



27 January 2021



Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your email of 13 January 2021 to the Ministry of Education requesting the following information:

- 1. Please forward a copy of their [Green Way's] report on works carried out and in particular the results of the air monitoring during and after their clean-up. We are particularly interested in the monitors on the boundary and near vicinity to our property.*

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

There are five documents in scope of this request, representing the five reports on air monitoring conducted at Ponsonby Intermediate School between 10 December 2020 and 11 January 2021. These documents and our release decision on each are detailed for you in **Appendix A** which is attached to this response.

#### *Understanding the air monitoring reports*

The airborne contamination standard for asbestos is an average concentration over any eight-hour period of 0.1 respirable asbestos fibres per millilitre of air. Its purpose is to identify a limit on the amount of respirable asbestos fibres permitted in a workplace's air. Air sampling is primarily there to ensure that the allowable limits are not exceeded. As the workers on the site were in full protective equipment they are protected in cases of higher exposure.

When a reading *exceeds* 0.1 respirable asbestos fibres per millilitre of air, but is less than 0.2, workers are required to stop work and reassess their control measures. If the levels exceed 0.2 respirable asbestos fibres per millilitre of air, then work must stop and WorkSafe need to be notified. In this case the control measures applied to the site worked from the start of the works and as a result, readings did not exceed the airborne contamination standard.

Some of the initial readings, as referenced in the attached **Document 1**, measured 0.1 f/ml which is right on the airborne contamination standard. However as outlined above, the control measures put in place by Ward Demolition (and subsequently GreenWay) worked and no readings exceeded 0.1 respirable asbestos fibres per millilitre throughout the clean-up.

I have also enclosed a copy of the Approved Code of Practice: Management and Removal of Asbestos. More useful information is also available from WorkSafe at [www.worksafe.govt.nz/topic-and-industry/asbestos/](http://www.worksafe.govt.nz/topic-and-industry/asbestos/).

As previously advised, we will release a copy of the Asbestos Clearance Certificate for the school clearance work once this has been received. David Bos, Regional Asset Manager, will be happy to share this with you directly.

I understand your concerns about possible asbestos exposure but reiterate Public Health advice that diseases caused by asbestos occur in people who are exposed to large amounts of asbestos over a long period of time. Short-term exposure to asbestos is not known to pose any risk to human health. However, we continue to follow industry best practice to minimise any potential hazard from asbestos removal in schools.

Please note, the Ministry now proactively publishes responses under the Act on our website. As such, we may publish this response on our website after five working days. Your name and contact details will be removed.

Thank you again for your email. You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. You can do this by writing to [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Nāku noa, nā



Kim Shannon  
**Head of Education Infrastructure Service**  
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