority of cases.

#### **Awareness of the DfE on-line asbestos awareness package**

97 per cent of our respondents knew nothing about this package, despite it being available for nearly two years. Clearly there is a need to publicise further.

#### **Whether anyone at school has accessed the DfE package?**

Given the extent of the lack of awareness about the DfE package, it is not surprising that very few were able to answer this question – only 40 in fact. Of these only 15 knew for sure that someone in their school has accessed the information, with 25 not aware of anyone accessing it. A lot of work went into the development of this package and the JUAC unions have all taken steps to publicise it. DfE needs to do more in this respect.

#### **Whether asbestos present is clearly marked?**

The majority of respondents (54 per cent) were unsure whether this was the case. Only 7 per cent said asbestos is clearly marked while 39 per cent said it definitely is not. This is highly worrying both in terms of the numbers who were unsure as well as those reporting that asbestos definitely is not marked. Failure to label asbestos makes it much more likely that damaged areas will continue to release fibres.

#### **Are contractors advised about the location of asbestos so they can avoid disturbing it?**

Only 18 per cent of respondents were sure that this routinely happens. 78 per cent were not sure and 4 per cent reported that this definitely does not happen. This is extremely worrying. It is essential that procedures are in place to alert contractors to the exact location of asbestos. If not, inevitably staff, pupils and contractors will be exposed and in many cases will not even know that exposure has taken place.

#### **Is there a clear process to follow if asbestos is disturbed?**

Again the majority, 64 per cent, were not sure. 9 per cent said yes and 27 per cent said no. This is disappointing but not surprising given responses to earlier questions.

#### **Incidents of asbestos exposure?**

Again, there were a large number of 'don't know' answers to this (62 per cent). 12 per cent of respondents were aware of such an incident while 26 per cent were not.

Of those who were aware of such an incident, only 40 per cent were satisfied with how it was handled. 60 per cent were dissatisfied.

#### **Whether concerns have been raised over asbestos management and, if so, whether they were dealt with satisfactorily?**

85 per cent of respondents had never raised such a concern, which given the overall lack of awareness of other issues, is not surprising.

Of those who did raise concerns (135 respondents), approximately a third – 36 per cent - were satisfied with the response, whereas around two thirds (64 per cent) were not.

#### **Do health and safety consultation meetings take place at which asbestos management can be discussed?**

82 per cent replied 'no' and 18 per cent 'yes'. Transparency is vital in this area but it is clear that opportunities to discuss and share information are being missed.

**If warm air cabinet heaters are present, have they been checked out to ensure they are not emitting asbestos fibres?**

Only 28 per cent of respondents indicated that their school does not contain this type of heater, suggesting they are still, despite their age, very prevalent. The majority of respondents (65 per cent) did not know if the heaters in their school had been checked or not. 4 per cent were sure they had not been checked while only 3 per cent were sure they had been. This suggests there is a way to go in publicising the JUAC warning and also highlights the need for the HSE/DfE to act. On a more positive note, we hope that simply asking the question will have, to some extent, raised awareness levels in those schools.

**Have there been instances of WW2 gas masks being handled or worn?**

More than three quarters of respondents (77 per cent) did not know the answer to this question.

13 per cent of respondents said that their school has always been aware of the risk, 8 per cent said that this used to happen but not any more and 3 per cent said that masks were still used in this way.

Again, simply asking the question may bring about a change in behaviour if respondents who answered 'don't know', or who know that masks are still used, raise the issue with colleagues and management. Also, we need to remember that the DfE warning has only recently been issued and our own JUAC warning is also relatively recent. Were we to ask the question in a few months time we would hope that there would be greater knowledge around this area.

**Conclusion**

- Overall the results reveal a disappointing picture of lack of knowledge and awareness in many areas, including provision of training and information, knowledge of who is responsible for asbestos management, whether asbestos is clearly marked, whether contractors are advised of the location of asbestos, whether consultation meetings take place and whether concerns, when raised, are properly addressed.
- The large number of 'don't know' or 'not sure' answers is worrying in itself.
- The answers to the questions about warm air cabinet heaters and gas masks suggest the messages about both are not yet widely known, despite our efforts (it is too soon for the DfE warning to have had an effect) and more needs to be done.
- The findings of the JUAC survey show that overall there is no room for complacency. Managing asbestos in schools is clearly problematic and any suggestion that current systems are working well and that there should be less focus on this area would be extremely irresponsible. If anything, schools require much more support in order to keep staff and pupils safe.

