



Fleming Field, Shotton Colliery, Durham. DH6 2JQ

Tele/Fax: 0191 5261531 Email: [ourladyoflourdes@durhamlearning.net](mailto:ourladyoflourdes@durhamlearning.net) Website: <http://www.ourladyoflourdes.durham.sch.uk/>

Headteacher: Mrs. L. Ashton

**26<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Heating Update and Arrangements for Returning to School on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

We were delighted to hear the Prime Minister's announcement that all pupils will return to school on the 8<sup>th</sup> March, and we look forward to seeing all of the children back to school. However, unfortunately, as our heating job will not be completed by that time, we will not be able to welcome all of the children back to Our Lady of Lourdes on that day.

While it may seem to be taking time to install the new heating system, I can assure you that it has been actioned as an emergency job by everyone involved. It is difficult to recognise the scale of the work that has, and will continue, to be completed in school. Plans have to be submitted, materials ordered and approval requested from the Diocese to carry out the work. Sadly, it is not just a case of replacing the boilers. The full work will take approximately 6 weeks to complete, so should be finished during the Easter holidays, ready for all the children to return to Our Lady of Lourdes at the start of the Summer term.

This whole situation has been out of our control and has made an already unprecedented time, even more difficult. However, as a school family we have worked together to ensure that learning continues for all children- those working from home and at school.

**By the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, the classrooms located off the veranda will be ready to move into. This will allow Reception Class, Year 1 and Year 2 to return to our school on that day. This part of the building will be safe to use by then and with strict risk assessments in place, the children will be able to enjoy their daily routine back in our school.**

As you are aware, during the past few weeks, the majority of Key Worker and vulnerable pupils have been attending provision at St. Bede's Comprehensive School, in Peterlee. This has been a very successful arrangement and we continue to be grateful to everyone at St. Bede's for their help and support during this time.

**From the 8<sup>th</sup> March, all of our Key Stage 2 children from Year 3-Year 6 will continue to be based at St. Bede's until Easter. I would like to reassure you that much thought, time and consideration has been given to this arrangement, to ensure that our Key Stage 2 children return to school in a safe environment.**

We are very grateful for the work that St. Bede's staff have carried out, relating to their organisation, in order to accommodate our Key stage 2 children and provide classrooms for our pupils to use for the 3 weeks leading up to Easter.

Our Lady of Lourdes will have its own area in the school and our pupils will not be in direct contact with any of the secondary school children throughout the day. We will continue to have our own entrance and exit, play area, eating arrangements and use of toilets.

After much thought, organisation and work around risk assessments, the Local Authority has agreed to provide **free transport for all Key stage 2 pupils who will be attending St. Bede's**. So far we know that the children will be picked up and taken to St. Bede's each day by coach and then returned after school by coach to be collected by parents. To get to this point, it has taken a lot of work and negotiation so we now need to confirm the fine details, such as timings, arrangements for buses etc. These confirmed arrangements will be shared with you all early next week. Please note, due to St Bede's Risk assessment, there will be no option to transport the children by car to St Bede's.

Whilst we appreciate that this situation is not ideal, we have tried to ensure that these arrangements have as little impact, and disruption to parents and their working arrangements, as possible.

We hope that this information has helped to outline our plans moving forward over the next few weeks and has reassured parents and carers that **all children** in our school family will be returning to school on the **8<sup>th</sup> March**, either at Our Lady of Lourdes or St. Bede's Peterlee.

We look forward to sharing further details with you early next week which will give exact information on arrangements from 8<sup>th</sup> March. We ask for your continued cooperation and support, to ensure a smooth transition back to school for all pupils.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Ashton

Headteacher