# Unity College

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> Our ref: JRI 7 March 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

# Industrial Action – Wednesday 15 and Thursday 16 March 2023 – Partial College Closure

As you may be aware, members of the National Education Union (NEU) are taking further strike action on Wednesday 15 and Thursday 16 March 2023. This represents a significant proportion of our staff body and so I do not believe we will be able to open safely to all students on this day. We will therefore prioritise groups in line with DfE guidance. This means that on Wednesday 15 and Thursday 16 March, the College will be closed to all year groups except for Year 11, who will be expected to attend school as usual. We will also provide child care provision for children of critical workers and those defined as vulnerable under the DfE guidance.

### Year 11

Year 11 students should attend that day as normal. They will be taught and these lessons will be important preparation for their exams. They should wear uniform and bring equipment.

# **Vulnerable Pupils**

Children with an EHCP and children with a social worker will be able to attend regardless of year group. Parents and carers of these students were contacted prior to the first day of industrial action on 1 February 2023. We will assume that, if your child attended college on 1 February and/or 28 February that they will do so on 15 and 16 March. Students must be in full uniform and bring all equipment. PE kit will not be required.

## **Children of Critical Workers**

School closure is always disruptive and we will seek to minimise this by providing childcare for critical workers if required. Again, we will assume that all students who requested a place in college on 1 February and/or 28 February also require one on 15 and 16 March. If you did not request a place for your child on 1 February or 28 February but need one for 15 and 16 March, please email a.hodgson@unity.lancs.sch.uk by 12 noon on Monday 13 March.

Please note that children in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 who attend college on 15 and 16 March will complete the same remote learning as their peers. Children will be supervised and supported by college staff. There will be no timetabled lessons on this day for children in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10. PE kit will not be required.

# **Access to Learning**

Teachers who are taking strike action will not be available to teach or set work, and teachers who are not striking will be working with exam groups or providing childcare as above. We will therefore be unable to provide online teaching. Work will be set for students in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 to complete at home. This work will be set via SatchelOne.

### Catering and Free School Meals

There will be a limited catering offer available in college on Wednesday 15 and Thursday 16 March for Year 11 children and those in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 who are attending college. Children will be able to purchase food or obtain a free school meal. For those families eligible for free school meals whose children will not be in college on 15 and 16 March, a voucher(s) equivalent to the value of a school-provided meal, for each child, will be sent directly to the parent's or carer's email address. If we do not have an email address, the voucher will be posted.

# 9x Parents' Evening – Wednesday 15 March

Given that a significant number of teachers are taking industrial action on 15 March, I have taken the decision to postpone the planned Parents' Evening. This will now take place on **Wednesday 29 March**. A small number of teachers will not be available on this date because it is the opening night of our college production *Matilda* but we will provide alternative methods of consulting with these teachers.

I know this is disruptive for everyone and I have carefully considered all alternatives. However, I have to be able to keep everyone safe, and I do not anticipate having enough staff to facilitate wider opening on 15 and 16 March. I hope by taking this decision as early as possible, it allows you to make alternative arrangements. Despite the inconvenience, it is important that we continue to work together. Teachers care very much about their students and want them to be able to attend well-funded schools, with specialist staff who want to remain in the profession.

Yours sincerely

Jane Richardson

J. No.

Headteacher