## **Asbestos Management in Schools survey**

Head teachers are subject to a number of statutory duties in relation to the management of asbestos in schools. Leadership unions ASCL and NAHT are concerned about the quality and availability of training and information on this issue for their members and in October 2013, NAHT carried out a survey of members to understand the issues better. In December 2013, ASCL repeated this survey with their members and this report outlines the combined results from both surveys.

This online survey was designed to assess members' awareness and understanding of these responsibilities, and their access to related training and information, in order to inform their work in this area.

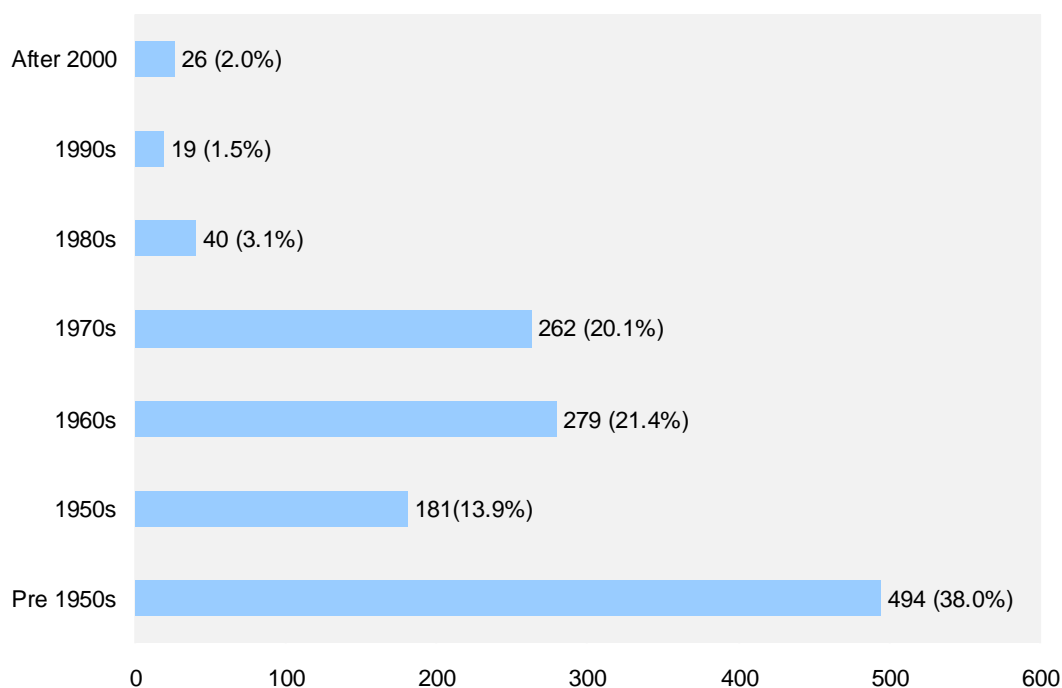
There were 1312 responses to the survey with a large proportion of responses coming from primary head teachers due to primary schools naturally outnumbering secondary schools nationally.

### **Executive Summary**

The key findings from the survey were:

- Over half of respondents (57.1%) have received training on asbestos.
- Despite this lack of training, the majority of respondents (97.3%) indicated that the responsibility for managing contractors on site for day to day repairs rests with the school; a role which requires significant knowledge of asbestos management to ensure that risks are managed.
- While 93.1% of respondents were aware of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations, there is a lack of clarity about the role of the Duty Holder, with 18.0% indicating that they did not know who held this role and further confusion between responsibilities of the Governing Body and Local Authority.
- There is also confusion over the extent of school leaders' responsibilities, with only 30% of respondents recognising all of their responsibilities in relation to asbestos.
- Concerns were also highlighted about the quality of surveys, with members reporting that older surveys did not identify areas which were later found to contain asbestos.
- Whilst there was very little variation in responses between respondents working in maintained and non maintained schools, there were 17% of non maintained schools that had not had an asbestos survey in the last five years, as compared to only 9% of maintained schools.
- However, non maintained school respondents appeared to be more fully aware of the range of their responsibilities in relation to asbestos, with 41.3% recognising all of their responsibilities in relation to asbestos, compared with 25.7% of maintained schools.
- The proportion of respondents who indicated that their Governing Body had received training was similar for the two categories (16.6% of maintained schools compared with 18.2% of non-maintained schools). However, as the Governing Body will be a Duty Holder in non maintained schools, the low percentage is more concerning for this category.

