



26th February 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

Strike Action by Members of the National Education Union (NEU)

Further to my previous emails, I am writing to you about forthcoming strike action by the National Education Union (NEU), one of the main teaching trade unions. There are three national and one regional day strikes planned. The strike days that are likely to affect schools in this area are:

- Wednesday 1 February 2023
- Tuesday 28 February 2023
- Wednesday 15 March 2023
- Thursday 16 March 2023

The NEU has posted a document for parents and carers that explains their reasons for taking strike action. It can be found at <https://neu.org.uk/media/24511/view> if you wish to read it.

How will strike action affect Oswald Road Primary School?

When a strike takes place, those taking strike action stop work and withdraw their labour. This means that those teachers involved in the action will not teach their class(es) or undertake any other duties on a strike day.

I have worked carefully with the rest of the Senior Leadership Team to consider the impact that industrial action will have on the operation of our school. One of the key issues is to assess whether there are sufficient staff available for the school to remain open, or partially open, during a strike.

To determine whether this school can remain fully or partially open, a detailed risk assessment has been conducted. This considers the impact that the action will have on the health and



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safety of pupils, staff and visitors, and whether the school can run a full or amended curriculum, to determine whether it is possible to operate the school safely during the strike.

I should add that teachers are **not** obliged to tell us if they plan to strike or not, which means that we have had to factor this into our risk assessment to ensure we have contingency plans in place in case there are teachers that strike that we have not had prior notice of.

ORGANISATION FOR STRIKE DAY - 1st February 2023

As headteacher, I and the governing body have decided the school will be open only to certain pupils, but closed to all other pupils. The classes that will be **open** on Wednesday 1st February are:

- All of Nursery
- All of Reception
- 2A and 2C
- 3C
- Children on an EHCP will also be invited to attend school on this day

Based on our risk assessment and given the numbers of staff striking on the day, we are unable to offer places to children of keyworker children who do not fall into one of the groups listed above.

I understand that many parents will have questions about how we have come to the difficult decision we have, and I have therefore included a list of FAQs below.

Clearly this is a very difficult situation, which will cause disruption to our families. I would ask you, however, to be understanding. A national strike by teachers is very unusual. Taking strike action is not something that any teacher would undertake lightly. Those on strike will have thought long and hard about their decision and will also lose pay for the days that they are on strike.



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Thank you as always for your ongoing support.

Kind regards,

Deborah Howard
Headteacher

Frequently Asked Questions

Can classes whose teacher is striking be covered by non-striking teachers?

The guidance states that where teachers are employed under the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, they cannot be compelled to provide cover for other teachers during industrial action. Furthermore, the Local Authority have strongly advised that schools consider the advice given by the Unions to their members in respect of non-striking employees covering the work of striking colleagues, to inform any contingency planning and risk assessment in this area. For this reason, we will not be making use of supply or agency staff on strike days.

Can classes be covered by TAs?

The Specified Work Regulations 2012 require classes to be taught by qualified teachers in maintained schools and some academies. This means that we cannot cover classes whose teacher is striking with Teaching Assistants.

What will happen if my child is entitled to Free School Meals but is not going to be in school during the strike action?

We will be providing a packed lunch for those children not in school on the day who are entitled to means-tested Free School Meals. These lunches can be collected on the day from the school office. We will not be providing this service for children who are on Universal Free School Meals (ie. if they get free dinners because they are in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2). If your child receives means-tested Free School Meals and will not be in school on Wednesday 1st February, please complete [this order form](#) no later than 3:00pm on Monday 30th January.



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What will happen on the subsequent strike days?

There are more strike days planned by the NEU;

- Tuesday 28 February 2023
- Wednesday 15 March 2023
- Thursday 16 March 2023

We will be treating each strike day as a separate event, and therefore may have different arrangements on different days but will keep you informed over the coming weeks.

Will you be offering remote learning on strike days?

We will not be offering any remote learning, as those teachers involved in the action will not teach their class(es) or undertake any other duties on a strike day.

Will afterschool clubs still take place on Wednesday 1st February?

Information to follow nearer the time on this once club leads have been consulted.



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