



Tomlinscote School

27th January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Arrangements at Tomlinscote School on Wednesday 1st February 2023

As you will be aware, the National Education Union (NEU) have voted to strike next Wednesday 1st February 2023. This industrial action is the result of a national dispute between the NEU and the Government over concerns about funding of schools, the erosion of teachers' pay and the subsequent difficulties this causes for recruitment.

This industrial action impacts upon whether a school can remain open and this will vary upon the local context. In order to make a decision regarding Tomlinscote school, a number of factors were considered. We reviewed all the information available from the DfE and unions and produced a risk assessment to establish the extent to which we can operate without compromising the safety of our students. We assessed staff capacity – the majority of staff at Tomlinscote belong to the NEU, assessed student supervision during lessons - because colleagues that are present in school cannot be compelled to provide cover for other teachers during industrial action and reviewed supervision at break and lunchtimes.

It became very clear that Tomlinscote cannot safely operate with the limited number of teachers potentially on site. Consequently, we have made the following decisions regarding our provision:

The school will be open for:

- Year 11 students who are sitting the BTEC Information Technologies external examination. These students must come to the Main Hall by 8.40am. They can go home after the test.
- Year 11 students who are sitting the UKMT intermediate maths challenge. This is an external maths challenge paper. Students must come to the Main Hall by 10.40am. They can go home after the test.
- A small, identified group of students will be contacted directly and expected to come into school. This group represents a category of student that we have been asked by the Government to prioritise. This group will be on-site and supervised whilst engaging with independent learning. They will be expected to be in school uniform.
- Staff that are not undertaking industrial action.

(continued)

Remote learning from home for students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11 – using the iPads.

- **All students** will need to go onto Google Classroom at 9am. They will need to look to see whether a member of staff has set work for them for each of their six period lessons. Teaching staff who are not striking will be present in school. They will set work on Google Classroom for each lesson. Students will be able to interact and communicate through Google Classroom with the teacher if they need support. Teachers who are on strike are not allowed to set work and therefore nothing will appear on Google Classroom for that lesson.
- **Year 11 students** – Where students do not have set work for their lesson, then they must utilise that time to produce revision materials/retrieval materials/complete past examination papers in preparation for their mock examinations and GCSEs. Students can also access Dr Frost maths, SENECA learning and use Kerboodle for relevant GCSE subjects. Many students also have the subject textbooks available on their iPad. It will be a useful time to prepare revision materials and must be used constructively.
- **Year 10 students & Year 9 students** – Where students do not have work set for their lesson, then they can also utilise this time to produce revision materials on the topics covered so far on their GCSE courses. Year 10 have access to SENECA learning resources. Year 9 have started their GCSE Science course. Students can also complete independent work using Sparx Maths and complete any home learning.
- **Year 7 students & Year 8 students** – Where students do not have work set for their lesson, then they can complete reading in preparation for their next accelerated reader quiz. They can also complete any home learning and access Sparx Maths for additional independent Maths activities.
- All students who are in receipt of a Free School Meal, will be contacted separately with arrangements for how they can receive access to a meal on 1st February whilst not at school.

I want to highlight that this decision has not been taken lightly. I appreciate that it will potentially create difficulties for some families, but we do need to adhere to strict rules concerning industrial action and to ensure that we can operate safely. The NEU have planned several other strike days in March and I will communicate our plans as soon as possible when I know more information.

Thank you for your support at this very difficult time for everyone concerned.

Yours sincerely,

Mr R Major
Principal