

27th January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to you regarding the proposed industrial action by members of the National Education Union (NEU) and the implications of this for us here at John Mason.

The first day of proposed action, in the form of a strike, is scheduled for **Wednesday 1st February. I am writing to inform you that school will be closed for all pupils on this day.**

We have spent some considerable time risk assessing the situation, as far as we know it, and have come to the inevitable conclusion that we simply do not have enough teaching staff in school to ensure that all pupils will be kept safe. Members of the NEU make up a significant number of the teaching staff here and they have indicated to me that they will be exercising their legal right to take industrial action in the form of a strike on the above date.

Members of the other main teaching union, the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) have instructed their members not to take part in any activities that would contravene the strike action of other unions, such as covering lessons for colleagues who are striking, setting work on their behalf, or teaching classes that have been put together. The situation is further compounded by the fact that teaching staff who have caring responsibilities for their own families have indicated that they may have to take time off school to look after their own children/dependents in the event that their own child's school is closed on this date as well.

It is apparent then, given the significant and overwhelming numbers of teachers who will not be available to teach, set work, cover lessons or perform duties, that we could in no way be able to keep our pupils safe, or supervise them adequately throughout an entire school day. The action by the NEU and the directed actions of NASUWT also mean that it is not possible for us to set remote learning to the standard that parents would usually expect and that we were able to provide during the school closures during the pandemic. However, pupils can complete homework and independent study on Google Classroom and via the numerous online platforms we provide e.g. Sparkx Maths, Seneca, Carousel, gcsepod, linguascope, Oak Academy and bedrock.

If you are a critical worker and need to send your child to school, we may have some limited provision available. Please let us know by the end of Monday 30th January if this is required, by emailing office.4126@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk

Registered Office: Rush Common School
Hendred Way, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 2AW

John Mason School is part of the Abingdon Learning Trust.
Abingdon Learning Trust is an exempt charity and a
company limited by guarantee.
Registered in England and Wales: **Company No. 7931866**

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The NEU have indicated that they are preparing to take action on a number of days in the near future. The next scheduled date is Thursday 2nd March. I suspect that there will be further negotiations with teachers' unions and the Department for Education, and that the context and landscape around the dispute could change fairly quickly. We will wait to see what happens as a result of this first day of action. If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully



Headteacher

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