

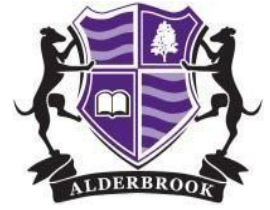
# Alderbrook School

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Dear Parents and Carers

26 January 2023

## Proposed Strike Action

As you are aware, the National Education Union (NEU) has declared strike action. This action will take place on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February, Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March, Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March. The strike action is happening because of a national dispute between the unions and the government over teachers' pay and school funding. It is not because of any specific issues at our school.

I am writing to you in order to provide you with as much information as possible about the strike action next week and the reasons behind the strikes.

## Plan for 1<sup>st</sup> February

We know that approximately half of our teaching staff are members of the NEU; although the union is not compelled to inform us of who plans to strike, we have had to risk assess who it is safe to keep the school open for on Wednesday. We are also conscious that some colleagues will be impacted by their own children's schools closing. We will therefore only be able to open the school to a limited number of students, and have had to prioritise those who are taking public exams this year, and our most vulnerable students.

The following groups should attend school on Wednesday:

1. **Year 11** – all Year 11 should attend as normal in full school uniform. As Mrs Hobbs explained in her letter last week, Year 11 will have two mock exams on Wednesday. They should arrive and leave at the normal time and our canteen will be open as normal at break and lunch. Students should go straight to Malley Hall at 8.30am.
2. **Year 13** – all Year 13 should attend school for periods 1 to 3. Teachers who are not participating in the industrial action will deliver lessons as normal. When lessons are not running, students should work in independent study. Enrichment will be cancelled so students will be able to leave school, if they wish, after Period 3. The Sixth Form servery will be open at break and lunch.
3. **Vulnerable children/children with an EHCP and children of critical workers.** If you are a critical worker and require childcare on 1<sup>st</sup> February, or if your child has an EHCP or is vulnerable and therefore would benefit from attending school, please complete the confidential Microsoft form [here](#). Please be aware that these students will be supervised and supported to carry out independent work in our ICT suites; they will not have taught lessons.

The school buses will run as normal. There will be no after school clubs or tutoring for that day.

**For all other students**, we ask that students work from home. For Years 7-10, we will put year-specific work on the website for students to access. The work will be structured into 5 periods and students will be able to complete the tasks independently from home. For Year 12, we ask that students use the day for independent study from home. No remote lessons will be taught on this day as we cannot guarantee coverage across all lessons.



**Alderbrook School**  
& Sixth Form

AMBITION | BRAVERY | KINDNESS

## Reasons for the strike action

We know that open and honest relationships with our families are crucial for our students' success. As a number of you have asked about the strikes, I wanted to take this opportunity to explain a little bit more about the NEU's reasons for taking strike action.

- Strike action is not simply about pay. It is about the state of the school system as a whole and the lack of school funding which is impacting directly on children and staff.
- The government say that school funding is higher than ever. However, there are now more children in schools than ever before (hence new buildings like ours being constructed). As such, there is less funding to go around and fewer services than ever before.
- Support services (like special educational needs support, educational support, health support, social care etc) that used to be provided by local government have been cut. Currently, schools either pay for these services from existing budgets or manage it in school. This has had a huge impact on staff well-being across the country and partly explains why there is a significant teacher shortage and why thousands of teachers are leaving the profession. Indeed, recent statistics show that one in eight teachers leaves the profession after just one year in the classroom, with one in three leaving the profession within five years.
- Teachers did have a pay rise in September. However, this was below the level of inflation and in real terms, is a pay cut of over 7% in 2022. This follows a pay freeze at various points in the last 10 years of 'austerity' on public sector wages.

The cost of all of the pay increases for teaching and non teaching staff has been funded directly out of school budgets. No extra money has been given to schools to cover these payments. This further exacerbates the financial issues schools are facing. The NEU firmly believes that these pay increases should be covered by the government, rather than from the schools' own budgets and money that was allocated to provide your children with the equipment, facilities, books and resources that they deserve.

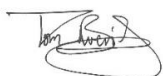
Therefore, as a direct result of these issues, many teachers in schools across the country will be choosing to strike. Not for their own pay particularly, but because they fear for the teaching profession in general and the impact sustained underfunding is having on their pupils and your children.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the teachers and non-teaching staff in our school. They work tirelessly for the good of every child in our community. I fully understand that this situation may be frustrating for you. Equally, I recognise that everyone has their own opinion about strike action.

If you have any questions or queries about the strike action please email [office@alderbrook.solihull.sch.uk](mailto:office@alderbrook.solihull.sch.uk)

Please be assured that I, and every member of the staff of Alderbrook School remain committed to providing a safe and secure environment for your child as well as delivering high-quality teaching in the classroom.

Best wishes



**Tom Beveridge**  
Headteacher