

**Question on Notice**  
**No. 521**  
**Asked on 20 April 2005**

DR FLEGG ASKED THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND THE ARTS (MS BLIGH)—

QUESTION:

With reference to her comments in the House on 19 April 2005 about air monitoring being not enough to ensure safety of children in schools and that her department undertakes dust monitoring—

Will she detail all schools that have had air or dust monitoring and release the results of the tests for each such school across the State?

ANSWER:

The Honourable member is determined to misquote me on this issue, and I refer him to the Hansard transcript of my comments in the House on 19 April 2005, in which I referred to research prepared by the CSIRO. I said that:

*“The CSIRO research made it clear that air monitoring on its own is not enough. That is precisely why the government does not rely on air monitoring alone. We also test dust samples and monitor the conditions of the roof on a regular basis.”*

Air monitoring is undertaken both as a safety process where suspected disturbance or concern exists regarding asbestos issues, and also as a standard process where asbestos removal work is being conducted in schools.

Testing dust samples for asbestos fibres is similarly standard practice. In state schools, dust sampling is used to confirm information contained in a school's Building Maintenance Plan and to determine the appropriate handling of material if disturbance of asbestos is suspected.

Dust sampling or air monitoring has been undertaken at 26 schools over the past two months (March - April 2005) across the State.

Air monitoring conducted in classrooms at these state schools has consistently indicated results below the limit of detection for the analytical method (i.e. less than 0.01 fibres per millilitre of air sampled) and are consistent with normal background levels.