

23rd February 2023

Dear Parent/Carers

Re: Planned strike action at Birklands Primary School on Wednesday 1st March

I write to update you on the progress of our contingency planning during the strike action in schools.

Background

We have had confirmation from NEU that members of the union intend to take formal industrial action by participating in the strike which will take place on Wednesday 1st March.

The strike action is in relation to a national dispute around teacher and school staff pay. I wanted to take this opportunity to further explain the dispute and to also outline the school's plans during the strike.

What will happen at the school during the strike?

Based upon the number of teaching staff available on Wednesday 1st March, DfE / Trust guidance and considering health & safety and the needs of the children; school will be partially open (see below). Due to teacher numbers, the children may not be with their class teacher and some year groups will be mixed beyond the usual arrangements. The structure of the day will also change and although linked to the current curriculum will not follow the children's current learning.

- School will be open for all children in Y2 & Y6 and the expectation is for them to attend as per the DfE guidance. Please note that there will be no PE on this day so uniform should be worn.
- School will also be open for those children currently in receipt of benefits related Free School Meals (FSM).
- If your child does not fall into any of the aforementioned year groups (Nursery, Reception, Y1, Y3, Y4 and Y5) or category of (FSM), they will come home with their learning on Tuesday 28th February, to be completed and returned on Thursday 2nd March.
- Please note that if your child is in Nursery but qualifies for FSM, they should not come into school as they are not statutory school age.

Some staff might form a picket line outside the school. A picket line is where staff gather near the entrance to a workplace to protest in person, they may be holding notice boards or banners. If that is the case, I would like to take this opportunity to remind all students and parents that as a Trust we support our staff's legal right to strike. Please ensure that any interactions you have with staff are courteous and respectful as they would be on any other day.

We would also like to remind you that it is unlawful for people who are not members of staff at the school (or their union representatives) to join a picket line. We therefore ask parents or carers or pupils to refrain from joining any picket line.

We have tried to give parents and carers as much notice as possible of these circumstances. We appreciate that any partial opening may be disruptive to you, for which we apologise.

Please be aware that these plans could be subject to change on the morning of Wednesday 1st March as teachers are entitled to decide on the day should they choose to strike.

If Industrial Action is averted we will inform as soon as possible. At present, there are two further days of planned strike action (15th & 16th March). We will update you on the schools' actions for these days in coming weeks.

Lastly, we want to take this opportunity to reiterate that your child's education is important to *all* staff at Birklands Primary School. We hope that by putting in place these contingency plans we can limit any impact the strike could have to your child's education.

Yours sincerely

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

Mrs V Farr
Head Teacher