

10/03/23

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Re: Planned strike action at George Mitchel School on 15th and 16th 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

I we received confirmation from NEU that members of the union intend to take formal industrial action by participating in a strike, the first of which took place on 1st February 2023.

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?

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 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 on the 15th and 16th March?

- The school will be open to students in Year 11 but will be closed to all other students (EYFS - YR10) unless they are a vulnerable student. The parents/carers of vulnerable students will be contacted directly by the school, please do not send your child to school otherwise.
- YR11 students are asked to attend school on both days between 09.30am - 11.30am. The usual timetable will be suspended; however, all students will have an English session on the 15th and a study session on the 16th. Non-attendance will be regarded as an unauthorised absence, unless there are genuine or exceptional reasons for non-attendance, in which case existing policies regarding absence reporting apply.
- Guidance makes it clear that striking teachers are not asked to set work for their classes to complete on the day of strike. However, secondary phase students are asked to access Seneca learning and MyMaths in order to minimise disruption and further learning loss following the pandemic.
- If your child is eligible for free school meals then a packed lunch will be available for them to collect from the primary and secondary school at 12.00pm.

We have tried to give parents and carers as much notice as possible of these circumstances. We appreciate that any 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.

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

Yours sincerely

Miss Simmons

Head teacher