

25 January 2023

Dear Parent Carer

I wish to follow up my previous letter about potential strike action and its impact in an attempt to provide certainty.

I fully understand the reasons for the strike action. It is about more than just increased pay; but about improved terms and conditions that would enable you to feel confident that the profession is not losing qualified staff each year and struggling to recruit replacements.

After discussion with the Chair of Governors, and Director of Education (Jon Lewis) I have made a decision to close the school on **Wednesday 1 February to all students**. I realise this will be difficult for some parent/carers, but it is necessary for the following reasons:

1. I am unable to know until the morning of the strike day the total amount of staff taking strike action.
2. I have been informed by another major teaching union that their staff they will not cover lessons on the days of the strike. This includes leadership staff and cover supervisors and is coupled with the inability to get anywhere near the supply staff needed booked in advance!
3. There may be an implication for staff who are not striking who may have to face child care/dependency days due to other schools partially/fully closing.
4. There are picket line implications and staff may decide not to cross the line. We now know today there is one to be set up at the school.
5. I cannot guarantee the quality of education even for the most vulnerable groups, or any group of young people, when I cannot be in control of who will declare strike action until the day of the first strike. This puts me in a position of vulnerability when I will not know who is in attendance until at least 8.00am on the day (or later if they are persuaded by the picket line).
6. The uncertainty of opening the school and then having to reverse this, and the implications it has on you if, for health and safety reasons, I cannot cover even the most vulnerable groups invited inside school.

Any student in receipt of free school meals will receive a voucher for any day that we may have to close due to strike action. I realise this is disappointing, but certainty is better than a half-planned promise that could go wrong. It also affords you the opportunity to plan ahead.

With regret



**Bryan Erwin**  
Principal