

Friday 27th January, 2023



Dear Parent/Carer

### **Parental Update 111: NEU strike action, Wednesday 1st February**

As you may be aware, one of the main education Trade Unions, the National Education Union, is currently in dispute with the Government about pay. They have called a series of strikes, which (in the north-west) are planned as follows:

- Wednesday 1st February;
- Tuesday 28th February;
- Wednesday 15th March; and
- Thursday 16th March.

A number of our staff are members of the National Education Union ('NEU'), and I understand that nationally a significant number of teachers have joined the NEU in recent weeks.

We have conducted a risk assessment to determine whether it would be safe for St Margaret's to open to students given the number of teachers who will not be onsite. Given that we cannot be certain, for the first day of strike action, how many teachers will report for work, I regret to advise you that **St Margaret's will be closed to most students on Wednesday 1st February**. The exceptions to this are as follows:

- We will remain open for Sixth Form students. This is because we can ask post-16 students to study independently if their teacher is not in school for a lesson; we cannot ask pre-16 students to do this. Sixth Form lessons will take place as usual where teachers are in school.
- We will remain open for Year 11 students taking a BTEC ICT exam. **It is vital these students come to school for their exam**; it is an external exam and cannot be resat later in the week, for example. After taking their exam, these students will be expected to return home, unless they fall into one of the three categories below.
- We will also remain open for vulnerable students in Years 7 to 11. We define vulnerable students to be:
  - Looked After Children;
  - students with an allocated social worker; and
  - students with an EHCP.

If your son meets any of these definitions we will be in touch with you to check whether you wish him to attend school on Wednesday 1st February. If we don't get in touch with you, we are not expecting your son to attend school on Wednesday.

We regret that on this occasion we are not able to offer a place in school for key workers' children, but this will be reviewed for subsequent strike days.

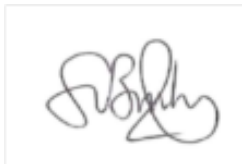
We will endeavour to set work on Teams for students who are at home if their normal classroom teacher is able to do so. If this does not happen, we would strongly encourage all students to engage with the excellent resources online at Oak National Academy, available [here](#).

Students who are entitled to Free School Meals can claim a supermarket voucher to cover the cost of a meal on strike day. Please e-mail [mdarcy@stmargaretsacademy.com](mailto:mdarcy@stmargaretsacademy.com) for more details.

I am sorry for any inconvenience this partial closure may cause you. Please do not presume that the same arrangements will apply on subsequent strike days; after the first day of action we will have a much clearer idea of the staffing resource available to us on subsequent days.

I appreciate that, of necessity, this is a rather different *Parental Update* to usual. We will be publishing another, more typical, *Update* on Friday 3rd February; please look out for it.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Brierley', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Stephen Brierley  
Principal.