Increasing numbers of school teachers' dying of mesothelioma

The latest statistics obtained in March 2011 show that the numbers of school teachers and school support staff who have died from the asbestos related cancer mesothelioma has again increased.

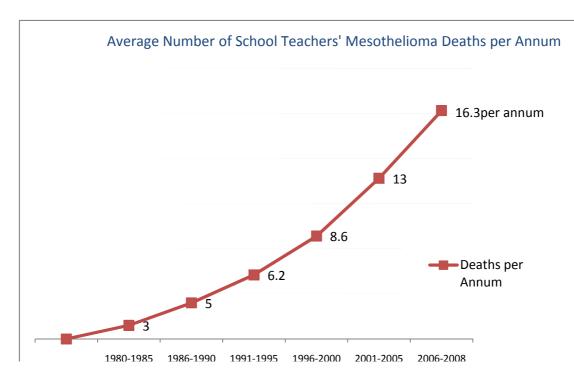
More than 234 school teachers, teachers in higher and further education, and school support staff died of mesothelioma in the ten year period 1999 to 2008 aged 16-74. (See Annex)

140 school teachers died of mesothelioma in the ten year period between 1999 to 2008 aged 16-74.

49 school teachers died of mesothelioma in the three year period 2006 to 2008. On average during the period 16 school teachers died each year of mesothelioma.

A total of 228 school teachers have died of mesothelioma since 1980 aged 16-74.

It is known that in addition teachers have also died of mesothelioma above the age of 75. These numbers are therefore less than the actual numbers.



Increasing mesothelioma deaths amongst school teachers ¹

mercusing mesothenoma acaths amongst school teachers							
	1980-	1986-	1991-	1996-	2001-	2006-	TOTAL
	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2008	
	(Southampton)				(soc 90,2000)	(3 Years)	
SCHOOL TEACHERS TEACHERS NEC	15	25	31	43	65	49	228
School teachers deaths Average per annum	3	5	6.2	8.6	13	16.3	

¹ HSE Mesothelioma occupational statistics: Male and female deaths aged 16-74 1980-2000 Table 3,4 Southampton Occupation Group. 5 year time period 1980-2000 excluding 1981. E-mail HSE Statistics Unit/Lees 15 Jul 2008. Mesothelioma deaths in the education sector for males and females 2001-2005. HSE Mesothelioma mortality in Great Britain: Analyses by Geographical area and occupation 2005 Tables 11, 13 (2002-2005). HSE Epidemiology Unit CSAG, table 0977/Lees 2 Mar 2011 HSE Epidemiology Unit, table 0925./Lees+ 25 Feb 2011

The numbers have increased year on year since mesothelioma occupational records began in 1980 when 3 school teachers died on average each year of mesothelioma.

In addition school support staff including teaching assistants, school caretakers, school secretaries, school cooks, nursery nurses and other child care related occupations have died of mesothelioma.²

The school teachers' mesothelioma deaths are significant, for every teacher there are 20 to 30 children in their class. Children are more vulnerable to the effects of asbestos. If the teachers are being exposed to asbestos and subsequently dying then so are the children. However because of the long latency their deaths are recorded under whatever occupation they had at the time and not as a child at school. There are therefore no statistics that show how many children have been exposed to asbestos at school and subsequently died. If 228 school teachers have died then proportionately that would equate to more than 4,500 children who have subsequently died.

In answer to a Parliamentary question about the numbers of teachers dying from mesothelioma the Minister of State claimed that "In statistical terms these numbers are broadly in line with the average for all occupations. Teachers do not stand out as a higher risk group." This is a misleading statement for teachers' deaths should not be average for all occupations, for the average includes the occupations that are known to be high risk. Rather, in an occupation where one should expect minimal or no asbestos exposures, the mesothelioma deaths amongst teachers shows that as a profession there has been a significant asbestos exposure. Of equal importance is that the Minister failed to address the relevance of the teachers' deaths to the children in their classes.

In December 2010 the Minister of State for Schools was asked if he would assess the asbestos risks to teachers, support staff and children. He replied "The Department has no plans to commission an assessment of the risks from asbestos in schools." In 2009 the Chief Executive of the British Safety Council had stated:

"It is unacceptable that the UK, in 2009, has not yet not comprehensively assessed the risks that teachers and pupils in each and every school face....."

In light of these latest statistics it remains unacceptable that the Government has not assessed the risks from asbestos to teachers, support staff and pupils. It is of particular importance that the Government assesses the increased risks to children.