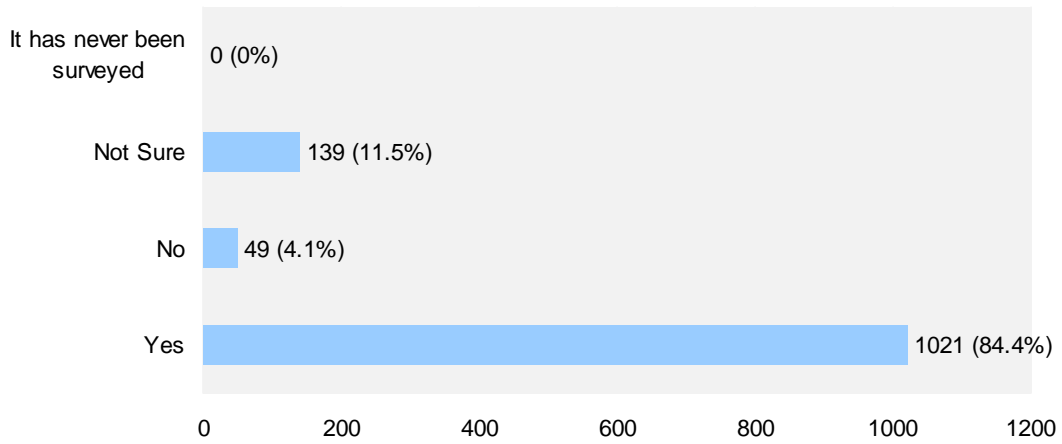
**1. When was your school built? (If on multiple sites, please answer for the oldest building)**



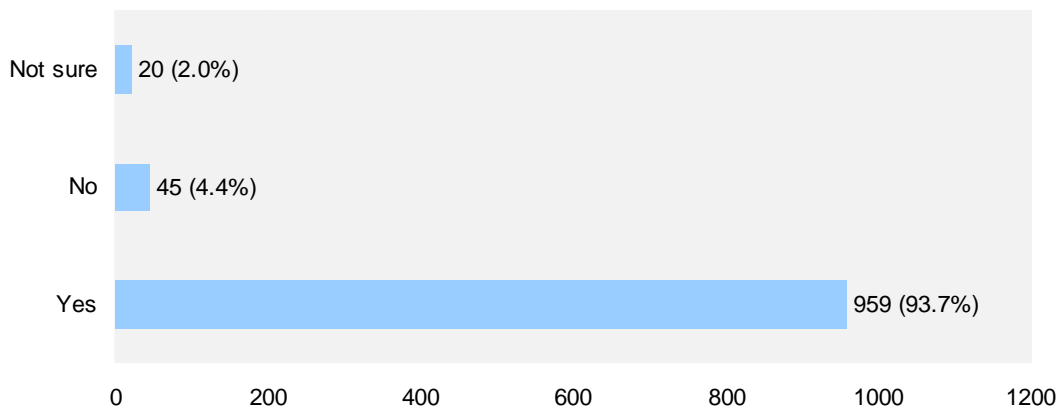
**2. Tell us about your school(s). Please select an answer from each column (If you are accountable for more than one school, please provide details of each).**

