



Cathedral House on Washington
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New Zealand

16 December 2014

Catholic Primary Schooling in St Francis of Assisi Parish

Dear Parents

Over the past year my officers have had many discussions with our school communities and the Ministry of Education regarding the proposal for the provision of Catholic primary education within the new St Francis of Assisi Catholic parish, following the red zoning of St Paul's School, Dallington, after the Canterbury earthquakes. I have been fully briefed throughout the process and from time to time have engaged directly with a board of trustees and responded to letters and telephone calls from affected parents.

The Minister of Education, Hon Hekia Parata, has informed me that she supports the proposal to cancel the integration agreements of Our Lady of Fatima School and St Paul's School. As a consequence these schools will close on January 27, 2016.

In the meantime, I am applying to establish and integrate a new school to be located on the current Our Lady of Fatima School site. This would be operational from Term 1, 2016. I wish to achieve this in a collaborative way where both school communities contribute to the new school.

As your Bishop responsible for the Mairehau parish community, I acknowledge and understand that this has been a long and sometimes difficult process. I accept and understand that earthquake enforced change is difficult in terms of the "goodbye" to familiar and much loved cultures. However the earthquakes necessitate change to Catholic primary school provision in the St Francis of Assisi Parish.

This proposal was developed with careful consideration to the needs of our current and future students from our parish families. I am excited about the opportunities for education for our Catholic community in the Parish as we move into the future.

Thank you for your contribution and patience through this process.

Yours sincerely

+ **Barry Jones**
Bishop of Christchurch