

30th January 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

Industrial Action – Partial school opening – Wednesday 1 February 2023

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 on Wednesday 1 February, Thursday 2 March, Wednesday 15 March and Thursday 16 March.

The strike action is in relation to a national dispute around teacher and school staff pay and not because of any issues at our school.

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 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?

With the first day of strike action taking place this Wednesday, 1 February, I am getting in touch to give you a further update - **that we are now anticipating disruption to our school.** The Headteacher and Governors cannot close the school in sympathy with striking unions, however, we have to give serious consideration to the safety of our students, and we do not feel therefore we can offer the adequate level of supervision across the whole school in the absence of striking teachers. **I should have a better position tomorrow following a union meeting this evening.** However, there is no requirement on unions to inform the school of which members of staff will take strike action. There is also no obligation on members of unions to obey a strike call. Members have said that they do not want the Pencalenick community adversely affected if possible and have promised to keep me in the loop as to decisions.

There is no obligation for NEU members to set cover work on this day. Therefore, students attending school will not necessarily be taught their usual lessons or be taught by their usual staff teams. We will endeavour to provide as much consistency as possible. Please note all staff retain the right to participate in the later dates. If staff decide to strike, then we will give parents as much notice as possible.

What about critical workers?

Although our position is not yet clear, if **you are a critical worker, working on this day, and for those for whom childcare arrangements cannot be made, we will try to provide a school place on this day.**

I'm sorry about the potential disruption to you and to your child's education. I understand that this situation may be frustrating and ask that all members of our school community continue to treat each other with respect. We are working closely with our staff union representatives to keep up to date with the situation and I will write to you again to confirm our position following the union update.

Lastly, we want to take this opportunity to reiterate that your child's education is important to all staff at Pencalenick 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 faithfully



Gary Oak
Head Teacher