



Mr M McCarthy
Director of Operations
Email: mike.mccarthy@ellesmere.com

20th September 2023

Dear Parent,

As the pupils are now settling into their new academic routines, I just wanted to update you on some information you may have seen in the newspapers over recent weeks.

There has been much media coverage about schools and the recent issues of Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) materials and the implications of its stability, after a set period of use.

A reporter contacted the school towards the end of the week to say they had been informed that Ellesmere had such issues and that there had been a ceiling collapse. We duly responded and clarified the position to the newspaper and that response appeared on Friday across most online regional papers.

As a College, we have regular structural surveys carried out as part of our own Quinquennial review and during last week we have had surveyors in to assess and confirm we have no RAAC materials in the construction of any of the school buildings, this has been confirmed to us today, hence my decision to await the outcome of this survey before writing to you about this issue.

We did have a small issue with a ceiling in a classroom last week, but this part of our main building (which was constructed in the late 19th century, well before any dubious concrete materials were used) was relatively recently entirely re-roofed as part of our ongoing maintenance programme. The re-roofing was so effective that it made the void between the ceiling and the roof not only watertight but also airtight. As a result, some of the wooden struts have dried out and shrunk and have fallen on to the ceiling and damaged it.

It is certainly not the case that a whole classroom ceiling came down: a relatively small area in the corner of one room was affected. That classroom and the adjacent classrooms have been temporarily taken out of use, pending the surveyor report as they all share the same roof void.

There has been no disruption to any lessons, as classes that have been impacted by the classroom closure have just been timetabled in other classrooms, so lessons carried on for those pupils as per normal.

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Ellesmere

A 7-18 Coeducational School

We are currently awaiting the surveyors' findings and recommendations for the current classroom roof issue and will endeavour to get the work completed and the classrooms reinstated at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

Mike McCarthy

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