



1st September 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

We are sure that many of you would have seen the news reports that appeared in the press on Thursday afternoon regarding school buildings made with reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC). Following a survey undertaken by the Department for Education (DfE) and after direction and communication from them late yesterday afternoon, we are writing to inform you that one of the buildings at Roding Valley contains this material. Fortunately, the rest of our school site does not contain RAAC and this means we are not in a position where full closure is required.

The DfE-commissioned survey identified that RAAC panels were used in the construction of the roof of one building in the school consisting of 18 classrooms (Maths, Art, IT), the canteen/kitchen and some staff workspaces. After careful analysis, the DfE has recently changed its guidance to education settings on the management of RAAC to take a more precautionary approach. It is therefore directing bodies responsible for the management of education premises to ensure appropriate mitigations are in place, and we have been instructed to close this building with immediate effect.

The affected building will be out of use while we put safety measures and the appropriate mitigations in place. You will appreciate, of course, that the safety of our students and staff is of paramount importance to all concerned.

This remedial work will cause some unavoidable disruption to students' education. A number of classrooms will be unavailable for a period and this inevitably means that our capacity to provide onsite education for all students all of the time will be reduced whilst we put these measures in place. We are working to ensure that the impact on students is kept to an absolute minimum. The DfE will be supporting us throughout and will also be assisting with longer-term remediation measures so that the affected areas can be returned to use as quickly as possible once we are fully confident it is safe to do so.

Arrangements for the Week of Monday 4 September - Friday 8 September 2023:

Monday 4th September - Site management preparation (no students on-site)

Tuesday 5th September - INSET (no students on-site)

Wednesday 6th September - Year 7 and 12 on-site only (Induction Day)

Thursday 7th September - Year 7, 11, 12, 13 students on-site only. (Year 8, 9, 10 home learning)

Friday 8th September - Year 7, 8, 9, 10 students on-site only. (Year 11, 12, 13 home learning)

**Please note that the timings of the school day remain the same*

As the affected building contains our catering facilities and canteen we will only be able to cater for students in receipt of free school meals. A very limited range of snacks will be available at break time for students but we advise all students to bring a packed lunch with them each day. Students will have access to water refill stations as usual.





Arrangements for Home Learning:

As you can see above, next week will involve one day of home learning for all year groups, apart from Year 7 who are on site for all three days. To ensure that students are readily equipped for home learning, we will be delivering assemblies to provide information on how the live lessons can be accessed. So that you can see some guidance in advance on how we use Google Meet to deliver live lessons, [please click on our home learning page](#). This page will also be updated as the week progresses. Your child will be receiving clear instructions via email regarding how they access their live lessons. We will be following a normal timetable to deliver these live lessons. Please contact the school via your child's YPL if your child has any issues accessing home learning.

We appreciate that the timing of this decision, shortly before the start of the autumn term, is far from ideal. This decision has been taken due to the late notice given to us by the DfE yesterday and we must place student safety first and foremost. We will be doing all we can to ensure that the impact on students is kept to a minimum.

Thank you for your patience and understanding in this matter. We will write to you again next week to set out further adjustments and share with you any further guidance from the DfE regarding the timeline of remedial work.

Yours sincerely

Dan Charlton
Headteacher

Paul Wershof
Chair of Governors