Type	Academy	Independent School	Special School	Community School	Children's Centre	Outdoor Education Centre	Pupil referral unit	Social Services Establishment	Foundation School	Voluntary aided school	Voluntary controlled school	Response count
School 1	8.4% (102)	0.5% (6)	7.3% (89)	<b>50.8% (617)</b>	0.2% (3)	0% (0)	0.3% (4)	0% (0)	4.5% (55)	16.9% (205)	12.6% (153)	1,214
School 2	11.5% (7)	0.0% (0)	8.2% (5)	<b>34.4% (21)</b>	16.4% (10)	0.0% (0)	4.9% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	14.8% (9)	9.8% (6)	61
School 3	<b>25.0% (2)</b>	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	<b>25.0% (2)</b>	12.5% (1)	0.0% (0)	12.5% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	<b>25.0% (2)</b>	0.0% (0)	8
Phase		Nursery	Infant	Junior	Primary	Middle	Secondary 11-16	Secondary 11-18	All Through	Sixth Form	Other	Response count
School 1		2.4% (27)	9.1% (103)	6.5% (74)	<b>71.2% (806)</b>	0.6% (7)	3.6% (41)	1.6% (18)	3.0% (34)	0.2% (2)	1.8% (20)	1,132
School 2		17.5% (10)	3.5% (2)	12.3% (7)	<b>54.4% (31)</b>	0.0% (0)	3.5% (2)	1.8% (1)	1.8% (1)	0.0% (0)	5.3% (3)	57
School 3		11.1% (1)	22.2% (2)	0.0% (0)	<b>44.4% (4)</b>	0.0% (0)	11.1% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	11.1% (1)	9

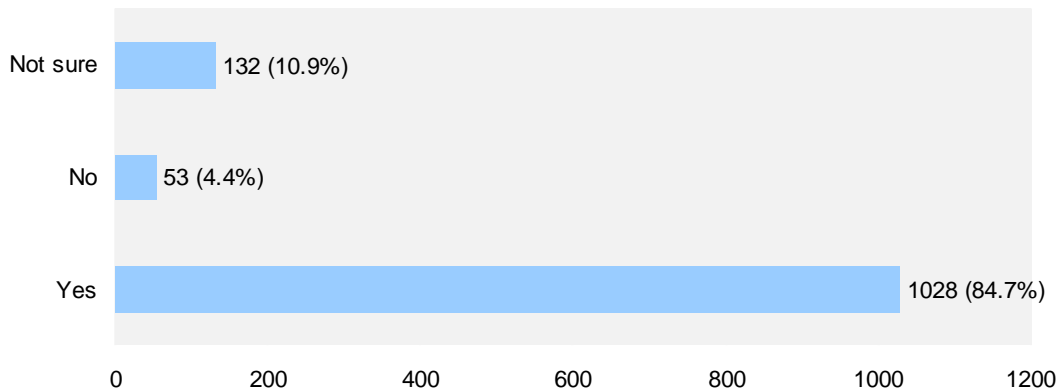
**3. Do you know if and when your school was last surveyed for asbestos?**



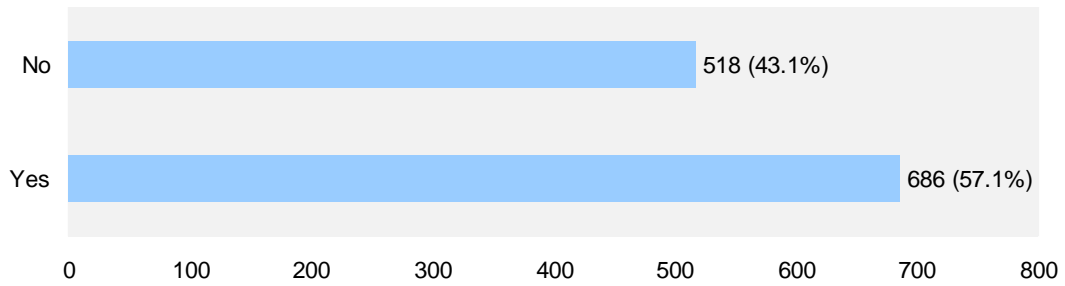
**4. Do you have a copy of this survey?**



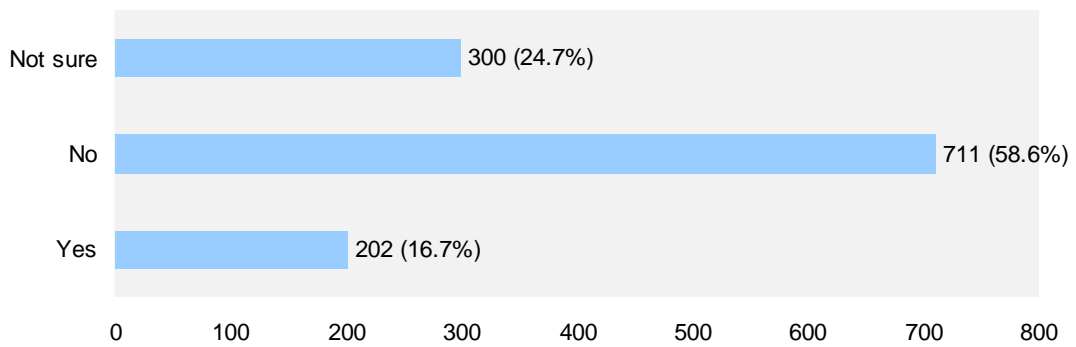
**5. Are you confident that the asbestos is well managed in your school?**



