



25 January 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

Update on strike action on Wednesday 1 February 2023

I wrote to you on Friday 20 January to confirm that we have begun planning for the upcoming strike action by the National Education Union (NEU). Unfortunately, there has been no resolution of the dispute between the NEU and Government thus far and so we have been making plans for the first planned strike on Wednesday 1 February.

Our approach and decision making has been led by clear principles: to ensure the safety of students and staff and to meet our responsibility to provide as much continuity of education as possible, whilst respecting the legitimate right for colleagues to take industrial action.

In line with these principles, and because we have a significant number of NEU members at Backwell School, the following decisions have been made for Wednesday 1 February:

- Backwell School will be open on Wednesday 1 February **only** to Sixth Form students and to a small number of students from Years 7 – 11, who will be invited to attend.
 - Sixth Form students should attend school as normal. Where the industrial action means it is not possible for a lesson to take place, sixth formers will undertake private study as would usually happen due to staff absence.
 - We have invited a small group of students from Years 7 – 11 into school on this date. If your child is in this group, you will have already received an email from the school. Please ensure you respond to this by 9.00am on Monday 30 January.
 - The small number of students on the school site, including Sixth Formers, will have access to the catering offer from Aspens as usual.
 - North Somerset Council have confirmed that those entitled to home-to-school transport will have their usual provision in place to get to school. Likewise, our out-of-catchment coach service, run by Eagle Coaches, will operate as normal. Please bear in mind that a train strike is also scheduled for Wednesday 1 February: Sixth Form students and those invited in who use the train as their mode of transport by choice will need to find alternative ways to get to school on this date.
- The majority of students in Years 7-11 **will not be able** to attend school and will access work at home via Frog on this date. Students should follow their normal timetable (for Wednesday Week 1) and should log on to Frog at the start of the school day.
- Students in receipt of Free School Meals will be provided with a suitable packed lunch to take home on Tuesday 31 January - unless they are expected in school on 1 February (as outlined above).
- Any after school clubs scheduled for this day have been cancelled.
- The first night of the Sixth Form Production of 'The Addams Family' will go ahead as planned from 7.00 pm in the Main Theatre.

I appreciate that there is likely to be significant inconvenience for carers and parents as a result of the planned action. I understand that this situation may be frustrating, and ask that all members of our school community continue to treat each other with respect. Backwell School remains committed to providing a safe and secure environment for our pupils and delivering high-quality teaching.

We are working closely with our staff union representatives to keep up to date with the situation, and I will inform you as soon as possible if things change further.

Schools in the Lighthouse Schools Partnership (LSP) have been working closely together on a Trust-wide approach to the strikes: our principles are fully aligned but the different contexts of the schools, especially in regard to numbers of NEU staff, means that individual school arrangements are not identical.

If this industrial dispute is not resolved before the further planned dates (2, 15 and 16 March 2023) then the school will review its risk assessment and we will, of course, update parents/carers to confirm the details for these dates in due course.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Nunes', written in a cursive style.

Mr J Nunes
Headteacher