For further information see:

Education sector mesothelioma statistics 1980-2005.

http://www.asbestosexposureschools.co.uk/Statistics%20of%20deaths%20teachers,%20support%20staff%20children.pdf Significance of teachers deaths:

http://www.asbestosexposureschools.co.uk/pdfnewslinks/TEACHERS%20DEATHS%20ARE%20SIGNIFICANT%206%20Jan%2010%20 2 .pdf The increased vulnerability of children to asbestos:

 $\frac{\text{http://www.asbestosexposureschools.co.uk/pdfnewslinks/CHILDREN\%20increased\%20vulnerability\%20to\%20asbestos\%202\%20Nov\%200}{9.pdf}$

Michael Lees

14th February 2011

Updated 7th March 2011. Amended 4th August 2011

http://www.asbestosexposureschools.co.uk/Statistics%20of%20deaths%20teachers,%20support%20staff%20children.pdf

³ PQ Chris Grayling MP Minister of State for Employment/Annette Brooke MP 13 Dec 2010 See:

http://www.asbestosexposureschools.co.uk/npaper%20links/PQ%20Annette%20Brooke.htm

² For further information see:

PQ Nick Gibb MP Minister of State for Schools/ John Cryer MP 8 Dec 2010 27283 http://www.asbestosexposureschools.co.uk/pdfnewslinks/PQs%20John%20Cryer%20%20Nick%20Gil

⁵ British Safety Council press release Government failing to tackle asbestos in schools. 3 Jul 2009 www.britsafe.org/feedcontents.aspx?id=100261

Annex.

Mesothelioma deaths for the education sector 1999 - 2008

Occupation	Se		
	Male	Female	Total
2311 - Higher education teaching professionals	25	2	27
2312 - Further education teaching professionals	31	4	35
2313 - Education officers, school inspectors	1	0	1
2314 - Secondary education teaching professionals	67	4	71
2315 - Primary & nursery education teaching professionals	7	53	60
2316 - Special needs education teaching professionals	2	1	3
2317 - Registrars and senior administrators of educational establishments	0	0	0
2319 - Teaching professionals n.e.c.	4	2	6
6121 - Nursery nurses	0	6	6
6122 - Childminders & related occupations	0	5	5
6123 - Playgroup leaders/assistants	0	0	0
6124 - Educational assistants	2	5	7
9244 - School mid-day assistants	0	6	6
4213 - School secretaries	0	7	7
	139	95	234

Note:

The following Standardised Occupational Classifications are used in this table

1999-2000: SOC90

2001: SOC90 & SOC2000 where the following SOC 2000 & SOC 90 occupation codes are assumed to be equivalent.

- 2311 Higher education teaching professionals & 230 University & polytechnic teaching professionals
- 2312 Further education teaching professionals & 231 Higher and further education teaching professionals
- 2313 Education officers, school inspectors & 232 Education officers, school inspectors
- 2314 Secondary education teaching professionals & 233 Secondary
- (& middle school deemed secondary) education teaching professionals
- 2315 Primary & nursery education teaching professionals
- & 234 Primary (& middle school deemed primary) & nursery teaching professionals
- 2316 Special needs education teaching professionals & 235 Special education teaching professionals
- 2317 Registrars and senior administrators of educational establishments & No equivalent
- 2319 Teaching professionals n.e.c. & 239 Other teaching professionals nes
- 6121 Nursery nurses & 650 Nursery nurses
- 6122 Childminders & related occupations & 659 Other childcare & related occupations nes
- 6123 Playgroup leaders/assistants & 651 Playgroup leaders
- 6124 Educational assistants & 652 Educational assistants
- 9244 School mid-day assistants & No equivalent
- 4213 School secretaries & No equivalent

2002-2008: SOC2000⁶

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⁶ HSE Epidemiology Unit CSAG, table 0977. 2 Mar 2011

Female mesothelioma deaths for the education sector 2001 - 2008

Occumation	2001-	2006-	Tatal
Occupation	2005	2008	Total
2311 - Higher education teaching professionals	1	0	1
2312 - Further education teaching professionals	3	1	4
2313 - Education officers, school inspectors	0	0	0
2314 - Secondary education teaching professionals	2	2	4
2315 - Primary & nursery education teaching professionals	18	25	43
2316 - Special needs education teaching professionals	1	0	1
2317 - Registrars and senior administrators of educational establishments	0	0	0
2319 - Teaching professionals n.e.c.	2	0	2
6121 - Nursery nurses	4	0	4
6122 - Childminders & related occupations	2	1	3
6123 - Playgroup leaders/assistants	0	0	0
6124 - Educational assistants	3	2	5
9244 - School mid-day assistants	3	3	6
4213 - School secretaries	5	2	7
Total	44	36	80

