



De La Salle  
School

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Headteacher: Mr. A. Rannard BA (Hons) NPQH

25<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Dear Parent / Carer

### **Re: Strike Action Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February**

I am sure you are aware that members of one of the larger teaching unions, the NEU (formerly the NUT and ATL unions), will be taking strike action on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February.

As a result, and after discussion with the St Helens secondary schools and reviewing the situation within school, I am writing to inform you that the school will be closed on that day to all students except:

- Vulnerable students (who will be contacted directly and invited into school)
- Year 11 students completing their mock GCSE Art exam

This has not been an easy decision, especially at a time when we, and the education sector are emphasising the importance of attendance and attempting to fill the gaps left by the pandemic.

#### **Why have you closed the school?**

Attempting to keep the school open is very challenging during a strike as, under the current guidelines, we do not know which staff will be striking. Likewise, the number of staff going on strike will not be clear until the day. Last week we had an indicative number, which was around half of our teaching staff, but since then there has been a widely-reported shift of staff to the NEU, so we anticipate this figure to be considerably higher by next Wednesday.

In addition to not knowing which staff would be in on the day, I am not permitted to ask other teachers to cover or supervise the students of a colleague on strike. This would result in large numbers of classes having no teacher or supervision throughout the day and me not knowing which classes they were until school started on Wednesday morning. This would simply not be a safe situation.

#### **What work should students do on Wednesday?**

Other restrictions prevent me from asking staff to plan online work when striking or for those who are striking. Like most schools, we are addressing this by encouraging students to pick up the topics they are currently studying through Oak National Academy <https://www.thenational.academy/> and of course the other online provisions that our students routinely use such as Mathswatch, Seneca Learning, GCSE Pod and TEAMS, and for Year 11 to focus upon their revision ahead of the mocks the week later.

#### **What about students on Free school Meals?**

We are working with the LA on a solution to this and hoping to be able to secure vouchers for all families on free school meals. We will be in contact with these families once this has been sorted out.

### **What about the other 3 strike dates?**

At the moment, as well as Wednesday's strike, schools in the North West are planned to be affected by NEU strikes on:

- Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February
- Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March
- Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March

I appreciate and apologise that this will cause disruption for many of our families. Everyone in the school, and wider education community, is saddened that the education of young people will be disrupted and we live in hope that some sort of resolution may be found to the dispute that prevents these strikes taking place. I will, of course, update you on our arrangements for any further strike action nearer the time.

Yours sincerely

**Andrew Rannard**  
Headteacher.