



"Building together for a better future"

St. Chad's C.E. (C) Primary School

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Headteacher: Miss S.J. Clarke Bsc (Hons), PGCE, NPQH

19th November 2020

Dear parents,

As you are aware we were due to have a Parent Forum meeting this evening at 4pm by TEAMS. However, we have taken the decision to cancel this meeting.

This has been a very difficult time for all of us since March 2020 when COVID first had its impact on life for everyone. Since then the whole of the country has been in turmoil and this has had a profound effect on everyone. Since the initial lockdown, we at St Chad's have tried everything in our power to ensure that our children continue to be at the heart of everything we do- keeping them safe, healthy, happy, educated and most of all cared for. The staff at our school have shown tremendous resilience, care, compassion and commitment to every child in their care. Over the summer they were in touch on a regular basis with all of our vulnerable pupils, meals were provided daily for some families throughout the term and holiday periods. Our teachers set work on a daily basis for your child, many of them also having young children of their own to care for at home.

Since returning to school in September, we have put comprehensive safety measures in place and worked at an unprecedented level to ensure we are providing the very best possible for your children in these difficult circumstances.

Difficult decisions are made on a daily basis, although never taken without consultation with staff, senior leaders and governors. This has been the most difficult time as leaders in schools, and so many of you have shown respect for our decisions and supported us-even when the impact has been difficult for you. For that, we cannot thank you enough.

However, as always there are a minority of parents who seem to thrive on negativity and an ethos of complaint. We have always been a school who welcomes constructive criticism, fresh ideas and innovation. This is why we originally set up the Parent Forum so that parents could walk alongside us on this exciting journey at St Chad's.

Over the past few weeks we have had a small number of parents complain about school decisions, question the integrity of decisions and even advise on how to run our school. The ultimate negativity came when a parent complained to The Sentinel newspaper about our school closure in KS1. Following that a number of parents made extremely upsetting and personal comments on the Stoke on Trent live site- which has upset everyone in the school community.

We are supposed to be working together for your children's future and I can guarantee that every decision we make is well thought out, based on valid reasons and taken with the utmost integrity.



We have never known such a time where some parents themselves seem to have forgotten that their child is at the heart of our work here and that is why teaching is a vocation and not a job. School staff across the whole of the country are being dragged down by parent complaints; lack of respect and damage caused by social media comments. Schools have reported comparisons being made between provision at different schools. This is extremely unhelpful as each school is so different and has varying needs and environments.

This is not the world we want for our children at St Chad's and therefore ask any parent who is unhappy with our work here to consider alternative provision for their child rather than bringing toxicity into our working environment.

Social media comments of a personal nature against any member of our school community will be dealt with as harassment and may ultimately result in a parent being banned from entering our school.

It is with a heavy heart that this letter has been written. If you are worried about your child and would like to talk to us about your concerns, you are- as always- more than welcome to talk to us here at St Chad's. Our door is always open to parents who want to discuss their child and our provision for them at school.

However, when any staff member replies personally to an email, letter or text, we respectfully ask that the reply is not then distributed to other parents. The reply is written as a response to the individual and not intended for other parents. This is a matter of trust, which once broken is difficult to mend.

Finally, we thank everyone who continues to show support for us here at St Chad's- it does make such a difference to us. We ask any parent who is not happy with the decisions we are making under these difficult times to contain their negativity and avoid spreading a toxic atmosphere amongst other parents. Negativity is a choice and has only one effect and that is to poison everything we are trying to achieve.

Parent Forum will reconvene when the time is appropriate and we feel parents will join us to celebrate, discuss, innovate and partner us in our fantastic life here at St Chad's C.E Primary School.

Your sincerely,

S Clarke

L Hunt

Miss S Clarke
Headteacher

Mrs L Hunt
Chair of Governors

Colossians 3:12-14

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

