The Painsley Catholic Academy
Better Together

CEO: Mr S G Bell, BA (Hons), PGCE, MA, NPQH
CFO: Mrs J Bradbury DSBM, Pg Cert, FISBL

3rd February, 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

Following Wednesday's industrial action by members of the National Education Union (NEU), I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff for their wonderful vocation as members of the Painsley Catholic Academy.

Education is facing very challenging times. His Majesty's Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman, recognised this in her annual report dated December 2022. She highlighted issues around a lack of social services capacity, insufficient SEND and mental health services, and problems around recruitment:

'Many of the problems highlighted in this report are either created or exacerbated by workforce and resourcing problems. If education and social care are to be resilient in the face of future challenges, these problems must be addressed.' (HMCI Report, 2022, para. 1.5).

In our multi-academy, we are blessed to be staffed with caring and dedicated professionals but we – like all educational institutions - recognise the challenges faced by the education sector in terms of the points raised by Amanda Spielman.

Due to the significant benefit of our size, we enjoy financial economies of scale that result in us (just about) having sufficient budgets to support our schools. This contrasts with many schools in England. One thing I can assure you is that our staff, unlike some colleagues in the sector, would never be expected to pay for resources out of their own pocket. Similarly, we (as a multi-academy) have allocated significant funding to resources and buildings. We are very prudent about every penny we spend in order to maximise the educational outcomes of our children. We commit to reducing teacher workload and wellbeing through the Department for Education's Wellbeing Charter. Teaching is a wonderful profession and the sector needs to recruit and retain more high-quality teachers.

The next day of industrial action is Wednesday 1st March, which means that there is a window of opportunity for the government and unions to agree a resolution to this dispute. We are united in wanting to see education improve for the nation's young people. The leader of the Association of School and College Leaders, Geoff Barton, has described the talks between ministers, officials and union representatives as 'constructive'.

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Registered office address: Station Road, Cheadle, Staffordshire ST10 1LH.

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I ask that you consider writing to your MP in order to highlight your support for alleviating the pressures on the education system. A swift resolution to the dispute would greatly improve the capacity of the nation's schools to deliver good outcomes for children.

Finally, I thank the leaders of our schools who worked so hard to follow the Department for Education's guidance to keep the schools open. Please do thank the leaders for their work as they are very much stuck in the middle of a very challenging situation.

God bless.

Yours sincerely,

Mr S. G. Bell
CEO
The Painsley Catholic Academy

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