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Happy half-term – and Future Industrial Action

Dear Parents and Carers,

It's been a really busy half-term and it was so good to round it off by seeing so many of you at the Parents' Evenings on 7th and 8th February. What a joy it was for us to be able to celebrate with you in person everything that your children are achieving, and to share ideas about what we can collectively do to help them achieve even more.

Thank you for your support and understanding through the full school closure day on 1st February. For that day my risk assessment was that I could not safely and securely open the site, and that the next best way of safeguarding the children was to give you all clear notice of the closure.

In consultation with the Governors I have undertaken a full risk assessment around potential future action, doing our best to navigate the wide range of non-statutory advice given, alongside all the complexities of Trade Union and employment law! One of the big risks is that all the senior leadership time, and much of the teachers thinking time over the next month and a half, could get eaten up in making complicated 'alternative arrangements' which would be to the ongoing detriment of learning across the school. For this reason – and because I believe the next best way to safeguard children is to give you clear notice - we're going to try and keep things simple.

We have agreed that the approach will be this:

- The classes of any teachers taking action will be closed
- Any clubs led by those teachers will not run
- Any children in those classes eligible for statutory free schools meals will be offered a 'packed lunch' to take home the day before
- All other children will attend school as usual
- Premier Education clubs and after school care to continue as normal
- The year 5 Dorset trip will be unaffected

In our school context, where we are respecting the rights of individual teachers to take action (or not), it is inevitable that some classes will be affected more often than others. In addition, I am sorry but I cannot guarantee that siblings will be able to attend on the same days and appreciate that this may well add complications in your homes!

The teachers have very generously agreed to give us as much notice as they can about their intention to take any further action – and have told me they are waiving their right to change their minds at the last minute! This means that once they have given me a decision they will stick to it. Some are still undecided.

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As things stand today:

- 2nd March – 6 classes closed
- 15th March – 15 classes closed
- 16th March – whole school closed

It is my intention to give parents notice of class closures by the following dates:

- no later than 22nd February – for any class closures on 2nd March
- no later than Monday 6th March – for any class closures on 15th and 16th March

In the event that the NEU calls off their action, school will of course be open as usual for all children regardless of any prior notice we have given. The only way that this will happen is if the Government engage realistically in negotiations. To my mind it's worth us all taking any steps we can to avoid the disruption to learning that seems inevitable at present, and one step that parents might consider taking is writing to their MP. The NAHT and NEU have launched a site to make this as easy as possible:

[Click here – and please share this link with anyone else you feel would like a voice to support teachers.](#)

It's a long shot – but surely it must be worth a try!

What I can assure you is that on the non-action days it is completely 'business as usual', with everyone working their socks off to ensure the children are getting the highest quality and broadest learning experiences that we can possibly deliver.

I thank you for your support, and pray that it will be ongoing.

Best wishes



Sarah Lewis

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