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Date: 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023

## **Partial School Closure on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> March**

Dear Parents/Carers

We are nearing the date for the third period of strike action by the National Education Union (NEU). There are two days of action scheduled for **Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023**. I am writing to inform you of our intention to partially close on these days.

We have assessed the likely levels of disruption and made the following decision:

- **We will be closed to Years 7, 8, 9 and 10.**
- **We will remain open for Years 11, 12 and 13.**

**On both days, school will finish at 2.25pm.** There will be no period 5.

Partial closure is necessary as we do not anticipate having sufficient staff to ensure the health and safety of all students on site.

### Information for Years 7-10

Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 will be asked to study at home on both days. They will be set work on Show My Homework by all their teachers except those who are taking strike action.

The exception is students who are attending the Voice in a Million trip. Parents have been written to separately about the arrangements for this trip.

If your child is entitled to Free Schools Meals, we will make packed lunches available for collection by students at the end of the school day on Wednesday. Please email [shughes@farmors.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:shughes@farmors.gloucs.sch.uk) if you would like to book a packed lunch by Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March at midday. Students will be able to collect these at the end of the day on Tuesday in the Dining Hall.

### Information for Year 11-13

**Students in Years 11, 12 and 13 must attend as normal.**

It is likely that some lessons will be disrupted, however many will run as usual. Where teachers are absent, Year 11 classes will be covered. Year 12 and 13 students are expected to undertake suitable study if their teacher is absent.

All students should be prepared to use time productively to study, if required. Please ensure your child has the correct exercise books with them and any other resources which they could use to study or revise from.

If students have a PE lesson they should wear their PE kit.

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### Transport

School commissioned bus services will leave at 2.35pm. Service buses will run at normal times. Students who need to wait may do so in the library.

### Future strike action

These strike days are the last of the dates announced by the NEU. However, talks between teaching unions and government are not progressing well. We expect the NEU to announce further dates for the summer term. We also expect the NASUWT to ballot their members again.

My primary concern is for the Year 11 and 13 students who are due to take their exams this summer. We are doing everything we can to stay open for these year groups. I would like to be able to bring younger students in too, but we do not have the capacity to do so based on the number of teachers taking action. I am sorry for this disruption.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay credit to students and their response to this action. The rate of work completion of students at home has been good. Where lessons have been disrupted for the students who are in school, they have been mature and flexible in their response. Year 11 students have behaved brilliantly, taking opportunities to get some revision done.

Whilst the disruption to schooling across the country is irritating, we should remember the bigger picture. Applications to teaching training are down by as much as 50% in some subject areas. We must make teaching an attractive career path. The quality of education depends on us recruiting and retaining committed and talented people. I want to put the best people in front of your children.

We should also not lose sight of the funding aspect to this dispute. We have been hit with quarter of a million pounds of unexpected costs this year and no additional funding to cover this. If we want a world class education for children in this country, someone needs to pick up the bill.

I remain impartial about the industrial action, but not to the cause. I have committed thirty years to education and ten to this school; I do not understand why the current and future generations of school children deserve less than their predecessors.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Evans', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Matthew Evans**  
**Headteacher**