

Dear Parent / Carer

I am writing with updates regarding:

- Upcoming strikes
- Uniform
- Toilets and vapes
- A busy week

UPCOMING STRIKES

The National Education Union (NEU) are planning two further days of industrial action:

- **Thursday, April 27th**
- **Tuesday, May 2nd**

This is a continuation of the national dispute because of what the NEU ballot defined as a “*Failure to provide a fully funded above-inflation pay rise (as measured by Sept 2022 RPI). A fully funded pay rise is one that is funded by additional resources sufficient to provide the above-inflation pay rise*”. There are two issues at stake here. The first is the actual amount of the pay rise itself; the second is that it is fully funded rather than schools having to meet the additional cost from existing budgets, thereby having to make cuts in educational provision elsewhere. The government recently proposed a 4.5% pay rise for next year, but their expectation is that 4% of that would be met from existing school budgets, leading to significant cutbacks having to be made to fund this by individual schools. This offer has subsequently been rejected by all of the teaching unions.

As you are aware, this is not a dispute with the school as an employer. However, the majority of our teaching staff are members of the NEU so our ability to function as a school will be severely compromised.

As such, we will only be open to the following students on both days:

- **Year 11**
- **Year 12**
- **Year 13**
- **Bridge and LEAP students**
- **Students with an EHCP**

Other students are expected to log onto Teams at home for a live lesson according to their regular timetable. In the event that a teacher is on strike there will be no lesson that period, but they should log on for the next lesson.

Wednesday 15th March is also Budget Day for the government when they are due to set out their future tax and spending plans. Let us hope that the government find some additional funding that results in

industrial action being called off as the last thing anybody wants is to see the education of our young people detrimentally affected. Thank you for your support and understanding in the meantime.

UNIFORM

Please can you ensure that your child attends school wearing full uniform each day. This includes a school blazer or the school quarter zipper PE top which are both compulsory items of uniform. Please do not let your child wear a sweatshirt or hoodie to school (including those from the recent French Exchange or ski trip); this applies to Sixth Form students as well. We appreciate your support in ensuring that students come to school in the **correct uniform** throughout the year, with **names clearly marked on all garments**. We have a sizeable number of PE zipper tops of all sizes available in lost property if your child does not have one. Persistent wearing of incorrect sweatshirts or hoodies will result in the items being confiscated.

TOILETS AND VAPING

From Monday we are adjusting our duty rotas to provide more active supervision of toilet areas. Everybody expects to have clean facilities that they are able to use. I would like to reassure parents that we have CCTV in the toilet areas, our individual cubicles all have locks on the doors and the toilets are cleaned three times per day. However, please be aware that staff will be monitoring the toilet areas to ensure single occupancy and that students are not eating or vaping in cubicles.

A BUSY WEEK

It has been an enjoyable first week back despite one student causing an incident on Tuesday afternoon. Contrary to speculation, there was no knife involved and the school did not go into lockdown, however numerous lessons were interrupted. Staff responded appropriately and the police helped remove the individual concerned from the premises and we are taking appropriate disciplinary action. However, this should not overshadow the many excellent activities students enjoy on a regular basis. Over Easter a group of students were skiing in Austria and Sixth Form Physics students visited CERN in Geneva, Switzerland. This week there has been a practice expedition for Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award, whilst our year 7 and 11 boys football teams both narrowly lost their District Cup Finals. Today we have had staff from NFU Mutual providing 1:1 career coaching sessions to Sixth Form students, whilst Year 9 and 10 have enjoyed an engaging, powerful assembly about knife crime. I am proud to lead such a committed and talented staff team who provide such a range of opportunities for our young people.

Thank you for your ongoing support and understanding. As ever, our twitter account [@StraUponAvonSch](https://twitter.com/StraUponAvonSch) contains regular updates.

Yours faithfully



Mr Neil Wallace
Headteacher