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Dear Parents/Carers,

21 November 2023

Following the strike action last week involving our hardworking non-teaching staff, I am now writing to you again about the forthcoming strike action announced yesterday by the **teaching unions** here in the North. You may have seen coverage of this in the news, so I wanted to inform you about the impact this is likely to have at St Oliver's Primary School.

When a strike takes place, those taking part in the strike action stop work and withdraw their labour. Teachers involved in the action will, therefore, not teach their class(es) or undertake any other duties before 12:00 noon on Wednesday 29th November 2023.

A risk assessment has been carried out, considering the impact that the action will have on the health and safety of pupils, staff, and visitors, and whether the school can run an amended curriculum, to determine whether it is possible to operate the school safely during the strike.

**As the Acting Principal, I have determined there is no alternative but to close the school to pupils until 12.00noon on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023.**

When the gates are opened at 12.00 noon, children should make their way to their classrooms as normal.

**For health and safety, please do not leave children to school before 12:00 noon as there will be no supervision and gates will not open before this time.**

Lunch will be served as normal on this day and your child's attendance will not be affected by this half-day action. There is no after school club on Wednesdays, so children in R/P1/2/3 will be going home at 1:45 as normal.

Clearly this is a difficult situation, which may cause some disruption. I would ask you, however, to be understanding. A strike by education staff is very unusual. Taking strike action is not something that any school staff 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.

All staff and governors want to see an end to this period of dispute, with an award of fair pay, improved working terms and conditions and a return to 'normal school life' as soon as possible. However, 'normal school life' includes a request for the essential need for adequate funding for ALL schools across the North.

To this end, I would ask you to write to our employers to urge them to immediately resolve this dispute.

You can use the following addresses:

Sara Long, CEO: Education Authority, 40 Academy Street, Belfast, BT1 2NQ

Email: [sara.long@eani.org.uk](mailto:sara.long@eani.org.uk)

Eve Bremner, Chief Executive CCMS: CCMS Lisburn, Third Floor, Linen Hill House, 23 Linenhall Street Lisburn, BT28 1FJ.

Email: [alison.russell@ccmsschools.com](mailto:alison.russell@ccmsschools.com)

Mark Browne, Permanent Secretary: DENI, Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Bangor, Co. Down, BT19 7PR.

Email: [mark.browne@education-ni.gov.uk](mailto:mark.browne@education-ni.gov.uk)

I will endeavour to keep you all up to date with any changes.

Yours faithfully,



Caolán Byrne

(Acting Principal)