



## Reinforced Autoclaves Aerated Concrete (RAAC) St Leonard's Catholic School, Durham Update from the Meeting with the Minister for the Schools System, Baroness Barran

6 October 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust and St Leonard's Catholic School continue to work closely with the Department for Education. We remain committed to finding a sustainable solution to the current RAAC situation. Our students remain our absolute priority.

We would like to thank the parents who met with Baroness Barran and her team yesterday evening. We appreciate that not all parents were able to attend due to the limited space. The parents in attendance were able to have sight of 'St Leonard's Road Map'. Numerous questions were asked in relation to the plan, future funding and the school rebuilding project.

The meeting was chaired by John Edwards, Director General Regions Group at the Department for Education. The Minister was also joined by Sally Smith, Director of Capital at the Department for Education, Mr Nick Hurn OBE, Trust Chief Executive Officer and Mr Chris Hammill, St Leonard's Headteacher. The meeting was recorded in order to enable all parents to hear the discussion. The recording can be viewed via the link below:

[St Leonard's Catholic School Meeting with the Minister for the School System, Baroness Barran MBE - YouTube](#)

There was considerable discussion around the official level of support for students in examination year groups, especially Year 13 and Year 11 from the Government, Ofqual and individual examination boards.

The following commitments were made by the Minister and other representatives:

- Minister Barran agreed to write to her fellow minister Nick Gibb for clarity regarding examinations, expressing the level of concern from parents and students.
- John Edwards, Director General Regions Group, DfE, agreed to answer further questions during the Trust / School online meeting with parents on Wednesday 11 October at 6pm.
- Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust and St Leonard's will continue to work with the DfE, Ofqual and individual examination boards to follow the current systems in place.
- The School will provide a 'catch up' programme, especially for examination year groups, which will involve access to specialist facilities and will provide an

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- update on Wednesday 11th October.
- The DfE will work with the school to confirm the need for temporary specialist facilities and provide an update on Wednesday 11 October.

The Minister for the School System, Baroness Barran, will also attend the online meeting which will take place on Wednesday 11 October at 6pm via Microsoft Teams. The link for the meeting will be shared with parents / carers on Monday 9 October 2023.

### **St Leonard's Road Map**

Accommodation for two year groups is being leased from Ushaw College and Durham University. We envisage using this arrangement just for next half-term, when our semi-permanent accommodation will be ready on our playing field opposite the school.

### **Face-to-face Teaching**

All pupils will be housed at either St Leonard's and/or Ushaw College week beginning 30th October with an increase of pupils returning to face-to-face education starting next week, week beginning 9th October: The full St Leonard's Road Map is attached.

### **Teaching and Learning**

To enable the teaching timetable to work effectively for all students: pupils in Year 9 to Year 13 will be taught at the St Leonard's site and Year 7 and Year 8 will be taught at Ushaw. Transport will be provided.

### **SEND**

SEND provision will continue as normal across both sites with the normal balance of in-class support and intervention work.

### **Overall Provision**

Both sites will have the full range of support services in place, this includes safeguarding measures, medical, first aid, mental health support and administrative personnel.

**The full St Leonard's Road Map is attached and we will ensure this is updated as progress continues.**

We know this has been an extremely difficult time for you and your child/children. We thank you for your continued support to school staff and remain firm in our commitment to you and all our students.

Very best wishes,

Mr Chris Hammill  
St Leonard's Catholic School

Mr Nick Hurn OBE  
Chief Executive Officer

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