



School Contact Information

www.st-johnscofe.durham.sch.uk

Telephone: 01388 773476

E-mail: shildonstjohns@durhamlearning.net

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Achieving More Together as God's Children

Headteacher's Message:

Teaching Assistants Industrial Action

Since 2008, St. John's has been rated an Outstanding School by Ofsted. This success was the product of many years' hard work from a dedicated and experienced team across all areas of school. As mentioned by Reverend David, the Teaching Assistants are a vital part of that team.

On Tuesday and Wednesday next week there will be many things that do not happen because of their absence. The range of support provided by all Teaching Assistants at St. John's is invaluable to all children and often families too. As a Headteacher I know that this support often goes above and beyond requirements of the role. Their work is highly valued by me and all members of the Teaching staff.

Some of the Teaching Assistants will be present at the school gates highlighting their case. I will be there showing my full support for them.

Your support and understanding at this difficult time will, as ever, be greatly appreciated.

Message from Reverend David:

'The success of our school revolves around having a team of people who really care about our children. Our teaching assistants are a key part of that team, regularly working longer hours, and doing more than they are obliged to do. They are committed, caring professionals who seek to see our children achieve their potential in all ways. Unfortunately, Durham County Council has sought to impose new terms and conditions on these valued team members which in many cases may mean a reduction in pay. After much consultation they feel that they have no option but to strike for two days next week to draw wider attention to the justice of their cause. In line with their commitment to our children, our school will not close during these two days but the additional value they bring to us will not be available. Our Nursery will close however, as the staff-to-child ratio in that part of the school is very different and cannot be sustained with fewer staff. We do wish our colleagues well during this action; please do be supportive if you see them at the school gates.'

Revd David Tomlinson
Chair of Governors

From our Support Staff to our Parents and Carers:

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is with heavy hearts that we find ourselves in this position through no fault of our own.

As a staff, taking industrial action is one of the most difficult decisions we have ever had to make. We are **not** striking for more money or holidays but we are fighting against life-changing pay cuts of between £2000 - £4000. In addition to this, Durham County Council expects us to work 18 hours a month more, for less pay.

As you know, we are loyal and dedicated staff to our school and community. Between us all we have given over 190 years as Support Staff at St. John's.

The children of our school have always been and will always remain our priority.

All we ask is that you support us in our fight for what is right and fair.

With thanks,

St. John's Teaching Support Staff