

# SS SIMON & JUDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Swift Recovery: Overcoming Challenges After the Fire



### INTRODUCTION

SS Simon & Jude CE Primary School in Great Lever, Bolton faced a significant challenge when a devastating fire in August resulted in the loss of almost all their facilities. The immediate concern was to restore face-to-face teaching and keep the 554 pupils within their local community.



### Immediate Priorities

After the fire, Portable Offices swiftly responded to the urgent need for alternative accommodation. The primary goal was to establish temporary classrooms, including spaces for early years education, toilets, offices, and canteen facilities.

Manager Ian Smith, with Portable Offices' extensive disaster recovery experience, collaborated empathetically with the school. A thorough disaster recovery plan was initiated, involving the identification and preparation of suitable buildings from four depots nationwide. The 73 buildings, including 69 modular sections, were delivered within an impressive five weeks from the time of ordering.

### Logistics and Challenges

Groundworks on the playing field were rapidly prepared, and a dedicated team of around 30 people worked collaboratively to ensure a seamless project execution. A new access road was created, presenting logistical challenges that were promptly addressed in close coordination with ground workers and the end user.

The buildings, showcasing Portable Offices' commitment to disaster recovery, were ready for children to return and handed over to the school only 14 weeks after initial discussions had taken place, a huge testament to everyone involved.

### Positive Outlook

The School Principal expressed satisfaction with the temporary provisions, emphasising their excellence as an alternative to the original building. The school eagerly anticipates welcoming pupils back.

Trust CEO Jill Albertina extended gratitude to the entire team, highlighting their unwavering commitment to supporting the educational journey of the children. The opening of the education village is seen as a remarkable achievement, bringing the community together in a short span after the devastating fire.

### Future Prospects

The playing field, currently hosting the temporary facilities, will be restored to its original use once the school undergoes rebuilding, a process estimated to take approximately three years.

### Ongoing Communication

Portable Offices remains dedicated to providing progress updates and transparent communication throughout the rebuilding phase.

Despite adversity, the commitment of everyone involved at SS Simon & Jude CE Primary School reflects a resilient determination to support the educational journey of the children.