

27 February 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

Following my communication on Wednesday 22 February, I would like to share with you the full details of how the school will operate during the second day of industrial action on Thursday 2 March 2023.

As you will be aware, members of the National Education Union (NEU) have voted to strike against government imposed pay and conditions. Approximately two-thirds of Denefield teachers are members of the NEU and I envisage that a large number of them will go on strike on Thursday 2 March. My priorities are to ensure students and staff are safe, that the school provides effective education, and that I protect the welfare and wellbeing of students and staff, whether they are on strike or not. I am also committed to providing you, as parents/carers, with full and timely information.

In short, we will provide as many face to face lessons in school for Year 11 and Year 13, continue with the school show rehearsals in school, provide online lessons for all other students, and will endeavour to supervise any student who wishes to do their online learning in school, where possible.

Full details of these arrangements are below.

Years 7 to 10 and Year 12

These year groups will have a full programme of online lessons. Once again students will access quality-assured, pre-recorded lessons from the Oak National Academy, as well as undertaking knowledge-retrieval exercises such as quizzing. There will also be an opportunity for physical or wellbeing exercises. The normal timetable will be suspended and all students will study English, Maths, Science, History or Geography, and PE or Wellbeing. Lessons will be set via Satchel One (Show My Homework) and although all lessons will be available from the beginning of the day, we suggest students follow the following timetable:

- 9.00am English
- 10.20am Maths
- 11.20am Science
- 1.00pm History or Geography - Years 7 to 9 will be set either History or Geography and Year 10 to 11 will choose whichever humanities they study
- 2.00pm PE or Wellbeing

The school will be open for those who wish to access their online lessons on site. We will be supervising the library and a number of computer rooms so that those students who want to, or need to do their online lessons in school, may do so. I am confident that we will have capacity to accommodate all students who wish to study in school, but if we cannot safely accommodate all who would like to be in school, we will prioritise students as follows:

1. students with EHCPs, those who are classed as children who are looked after, those with a social worker, those who are refugees, and those who are classed as vulnerable
2. students where all parents/carers are critical/key workers
3. students on Free School Meals
4. Year 7 and Year 11 students
5. Year 8, 9 and 10 students, in that order.

#### Year 11

A full programme of online lessons will run as above. Plus we are running compulsory catch-up, revision and intervention sessions for a significant number of students. Students will be invited individually by the end of Wednesday and will be expected to attend. If invited, students should prioritise in-school lessons over online lessons. The programme for invited students is:

- 9.00am to 11.00am - Maths support and intervention for approximately a quarter of the year.
- 11.00am to 12.00pm - History support and intervention for all those taking History.
- 1.00pm to 3.00pm - Business and Modern Foreign Languages support and intervention for selected students.
- 09.00am to 3.00pm - DT, Health and Social Care and Sport coursework and assessment completion for selected students – except when students are in Maths or History.

All Year 11 Art students that have not been invited in for any of the above sessions should be working on their Art portfolios and unit 2 preparation at home.

#### Year 13

Students will be notified by their teachers which Year 13 lessons will run in school, and will be expected to attend. In addition, the following sessions will run and will take priority:

- 9.00am to 3.00pm - Health & Social Care and Sport coursework/assessment
- 9.00am to 10.00am - History for selected students
- 1.00pm to 3.00pm - A Level Maths for selected students.

#### School Show – Buggy Malone

- 9.00am to 3.00pm - Rehearsals for all cast members not otherwise needed in school in M109. Please do not complete the Jotform.

### Combined Cadet Force

Cadets will still travel to Pangbourne College as normal, therefore they will need to be ready in cadet uniform outside main reception at 3.40pm. Please inform Mrs Saverton or Miss Pullen-Clarke if you are not attending so we can arrange appropriate transport. Please do not complete the Jotform.

### What to do now

If your child is in Year 11 or Year 13 and is required to be in school, you will receive a separate invitation.

If your child has an EHCP, social worker, is classed as looked after, a refugee or is otherwise vulnerable, you will receive a separate invitation and you will need to complete the Jotform mentioned below.

If you wish your child to attend school then you must complete the Jotform [click here](#), no later than 9.00am on Wednesday 1 March. We will confirm by the end of the same day whether we will be able to supervise your child on strike day. Students attending school will need to be at the gate by 8.58am on Thursday 2 March and must be in full school uniform. They will be greeted by a member of staff and informed which room to go to.

### Frequently Asked Questions

1. Will the canteen be open on 2 March? Yes, the canteen will be open at break and lunch time, although there may be a smaller choice of food available.
2. My child is on Free School Meals. What should I do? Any child who wishes to have their free school meal must attend school for the day.
3. Why can't some year groups come in and have normal lessons for the day? At present we do not know exactly which teachers will be on strike. It is likely to be more than half. This means that if we had any year groups in, more than half of their lessons would be cover lessons. There will not be any cover work set, because teachers who have withdrawn their labour – and who are not getting paid – should not be expected to set cover work.
4. Why can't the other teachers cover for striking teachers? Firstly, I cannot legally compel teachers to cover for striking teachers. In addition, I am mindful of the workload and wellbeing of all teachers – whether they are striking or not. Finally, even if it were legal or appropriate to ask non-striking teachers to cover for striking teachers, with two thirds of our teachers potentially on strike, there simply would not be enough teachers to provide cover.
5. What about using agency staff? Agency staff are currently few and far between – and many of them are members of the NEU and may therefore be on strike. Given that I cannot ask striking teachers to set cover work, even if we employed agency staff, there would be no work for them to deliver.
6. What about the other potential strike days – Wednesday 15 March and Thursday 16 March? I am hoping that the NEU and the government can reach agreement. If not, we will look at each strike day individually.

Finally, I would like to thank all parents/carers for their support of the school at this crucial time. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Yours faithfully

Mr E Towill MA (Oxon)  
Headteacher