



4th June 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

We are writing to you again because we know many of you are asking the same, very understandable question: *why can this not simply be stopped so things can return to normal?*

First and foremost, we want to say how deeply sorry we are for the disruption you and your children are facing. We know this is not just inconvenient; it is worrying, frustrating, and, at times, upsetting. Your children's education, routines and wellbeing matter to you, and they matter to us just as much. While we recognise that disputes like this are happening in other schools across the country, we know that doesn't lessen the impact on your child or make this situation any easier for our community.

At St Cuthbert's, the changes we are making are not about short-term decisions, but about addressing longer-term issues within the school. Over time, outcomes for pupils have not been as strong as they should be, and we have a responsibility to put that right. The restructuring forms part of a plan to build a stronger, more sustainable school, ensuring that both current and future pupils have better opportunities and achieve the results they deserve.

We understand why it might feel that stopping these changes would bring an immediate end to the dispute. However, pausing or reversing them would not resolve the underlying issues we are trying to fix, and it would risk delaying the improvements that are so important for your children's future. That said, we are not approaching this rigidly, we are committed to listening, to working with staff and their representatives, and to finding a way forward that brings stability back as quickly as possible.

We are not dealing with this alone. We are keeping the Department for Education and the Diocese closely informed about what is happening and the steps we are taking to get children back into school more regularly. We are also meeting with the Local Authority to ask for their support in helping to move things forward.

We will shortly be working with ACAS to help move discussions on, and we remain hopeful that this will lead to progress. Our focus throughout is to reach a resolution that allows all pupils to return to regular, high-quality education.



MAKE CHRIST *known*;
MAKING LIVES *better*



What matters most is that all adults involved work together in the best interests of the children. That is what we remain focused on. As a Catholic Trust, our purpose is to serve our community and ensure that every child is given the education and opportunities they deserve.

In the meantime, we are doing everything we can to reduce the impact on your children. We are continuing to plan for more pupils to be back in school more frequently, particularly those in examination years, and we are preparing additional support to help pupils catch up on lost learning when full-time education resumes. In light of the ongoing industrial action, we have made the decision to remove the formal Year 10 mock examinations for the current year 10 cohort. We are mindful that this is an important stage in students' preparation; however, we do not feel it is appropriate to place additional pressure on pupils at this time. Please be assured that, at the appropriate point, students will take part in assessments under mock examination conditions to support their preparation for future GCSE examinations. This will form part of our wider recovery planning, and we will share further details with you early next week.

We know this situation is testing the patience and trust of our whole community. Please be assured that we are not ignoring your concerns; we hear them clearly, and we are working every day to bring this period to an end. We have added a dedicated section to the school website where you can find information about the situation, along with a regularly updated list of frequently asked questions. As new concerns are raised, we will continue to add to this, so you have clear and consistent information.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding. Apologies for the delay in this communication, this was due to a technical issue when sending via Arbor.

Yours sincerely

Chris Foley
Trust CEO

John McAuley
Chair of the Trust Board

Peter Riley
Chair Trust Intervention Committee

