

## education

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**From:** Rebekah Hayward <rhayward@catholiceducation.org.uk>  
**Sent:** 12 January 2023 16:15  
**To:** education  
**Subject:** 03.23 DSC/DRE Letter Freedom of Information Requests - Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (ITN)

**Commissioners' Letter 03.23**  
**12 January 2023**

**Diocesan Schools Commissioners**  
**Directors of Religious Education**

*DSC and DRE Letters are issued solely to enable you to carry out your education functions on behalf of your diocesan bishop. They often contain information of a sensitive nature and must be respected as private communications and not be shared with any third parties external to the diocese without CES consent.*

### **Freedom of Information Requests - Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (ITN)**

We understand from various dioceses that schools have been receiving freedom of information requests from ITN asking questions about the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in school buildings and plans to replace or remove it. We believe that this request is being made following this article in Schools Week, [Councils dawdle on surveying collapse risk building material \(schoolsweek.co.uk\)](https://schoolsweek.co.uk) which refers to FOI requests having been made to Local Authorities. When responding to an FOI request organisations are only obliged to provide any recorded information that they hold in relation to the questions asked, they are not obliged to create new recorded information. Dioceses, as responsible bodies, were contacted by the DfE in July 2021 and March 2022 as part of an information gathering exercise relating to the prevalence of RAAC in school buildings, but dioceses are not required to respond to FOI requests as they are not public bodies. There is also no obligation for dioceses to provide information to schools to enable them to respond to these requests.

It is our understanding that it is unlikely that schools hold any information relating to RAAC in their school buildings and this is likely to be why they have referred the questions to diocesan buildings officers. If schools do not hold any information that would enable them to answer the questions asked, they would be best advised to respond by saying that they do not hold any information that will enable them to answer the questions asked. If schools do have recorded information please let me know and I will be able to provide further advice.

If you have any questions please let me know. I have sent a copy of this communication to Diocesan Buildings Officers.

**Keri Goddard**  
**Senior Solicitor**

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