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Thursday, 26 January 2023

Dear Parents,

NEU Teachers' Strike on Wednesday 1st February

You will have heard in the press this week, that the National Education Union has voted to arrange a series of strikes, in protest of teachers' pay and conditions, and school funding. This action is not against Deptford Park School itself but is part of national industrial action organised by the NEU for the reasons above. Some of the teachers at Deptford Park are members of the NEU, and have indicated they will be taking strike action on Wednesday 1st February. I am sure that you will understand that our dedicated and hard working teachers have not taken this decision lightly.

The NEU explain: *"This is not about a pay rise but correcting historic real-terms pay cuts. Teachers have lost 23% in real-terms since 2010, and support staff 27% over the same period. The average 5% pay rise for teachers this year is some 7% behind inflation. In the midst of a cost of living crisis, that is an unsustainable situation."* In addition, part of this pay rise has NOT been funded by central government, and will have to be found in the school's existing budget. This will have a direct impact on the provision at Deptford Park and our pupils and staff.

There is no requirement on unions to inform us of which members of staff will take action, and it may be that they will not know themselves as there is no obligation on members of unions to obey a strike call. Therefore, I may not know until very late how many staff will be available to work, the decision to close may have to be taken at the last minute. Every effort will be made to give notice at the latest by the day before.

If our school does remain open or partly open for some classes, it is unlikely that lessons will be normal and there may have to be sessions supervised by support staff who have the skills required to carry out the work. There is no legal requirement to teach the curriculum on strike days.

Whilst we are aware of the inconvenience that the strike will cause families, teachers across the UK are asking the Government to listen to their concerns and reconsider their stance to protect education, and enhance the recruitment and retention of teachers. We must all hope that the issues over which the industrial action has arisen are resolved as soon as possible.

As things currently stand **Deptford Park will be open on that day.**

Sincerely,

Ken Johnson

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Head Teacher: Ken Johnson
Deputy Head: Leona Baffour

