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Dear Parents/Carers

Updated Arrangements for Wednesday 1 March 2023

As you are aware from my letter to you on 18 January 2023, one of the teachers' unions, NEU, has invited its members to take strike action. The strikes are happening because of a national dispute between the unions and the government over teachers' pay and school funding; it is not because of any local issues at our academy.

This letter is to advise you of our **updated** plans for the **second** of the planned action days on **Wednesday 1 March 2023**. This is a regional strike, which includes the West Midlands region so impacts on our academy. The arrangements below apply to **Houlton School only**. Other TLET academies will have made their own decisions based on local intelligence and they will contact you directly if you have a child attending one of our other providers.

Union members are **not** obliged to tell me whether it is their intention to take strike action or not. However, many of our staff have helpfully given me notice of their current intentions, which has supported me with planning for the day.

YEAR 7 – Fully open

At present, we anticipate **being fully open to Year 7 Pupils only on Wednesday 1 March 2023**. Pupils will be immersed in the same fantastic World Book Day activities that our current Year 8 pupils enjoyed last year, including an exciting visit from children's writer Ele Fountain (author of 'Boy 87' that pupils study as part of their English curriculum).

YEAR 8 – Remote learning from home for most pupils

Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient staff confirmed on site to remain open for Year 8 pupils. **Pupils will be set remote learning on this day**, which they will be able to complete via Google classroom from home.

We do have **some limited capacity** to supervise a small number of pupils if they cannot be accommodated at home on this day, including:

- vulnerable pupils (pupils entitled to the **Pupil Premium** Grant or children with an Education, Health Care Plan (**EHCP**)); and
- children of workers in the following professions: **front line emergency service roles**; staff working with children in **schools and educational settings**.

No Year 8 pupils are required to attend school on this day. Therefore, any Year 8 pupils in the groups above who are attending school will access the same remote learning as their peers from computer rooms, which will be supervised by school-based adults.

If your Year 8 child is vulnerable or you are a front-line worker, and you need to send your child into school, [please complete this online form](#) so that we know to expect them on Wednesday. Otherwise, we will assume they are accessing learning from home on this day.

For Year 7 children in school:

- The Refectory team will be in school as usual, so **there will be a normal service on this day for breakfast, break and lunchtime**;
- Breakfast club, supervised by the inclusion team, **will run as usual**;
- Lunchtime co-curricular clubs will **not** run with the exception of 'quiet lunch', which will run as usual;
- After school co-curricular clubs will **not** run with the exception of study support, which will run as usual;
- In addition to the usual study support provision after school, we **will open the Malcolm Hancock Centre for Communications** for any pupil who would usually stay for a co-curricular club and cannot get home at the end of school. They may read quietly or use the computers.

Important – please note

In the unlikely event that there are a number of unexpected staff absence calls on the morning of the strike action itself, **we may have to close in full**, at short notice. **We will send a message by 7.45am via Edulink, update our website and post via our three main social media channels of Twitter, Facebook and Instagram**, so please keep your eye on these channels on the morning just in case.

I apologise for the disruption this action will cause to your child's usual lessons. Rest assured, we will work with those Year 7 pupils due to be in school who find disrupted days more challenging ahead of the day to ensure that they are informed and prepared for the different arrangements.

If you have any questions, please contact us in the usual way hello@houltonschool.org.uk

Yours faithfully



Michael McCulley
Principal