



26 January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

Further to my letter last week regarding the planned strike action by the NEU teaching union on Wednesday 1 February, we have carried out a risk assessment and reached the following conclusion.

In anticipation of the strike action planned on Wednesday 1 February, it will not be safe to open the school to students and therefore the school will be closed on this day.

We will be able to operate a small on-site provision for a small group of students including those with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) to ensure that they receive statutory daily provision in line with their plans. This will be staffed by non-teaching colleagues who are exempt from any restrictions. Families will be contacted separately to advise of this provision.

Provision

If the strike goes ahead on Wednesday 1 February, all children should follow the timetable below. Please click on the timetable to open:

Years 7-11				Years 12 and 13																																																																															
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Free school meals: vouchers will be provided to all families entitled to free school meals.
Peripatetic music lessons: these lessons will be rescheduled for students.
Student attendance: strike days where students are not required to attend will not count towards student attendance percentages.

Arrangement for future strike dates

If this dispute is not resolved before the further planned dates (2, 15, 16 March) we will review our risk assessment and confirm arrangements in due course. Further details on the risk assessment and industrial action are detailed overleaf.

We appreciate there is likely to be significant disruption for families as a result of this planned action and we thank you in advance for your understanding as we navigate this challenging time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Humphreys', written in a cursive style.

Justin Humphreys
Headteacher

Headteacher: Justin Humphreys

St Katherine's School, Ham Green, North Somerset BS20 OHU

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 St Katherine's School  @stkathsschool

Further information and details

Risk Assessment

The risk assessment considered the proportion of NEU members, the position of other unions and the impact of school and class closures on the workforce. These factors mean that we do not know which colleagues will be striking - only that almost 60% of colleagues are eligible to do so, plus a currently unknown number of other staff who may be absent due to the wider impact of the national strike. This means that we are not able to predict with any certainty which classes and duties would be unattended on strike day.

Even if we were able to make that prediction with any degree of accuracy, we are not able to require members of non-striking teacher unions to provide cover for those classes or duties. Many supply teachers and agency staff have also indicated that they are unwilling to break the strike by providing cover for staff involved in the industrial action.

Industrial action by the NEU - further details

The National Education Union (NEU) is in a formal trade dispute with the Secretary of State for Education because she has failed to give the undertaking sought by the NEU to make available additional and sufficient funds to allow employers to pay a fully funded increase in teachers' pay at a rate greater than inflation (as measured by September 2022 RPI).

The NEU has announced strike action over pay for its teacher members. The proposed dates for strikes by NEU teachers are as follows:

- 1st February 2023 (national strike)
- 2nd March 2023 (South West)
- 15th March 2023 (national strike)
- 16th March 2023 (national strike)

We are committed to do all we can to preserve continuity of education for our students through this period of disruption. We have to balance that commitment with the overriding need to ensure that the school site is safe.