

26 January 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

PLANNED CLOSURE TO CLASSES DUE TO STRIKE ACTION

As I am sure you are aware, teacher members of the National Education Union (NEU) have voted to carry out industrial action and have announced their intention to strike on the following dates: Wednesday 1 February 2023, Tuesday 28 February 2023, Wednesday 15 March 2023 and Thursday 16 March 2023. Due to the nature of the industrial action, I will have to inform you of our position before each planned day, as it is possible to have a different outcome for each day of action, based on available staffing and risk assessments.

In relation to the potential strike day scheduled for **Wednesday 1st February 2023** Larkspur Primary School plans to close to the following classes and their pupils:

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|---------------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| • Nursery/Reception | Hazel Class | Miss Mills, Class Teacher |
| • Year One | Juniper Class | Miss Graham, Class Teacher |
| • Year Two | Beech Class | Mrs Arkless, Class Teacher |
| • Year Three | Birch Class | Mrs Bell, Class Teacher |
| • Year Four | Maple Class | Mr Doyle, Class Teacher |
| • Year Five | Elm Class | Mr Askwith, Class Teacher |

Year 6 children are expected to attend school as usual on 1st February 2023.

We know this decision will be disappointing for families and will cause challenges for childcare. Please refer to the frequently asked questions on the reverse of this letter for more information. Industrial action is not undertaken lightly, and decisions can alter over time even in the hours before a strike day. We will keep families updated whenever we have relevant information, to ensure there is clear planning to support our children.

If your child is entitled to Means Tested Free School Meals and is not attending school due to the strike, you can order a school packed lunch by contacting the office by 12pm on Monday 30th January. Packed lunches will need to be collected from school by an adult between 11:00am and 12:00pm on the day of the strike.

Thank you for your continued understanding in this matter.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Margaret R Liddle
Head Teacher

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Industrial Action – Strike Day - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1st February 2023

Why is the strike happening?

Various teaching unions balloted members about taking part in industrial action in relation to their pay and conditions. The outcome of the ballot from The National Education Union (NEU), which is the largest teaching union in England, was that the majority of their members voted to take action.

A programme of strike days has been scheduled which is aimed at highlighting to the government the feelings from members about problems which have been discussed between union officials and politicians over recent months.

Why will some schools close and others open?

There are several teaching unions and, within any school, there will be a different proportion of teachers within those unions. The other teaching unions do not have a mandate to strike and, therefore, any teacher who is not in the NEU is unable to undertake industrial action.

There is also a situation where, for various reasons, teachers who are part of the NEU may choose not to take part in the strike action and, instead, they will report for work.

Why might there be some classes closed and some open within the same school?

As only teachers in the NEU are able to strike at this point, this may mean that only specific classes will be affected. A school may have a situation where it is feasible to open to a number of classes because they have appropriate personnel in school to open safely to classes whose teachers are not striking.

How is a decision made?

The decision to open or close the school lies with the Head Teacher. When considering how to manage the situation, the Head Teacher must consider a number of factors such as the number of teachers, senior leaders, other staff, and first aiders that are available. Any decision will be based on an assessment of how safe it is for users of the building. This decision will also take into account what the problems may be if a major issue arose and how this would be safely managed without certain staff available.

If my child's class is closed, what will that mean for their attendance?

If a school has to restrict attendance by telling some pupils not to attend school on a strike day, the Y code should be used for pupils who are told not to attend. The Y code does not count towards the pupil or school's absence record.

Pupils who are required to attend should be marked in the normal way. If a pupil is required to attend school on a strike day but does not, then they must be recorded as absent.

If my child's class is open but other classes are not, is attendance optional?

Where the school is open to children, even partially, the attendance at school for these children is expected as normal.

This may mean that within one family, some children are able to attend school while others are not. This could be the situation across schools or within the same school.

My child is entitled to free school meals because of our household benefits. Will they still be provided with a meal on a strike day?

For any child who is entitled to free school meals due to a parent/carers' benefit assessments, they will be entitled to a meal on the day of a strike. However, for children not attending school, this meal will consist of a packed lunch prepared by the school meals service.

You will know if you are entitled to free school meals because this would have been agreed by the council and you will have recently been receiving meal vouchers over holiday periods as part of the government/council support scheme since the start of the pandemic.

If your child is in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 and receives a free meal through the Universal Infant Free School Meals system, they will not be entitled to a packed lunch provided by school on a strike day.

The arrangements for Larkspur Primary School:

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