

**Poltair School**  
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Headteacher: Mr Mark Everett



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26<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Planned strike action at Poltair School: Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023

I am writing to give you as much notice as possible about our arrangements for Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 to enable you to arrange alternative childcare where needed.

### **Background**

We have had confirmation from the NEU that members of the union intend to take formal industrial action by participating in a strike which will take place on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February, Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March, Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

The strike action is in relation to a national dispute around teachers and school staff pay. I wanted to take this opportunity to further explain the dispute and to also outline the school's plans during the strike.

### **What is the dispute which has led to the strike?**

As you may know, teaching unions across England and Scotland, including the NEU, are in dispute with the Department for Education regarding their request for teachers' pay to keep up with inflation and the cost of living.

### **What will happen at the school during the strike?**

We have conducted a risk assessment to assess how we can manage the school safely for staff and students during this period of industrial action. Given the staffing levels we believe we will have on the day, we feel we are able to open the school to Year 11 students only.

### **Students who will attend school:**

Year 11 have been prioritised to attend school as they have public examinations this summer, as well as the days and weeks following strike action.

Year 11 will have a combination of timetabled lessons, where possible, and revision workshops. They should report to their tutor rooms as normal for registration and in full school uniform. Some classes may need to be combined and supervised by a non-specialist teacher or a member of senior staff.

Year 11 must attend school as planned on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February as the Department for Education expects all school-registered children of compulsory school age to be in attendance on school opening days.

### **All other students (Years 7, 8, 9 & 10)**

Years 7 – 10: Will have work set via ClassCharts. For Year 7, 8 & 9 this will be work to prepare them for their forthcoming assessments. For Year 10 this will be work focused around careers and work experience.

If you or your child need support in accessing ClassCharts – our IT support team are available by email [helpdesk@celtrust.org](mailto:helpdesk@celtrust.org).

## **Student Support Centre, Link 3 & Link 4**

In addition to Year 11, we are able to accommodate some SEND children and safeguard our most vulnerable young people. A small number of students will be invited into school and will be supervised within either the Student Support Centre, Link 3 or Link 4 dependent on their individual needs. You will hear from the SEND or Safeguarding teams directly to arrange this provision with you over the coming week.

### **Practical arrangements**

- School transport will operate as normal
- Catering for staff and students will be provided in the school canteen as normal
- Students in Years 7-10 who are entitled to Free School Meals will be offered a packed lunch to take home with them on the afternoon of Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> January
- The school day will finish at 3.15pm, all after school activities are cancelled on this day.

### **Picket lines**

Some staff might form a picket line outside the school. A picket line is where staff gather near the entrance to a workplace to protest in person and they may be holding notice boards or banners. If this is the case, I would like to take this opportunity to inform all students and parents that, as a Trust, we support our staff's legal right to strike. Please ensure that any interactions you have with staff are as courteous and respectful as they would be on any other day.

I would also like to remind you that it is unlawful for people who are not members of staff at the school (or their union representatives) to join a picket line. We therefore ask parents and carers or students to refrain from joining any picket line.

### **Summary**

We have tried to give parents and carers as much notice as possible of these arrangements, as we appreciate that any closure or partial closure is disruptive to you, for which we apologise. We hope that you understand we have not taken these decisions lightly and had to take decisions to secure the health and safety of your child and any non-striking staff into consideration of anticipated heavily reduced numbers of staffing.

We understand that this situation may be frustrating and ask that all members of our school community continue to treat each other with politeness and respect. Poltair remains committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment for everyone.

We are working closely with our union representatives to keep up to date with the situation, and I will inform you as soon as possible if arrangements change further. Further strike days have been scheduled for Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March, Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March and I would encourage you to consider contingency plans for childcare on these days.

Please be assured that despite these challenging times, your child's education is extremely important to all staff at Poltair.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school via [secretary@poltaire.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:secretary@poltaire.cornwall.sch.uk)

Yours sincerely



Mark Everett  
Headteacher