

International Academy of Greenwich to Close

The International Academy of Greenwich (IAG) today announced the decision of the Department for Education (DfE) to close the school.

The academy, which is currently on a temporary site on Meadowcourt Road, opened in September 2016 and currently educates around 270 students between the ages of 11-15.

In late July, plans for the school's new build were rejected by the Royal Borough of Greenwich's Planning Committee, who raised concerns with the DfE plans for the building and reviewed new data that questioned the need for additional secondary school places in Greenwich.

Under the closure plans revealed today, the school will now close for all students currently in Years 7, 8 and 9 at the end of this academic year, with the students in Year 10 being offered the opportunity to continue at the school for a further year so that they can complete their GCSEs.

Liz Robinson, Co-Director of the Big Education Trust, of which IAG is part, said: "We are absolutely devastated by the outcome of this prolonged process. Having invested hugely in developing this school, this closure decision is incredibly sad."

Ms Robinson said that she was confident that no stone had been left unturned in looking at all options for keeping the school open. The DfE had, however, confirmed that closure had become the only viable option.

Ms Robinson said: "This has been an incredibly tough few months for our community. We have been working tirelessly behind the scenes to push the DfE to look at options for appealing the Council's Planning Committee's decision or find us another site - both of which have been ultimately unsuccessful.

"The reality is that we cannot offer our students the education that they deserve over the longer-term unless we are in a new school building. Our existing site simply does not give us the capacity to offer a broad and engaging curriculum to a full cohort of students.

"If we can't offer the highest of standards of facilities to meet the needs of our students, and deliver on our educational philosophy and promises, then it was right that we accepted the DfE's decision to close IAG."

Parents and staff have been notified, and support is being made available to them over the coming weeks and months. A listening period will also be launched to help support the school's community through the closure decision.

Ms Robinson added: "Our priority is to now support staff and students to find new places to learn and work, and provide the best possible education standards until our doors close to students for the last time. The DfE has confirmed it will do everything within its power to support the school and trust until closure, and the department has signalled it has strong faith in the leadership of the Trust. We will hold them to their commitments."

"I would also like to thank our community for their incredible support and understanding over recent months. The uncertainty that we have been working under has been difficult and testing for us all; particularly our students, parents and staff. "The fact that our students have continued to thrive is testament to the incredible ethos that has developed across the school over the last three years. In fact, it is this ethos that I hope will support our community as they progress into the next phases of their education and careers."

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For more information, contact **Ben Peck** on **07713 517 393**.