

27 January 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

### **Strike Action – Wednesday 1 February 2023**

Following on from the Wessex Learning Trust communication on Wednesday 18 January 2023, the National Teachers Union (NEU) has declared strike action, which will take place on Wednesday 1 February 2023. I am writing to give you as much notice as possible of the impact of this action on the Academy.

Whilst the planned action is because of a national dispute between the unions and the government, and not specifically because of any issues specific to our school, it is important that we respond accordingly in the interests of our students, whilst respecting the rights of our staff.

Our priority is to ensure that students and staff remain safe within all aspects of their school day with regards supervision, whilst trying to ensure some continuity in education. **I am writing to inform you that the Academy will be closed to the majority of students on Wednesday 1 February 2023.**

This decision has not been taken lightly and we have carried out a full risk assessment. This assessment has considered the following factors:

- A significant number of our staff are members of the NEU. Members do not have to disclose their intention to strike.
- Members of other unions, whilst not on strike, have been instructed that they cannot provide cover for striking colleagues. This includes the cover of lessons, setting work or supervising students during lessons or social time that would have been otherwise carried out by those colleagues on strike.
- With the anticipated closure of other schools, there will be a higher proportion of non-striking colleagues unable to access work due to their own childcare commitments.

These factors mean that we are unable to accurately predict the numbers of staff striking or the number of staff affected by the wider impact of the strike. If we were able to confidently predict the numbers of staff striking, we would still be unable to provide cover for these classes.

There will be on-site provision for students with Education Health Care Plans, or where students have specific vulnerabilities. This will be staffed by non-teaching colleagues. We will contact these students and their families separately to provide further details.

Kings remains committed to providing high quality education whilst most of our students are unable to attend school. We will be providing work for students to complete at home during the day. Details will be posted on ClassCharts as homework or as an announcement. We would highly recommend that all students check their ClassCharts account prior to 9am on Wednesday 1 February for details of each task.

We will provide learning resources across all our core subject areas for Years 9, 10 and 11. Maths will set work via Hegerty Maths, English will be issuing a creative writing task, Science will be setting tasks via Educake and RE will issue some online lesson resources to enhance knowledge of a current curriculum area. Year 12 students will be

signposted to appropriate resources on FireFly, whilst we would encourage our Year 13 students to use the time productively to revise for their upcoming PPEs.

Staff that are not striking may wish to set specific tasks. These will be set via ClassCharts. In some cases, live lessons may be completed via Microsoft Teams. Your child will also be able to access this information via ClassCharts.

Students entitled to Free School Meals will be issued with vouchers as they are during school holidays.

We appreciate that industrial action is disruptive. We would like to extend our apologies for the fact that alternative arrangements for care of your child may need to be made for this day, and for the disruption to your child's education whilst this action is ongoing. We recognise that families will have differing views on strike action, the NEU's dispute and the Government's stance. Ultimately, the duty of the Headteacher is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students when on site, hence my decision. We understand that the situation will be frustrating for many of you and ask that all members of our school community continue to treat each other with respect. We will, of course, continue to monitor the arrangements in place and make modifications where possible to improve support for students wherever possible.

The NEU has indicated that they will continue strike action for a further three days on **Thursday 2 March, Wednesday 15 and Thursday 16 March 2023**. We will continue to work closely with the staff union representative. We will inform you as soon as possible of the situation for the further proposed dates.

Please note if you have a child or children in other schools within the Wessex Learning Trust, the individual school will communicate with you regarding their opening or closing status dependent on staff availability.

If you have any questions or concerns about the alternative arrangements outlined above, please contact the Academy at **office@kowessex.co.uk** in the first instance. Thank you for your continued support and understanding during this time.

Yours sincerely



**David Wiltshire**  
Headteacher