



21 April 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

Information regarding strike action on Thursday 27 April and Tuesday 2 May 2023

Unfortunately, there still has been no resolution of the dispute between the NEU and Government. The NEU membership voted overwhelmingly to reject the latest pay offer and have scheduled two further dates for industrial action on Thursday 27 April and Tuesday 2 May 2023.

As I wrote to parents last term, we now have an accurate idea of the scale of the impact this ongoing action has on staffing at Backwell; we can safely bring the Sixth Form (Years 12 and 13) plus one other year group on to the school site. Although we are very mindful that students in Years 7 to 9 have already been accessing work, via Frog, at home for four days of industrial action (and students in Year 10 for three days) the timing of this new action, so close to exams, means we must once again prioritise Year 11 students for on-site learning

As before, our approach, planning and decision making for these dates 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 the school will be open as follows:

Thursday 27 April and Tuesday 2 May 2023

- Backwell School will be open to students in **Years 11, 12 and 13** and to a small number of students from Years 7 – 10, who have been invited to attend.
 - **All Year 11 students** should attend school as normal: in full uniform with books/equipment for their scheduled timetable. Attendance is compulsory and where a member of staff is absent from school, students will complete revision activities. Year 11 need to head to assembly in the Sixth Form Theatre at 8.40am.
 - Year 11 students should now be following their revision programme and they should bring appropriate revision materials with them to use if their teacher is absent. We will provide back-up revision materials including past paper questions if required.
 - **For Year 12 students** Thursday 27 April falls within Trial Exam Week. In that week, Year 12 students have study leave and are not required to attend school other than for their examinations. All Year 12 students should attend school as normal on Tuesday 2 May. 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.
 - **All Year 13 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 – 10 into school on this date. If your child is in this group, you will have already received an email from the school.
- Students on the school site, including Sixth Formers, will have access to the catering offer from Aspens as usual; this will be served from the Main Canteen (Years 7-11) and the Sixth Form Canteen (Years 12 and 13).
- 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.
- The Education Support Forest School Trip (small group of children from Years 7 -9) will still go ahead and parents/carers of those taking part will receive a separate email communication connected to this.
- The majority of students in Years 7-10 **will not be able** to attend school on these days and will access work at home via Frog on this date. Students should follow their normal timetable and should log on to Frog at the start of the school day.
- Any school clubs scheduled for these days have been cancelled.

Free School Meals

- Parents/carers with children eligible for Free School Meals will be issued with a voucher, by email, to purchase lunch items for the two strike days - unless the student is expected in school on these days.

Schools in the Lighthouse Schools Partnership (LSP) have been working closely together but the different contexts of the schools, especially in regard to numbers of NEU staff, means that individual school arrangements are not identical.

At time of writing these two dates are the final dates of the current planned industrial action, however the NEU are considering further action in the summer term if a settlement is not reached and the three other major teaching unions; NASUWT, NAHT and ASCL are all in discussions about their response to what they consider to be an unacceptable pay offer. This, therefore, remains an incredibly challenging time for schools and school leaders: thank you for your understanding.

Kind regards,



Mr J Nunes
Headteacher