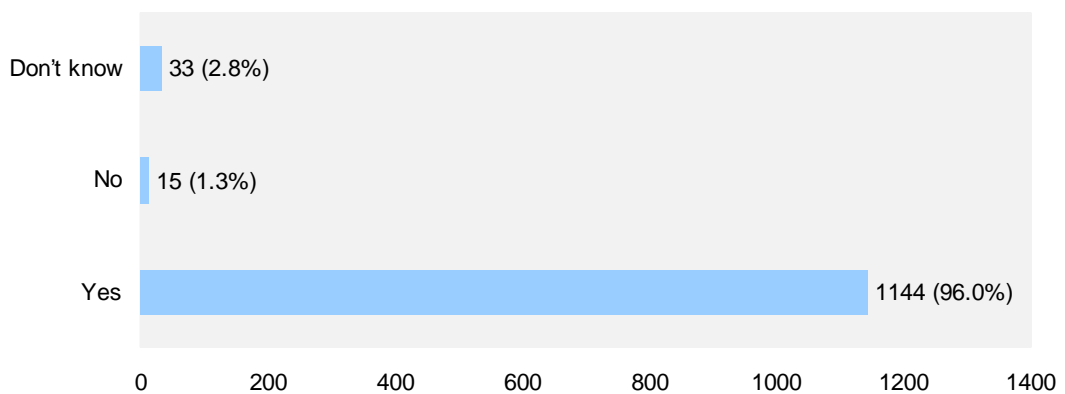
**6. Have you received training on asbestos?**



**7. Has any member of your Governing Body received training on asbestos?**



**8. Do contractors receive any information on asbestos before they begin work in your school?**

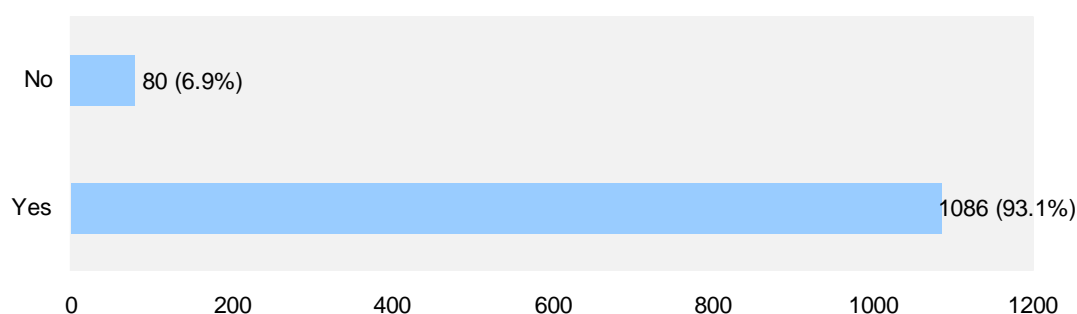




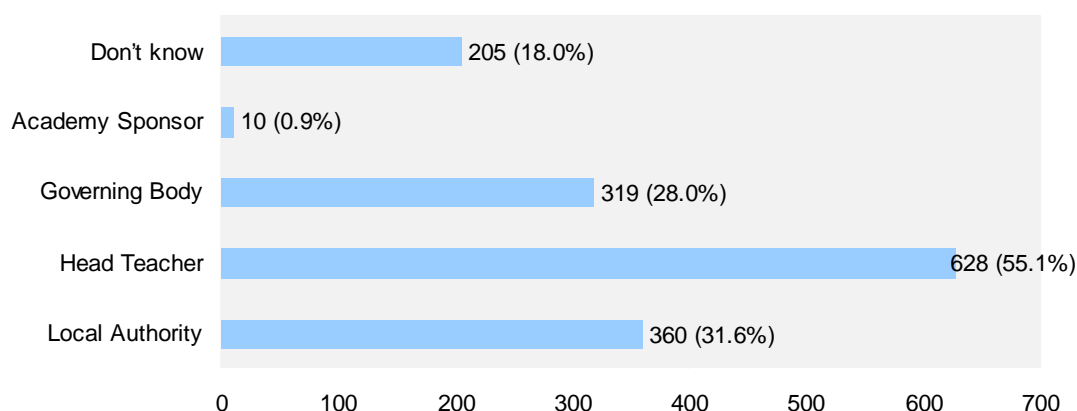
**9. In relation to repairs to the school, who is responsible for the following?  
(Please tick all that apply)**

