

TLA / GPA

26<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

### **Strike action by members of the National Education Union**

Further to my previous communication regarding planned strike action by members of the National Education Union (NEU) tomorrow and our arrangements for the day, I am writing to explain our plans for the further day of strike action planned for Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May and the provision we will be able to offer. The NEU has posted a document for parents, carers and grandparents that explains their reasons for taking strike action. It can be found at <https://neu.org.uk/media/24511/view> if you wish to read it. Please also refer to the opening paragraphs of my earlier letter for general information relating to the rules around industrial action and the considerations for schools in determining capacity on such days.

Please keep in mind that union members are not obliged to declare their intentions in advance and so we may only find out the exact numbers of teachers taking action on the day itself. We therefore have to work on the basis of the worst-case scenario to determine whether Alec Hunter can remain fully or partially open, and to this end, a detailed risk assessment has been conducted. This considers the impact that the action will have on the health and safety of pupils, staff and visitors, and whether the school can safely deliver a full or amended curriculum during the strike. **On this occasion, it has also been necessary for me to consider the current high levels of staff absence and regrettably I have concluded that we will be unable to open the school to KS3 students due to uncertainty about staffing levels on that day.**

As Headteacher, and with the approval of the Saffron Academy Trust, I have determined the following arrangements for Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May:

1. **Year 11 will attend lessons as normal.** If the teacher is present, a standard lesson will be delivered as usual; if the teacher is absent, they will be supervised by a member of Leadership Group either in their normal classroom, a computer room or in the Main Hall if we need to amalgamate classes. **It is therefore essential that they have revision materials and private study resources with them for the day**, since we are not obliged to provide cover work at these times. Due to the proximity of exams, the NEU has permitted Headteachers to discuss, with union representatives, ways in which colleagues can support the strike action whilst also minimising the impact on Year 11 students preparing for exams. I am in regular contact with our NEU reps with a view using this dispensation to maintain as normal a service as possible to Year 11 in the circumstances.
2. **Year 10 students who are sitting their Art or Textiles practical exam should attend school at the normal time** as they will be undertaking formal exams throughout the full day of industrial action. This group of Year 10 students will be supervised by exam invigilators, subject teachers and, if necessary, the Leadership Group.
3. **Year 10 students who are not sitting their Art or Textiles practical exam** should remain at home and undertake independent revision for the 3 further days of formal exams which follow thereafter.

4. **Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 will be asked to stay at home.** Non-striking members of staff will be expected to set work for all classes in these year groups on Satchel One. We can confirm that **work (where applicable) will be set in accordance with the student's timetable for that day.** Non-striking teachers should be available to respond to email queries about the work set during the normal lesson time. Striking members of staff are not required to set work and other staff will not set work for the classes taught by striking colleagues. If your child does not have much work set for the day, additional lessons can be found on the Oak National Academy website (<https://classroom.thenational.academy/>) or there are plenty of activities on other platforms we recommend, such as GCSE Pod, SAM Learning, BBC Bitesize, Seneca and subject-specific ones like MathsWatch.
5. **A small number of students from Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 with specific needs will be invited into school to be supervised if they wish.** We will contact families of these students to make this offer, which is at the discretion of the school.
6. **Students eligible for free school meals in Year 11, as well as those students in Year 10 who are sitting exams on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May** will be able to claim a free lunch in the canteen as usual.
7. **All other Year 10 students, as well as all students in Years 7, 8, 9, who are eligible for free school meals** can order a packed lunch if required and a separate communication will be sent via email to eligible families regarding this.
8. Only certain areas of the playground will be in use on Tuesday, which will reduce the number of duties required and ensure we can safely supervise. Students will be given directions on the day.

Once again, this is a difficult situation, requiring us to make adjustments to our normal provision. I would ask you, however, to be understanding. Strike action is not something that any teacher would undertake lightly. Those on strike will have thought long and hard about their decision and are aware that they will also lose pay for withdrawing their labour on the day.

If you have any queries about the arrangements for Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,



Mr T. Lawn  
Headteacher