Male mesothelioma deaths for the education sector 2001 - 2008

Occupation	2001- 2005	2006- 2008	Total
•	10	6	16
2311 - Higher education teaching professionals	. •	ŭ	_
2312 - Further education teaching professionals	13	16	29
2313 - Education officers, school inspectors	1	0	1
2314 - Secondary education teaching professionals	36	17	53
2315 - Primary & nursery education teaching professionals	5	2	7
2316 - Special needs education teaching professionals	0	2	2
2317 - Registrars and senior administrators of educational establishments	0	0	0
2319 - Teaching professionals n.e.c.	1	1	2
6121 - Nursery nurses	0	0	0
6122 - Childminders & related occupations	0	0	0
6123 - Playgroup leaders/assistants	0	0	0
6124 - Educational assistants	0	2	2
9244 - School mid-day assistants	0	0	0
4213 - School secretaries	0	0	0
Total	66	46	112

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⁷HSE Epidemiology Unit, table 0925. 25 Feb 2011

Mesothelioma deaths School Teachers and Teachers and Lecturers 1980-2008 aged 16-74

	1980- 1985 Southampton 8	1986- 1990	1991- 1995	1996- 2000	2001- 2005 soc 90,2000) ⁹	2006- 2008 ¹⁰ 3 years	TOTALS
Higher/Further Education	6	12	22	26	27	23	116
School Teachers	15	25	31	43	65	49	228
Teachers NEC							
TOTAL	21	37	53	69	92	72	344
Higher/Further Education							
& School Teachers Teachers							
NEC							

A total of 344 school teachers and teachers and lecturers in Higher and Further Education have died of mesothelioma since 1980 aged 16-74.

Note:

It should be noted that the Southampton codes only listed teachers in higher education and teachers nec, whereas the SOC1990 codes break the occupation down into three separate codes for each and the SOC2000 into three groups for higher education and four for school teachers, with an additional code for senior educational administrators. Therefore to compare like with like in the tables the higher education numbers have been added together, as have the school teaching professions.

The five year tables above from 1980-2000, includes the only two groups of teachers under Southampton occupational coding -Teachers nec and teachers in higher education. For some reason the HSE table does not include female teachers in higher education, even though statistics show that there were some deaths. In addition education assistants, nursery nurses and childcare related occupations are not classified separately under this coding but are "lost" amongst other groupings. Therefore some mesothelioma deaths are not be included. ¹¹

School caretakers, cleaners, cooks and maintenance personnel are also known to have died of mesothelioma, but their deaths are classified under a general occupational heading and not as a "school" caretaker or cleaner. Their deaths are therefore not included in the statistics for schools.

The mesothelioma occupational statistics only include deaths between the ages of 16-74. Many deaths occur above the age 74 and it is known that teachers and support staff have died above that age. It is probable that a significant number have. The numbers of deaths from mesothelioma in the occupations who work in schools and colleges is therefore likely to be significantly higher than shown in the statistics.

There are no statistics that show how many children have subsequently died. An assessment is therefore essential.

⁸ HSE Mesothelioma occupational statistics: Male and female deaths aged 16-74 1980-2000 Table 3,4 Southampton Occupation Group. 5 year time period 1980-2000 excluding 1981

⁹ E-mail HSE Statistics Unit/Lees 15 Jul 2008. Mesothelioma deaths in the education sector for males and females 2001-2005. HSE Mesothelioma mortality in Great Britain: Analyses by Geographical area and occupation 2005 Tables 11, 13 (2002-2005)

Mesothelioma deaths for occupations relating to schools for males and females aged 16-74 (SOC 2000) 2001-2008. E-mail HSE CSAG Epidemiology Unit. Benson/Bonney 10 Feb 11
 (HSE mesothelioma occupational statistics male and female deaths aged 16-74 1980-2000 (Southampton coding) 5 year time period.

¹¹ (HSE mesothelioma occupational statistics male and female deaths aged 16-74 1980-2000 (Southampton coding) 5 year time period. Tables 3,4.)