



20<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

**Re: Planned strike action by the National Education Union (NEU)**

The National Education Union (NEU) has declared further strike action which is currently planned to take place on the following dates:

- **Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April**
- **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May**

The strikes are happening because of a national dispute between the NEU and the Government over teachers' pay and the impact of funding on schools over a number of years, and not because of any issues at our school. I am contacting you at this point to give you as much notice as possible about our arrangements and so that you can take the necessary action for your child(ren) if or when it may be required.

Members of the NEU are not required to let us know in advance whether they intend to be away from school although some may indicate their intentions to us. This means that, until the days of the strikes, we will not know for certain whether we will be able to run the school as we normally would. That being said I have met with our NEU union rep who has confirmed that approximately 70% of our teaching staff are NEU members and so we must assume that they will take industrial action. The NEU has provided additional guidance about supporting exam groups at this crucial point in the year. Exam classes at Swakeleys are Year 11, 12 and 13.

Taking all of the above into consideration I have made the decision that school will remain open to vulnerable children, the children of critical workers and for pupils sitting public exams in the Summer (Years 11, 12 and 13). School will be closed to other children and work will be set for them. Below is a summary of what each group is doing on the upcoming strike days:

	Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> April	Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> May
<b>Year 7</b>	Working remotely at home. Guidance on Y7 Google Classroom	
<b>Year 8</b>	Working remotely at home. Guidance on Y8 Google Classroom	
<b>Year 9</b>	Working remotely at home. Guidance on Y9 Google Classroom	
<b>Year 10</b>	Working remotely at home – Focusing on areas for development identified in 10 exams. Blank revision book has been provided for notes.	Year 10 on work shadowing
<b>Year 11</b>	<b>ALL YEAR 11 PUPILS IN SCHOOL</b> – students should register as normal in form rooms at 8.40am. Dismissal at the end of the school day.	
<b>Year 12</b>	<b>ALL YEAR 12 PUPILS IN SCHOOL</b> – students should register as normal in form rooms at 8.40am. Students stay until the end of the school day unless they do not have a teacher for the last lesson in which case they may sign out	
<b>Year 13</b>	<b>ALL YEAR 13 PUPILS IN SCHOOL</b> – students register as normal in form rooms at 8.40am. Students stay until the end of the school day unless they do not have a teacher for the last lesson in which case they can sign out	

The model we are running for Year 11, 12 and 13 involves them attending school for a full school day. Students will have a mixture of taught lessons, exam practice and independent study. **Students must bring physical copies of revision materials with them when they are in school on strike days.** These might include revision guides, notes and timetable. Personal learning checklists and past papers will also support focused and active revision. **Your child must attend school on strike days if they are in Years 11-13 as this is such a crucial time in the lead up to the public exams.**





We are super conscious that high levels of attendance are important for all students and I can assure you that all possible avenues have been explored in order to keep the school fully open. In line with the Department for Education's advice on 'Handling Strike Action in Schools' we are applying the principles set out in the DfE's emergency planning and response guidance by giving priority to vulnerable children and young people and children of critical workers (Annex A and B at [Emergency planning and response for education, childcare, and children's social care settings October 2022 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)) and then, if possible, those sitting public examinations this summer.

If you are a critical worker, or we have previously contacted you to advise you that your child can attend school on strike days, you can book a place for your child to attend. If you would like your child to be in school for the strike days please could you contact my PA at [zwilkinsl@swakeleys.org.uk](mailto:zwilkinsl@swakeleys.org.uk) by Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April.

Our experience of delivering blended and online learning, developed during the pandemic, means that we have a well-established online learning facility, although we may not have staff able to facilitate this fully for all subject areas on any strike day. The Department for Education has said that there is no obligation for schools to cover the curriculum on strike days. However I am sure that we can agree that we want your child to be busy and engaged on the strike days. Because I am unable to know for sure which members of staff will be in school I am therefore not able to guarantee work will be consistently available for all students. We will ask staff who are not striking to provide work for students. Some staff will teach lessons via google meet. Other staff may set work on google classroom. If no work is available on google classroom we have provided some standalone activities which should keep your child busy over the strike days. Attached is information about what each year group should do on strike days and this will also be available on your child's year group google classroom.

Should your child require access to a device in order to complete work at home on the strike days please could you email my pa at: [zwilkinsl@swakeleys.org.uk](mailto:zwilkinsl@swakeleys.org.uk) by Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April.

If your child is eligible for free school meals then we will send you out vouchers to cover the cost of lunches for the two days of strikes. If your daughter is in school on the strike days she will be able to have her lunch as normal as the canteen will be open.

I am sorry that you may have to make alternative arrangements for your child at short notice, and that they may experience further disruption to their education but hope that in communicating the uncertainty of the situation and our plan for the strikes will enable you time to make arrangements. I understand that this situation may be frustrating and you should be assured that Swakeleys School for Girls remains committed to providing a safe and secure environment for our students and delivering high-quality teaching and learning.

I will inform you as soon as possible if or when I know further details and hope that a resolution can be reached between the NEU and the Government as quickly as possible. In the meantime if you have any queries do please address them to: [office@swakeleys.org.uk](mailto:office@swakeleys.org.uk)

Yours sincerely

Kelda Stevenson