

## ***ST FRANCIS' PRIMARY SCHOOL***

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Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to you about the forthcoming strike action by the teaching unions in Northern Ireland. You may have seen coverage of this in the news, and I wanted to inform you about the impact this is likely to have at our school.

### **How the strike action will affect St. Francis' PS Aghaderg:**

When a strike takes place, those taking strike action stop work and withdraw their labour. Teachers involved in the action will, therefore, not teach their class or undertake any other duties before 12.00 noon on the strike day.

A detailed risk assessment has been conducted which considers the impact that the action will have on the health and safety of pupils, staff and visitors, and whether the school can run a full or amended curriculum, to determine whether it is possible to operate the school safely during the strike.

As the Principal, I, and the Board of Governors, have determined the school will be closed to pupils on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February until 11.45 am when pupils will be able to come to school. Dinner/ lunch will take place at the normal scheduled times between 12 and 1 and the remainder of the school day will run as normal with the usual bus services available at home-time. Bus club and afterschool Soccer will all run as normal. Children's attendance record will not be adversely affected as DE have issued guidance on recording these days appropriately on SIMS.

Clearly this is a difficult situation which will cause some disruption. However, a strike by teachers is very unusual. Taking strike action is not something that any teacher would undertake lightly. Those on strike will have thought long and hard about their decision and will also lose pay for the period that they are on strike.

The education of our children is of paramount importance, they deserve the very best and provision for this should be adequately funded. Instead, we are seeing unprecedented cuts to our funding; we

are having to ask our families to support us more and more and to ask for our staff to deliver more, with less.

It is my sincere hope that a solution is found; that the education sector is more adequately funded, and that our pupils can access the resources and support they need and deserve. In the meantime, I would like to thank our families and our staff for your continued support in helping us achieve the impossible: you have helped provide our children with access to the best resources and we are using these to spark genuine enthusiasm for learning and provide access to a broad and rich education that prepares them for their next big steps.

Sincerely,

S. McKeown