



13th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I write to you in unprecedented times.

Prior to our world in Lockdown, I reflected on my role as Headteacher of the amazing Abbey Catholic Primary School. I looked at all of the successes of the wonderful pupils who had walked through these gates in the 14 years I have been here (11 of those as Headteacher), looked at the teachers who have moved on to take up leadership positions in schools across the Archdiocese and looked at the wonderful team of staff currently in our school; constantly striving to do their very best to ensure our pupils, your children, can be the person God has called them to be.

I realised I had completed my goal as Headteacher, I had developed a school of leaders at all levels that could carry on without me. As Headteacher, this brings equal measures of pride and sadness. I realised it was time for a new challenge and at the beginning of March 2020, I was appointed Director of the Birmingham Catholic Primary Partnership. I shared this news with my staff team, fully prepared to share it with families a couple of weeks later via our newsletter; not realising that a couple of weeks later school life was going to turn upside down!

Being the Headteacher of a Catholic primary school is so much more than preparing our children for the Sacraments, so much more than ensuring English and Maths are taught correctly, so much more than lost uniform, so much more than supporting families, so much more than reassuring forlorn pupils, so much more than supporting staff through personal and professional worries. It's all of these and much, much more. Primarily it is about being part of a Catholic community that supports each other through the good times, the bad times, the sad times, the funny times.

With that in mind, I felt utterly torn during the Lockdown situation and how school would move forward. In order to provide stability and a smooth transition for all, the Governing Board has arranged that with Mr McTernan as Head of School, I will be Executive Headteacher of school until October half term.

The advertisement for a new Headteacher has been placed nationally. Please hold the applicants and the governors and diocesan staff who support this process in your prayers.

I would like to thank all of the fabulous parents, families, governors and parishioners who have made my 11 years as Headteacher an amazing adventure. It has been a privilege to be part of a community who love and respect each other and who are always there to offer support; whether that's a smile on the playground, kind words after exhausting residentials, or support in raising thousands of pounds for communities nationally and internationally who are not as privileged as ourselves.

I'm looking forward to continuing to support our wonderful school and community as we work in partnership to safely get school back to what will be a 'new normal'. We look forward to the days when our biggest concern is the missing lunchbox that was only purchased at the weekend and the third jumper to go missing this term!

I ask that we all continue to work together with patience and understanding as we try to charter ways forward.

I always have and always will #lovetheabbey

God bless.

Kind regards

Julie-Anne Tallon

Headteacher

Abbey Catholic Primary School