



PRESS RELEASE

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Notre Dame School Opening

Notre Dame School will open at its current location next week, with starting days according to school year as previously announced by the Department of Education. This will be 9:00am on Monday 3rd September for Years 1, 2 and 3 and Tuesday 4th September at 9:30am for Reception. The Nursery talk for all parents (no children) will be on Wednesday 5th September at 9:30am. On Thursday 6th September Nursery Classes will start at 9:30am.

It is expected that the new school buildings will be ready around 11th September, but based on educational advice from the professionals in the Department of Education and from the School it has been decided not to delay the start of the school year and open at the current site. This decision will additionally allow more time for 'snagging' and checking of all the facilities and equipment before the move. Government considers that this approach is more responsible and is preferable to a move before it is absolutely certain that all is functioning correctly and safely.

Work at the new Notre Dame has been progressing well, and would have been completed several weeks ago had it not been for the inevitable delays at the start of works due to the importance of relocating the Laguna Youth Club. In addition, there was an unusually high number of severe storms over last winter, which caused considerable disruption throughout Gibraltar and impacted heavily on construction, in itself causing several weeks' delay.

The new School has been designed for purpose, with the full involvement of the school staff and will be an impressive facility.

The site was visited by the Minister for Education, the Director and senior staff from the Department of Education as well as the new Head teacher on Friday, and all were impressed with the layout and design and the standard of work.

Minister for Education John Cortes commented, "This is about education, not politics, despite what my old school friend Edwin Reyes has suggested recently. If it were about politics we would have rushed things and moved into a building without being 100% certain as to its readiness. We have, as is our style, listened to the advice of the professionals. We will start term on time in the current Notre Dame and move in a measured and structured way at a later stage. This is what I have always stated would be the case. The Government cares about what is best for the children and their

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educators, and that is what has been behind taking the right decision. I thank all the teachers for their professionalism in the whole process and can't wait to join them in celebrating the new, and simply amazing Notre Dame School very soon."