



4th September 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome to the new school year. This is my first letter to you in my capacity as Acting CEO of the Skills for Life Trust. I have been working in the background since March 2023 following the two Ofsted inspections at Walderslade Girls' School and Greenacre Academy. My main responsibility is to lead the Headteachers and the Head Office team to drive improvements for the benefit of your children. I am also the CEO of the Beyond Schools Trust. We have been providing support to some of the Skills for Life schools and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Over the next few months, I will keep you updated on how this close relationship develops.

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

As many of you will be aware from the press and media coverage over the last few days, there has been a lot of concern regarding the use of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) within educational establishment buildings. The Government has asked some schools to close or partially close due to the presence of (RAAC) in their school buildings.

RAAC is a lightweight form of concrete; because it is weaker than regular concrete, concerns have been made as to its long-term durability. More information can be found here.

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/08/31/new-guidance-on-raac-in-education-settings/>

I wish to inform you that the Skills for Life Academies are not affected by this decision, as the DfE guided inspection performed in 2022 found no evidence of RAAC in any of the Trust's buildings, therefore, they will continue to function as normal.

As part of our duty of care to all those in our community, our site teams and Trust Estates Manager carry out both statutory and regular checks on the buildings as part of health & safety requirements. We will continue to undertake monitoring and follow any further DfE guidance and advice regarding RAAC.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for your on-going support for the Academies within the Trust and to welcome all the new starters who are joining our Academies, whether that be in our Reception classes, Year 7, or the Sixth Form.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'A Minchin'.

Andrew Minchin
Acting CEO