

Submission  
No 137

**INQUIRY INTO PLANNING AND DELIVERY OF SCHOOL  
INFRASTRUCTURE IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 6 September 2022

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Partially  
Confidential

## **Re: Asbestos at Castle Hill High School**

**To Whom it May Concern,**

**I have worked at Castle Hill High School for around ten years.**

**1. During this time, and before any talk of asbestos issues, I witnessed:**

- Debris, dust and small insects/ants, falling from the ceiling in my staffroom that was reported by a colleague.
- These reports being dealt with in a not very timely manner/brushed off as “not that important.”
- This falling debris, dust and small insects/ants finally being dealt with in a very rudimentary way, that is, with the General Assistant attaching a piece of plywood attached to the ceiling above the colleague’s desk.
- Debris, dust and small insects/ants falling from the ceiling in other areas of my staffroom.
- The suggestion that this debris fell through the ceiling due to the presence of animals living in the roof cavity.

**2. During this time, and after discussion of the presence of asbestos, I witnessed:**

- Staff being told that the debris, dust and small insects/ants that fell from the ceiling in my staffroom was caused by small insect/ants who had eaten through lining between the ceiling and the roof cavity, where asbestos lies.
- The school dealing with reports of falling debris, dust and insects/ants in a begrudging way, that is, once again, brushing off suggestions that the falling debris might be asbestos and be of potential harm.
- Reports of a lost sample of some of this debris that was sent for testing.
- Reports that a sample of some of this debris that was never lodged.
- Reports that the lost, or never lodged, sample of this debris had been found years later and suggested higher than normal levels of asbestos.
- Members of the school executive organising meetings so that staff could meet with DET experts to allay fears of higher than normal levels of asbestos in the school’s ceilings.
- Many concerned staff attending these meetings, myself included, to be reassured that there was no problem with asbestos levels, then the whole of the upper floors’ ceilings being encapsulated in 2020 .
- Many concerned staff attending meetings, myself included, to be reassured that there was no problem with asbestos levels, then the carpets being replaced on upper floors in 2021 and 2022.
- Lots of dust and debris loosened due to the recent recarpeting work with little evidence of covering up of equipment and furniture during this time (see attached photos).
- Staff not being given much prior warning or information about these rectification works.
- Many staff now on extended leave after reporting their concerns during the past few years.

**There are two main problems I have with all of the above:**

1. That teachers reported falling debris, dust and insects/ants for years and this problem was not dealt with as a potential asbestos problem. Makeshift repairs occurred instead of the repairs being dealt with by asbestos experts until the major ceiling encapsulation of 2020.
2. That the school's management covered up their failure to deal with the reports of falling debris, dust and insects/ants as potential asbestos. They did not want staff to know of their failures in dealing with potential asbestos in the correct manner.

Thank you for your time.