Answer Options	Local Authority	Academy Sponsor	School	Other	Don't know	Response Count
Capital budget for the school	488 (47.7%)	18 (1.5%)	<b>743 (63.5%)</b>	61 (5.2%)	9 (7.7%)	1170
Procuring capital works	499 (42.8%)	15 (1.3%)	<b>773 (66.2%)</b>	93 (8.0%)	10 (0.9%)	1167
Managing capital works contractors on site	431 (36.9%)	12 (1.0%)	<b>834 (72.1%)</b>	108 (9.2%)	10 (8.6%)	1169
Day to day maintenance and repairs budget	38 (3.2%)	3 (0.2%)	<b>1138 (97.2%)</b>	13 (1.1%)	1 (0%)	1171
Procuring day to day management and repairs	74 (6.3%)	4 (0.3%)	<b>1112 (95.0%)</b>	25 (2.1%)	1 (0%)	1170
Managing day to day repair contractors on site	48 (4.1%)	4 (0.3%)	<b>1136 (97.3%)</b>	17 (1.4%)	2 (0.1%)	1168

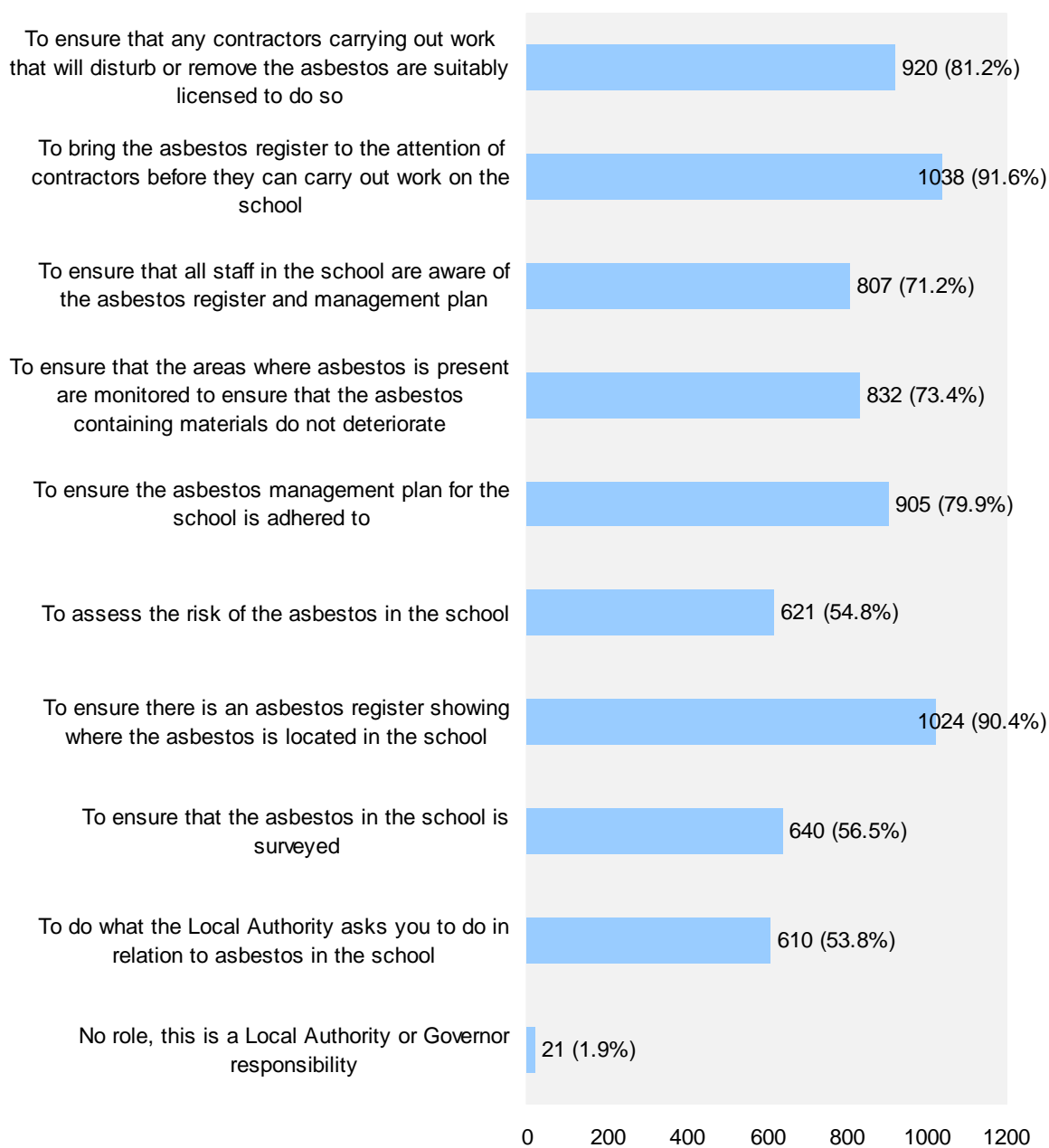
**10. Are you aware that the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2006 require those who own, occupy, manage or have responsibility for premises which may contain asbestos to identify and manage that asbestos?**



