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- School defect revelations 'deeply worrying'

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A BBC investigation that has found that at least 71 schools in Scotland were found to have defects similar to those found in Edinburgh has been described as 'deeply worrying' by the Scottish Conservatives.

17 schools in Edinburgh were shut after a wall collapsed at Oxbgangs Primary School last year, and since then 15 local authorities have carried out work to deal with similar defects.

However, eleven local authority areas admitted that they had not done intrusive surveys that the report into the Edinburgh schools said was necessary to uncover problems. Shadow education secretary Liz Smith described this as 'totally unacceptable' and called on the Scottish Government to do more to ensure that councils carry out their statutory obligations to check school buildings.

## **Scottish Conservative shadow education secretary Liz Smith MSP said:**

"These revelations are deeply worrying for all parents who are about to send their children back to school after the Easter break and for all pupils and staff who work in our schools.

"The fact that 11 local authorities have not undertaken the detailed building surveys which were recommended in the Edinburgh schools report is totally unacceptable.

"It lays bare the fact that the Scottish Government has not done nearly enough to check that all local authorities are carrying out their statutory obligations to check school buildings.

"Nothing is more important than public safety so it is now imperative that all local authorities carry out these checks immediately.

"The Scottish Conservatives have long argued that there should be no scope to make short cuts on these statutory checks undertaken by local authorities and contractors, and that confirmation of the checks should be made available at the same time as a school is inspected by HMIe so that parents, staff and pupils can be confident that their school is wholly fit for purpose."

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**For more information:**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-39580308>