



24th April 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Industrial Action on Thursday 27th April and Tuesday 2nd May 2023

As you will be aware, the National Education Union (NEU) is continuing with its planned series of strikes that will impact schools on the above dates.

These strikes are not aimed at individual schools or students and they reflect the strength of the feeling in our profession towards Government policy. The Government recently made an offer to teachers about pay but all four of the teaching unions, including Headteachers, have rejected the offer. As well as the level of teacher's pay itself, school leaders are gravely concerned that the Government is not offering schools funding to cover the cost of any further pay awards.

We continue to have to prioritise those students who have upcoming examinations for coming into school.

Year 11

These students must attend school as normal on both days. Their normal timetable will run and where teachers are not striking, they will be taught completely as normal. There will be an element of luck, but some students will have all of their normal lessons on the day.

Where a Year 11 teacher is striking, the class will be supervised as they complete revision work and work that they have on the Google Classroom. They will not necessarily be set additional work – they already have plenty to do!

GCSE Photography – Year 11

It is imperative that those students studying GCSE Photography attend; they have an examination on Thursday (and Friday). Of course, their examination will run completely unaffected by the action.

Year 13

These students must attend school as normal on both days. Their normal timetable will run and where teachers are not striking, they will be taught completely as normal. There will be an element of luck, but some students will have all of their normal lessons on the day.

Where a Year 13 teacher is striking, the class will be expected to work in the study areas, completing revision work and work that they have on the Google Classroom. They will not necessarily be set additional work – they already have plenty to do!

Year 12 Law – 2nd May

Those students studying Law must attend school on Tuesday 2nd May to allow them time with Mr Cunningham and their pre-release material before their exam on the Wednesday. All other Year 12 students will join our remote learning programme (see below).

The Buckingham School is committed to ensure that every student should have the opportunity to attend school activities/obtain equipment, regardless of their financial circumstances. As such, it may be possible to subsidise those students who would otherwise be unable to attend trips/purchase items. Please feel free to write in confidence to finance@buckinghamschool.org, if you wish to seek assistance, or obtain more information about Pupil Premium funding.

Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12

We are concerned about the need for all students to continue learning on these two days. Unfortunately, as before, we have conducted a full and detailed review of the staffing and it will not be possible to make a safe provision on site to these students. We will provide remote learning for all Year Groups 7-10 and 12 on both of the strike days. All Year Groups 7-10 and 12 will have remote learning with a live component, should their regular teacher be available.

Teachers who are not participating in the industrial action will be delivering virtual lessons, in which at least the first 10 minutes will consist of a live element in order to discuss the lesson with students, following which, they will be set a task for the remainder of the hour. The teacher's delivering lessons on the day will place a message on their Google Classroom before 8.30am in order that students will be able to see which lessons will be delivered at their normal times. Please can you ensure that your child has logged in by this point in order that they don't miss this learning opportunity.

Critical workers

All parents should keep their children at home if they can. We will try to maximise the provision for those children with at least one parent who is a critical worker, as defined by the Department for Education. We have limited places available that we can offer to parents and we are prioritising those that work in Health and Social Care, Education and Childcare or Emergency Services.

Parents need to complete an Expression of Interest form by 9.00am on Wednesday 26th April 2023 to aid with planning - <https://forms.gle/z62bgueZw4AUaBFz6>

In the meantime, please make alternative arrangements where you can and respect the DfE recommendations about keeping children at home where possible.

Completion of the form does not guarantee you a place. You will be contacted separately to confirm if you have been offered a place.

Other Students Who Are Invited Into School

On these occasions we invite certain students into school. These families will be contacted directly, and their child will be expected in school.

In General

When we consider the staffing impact on schools across the strike days we have to take a number of issues into account. For example:

- Staff do not have to inform us in advance if they are striking or not.
- We cannot ask striking staff to set cover work for the time they are out of school for industrial action.
- Non-striking members of staff should not be expected to cover the lessons of a striking colleague or to set work for these lessons. If asked, they can refuse.
- Non-striking staff cannot be directed to cover the supervisory duties of staff that are striking.
- Many teachers are also parents and they may be facing issues with provisions for their own children caused by the strike.

Having once again modelled our staffing capacity, it is evident that a normal timetable cannot be safely delivered and therefore to best support as many students as possible we will be providing virtual lessons to all students, except those highlighted above.

We do face a challenge in producing remote learning at this time, unlike during the pandemic, we will not have each class teacher available nor are they obliged to set online learning tasks for students on strike days. This means you should not expect online live lessons for every lesson, and some learning tasks provided may seem very generic. This will I am sure be a frustration, but it is a natural by-product of

industrial action and the withdrawal of labour.

We have done all we can under the above constraints to maximise the number of students we can have in school safely and to make the learning experience purposeful for as many students as possible.

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I recognise the disruption this causes for families and students, but would like to thank you for your ongoing support.

With best wishes,

Mr A McGinnes

Headteacher

aallen@buckinghamschool.org

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