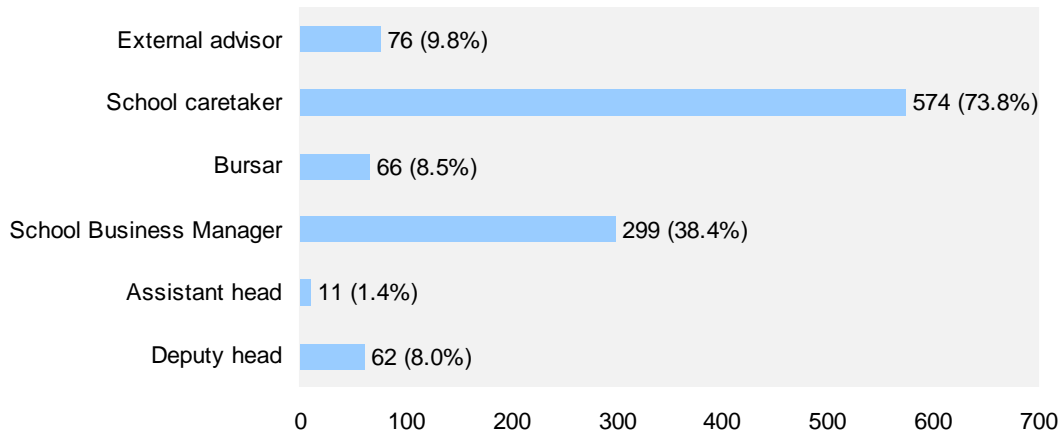
**11. Regulations also refer to the duty holder who has overall responsibility for managing asbestos. Do you know who is the official duty holder for your school? (Please tick all that apply)**



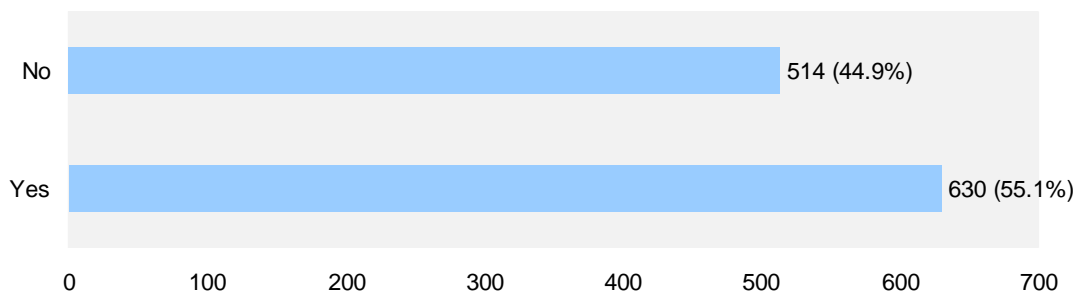
**12. What do you see as your role in relation to the asbestos in your school  
(Please tick all that apply)**



