

Council fined after workers exposed to asbestos

Kent County Council (KCC) has today been fined £200,000 after asbestos was disturbed at Lansdowne Primary School.

Canterbury Crown Court heard how, on 6 November 2014, an environmental health officer was carrying out a routine food inspection when they noticed what looked like asbestos rope hanging from the ceiling.

A prohibition notice was served on the now independent educational trust. An investigation found that the asbestos flue and rope were disturbed when it was under the control of the County Council 18 months beforehand.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the flue and gasket rope were attached to a steriliser unit that was removed by the caretaker. The investigation also found that neither the caretaker nor the head teacher had any asbestos management or awareness training. The council failed to effectively to prevent exposure and failed to provide suitable training to those liable to be exposed to asbestos.

Kent County Council pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 10 (1) of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and was fined £200,000 and ordered to pay costs of £21,500.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Kevin Golding said "The Council had implemented a system, but they had failed to take the simple step of checking to ensure it was being rigorously adhered to, resulting in employees not receiving the appropriate training. Organisations should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. www.hse.gov.uk
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/
3. Guidance for managing asbestos in schools: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/asbestos.htm>
4. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.

HSE investigating supply to schools of metal gauze mats which contain asbestos

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has been made aware that two UK laboratory supply companies have supplied schools and potentially other users with gauze mats which contain asbestos. The metal gauze mats are designed for use over Bunsen burners.

A HSE spokesperson said:

“While we assess the overall risk of exposure to be low, we have taken swift action. We have ensured that both of the supply companies concerned immediately ceased supply of the gauze mats and are overseeing arrangements to contact affected customers and provide precautionary advice on how the mats should be disposed of safely.

“We are working closely with Department for Education, education departments in Scotland and Wales as well as CLEAPSS (Consortium of Local Education Authorities for the Provision of Science Services). This will help us ensure that schools, colleges, local regulators, and others who may have supplied or purchased similar products are directed to our advice.

“We are also investigating how these particular gauze mats came into circulation. Breaches of the restrictions on the supply of asbestos are taken very seriously by HSE.”

About HSE

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Manufacturer fined after workers exposed to asbestos

A machining manufacturer has been fined after workers were exposed to

asbestos fibres whilst demolishing an internal wall.

Birmingham Magistrates' Court heard how the workers were asked to remove the internal wall by their manager. There was no asbestos survey or an up to date asbestos management plan for the premises.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that asbestos insulation sheets were removed unsafely without proper precautions and by unlicensed individuals from the company without any safeguards in place to prevent the spread of the asbestos fibres.

Birmingham Specialities Ltd of Moor Lane, Birmingham pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The company has been fined £20,000 and ordered to pay costs of £2,454.40.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Tariq Khan said: "Asbestos in buildings needs to be managed or removed by competent contractors. Those in control of work have a responsibility to devise safe methods of working and to provide the necessary information, instruction and training to their workers in the safe system of working. The company needed to follow the proper procedures by carrying out an asbestos survey and formulating an asbestos management plan as well as training those responsible for managing asbestos".

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: legislation.gov.uk/
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
4. Further information about managing asbestos in premises can be found at:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pUbns/priced/hsg227.pdf>

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[Two companies plead guilty following](#)

death of five-year-old Alexys Brown in August 2015

Before Bournemouth Crown Court, two companies have today pleaded guilty following a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation into the death of a five-year-old girl who became trapped while using a lift at her home in Weymouth.

On 13 August 2015, Alexys Brown got into the lift and put her head through a damaged vision panel. As the lift moved upward, her head got stuck between the lift and the ground floor ceiling. Alexys died as a result of her injuries.

Today, Thursday 23 August 2018, Synergy Housing Limited of West Street, Poole and Orona Limited of Europa View, Sheffield Business Park both pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

They are due to be sentenced at Bournemouth Crown Court on 14-15 January 2019.

Charges against a third company, Aster Property Ltd, under Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, have been ordered to lie on file.

A HSE spokesperson said: "HSE acknowledges today's guilty pleas but will not make a further comment until after sentencing."

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Landlord given custodial sentence for gas safety offences

A landlord has been sentenced for failing to maintain gas appliances at a rental property and repeatedly failing to provide tenants with a Landlords Gas Safety Certificate.

Norwich Magistrates' Court heard how inspectors from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Gas Safe Register inspected a property at Kings Lynn in Norfolk in 2017 where they found a gas oven to be 'at risk' and the gas central heating boiler to be unsafe to use.

The subsequent HSE investigation found the landlord, Mr Steven Ladell, had failed in his duty to have the gas appliances regularly inspected or

maintained, and failed to provide a Landlords Gas Safety Certificate for a number of years, all of which are legal requirements. In addition, Mr Ladell failed to comply with an Improvement Notice issued on 13 July 2017 which required he take action to deal with these issues.

Mr Steven Ladell of Great Harwood, Blackburn, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 21 of the Health & Safety Work etc. Act 1974 and breaching Regulation 36(2) and Regulation 36(3) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. He received a 20-week custodial sentence, suspended for two years, was ordered to carry out 100 hours of unpaid community work and to pay full costs of £4,146.34.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Paul Unwin said: "Landlords must ensure gas appliances at their tenanted properties are checked by a Gas Safe Register engineer at least every 12 months, and are maintained in a safe condition.

"HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards"

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4. Further information about gas safety can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas>

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