



TRUST MESSAGE TO PARENTS
RE: SOME CERAMIC WIRE GAUZES USED IN SCIENCE

You may have heard on the news about an issue with some ceramic wire gauzes in school science departments, typically used with Bunsen Burners. They have been found to contain Temolite, a form of asbestos.



We have been informed by one of our Trust's providers that the Health & Safety Executive have assessed the situation and advised *"The risk from asbestos in the gauze material from normal tripod use will generally be extremely low for several reasons. The material is predominantly non-asbestos. There is very limited contact with the material during use (e.g. essentially placing items on top) and any contact is light and momentary. Consequently any free fibre release into the air will be minimal for normal use. However, the material is soft and crumbly and some small particles or fragments may detach on occasions including during use. Particles and debris may also break off over time through abrasion or impact in storage. These particles and fragments do not represent an airborne risk"*

We should like to reassure you that our science departments at Maiden Erlegh School, Maiden Erlegh School in Reading and Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge, took immediate action. Any gauzes which we could not confirm complied with the UKAS regulations, have been removed from use and new compliant gauzes have been ordered.

As you can imagine all UK schools are in the same position, as a consequence the suppliers have not been able to confirm a delivery date at present. This means that there will be an impact on the teaching of practical work until the new gauzes have been delivered. We will not allow this to have a detrimental effect on the learning of your child by teaching material that does not require the use of gauzes until the new ones have been delivered, we will then return to the lessons requiring gauzes in an appropriate fashion that aids learning.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr R Austin, Maiden Erlegh Trust Estates Manager and Compliance Office or your school's Head of Science (using the school's main email address):

- Maiden Erlegh School : Mr J D'Cruz
- Maiden Erlegh School in Reading: Mr R Wallis
- Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge: Miss K Hardman