



Thomastown West OHS Asbestos Policy 2024 - 2028

Thomastown West Primary School motto is **Together Working on Pathways to Success**. Health and safety is an issue that affects everyone in the workplace including teachers, students, parents, volunteers, contractors and visitors. Effective safety management will help provide a stimulating, safe and healthy workplace and prevent/reduce the incidence of illness and injury.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is:

- To provide a school environment safe from the potentially harmful effects of asbestos.
- To ensure that asbestos contained in construction materials in existing school buildings and soil is safely managed.
- To regularly assess, control and review the identified hazardous asbestos building materials.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff, students, parents, volunteers, contractors and visitors at Thomastown West Primary School. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Department of Education and Training's [Occupational Health and Safety Management System \(OHSMS\)](#)

DEFINITION

Asbestos are naturally occurring fibrous silicate materials that can be found throughout our environment. They were used extensively in building and consumer products up until the 1980's, but have been for use in Australia since 2003. Many Australian schools incorporated asbestos-containing materials in structures such as roofs, floors, ceilings and walls. Examples of ACM include: asbestos-containing cement sheets, cement pipes, vinyl tiles and sprayed insulation.

Many studies have shown that these products, if maintained in good condition and left undisturbed, do not pose a significant health risk. Asbestos is usually found in a bonded form (non-friable asbestos) that does not normally result in the release of dangerous fibres. It is only when asbestos is disturbed or damaged that the potential for release of fibres increases (friable asbestos).

POLICY

- Asbestos in schools is relatively safe if it is sealed, enclosed or encapsulated and not disturbed.
- An OHS committee will be established and it will meet monthly consistent with an OHS committee [Charter](#) that it develops. An OHS Representative (HSR) will be elected by staff. The HSR and the Principal will be key members of the OHS committee.
- If hazardous asbestos-containing material is identified, the Principal and/or Asbestos Coordinator, in consultation with the OHS committee will implement appropriate actions in order to reduce the risks of exposure to asbestos fibres to [employees](#), [contractors](#), [volunteers](#), students and visitors, while on site.
- The Principal and/or workplace manager will contact the Department's [Asbestos, Reinstatement and Preventative Maintenance Call Centre](#) on ph.1300 133 468 to identify the presence of hazardous building materials within the workplace. The results of this



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assessment should be recorded in a hazardous building material report provided by **Programmed.**

- The Principal and/or Asbestos coordinator will record it in the *OHS Risk Register* and develop a *School Asbestos Management Plan (SAMP)* using the Department's *Schools Asbestos Management Plan* template.
- The OHS committee will, in consultation with all staff, establish and conduct an annual [OHS Activities Calendar](#) of mandated and situational OHS requirements including quarterly workplace inspections of asbestos areas to monitor their condition.
- The Principal and/or Asbestos coordinator will communicate the information contained within the hazardous building material report and SAMP as per the *OHS Consultation and Communication Procedure* with the OHS committee, staff, volunteers and contractors.
- Contractors will be required to provide Safe Work Method Statements to the Principal before commencing any work that is potentially hazardous.
- The Workplace Manager and/or Asbestos coordinator will provide current copies of the Division 5 and Division 6 Asbestos Audit Report and SAMP as part of their OHS induction to all persons who come on site prior to commencing work.
- The school will engage an accredited person to conduct an audit of our school and provide a formal report that identifies the types, locations and conditions of any hazardous building materials, including asbestos.
- External competent persons will be engaged and managed as per the requirements of *Contractor OHS Management Procedure* and *School Asbestos Management Plan*.
- The condition of hazardous building materials will be inspected on a quarterly basis at a minimum.
- The school will inform the OHS Advisory Service (1300 074 715) of the identification of asbestos at the school and follow their directives in relation to its handling and/or removal.
- The OHS committee will refer to the [hierarchy of control](#) (eliminate, substitute, isolate, engineering, administration, personal protective equipment) and establish a series of controls that eliminate or effectively minimise and manage the risk associated with asbestos.
 - elimination of asbestos by a contractor who holds an asbestos licence; (See *Schools Asbestos Management Plan*)
 - conducting monitoring checks to determine actual exposure (see *Hygiene Management Procedure*)
 - using the *Safe Work Procedure Template* develop Safe Work Procedures for performing tasks on or adjacent to hazardous building materials
 - if reasonably practicable indicate hazardous building materials by labelling
 - providing [Personal Protective Equipment](#) (PPE)
- Only certified contractors will be commissioned to remove or carry out works involving asbestos and other hazardous building materials.
 - Note:- Asbestos can only be removed by an asbestos-licensed holder. Department workplaces must follow the *School Asbestos Management Plan* for requirements on ACM removal.
- The OHS Risk Register will detail the controls that are to be implemented for asbestos material as well as a schedule indicating implementation timelines for each proposed control.
- The OHS committee's attention is to be drawn to the fact that the Department of Education conducts a program of regular asbestos auditing in DET workplaces. A copy of



