



Dear Parent/Carer,

25th April 2023

Re: Planned strike action on Thursday 27th April and Tuesday 2nd May 2023

Information for pupils in Year 11

As you will have seen in the news, the National Education Union (NEU) has announced that its members will be taking further national strike action within the next fortnight in relation to its dispute with the government around teacher and school staff pay. I am writing to update you on our contingency planning.

What will happen at the school assuming the strike goes ahead as planned?

Thursday 27th April

The school will be **open to ALL Year 11 pupils**. Attendance is compulsory, as on any other normal school day.

- GCSE Drama pupils will be taking their exam.
- Revision sessions will run for pupils who take GCSE Computer Science and/or OCR Cambridge National Creative iMedia courses.
- All other Year 11 pupils will take part in revision sessions for English Language and Literature in the Sports Hall, led by members of the English Department.

Tuesday 2nd May

- The school will be **open** for pupils who take GCSE PE. The PE department will be running revision sessions throughout the day.
- The school will also be open for a small number of pupils who are deemed to be in vulnerable groups. These pupils have received a separate letter.
- Regretfully, school will be **closed** to all other Year 11 pupils on 2nd May.
- Revision activities will be set by your child's class teacher for each subject on their timetable that day. These may include revision worksheets, recall tests, signposting to online revision websites, live video lessons, etc.
- **All work will be posted on your child's class page on Microsoft Teams.**
- In the unlikely event that they have difficulty accessing this, pupils should complete independent revision using their exercise books, revision guides and online learning platforms such as Oak National Academy, Seneca, Quizlet and BBC Bitesize.

Where necessary, we *may* also be able to offer a place in school to children of Critical Workers (e.g. emergency services workers). **Please note:** this is not an automatic entitlement and alternative childcare arrangements should still be put in place wherever possible. **To apply for a Critical Worker place for your child, you must complete this online form no later than 10am on Wednesday 26th April:**

<https://forms.office.com/e/hXNKEYUs8k>

What if my child qualifies for Free School Meals?

For pupils who qualify for Free School Meals but who are not going to be in school on Tuesday 2nd May, we will supply a supermarket voucher.

A reminder about picket lines

Some staff might form a picket line outside the school. If that is the case, I would like to take this opportunity to remind all students and parents that as a Trust we acknowledge staff's legal right to strike. Please ensure that any interactions you have with staff are courteous and respectful as they would be on any other day.

Why is the school not open for more pupils on Tuesday 2nd May?

The school's leadership (headteacher, governors and trustees) adopt a strictly neutral approach to this matter. Members of the NEU have met legal thresholds to take strike action and are entitled to do so by national employment law.

Under the law, union members are not required to inform the school until the strike day whether it is their intention to take industrial action or not. Members of non-striking unions are also permitted by law to refuse to undertake the duties of those members of staff who are on strike. This makes it very challenging to plan ahead with any certainty.

Based on the information available, our risk assessment shows that we will regrettably have insufficient staffing in place to open to the whole year group on Tuesday 2nd May.

Summary

We appreciate that any partial closure may be disruptive to you, for which we apologise. We hope that you understand we have not taken these decisions lightly. Your child's education is important to *all* staff at Dereham Neatherd High School. We regret that we are having to close the school to so many pupils and all hope that this national dispute can be resolved as soon as possible. By putting in place remote learning, we can limit the impact the strike could have on your child's education.

If our plans change significantly, or if the strike action is cancelled or postponed by the NEU, I will write to you again with an update.

Yours sincerely,



Mr J. Mallett
Headteacher