



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

March 2019

*Dear Constituents,*

Thank you for contacting me about asbestos in schools.

I can assure you that the safety of pupils and staff is of paramount importance to the Department for Education (DfE).

Ministers are committed to supporting local authorities, schools and academy trusts to meet their obligation to manage asbestos safely.

The Health and Safety Executive's expert advice recommends that if asbestos is unlikely to be damaged or disturbed, then it is best managed in situ. A blanket policy of removing asbestos in schools could potentially pose a greater risk to pupils and staff. Decisions to remove asbestos in schools are taken carefully and assessed on a case-by-case basis that examines potential risk of exposure and the work being undertaken.

Since 2015, the DfE has allocated £6 billion to those responsible for school buildings to ensure that essential maintenance work is carried out and this includes removing or encapsulating asbestos if it is the best course of action. Some of this money has been spent locally in Daventry.

Furthermore, the Department's £4.4 billion Priority School Building Programme is rebuilding or refurbishing more than 500 school buildings that are considered to be in the very worst condition, with asbestos a key factor in deciding which schools qualify for this funding.

The Government recently concluded its Asbestos Management Assurance Process, which has collected the most up-to-date data on asbestos management in schools. This updated information will be published in spring 2019.

I hope this response has reassured you that over time, asbestos will be sensitively removed from school estates.



Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Chris".

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**