

Thursday 9 February 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

Firstly thank you for your continued support during the last strike day and the subsequent days that are likely to happen in March. As a result I am writing to you to share what our contingency plans are for the remaining strike days on:

- **Thursday 2 March** – South-east and South-west England
- **Wednesday 15 March /Thursday 16 March** – two-day strike of all schools in England and Wales

NEU members are under no obligation to inform me they intend to strike, therefore planning is complex and always based on a worst case scenario. As I am sure you will understand this will impact on how many year groups we can safely have in the school with a significant number of colleagues out of school during these days.

As with the previous strike day, I will have no option but to have some students working from home on these days. I have modelled up what these contingencies could look like for the three remaining days of strike action. I will confirm if the contingencies are to be put in place the week before the strike action, but I hope the information gives you time to make any necessary arrangements. Please be mindful these plans are subject to change.

Partial opening contingency

- **Thursday 2 March** – School will be open for year groups 7, 8 and 10 and home learning for years 9 and 11, however, year 11s will be required to come into school for 8:40am (in full uniform) to complete their Maths PPE (mock examination) in the morning and will then be able to go home and continue with their normal lessons from period 3 (11:30am) as per the arrangements below for online lessons via Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) or work set via Class Charts.
- **Wednesday 15 March** – School will be open for year groups 7, 9 and 11 and home learning for years 8 and 10.
- **Thursday 16 March** - School will be open for year groups 7, 10 and 11 and home learning for years 8 and 9.

All children with an EHCP in any year group will be invited in for all three remaining strike days. As before, all students in school will either be taught by their normal teacher in person, if they are not striking, or, if their teacher is striking, taught by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) or by external cover teachers. The lessons taught by SLT or cover teachers will focus predominantly on core subjects (English, Maths and Science) for Key Stage 3 (years 7, 8 and 9) and years 10 and 11 will focus on their GCSE work.

Any year group required to stay at home will need to work online. If your child is taught by a teacher who is not striking, that teacher will be in school and will send your child a MS Teams invite to access the lesson online (guidance on how your child can access MS Teams here [teams-guide.pdf \(castleschool.co.uk\)](https://www.castleschool.co.uk/teams-guide.pdf), or be set work online on Class Charts. If your child's teacher is striking, they will not receive an invite and all work will be set online via Class Charts.

It is worth noting again that colleagues may not strike on all the days and can choose which days they do so, and therefore we will need to plan on the assumption all staff in the NEU will be out of school on these days. If they choose to come in, they will deliver their lessons online live via MS Teams or upload work to Class Charts for year groups at home or deliver lessons in person for students in school. Please note the invite for these lessons may only arrive on the morning of the strike day.

Children in receipt of Free School Meals who are not in school will receive the normal gift card emailed to parents/carers. Please contact the school if your child does not have a device to use at home and will struggle to access Class Charts or MS Teams.

There is likely to be no after-school enrichment on the strike days. If there are any scheduled clubs or fixtures, your child's teacher will let them know if they are still being held. The Library will be open as usual until 5.00 pm.

My priority is to ensure your child gets the best possible education we can offer. For all three future strike days all other services, such catering, first aid, teaching assistant support and pastoral support will continue as normal.

Thank you for your understanding and support during this time. If you have any concerns, please do contact your child's Tutor or Head of House in the first instance.

Yours sincerely



Mr Lamb
Headteacher

