

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

**Re: Strike Action**

I hope this letter finds you well.

As I alerted you to on 24<sup>th</sup> February, the membership of the National Education Union (NEU) has voted to take industrial action in schools across the country. This will take the form of strike action and is currently due to take place in the South West next week on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March. We were sincerely hoping that talks would progress enough for these two days to be called off but, as I compose this letter, that has not been the case.

The industrial action is a result of a national dispute between the NEU and the government and is not specific to our school nor to United Learning. The overwhelming majority of schools locally and nationally will be impacted but each school will have different arrangements for pupils due to the number of members of its staff who are likely to strike.

We have been working closely with colleagues here in order to plan for the strikes so that we can minimise any disruption to our pupils' education. Our current understanding is that a significant number of colleagues here at Huish Episcopi Academy will be taking industrial action and we are thus planning for this accordingly.

Our view, at present, is that we will be able to keep the school open on the proposed strike days for some pupils, with the following arrangements in place for both Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March:

- **Years 11, 12 and 13 to attend school as normal.** Year 11 will have a programme of examination preparation and practice. Years 12 and 13 will be engaged in a mixture of lessons and supervised private study. Travel will be as normal. Catering facilities will continue to be provided for students here at the academy.

We have been asked by the government to consider whether we can make arrangements for some of the children of critical workers. The numbers and logistics involved mean we can do this for only those in years 7, 8 and 9:

- **Years 7, 8 and 9 children of critical workers.** If your child is in year 7, year 8 or year 9 and on the list defined below (pages 3 & 4), please complete the [Year 7, 8 and 9 Children of Critical Workers Survey \(link here\)](#) and let us know if you intend to send your child in to school by Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March. Please do not send your child to school on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March if this form has not been completed.
- **Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 to work from home.** Please do not send your child in if they are in these year groups. You are responsible for their wellbeing, supervision and food arrangements on the day. Those pupils entitled to free school meals will receive a voucher by email in advance of Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March covering both days. Further

communication will be sent on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March detailing the work for students to complete.

- **Vulnerable students:** We have a list of those students who we have identified as forming our vulnerable cohort and we will be contacting their parents/carers individually to invite them to attend the Academy on the Wednesday and Thursday.

I apologise for any potential inconvenience this causes you but we are doing everything we can to minimise the number of pupils who are impacted by the industrial action.

It is unlikely that the industrial action will be called off, but if this were to happen, I will write to you to confirm that the school will be fully open.

If you have any questions or concerns about the alternative arrangements outlined above, please do contact the main reception on [office@hea.ac.uk](mailto:office@hea.ac.uk).

Thank you for your continued support of the school and your child's education.

Yours sincerely



**Nat Parnell**  
**Principal**



## **Critical workers**

We expect you to maximise the number of children, pupils and students who are in face-to-face provision during an emergency. If the impact of an emergency means that not everyone can attend face-to-face provision, we expect you to inform parents as part of your emergency communications of the impact, set out the groups you are prioritising for face-to-face provision, and invite parents to tell you if they meet one of the critical worker categories.

Parents whose work is critical to an emergency response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined in the following sections. If exceptional circumstances mean that attendance is temporarily limited, children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to their setting if required, but parents and carers should keep their children at home if they can.

## **Health and social care**

This includes, but is not limited to, doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain, including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment.

## **Education and childcare**

This includes:

- childcare
- support and teaching staff
- social workers
- specialist education professionals who must remain active during an emergency response to deliver this approach

## **Key public services**

This includes:

- those essential to the running of the justice system
- religious staff
- charities and workers delivering key frontline services
- those responsible for the management of the deceased
- journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting

## **Local and national government**

This only includes those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of:

- an emergency response
- essential public services, such as the payment of benefits including in government agencies and Arm's length bodies (ALB).

## **Food and other necessary goods**

This includes those involved in food:

- production
- processing

- distribution
- sale and delivery
- as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines)

### **Public safety and national security**

This includes:

- police and support staff
- Ministry of Defence civilians
- contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to an emergency response)
- fire and rescue service employees (including support staff)
- National Crime Agency staff
- those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas

### **Transport**

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during an emergency response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.

### **Utilities, communication and financial services**

This includes:

- staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure)
- the oil, gas, electricity, and water sectors (including sewerage)
- information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during an emergency response
- key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services)
- postal services and delivery
- payments providers
- waste disposal sectors