**St Brigid’s PS**

**Castle Street**

**Ballymoney**

**BT53 6JX**

**Principal: Mr Kieran O’Neill**

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**Tuesday, 14 November 2023**

Dear Parent

**Day of strike action by Non-Teaching staff on 16th November**

The Education Authority (EA) has warned of expected disruption to some school services because of industrial action notified by UNISON, UNITE the UNION, NIPSA and GMB. This strike action will commence with UNITE the UNION from Wednesday 15th November 2023. UNISON, UNITE the UNION, NIPSA and GMB will all take strike action on Thursday 16th November 2023. I am writing to outline the expected impact on our school.

**How will strike action affect St Brigid’s Primary School?**

When a strike takes place, those taking strike action stop work and withdraw their labour. A detailed risk assessment to determine whether it is possible to operate the school safely during the strike has been conducted that 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.

As the Principal, along with my fellow colleagues from a number of other schools, we have determined the following:

* **As we can’t guarantee how much cover we will have to support the children, we have reluctantly made the decision to close the school to all pupils on Thursday 16 November.**
* The Non-Teaching staff who do not wish to strike, will be in school as normal and this time will be used for staff training and preparing for the year ahead.
* If the Unions come to an agreement and cancel the strike action, then the school will be open as normal. Let’s hope this happens!

Clearly, this is a difficult situation, which will cause disruption. I ask you, however, to be understanding. Strike action is very unusual and taking the step of strike action is not something that any member of the school staff undertakes 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 staff in our school are invaluable to the learning, development and safeguarding of your children and I, along with the Board of Governors, feel strongly that they should be paid fairly for the essential and very challenging jobs that they do. I trust a settlement will be found soon and that there will be no more disruption to your child’s education.

Yours sincerely

Mr Kieran O’Neill (Principal)

Mr Gerry Doran (Chair of BoG)