



Friday 1 September 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

You may have seen recent media coverage regarding Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) and its use in educational settings. RAAC is a lightweight form of concrete; because it is weaker than regular concrete, concerns have been raised about its long-term durability. Department for Education (DfE) has recently changed its guidance to education settings on the management of RAAC to take a more precautionary approach and as a result areas in areas with RAAC will be vacated until safety mitigations are put in place. I have this morning, had a phone call from the DfE to discuss the matter.

Firstly, I would like to inform you that there are no RAAC panels at Reddish Vale High School.

A DfE-commissioned survey last academic year confirmed that RAAC panels were used in the construction of some of the **Altrincham College** buildings, however the school was aware of this and had already put safety measures in place. At Altrincham College all RAAC had been removed at the time of survey aside from the Drama Studio area which is currently being rectified. Work started on this area over the summer however the area was immediately closed and was not in use for almost all of last academic year. This work will continue until approximately October half term.

Safety measures remain in place at Altrincham College and the area where work is being completed is fenced off ready for the start of term. Timetabling has allowed for the use of other rooms and site staff have ensured safe access to the History/Textiles block is in place. The Trust appreciates this may cause some concern but we will continue to prioritise the safety of our students and our staff.

We are working to ensure that the impact on students is kept to an absolute minimum. All mitigation measures are in place and the DfE are happy with all the school has done. The DfE will be supporting us throughout so that we can bring all students back into these areas once we are fully confident it is safe to do so.

I appreciate that the timing of this communication, shortly before the start of the autumn term, is far from ideal however I felt it was necessary following reports in the Press yesterday and also to reassure you following my call with the DfE.

Both schools will be fully open as planned from next week; Monday is an INSET Day in both schools with students returning on Tuesday.

Thank you for your patience and understanding in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

K Earle
CEO of the South Manchester Learning Trust

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