



Tuesday 24th January 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

NEU Industrial Action – Wednesday 1st February 2023

Further to my letter of 19th January 2023 regarding the forthcoming industrial action impacting schools, I write to confirm the situation for next Wednesday 1st February 2023.

The action will result in Barrow Hedges being closed for eleven of its classes next Wednesday. The following classes will be **OPEN** and children are expected to attend as usual:

Nursery

Reception – Fox
Reception – Badger
Reception – Hedgehog

Year 1 – Squirrel
Year 1 – Otter

Year 2 – Robin

Year 4 – Lime

Year 6 – Sycamore
Year 6 – Chestnut
Year 6 – Willow

Our after school clubs, which on Wednesdays are all run by external providers, will go ahead as normal and all children, including those whose classes are closed due to the strike, will be able to attend. A separate communication will be sent to those parents whose children attend a Wednesday club and this will include a form to complete – please do look out for this and respond as soon as possible so that we will make the necessary arrangements. **Hedgerows will run as usual for those children who are booked on as will tutoring.**



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When making any decisions to close or partially close the school, please be aware there are many factors to consider. This includes the health and safety aspects of a reduced staff capacity including adequate supervision, necessary first aid cover and the required safeguarding provision.

Finally, I absolutely recognise the disruption that this causes for parents and carers which is why we have wanted to provide you with this information at our earliest opportunity. I know that the decision the teachers have made is certainly not one that has been taken lightly. Although the strike is detailed as being about pay (and its gradual erosion over time) the reasons many teachers will have decided to strike is about so much more than their own personal circumstance, more the effect that these circumstances have on their pupils. Current funding levels in schools are woefully inadequate to meet the needs of society (despite the claims of real terms cash increases). Schools have national pay scales and we are confined by the income we are given. When a recession and cost of living crisis hits, retail and hospitality sectors can put up their prices and then offer to pay higher wages to compensate this. Schools with a fixed income can't do this, therefore staff may leave or are forced to rely on handouts or foodbanks leading to further staffing challenges, pressure on those who remain in the profession, burn out and a recruitment crisis which is very real in the here and now.

Therefore, when teachers, like nurses, are striking 'because of pay' it is not very often solely because of their own take home pay. It's the impact it has on the service they can provide, that they long to provide. Having entered caring professions teachers never want to disadvantage their pupils. They are not taking a day off - striking workers are not paid when they withdraw their labour - but they are left with no option to affect change.

Thank you for your understanding in this matter and if you have any concerns that you would wish to speak to us confidentially about then do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Louise wood".

Mrs Louise Wood
Headteacher