

Frequently asked questions

Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC)

What is RAAC?

Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) is a lightweight, 'bubbly' form of concrete commonly used in construction between the 1950s and mid-1990s. It's usually found in precast roof panels, and occasionally in floors and walls.

Where is RAAC in the school?

RAAC has been used as a roofing material on the top floor of the building that was constructed in the 1960s. Not all of the top floor was constructed at the same time and therefore there are a few top floor classrooms on an extended limb of the building that are not affected by RAAC. Classrooms on the lower floors are not affected by RAAC. At this stage there are 6 science labs affected by RAAC, the Geography classrooms and a Religious Education classroom. The school hall and dining area have also been made out of bounds.

Why have these areas of the school been closed off?

Due to the way it is made, RAAC is much weaker than ordinary concrete. On 6th September 2023, the Department for Education (DfE) announced a change in its approach to managing RAAC in schools and advised educational settings to vacate areas that are known to contain RAAC, unless or until suitable mitigations are in place.

What is happening in the short term - the next two to three weeks?

The school is putting in place mitigation measures to enable students to be back in school. A very short period of remote learning has helped school leaders and teachers to prepare for students to return to school safely. In the short term classes affected have been re-roomed into other classrooms and a plan has been put in place to facilitate hot 'grab and go' food as well as a cold offer from the canteen. A seating area will be made available in the school gym for students to eat food.

What are longer term plans?

Within the coming weeks the school will be allocated a DfE caseworker who will work alongside school and Trust leaders to ensure that mitigations are made to enable the school to function both temporarily and in the longer term.

Should I be worried about my child attending school?

The areas of school affected by RAAC have been closed off to staff and students. Students will be informed of new routes to move around to their re-roomed classes. Students and staff will not be accessing areas where there is RAAC.

Will my child miss learning?

It is hoped that all children will be back in school as soon as possible. Once they are back in school they will continue to attend lessons as normal. The loss of some science labs will impact on the range and frequency of practical work for some year groups but the science department will work to ensure the best offer for students.

What is remote learning?

The DfE is clear that remote learning should be a last resort in mitigating the risk of RAAC in schools. While it has been necessary to revert to remote learning for Tuesday 19th September 2023, and may be necessary in the future, the school can use remote learning to keep teachers and students connected while they cannot share the same space in school. This [link](#) on the school's website is for the remote learning page which has useful information and videos for parents and carers to support their child's learning from home.