

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Re: Planned strike action at Nottingham Free School on 1st February 2023.

We write further to our previous correspondence to update you on the progress of our contingency planning during the forthcoming strike action in schools.

Background

We have had confirmation from NEU that members of the union intend to take formal industrial action by participating in a strike which will take place next Wednesday.

The strike action is in relation to a national dispute around teacher and school staff pay. I wanted to take this opportunity to further explain the dispute and to also outline the school's plans during the strike.

What is the dispute which has led to the strike about?

As you may know, over the summer the Department for Education agreed to a 5% pay rise for teachers. Teaching unions across England and Scotland, including the NEU, are in dispute with the Department for Education regarding their request for teachers pay to keep up with inflation and the cost of living.

What will happen at the school during the strike?

- School will be **closed** to pupils in **Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12**. For students in Years 7 to 10, online assignments for English, maths and Science will be set via Bromcom. Non-striking teachers of Year 12 will set work for timetabled classes.
- We aim to prioritise our vulnerable students in these year groups, and those whose parents are critical workers. If you are a critical worker and you would like your child to come to school on 1 February 2023 please let us know, by 4pm on Friday, 27 January, by following this link <https://forms.office.com/e/0shQYYUw5W>
- School will **remain open** to pupils in **Years 11 and 13**. When students arrive in school they should go to their tutor rooms as normal to be registered by members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Until the morning of the strike we will not be aware of which teachers are in school. Where timetabled lessons are not possible, Year 11 students will have study periods in the hall, supported by SLT.
- The parents evening planned on that day for Years 12 and 13 will be postponed and a new date shared with parents as soon as possible.
- School will open between 1.15pm and 2pm for students in all year groups in receipt of Free School meals. Students wishing to come into school for lunch should be in full school uniform. To allow for appropriate planning, if you would like your child to come into school for lunch please let us know by following this link <https://forms.office.com/e/bJbY4GzXxG>



Some staff might form a picket line outside the school. A picket line is where staff gather near the entrance to a workplace to protest in person, they may be holding notice boards or banners. If that is the case, I would like to take this opportunity to remind all students and parents that the Nova Education Trust supports the legal right of our staff to strike. Please ensure that any interactions you have with staff are courteous and respectful as they would be on any other day.

We would also like to remind you that it is unlawful for people who are not members of staff at the school (or their union representatives) to join a picket line. We therefore ask parents or carers or pupils to refrain from joining any picket line.

We appreciate that this partial closure may be disruptive to you, for which we apologise. We hope that you understand we have not taken these decisions lightly and had to take decisions to secure the health and safety of your child and any non-striking staff in consideration of anticipated heavily reduced numbers of staffing.

We will communicate our response for further proposed industrial action in March in due course as the situation develops.

Lastly, we want to take this opportunity to reiterate that your child's education is important to *all* staff at Nottingham Free School. We hope that by putting in place these contingency plans we can limit any impact the strike could have to your child's education.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Jo Simpson
Head Teacher