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the school's Division 5 Audit Report Schools can be downloaded by going to the School Maintenance System portal: <https://prms21.eduweb.vic.gov.au/SMS/>. Each school (other than Greenfield sites) will have a copy of the division 5 audit report. Our school will have an up to date Asbestos Management Plan, and the principal will assume the role of the Asbestos coordinator.

- The Principal and/or workplace manager should ensure the workplace nominated Asbestos Coordinator has attended the Department Asbestos Awareness Training (component of the Bricks and Mortar Training). This should be recorded in the [OHS Training / Planner Register](#)
 - The Principal and/or workplace manager are responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of hazard controls in consultation with the HSR and employees on an annual basis.
 - The Principal and/or workplace manager are to ensure that the *OHS Risk Register* is kept up to date and is reviewed when hazardous building materials are identified, assessed, controlled and reviewed.
 - The OHS Risk Register will be updated to reflect any changed condition of hazardous materials and reflect the phased introduction of hazard controls.
 - School Council will provide sufficient funds over time to ensure that the control measures, including training, as identified in the OHS Risk Register are implemented.
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- The Principal will seek further information, advice or assistance on any matters related to Hazardous Building Materials management by contacting the OHS Advisory Service on ph. 1300 074 715 or email safety@education.vic.gov.au.

RELATED TEMPLATES

Schools Asbestos Management Plan Template

- [Asbestos Label Register](#)
- [Asbestos Removal Completion Form](#)
- [Asbestos Register](#)
- [Risk Assessment Template](#)
- [Safe Work Procedure Template](#)
- [OHS Training / Planner Register](#)

MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Related references

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017

[Victorian School Building Authority: Asbestos in Soils Policy](#)

[Victorian School Building Authority: Fill on School Sites Policy](#)

[Victorian School Building Authority: Asbestos Management and Removal Policy](#)

[Victorian School Building Authority: Building Quality Standards Handbook May 2018](#)

[Victorian School Building Authority: Hazardous Materials Policy](#)



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Managing Asbestos in Workplaces – WorkSafe Compliance Code

Removing Asbestos in Workplaces – WorkSafe Compliance Code

OHS Risk Register

Related documentation

Contractor OHS Management Procedure

Contractor OHS Induction Checklist

Hygiene Management Procedure

OHS Activities Calendar

OHS Consultation and Communication Procedure

OHS Induction Checklist

OHS Induction and Training Procedure

OHS Risk Management Procedure

OHS Risk Register

Schools Asbestos Management Plan Template

Volunteer Worker OHS Induction Checklist

EVALUATION

- Quarterly Occupational Health and Safety reviews will be conducted by the appointed HSR, in consultation with the Principal, OHS Manager and nominees from the OHS committee or after any serious incident or issue.
- The outcomes of this review will be placed on the OHS notice board and will be included within the Buildings and Grounds committee's report to School Council and the community.
- This policy will be reviewed as part of the Thomastown West Primary School four year policy review cycle.

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References	Victorian Government Schools Policy Advisory Guide