

Our ref: DSH/AKE

Wednesday 25th January 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

National Education Union - strike action for teachers

- **Wednesday 1st February (whole country)**
- **Wednesday 1st March West Midlands and East Midlands**
- **Wednesday 15th March (whole country)**
- **Thursday 16th March (whole country)**

As you may have seen, the National Education Union (NEU) has confirmed that their teaching members will be taking industrial action in the form of strike days. The first date scheduled is Wednesday 1st February. The other three dates are: Wednesday 1st March, Wednesday 15th March and Thursday 16th March, but we will update you of the plans closer to those dates, as the Secretary of State is meeting with trade unions to try to resolve the outstanding issues.

This action is not against Outwood Academy Portland itself, but is part of national industrial action organised by the trade unions about salary negotiations with the Department for Education.

Neither the Outwood Grange Academies Trust Board nor I as Principal are legally allowed to close the academy in sympathy with the strike, and we will not do so. However, our main concern is the health and safety of our students. The academy will only close (partially or fully) if, in our opinion and following a full risk assessment, it is not safe to remain open.

Due to the number of staff taking action, we have made the difficult decision to close the academy on the first strike day (Wednesday 1st February) to all students apart from Year 11, who will be expected to attend as normal, with the exception of any vulnerable students from other year groups. We will be in touch with the parents/cares of vulnerable students shortly. Vulnerable students can be defined as looked after children, children in need, child protection and children who have an Education Health Care Plan.

Whilst the academy will be closed to some students, online learning via Google Classroom will be available to all students and students will be expected to complete the work set. Please note, that work set may be different from normal timetabled lessons as their teacher may be striking. Instructions will be given to students regarding work set via google classroom. Work packs will be made available for those who do not have access to a computer. Please complete the attached form if your child requires one.

Students in all year groups in receipt of Free School Meals may attend between 12.30pm and 1pm on Wednesday 1st February to collect a lunch pack. Please complete the attached form if you request a lunch pack by noon on Friday 27th January 2023.

The google form for paper work packs and Free School Meal packs can be found here:
<https://forms.gle/PB4KMdhM8B9YFqNj9>

For Year 11 and vulnerable students, the academy will be open as normal and students should arrive ready for the usual 8.25am start. Buses for students will run as usual, however enrichments will be reduced.

As we may not know until very late how many staff will be available to work, the decision to fully close may have to be taken at the last minute. However, every effort will be made to give notice - at the latest by the day before.

In order to ensure that we can communicate any changes to these plans at short notice; which may include on the day itself, we are asking parents/carers to ensure that we hold up to date emergency contact details. If you do need to make any changes, please send to our dedicated email address for this purpose enquires@portland.outwood.com. We will always endeavour to minimise disruption as much as possible.

We will update you again about the plan for the academy before the next proposed strike date. We understand that there will be concerns about the disruption but we want to give you this advance notice and thank you in advance for your patience and understanding at this time.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D Sheehan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Danielle Sheehan
Principal