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WELSH GOVERNMENT MUST TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ASBESTOS SAFETY LEVEL IN SCHOOLS

Responding to the announcement by Education Minister Leighton Andrews on asbestos in schools, **Chris Keates, General Secretary of the NASUWT, the largest teachers' union in Wales and throughout the UK**, said:

“The situation at Cwmcarn High School has highlighted the presence of asbestos in school buildings in Wales and is a serious problem that calls for decisive action from the Welsh Government.

“Instead, the Welsh Government has decided against establishing a phased programme for the removal of asbestos from school buildings and against setting a safety level on asbestos for the learning and working environment.

“The school workforce and the pupils could be forgiven for thinking that they are being let down by a Government that places high expectations on them but is not prepared to take responsibility for their health, safety and welfare.”

NASUWT Wales Organiser, Rex Phillips, said:

“The NASUWT was expecting the Minister to take responsibility for the situation and provide direction and guidance to ensure that both the working and learning environments in our schools are safe.

“Regrettably the Minister has once again attempted to shift both the blame and the responsibility onto local authorities and schools. The complacency is at Welsh Government level as the only way to protect the safety of staff and learners is to ensure that our schools are asbestos-free.”

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