



Sir Graham Balfour School

Member of Sir Graham Balfour Multi-Academy Trust

Our Ref: MMM / VM

27th January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

You will probably be aware from recent media coverage that the National Education Union (NEU) have declared strike action, which will take place on the following dates:

- Wednesday 1st February
- Wednesday 1st March
- Wednesday 15th March
- Thursday 16th March

The strikes are part of the formal trade dispute between the NEU and the government regarding teacher recruitment and retention, including pay, and not because of any issues in Sir Graham Balfour School.

The problems in teacher recruitment are real and evident in schools across the country. The target for the recruitment of new secondary school teachers was missed this year, with only 59% of the target met (Source - [Initial Teacher Training Census, Academic Year 2022/23 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/explore-education-statistics)). This is the ninth year out of the last ten that the recruitment target has been missed and it does make it highly challenging for all schools to recruit specialist teachers in most areas of the curriculum. We are fortunate at Balfour in that we are currently fully staffed with subject experts in each department, but the governors and I do have significant concerns about teacher recruitment in the future should the current national problems remain unresolved.

The rest of this letter gives details of our arrangements for **Wednesday 1st February only**. These arrangements are a pragmatic response to the impact of strike action by our colleagues on that day.

- School will be open for students in Year 7 and Year 8 only.
- School will be closed for students in Years 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13. Students in these year groups should remain at home and they will be provided with remote learning or directed revision to complete on the day of the strike.
- Year 9 Pathway meetings scheduled for this day will be rearranged.
- School buses will run as normal for students in Year 7 and Year 8. The canteen will also be open as normal in school.
- All after school and lunchtime clubs will be cancelled.

If the strikes in March go ahead, then we will carry out an analysis of the impact, as above and I will be in touch prior to each date to confirm the arrangements.

Yours faithfully

Mr M Mason
Headteacher