

21 April 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

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 again envisage that a large number of them will go on strike on the above dates. 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.

The strikes are scheduled for Thursday 27 April and Tuesday 2 May 2023. On those days school will be:

- closed to students Years 7 to 10* who will be set lessons on Satchel:One
- open to all Year 11 students. During any cover lessons, we will provide learning materials for students but they will be allowed to use their own revision resources if they have brought them in with them
- open to Year 12 and Year 13 for timetabled lessons.

*Students of Year 10 - 10D/PV1 BTEC Sport

Miss C Wheeler will contact students via Satchel:One with further details. Any queries please email cwr@denefield.org.uk

The school will be open for those who wish to access their online lessons on site in supervised computer rooms. There is a limit to the number of students we can accommodate and will prioritise students in the following order:

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.

If your child is in school then normal expectations apply – except we will open from Period 1. Students should arrive by 8.58am in full uniform and with normal equipment.

If you wish your child to attend school then you must complete the jotform [click here](#), no later than 3.00pm Monday 24 April 2023. We will confirm by the end of the next day whether we will be able to supervise your child on strike day.

Inset clarification

We would just like to clarify that Monday 24 April is not a school inset day. Staff have twilight inset

training which is after 3.00pm and will not affect students. Denefield's next inset day is, as per the calendar, on Monday 26 June 2023.

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

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Will the canteen be open on these days? 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?
The NEU has not yet announced whether it will take industrial action on other days. I will keep you updated as soon as I have further information.