

Mildenhall College Academy

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Principal: Miss N Hood BEd (hons)



**Mildenhall College**  
A C A D E M Y

27<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Dear Parent and/or Carer

### **NEU Strike Action**

A very high number of colleagues are in the National Education Union (NEU) and have indicated that they will join the strike action, giving up a day's pay as they are withdrawing from work, on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February. This means there will be substantial changes to our provision on that day. The NEU has posted a document for parents, carers and grandparents that explains their reasons for taking strike action. It can be found at <https://neu.org.uk/media/24511/view> if you wish to read it.

Following a comprehensive review of our timetable and the completion of the expected risk assessment, I can confirm that the academy **will only be open to Year 7, Years 11, 12 and 13 and a very small number of students in other years.** As the academy will be open to Year 7, 11, 12 and 13, those students are expected to attend, and any absence will be followed up in the usual way.

**Students in Years 8, 9 & 10 will be expected to work at home.** A small number of students will be invited to work in the academy, but in all other cases students must work from home as we will not have enough staff to provide safe levels of supervision. Work will be set by 9am, however, please note that teachers who are on strike will not prepare or set work for students on strike days, so the work set will only cover some of the timetabled lessons for that day. When students have completed that work, we would encourage them to spend any additional school time closing gaps, completing homework and making use of the on-line programmes provided by the academy such as Sparx Maths, Educake and Bedrock. Students in Years 8-10 could also choose to access materials from Oak Academy and to use those to explore a topic of interest or to revisit a key topic.

### **FAQs**

#### **What will happen about individual music lessons?**

If your peripatetic Music teacher is available and decides to offer lessons in the academy on 1<sup>st</sup> February, you will be allowed to come into the academy for the duration of your lesson. If transport issues make that difficult for you, then your peri Music teacher might be able to change the timetable or offer a lesson on TEAMS. Please email Mrs Sayer with any queries on this matter.

# #TransformingLives



### **Will fixtures go ahead?**

Fixtures on this day will be re-scheduled for a non-strike day.

### **How will you provide for students entitled to Free School Meals?**

Students entitled to free school meals will be invited to pick up a packed lunch bag from the Dining Room the day before (Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> January), at the end of the academy day.

### **Why have Year 7, 11, 12 and 13 been selected to come in instead of another year group?**

A review of the timetable showed that we can provide meaningful provision for some year groups. We have prioritised Years 11-13 as they have mock examinations approaching and are in important examination years and Year 7 due to the increased potential for childcare. We do not have sufficient guaranteed staff cover to invite more than these year groups into the academy. If further staff indicate they will join the strike action then we may need to close to Year 7 and we will endeavour to give as much advance warning as we can.

### **What will teachers who are not on strike be doing, if students are not in the academy?**

Teachers who are not on strike will attend work in the usual way. They will teach their classes and be on duty. They will assist in setting work for their classes at home and be available to support students working at home during those lesson slots. In addition, they will mark work and prepare lessons.

### **Why are you not running live lessons for students at home?**

We have decided that the high number of colleagues expected to be on strike means that it is better for our students to know how much work has been set by their teachers from the start of the day. They can then complete that work to the best of their ability. They can divide their time, using any gained time to close gaps in their learning using on-line programmes provided by the academy and use the resources provided by Oak Academy.

### **Will this be the plan on the other strike days?**

Not necessarily. It is possible that the government and the NEU reach an agreement and the planned strike days in March are cancelled or reduced in scale. We are also aware that NEU colleagues may decide to only strike on some of the identified days and that more colleagues may choose to join the NEU. We will look at each day in turn and communicate with you. We will endeavour to prioritise exam years, where the timetable allows for meaningful teaching to take place.

**Will school transport be operating if many students are at home?**

The bus companies have confirmed that school buses will run as normal and so those students expected to be in the academy should travel to the academy in the usual way.

Clearly this is a difficult situation, which will cause some disruption. I would ask you, however, to be understanding. A national strike by teachers is *very* unusual. Taking strike action is not something that any teacher would undertake lightly. Those on strike will have thought long and hard about their decision and will also lose pay for the days that they are on strike.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N Hood', written in a cursive style.

Miss N Hood  
Principal