

Stanhope Barrington C of E  
Primary School



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Dear Parent/Carer

26<sup>th</sup> January 2023

**Re: NEU Strike Action**

I am writing to update you on the impact of the recently announced strike action by the National Education Union. There are four days of strike action which will affect our school:

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Teaching staff at our school have the right to take part in this strike action. Both myself and the teaching team wanted to clarify that this dispute has arisen following years of reduced funding in schools. Due to the fact that funding for schools has not kept in line with rising costs, and that pay awards have not been fully funded, this has resulted in a huge negative impact on our school budget. This crisis is not limited to our school but is being experienced across the country. Nationally, there is a recruitment and retention crisis in education, mainly due to the fact that salaries for school staff have fallen by 20% in real terms over the last decade.

However, our teachers are not striking purely for an increased pay award. They understand the very real impact on our school should pay awards not be fully funded and the schools continue to be expected to find more money from a budget which should be used to support the teaching and learning of our children.

The funding crisis is impacting on all staff and children and whilst I appreciate how disruptive and inconvenient this strike action will be for families, I hope you can understand and support the reasons for this action being taken.

Taking strike action is a very personal decision and for some schools there may be no or little impact whilst others are totally closed.

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In conjunction with the Chair of our Academy Council, Dr Sarah Haynes, I have taken the very difficult decision to close all of our Learning Zones on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023. We will be offering childcare provision for those children who are classified as vulnerable. This will include children in receipt of benefits-related free school meals; children who are on the Special Educational Needs register; children who are on the Child Protection Register or who are identified as a Child In Need. I will be writing to these parents & carers separately to confirm that their child(ren) will be offered a childcare place during strike action.

Safeguarding, First Aid, Health and Safety, the needs of vulnerable children etc have all been taken into account in this decision-making process. At the current time, I can ensure the safe provision of childcare for our vulnerable children. I cannot however, safely open the Learning Zones for teaching and learning. Should more teaching staff than anticipated at the current time, turn up for work on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February, you will be notified by our text service which may enable me to open some of our Learning Zones to our children but please be aware I will not be able to inform you of this decision until 8.30am on the morning of the strike.

Please note that Breakfast Club and After School Childcare and Clubs will not be available on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023.

It is everyone's hope that unions and government can come together to reach an amicable agreement to this dispute and that future dates for strike action can be avoided. Decisions regarding the opening of the school on future strike days will very much depend upon what happens next and I will keep you posted.

Thank you so much for your understanding.

Yours sincerely

*Mrs D Cross*

Mrs D Cross  
Head Teacher