

Response to planned strike action by the NEU on 1st March 2023

As previously communicated, teachers in the NEU have declared strike action, which will take place on 1st March, 15th March and 16th March 2023. The strike is happening because of a national dispute between the unions and the government over teachers' pay and conditions, and not because of any issues at Wollaston.

The vast majority of members of the teaching staff at Wollaston are members of one of the unions, including about 45 who are in the NEU. We encourage staff to be part of a union for the protection and support it can offer. NEU membership amounts to approximately half of our teaching staff. Therefore, on 1st March, the school will be open to some year groups, and closed to others.

NEU members are not obliged to say in advance whether they are striking or not, and therefore I must assume and plan for all members of the NEU taking strike action. However we are keen to be supportive of the school community, so this letter therefore notifies you of our plans. As a profession teachers have made it clear that they do not wish to strike, but find themselves in a position where they feel no option but to do so - it is not something they are doing lightly. Members of the NEU voted decisively for strike action. The issues that have led to this include pay of course, but also working conditions, recruitment and retention in the profession and overall school funding.

Health and Safety is the primary consideration when thinking about the operation of the school during strike action, although other considerations also need to be taken into account. Whilst guidance around strike action is provided by the DfE, this is guidance and is not statutory. All schools are, therefore, left to make decisions based on their own specific circumstances. This communication is to give you as much notice as possible about our arrangements for 1st March 2023. I have, alongside the senior team and NVP CEO James Birkett, considered the situation and the information that we have on the impact of the strike on staffing levels.

As a result, we have decided that on Wednesday 1st March 2023 we should do the following:

- Year 10 will attend school and will take part in personal development day activities, as planned before the strikes were announced. This includes talks from visiting speakers.
- Year 11 will attend school and will attend lessons as per their normal Wednesday timetable.
- Years 7, 8, 9 will not be able to attend school and will need to study from home. Students will be set an activity on Go4Schools for them to complete at home. There will not be any live remote lessons on this day.
- Year 12 students will be set home learning tasks linked to their personal development by the 6th form team.
- We are committed to providing a packed lunch to students in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 who are eligible for free school meals. These will be made available for eligible children to collect on Tuesday. If this is something you would like your child to have please complete this form. https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=kYQQh3KgAUuHkx8r-apy_uAVtmS3Ir5Jnxhg0loTKrpUM1c5OFpSTFVFSVZBSU1CVUdWSTdESlpVWi4u
- Students attending school will have access to normal canteen provision.
- For students of critical workers who cannot supervise their children at home, they should notify the school of this so that we can consider how to accommodate these children on site during the day. Please bear in mind that there is likely to be limited capacity to manage these children. Notification should be made to Fitzhughj@wollaston-school.net Please

include in the request a picture or scan of your employee ID badge and we will contact you by Monday evening to confirm their place. Depending on demand, we may need to prioritise children of first responders and pupils in Years 7 & 8. We will however look at enacting a rota for future planned strike days if demand exceeds what we can safely provide.

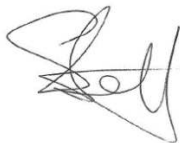
- A separate communication will go to families of children who are vulnerable and the provision available to them. This includes children who have an EHCP, children who are looked after by the local authority and children with a Social Worker as they are on a Child Protection Plan or Child in Need Plan. If your child falls in to one or more of these above categories they will be expected to be in school and **you will be contacted by either the pastoral team or the SEND team on Monday** to confirm the details for Wednesday 1st March.
- Normal school transport will continue for those students attending school on the day.
- There are no planned examinations or trips on this day, and we do not anticipate any issues in this area.

I am sorry that you will have to make alternative arrangements for your child, and that they will experience disruption to their education. Whilst I understand that this situation may be frustrating, I ask that all members of our school community continue to treat each other with respect. Wollaston School remains committed to providing a safe and secure environment for our students and delivering a high-quality education.

We are working closely with our staff union representatives to keep up to date with the situation, and, whilst we do not anticipate any changes, I will inform you as soon as possible if arrangements do need to be adjusted further. If you have any questions, please do feel free to contact me.

Finally, I intend to brief students fully on Monday and to communicate with all families again on Tuesday giving a reminder of details such as how to login to Microsoft 365, what to do if students can't remember logins etc, expectation of students during online lessons and arrangements for safeguarding on Wednesday 1st March.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Anderson', written over a faint horizontal line.

Mr Simon Anderson
Head of School