Dear <INSERT NAME> MP,

I am a member of Townswomen’s Guilds (TG), one of the UK’s largest women’s organisations whose members campaign on a wide range of topics. I am writing to you as my constituency MP to find out what you are doing about asbestos in schools in <INSERT CONSTITUENCY>. I am also interested in what your party is doing to address the amount of asbestos in schools across England.

You may be shocked to learn that

* 86% of UK schools still contain asbestos
* only 46% of teachers who responded to a National Education Union poll knew if there was asbestos in their school. This lack of awareness puts them and their pupils at risk of exposure.
* More than 363 teaching professionals in England have died of mesothelioma since 1980. In 2016 alone 32 people died. Mesothelioma is the incurable cancer caused by exposure to asbestos.
* Children are particularly vulnerable to developing mesothelioma. A five year old child that is exposed to asbestos is five times more likely to contract mesothelioma than someone exposed at age 30. It is hard to know exactly how many pupils are affected but it is reported that between 200 and 300 people die each year as a result of exposure to asbestos when they were at school.
* The HSE reports that in the last 5 years there have been almost 200 reported instances of asbestos disturbed in schools.
* Over the last 10 years councils in England have paid out at least £10m in compensation to people who developed illnesses because of asbestos in school buildings.

Parents in the UK are still being kept in the dark about the dangers that our children face from exposure to asbestos. If 300 pupils died in 2015 from a quick acting airborne killer in their schools there would be widespread concern and calls for immediate action to prevent further deaths. The fact that the asbestos takes 15-60 years to kill pupils still does not make this death toll acceptable in any way.

At our 2018 AGM, TG members voted to support the motion that, ‘*every establishment that contains asbestos must produce an annual report for staff, pupils and their families. This report must explain how asbestos can affect health, where asbestos is present and how it is being monitored and maintained’*. We believe it is critical that there is transparency about asbestos in schools, so that teaching professionals and school staff are able to protect themselves and the children that they care for, and I would welcome your support. I look forward to hearing from you on this issue.

Best wishes,

<INSERT NAME AND ADDRESS. NOTE MP’s WILL ONLY RESPOND TO PEOPLE IN THEIR CONSTITUENCIES SO MAKE SURE YOU INCLUDE YOUR ADDRESS DETAILS EVEN IF YOU ARE SENDING AN EMAIL>