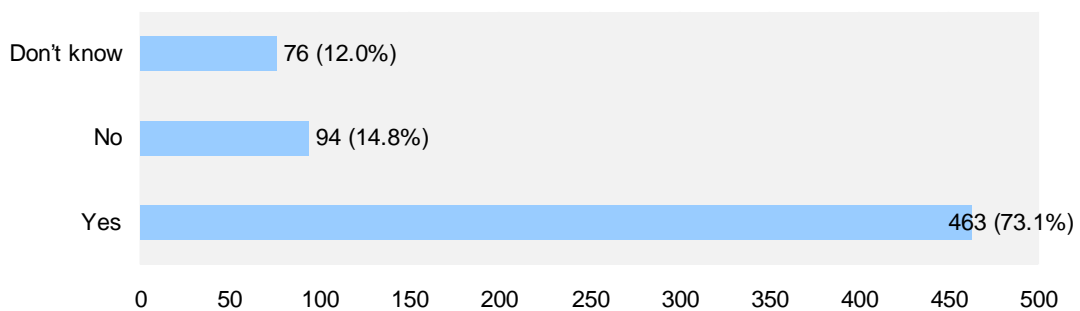
**13. Do you delegate your role in relation to asbestos to anyone else?  
(please tick all the apply)**



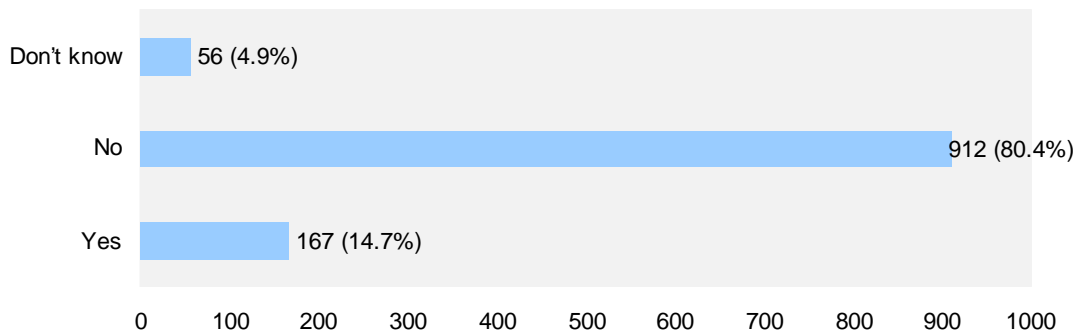
**14. Do you have any in-house staff who carry out building maintenance work?**



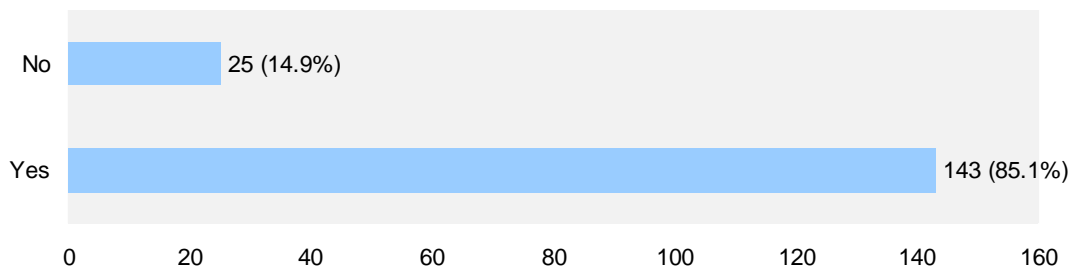
**15. Have they had any training on asbestos?**



**16. As far as you are aware, have there been any incidents of asbestos exposure at your school?**



**17. Were you satisfied with the way in which your Local Authority or employer handled the incident?**



The majority of comments were from those who were happy with the way the employer or local authority handled the incident. Comments from those who were unhappy included:

- Contradictory advice from the LA and independent survey
- LA not recognising that the building contained asbestos until the school insisted that it be confirmed
- LA not helpful in managing the incident
- School informed the LA that there was asbestos on site, who allowed work to go ahead, which then cease when asbestos was found
- Unnecessary mess and damage.