



Our Ref: PLE/KHU/Strike

Date: 27th January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

I wanted to update you with plans for limited opening and school closure due to strike action next week.

Having carried out a thorough risk assessment for the impact of the strike action on **Wednesday 1st February**, I have made the decision to open to only specific groups of students as per below:

- **Year 12 and 13:**

Students to carry out independent study at home. The Sixth Form area will be open and supervised as a warm space for those wishing to come in. No live lessons will be taught.

- **Year 11:**

School will be open for all Year 11 lessons. Where teachers are not in school students will be supervised and other examination preparation activities put in place by Senior Leaders.

- **Year 7, 8, 9 and 10:**

School will be closed to these students. Students should access online work as per their timetable, via our website. The work will be arranged by year group and subject. Please use [THIS LINK](#) to access the work.

We have identified some students that we consider would benefit from being supervised to work in school. A link will be sent out via text directly to parents on the evening of Friday 27th inviting the identified students from Year 7 to 10 to attend school, where they will be supervised to undertake the online work in our IT room. If you receive this text, please respond to confirm attendance.

Students entitled to Free School Meals will be offered a Grab Bag Lunch that can be collected from the school canteen at the end of Tuesday 31st January. Parents of those entitled to Free School Meals will receive a text on the evening of Friday 27th detailing how you can book a Grab Bag for your child to collect after school on Tuesday. If you receive this text, respond to confirm if a Grab Bag is required, as this will allow us to prepare the correct amount.

Whilst I recognise that these plans may cause disruption around your childcare arrangements, I have made these decisions based on ensuring the safety of our students. This reflects the known availability of staff and the potential disruption that may be caused by staff with their own childcare issues. Please be reassured that we will review these arrangements and communicate with you any changes to our plan before the next proposed strike day on 1st March.

I would like to take the opportunity to provide some background behind the strike action. The support for strike action, from teachers, is as a result of 12 years of underfunding education, by the government. The consequence of this is that we are now in the throes of a recruitment and retention crisis in teaching. Teacher shortages are a critical problem for almost every school, with pay not sufficient to attract and retain enough staff. Across the country, there has been a significant drop in applications for vacant posts across all subjects, with subjects such as math, science, computing, business studies and languages often receiving no applications at all.

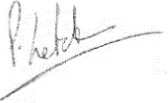
Graduate recruits to teacher training are well below targets as graduates of key subjects are able to earn significantly more in industry. This teacher shortage does not show any sign of abating.

Problems recruiting and keeping staff are central issues for heads now, and inadequate pay is the biggest contributing factor. The erosion of teacher's pay and serious concerns about funding for schools, is causing increasing difficulties for school leaders. Shortages of teachers and supply teachers increases the burden on staff in school. Teachers choosing to strike do so because they feel very strongly about these issues. The recruitment issues run alongside the decision by central Government not to fund schools fully for the pay increase offered to teachers this year. School budgets are therefore being placed under further strain which can only impact on the provision we offer.

We have a significant number of staff in the NEU at Huxlow Academy and for the first day of action I must assume many will take strike action and other staff will be impacted by their child's school not being open. This means that I am unable to run full timetables on the day and as such, please make arrangements to follow the plan outlined above next Wednesday.

If any plans change, I will communicate further next week, and again when we are able to review our capacity to open for 1st March.

Yours faithfully



Mr Paul Letch
Headteacher