



Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

## Headteacher's Weekly Update

The Easter holiday already feels a distant memory as we have hit the ground running at the start of a critical half-term, particularly for Years 11 and 13 as they enter the summer exam season. There is lots going on at the moment so it is a larger than usual letter this week.

### NEU Strike Action

The NEU has now announced two further dates for national strike action:

- Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April
- Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May

### **The Year 11 Creative Media Production exam scheduled for Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> will go ahead as planned – all students entered must attend as this is an external exam.**

We will be able to offer the following provision for both strike days:

**On Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> & Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> students in only Years 11, 12 and 13 must attend school with Years 7-10 remaining at home.**

**Years 11, 12 & 13:** students have their lessons as usual if their teacher is in school. If any of their teachers are striking then Year 11 students will be supervised to complete independent revision while Year 13 students will have an independent study period. Students must come to school with revision materials so that they are able to work independently if required.

The NEU has issued guidelines aimed at reducing the impact of these strikes on the exam preparation for students in Years 11 and 13. I have therefore put an offer to NEU members at the school that could allow them to strike but still be able to deliver lessons for students in Years 11 and 13. While I cannot know in advance how many staff will be available to deliver lessons to Year 11 and 13 on the strike days (as they are not required to inform me), I hope that these arrangements will ensure that students receive the best possible preparation for their forthcoming exams.

**Year 10:** the students will remain at home. They will be offered live lessons via Teams if their teacher is not striking. As staff are not required to tell us if they are striking, students will need to log on at the start of each lesson. If they do not have a lesson, students should complete any outstanding homework or read.

**Years 7, 8 & 9:** the students will remain at home. In a change from previous strikes, they will be set work via Satchel One if their teacher is not striking. We have made this change in response to feedback about the disruption students faced by not knowing if teachers would be delivering lessons or not. This way, students will be able to see in advance what work they need to complete



during the strike day. If a teacher is striking then we cannot set work for their classes and so students should complete any outstanding homework or read during those lessons.

For all pupils in receipt of free school meals, they will be able to collect a food parcel (after school on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> and Friday 28<sup>th</sup>) from the canteen for the strike days that follow.

I appreciate that strike action causes disruption to families and I really do appreciate your support. I know my colleagues and I know that they do not take this action lightly and that they do so because they believe in their cause.

It appears that all major teaching unions will be re-balloting on further strike action so we may continue to face disruption. I will keep you updated.

### **May Half-Term Revision Sessions for Years 11 and 13**

I am so pleased to see that so many Year 11 and 13 students attended the Easter revision sessions during the holiday. I am confident that these sessions will have helped the students prepare for their upcoming exams and I am grateful to all the staff who gave up their time to support the sessions.

I want to give you advanced notice that further revision sessions will be offered during May half-term (Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> May – Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June, not Monday 29<sup>th</sup> as this is a bank holiday), so please make plans to be able to support your child to attend.

A reminder that Year 11 students can access core revision sessions after school every week:

- Tuesday – Maths
- Wednesday – English
- Thursday – Science

Other subjects do provide sessions so please check with us if you're unsure. If you have any queries about support for your child in the run up to the exam period then please contact us:

#### **Year 11**

- Miss Horne ([ehorne@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk](mailto:ehorne@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk)), Head of Year
- Mrs Panesar ([lpansar@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk](mailto:lpansar@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk)), Assistant Headteacher

#### **Year 13**

- Mr Constable ([dconstable@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk](mailto:dconstable@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk)), Head of Sixth Form
- Mr Whitehouse ([pwhitehouse@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk](mailto:pwhitehouse@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk)), Assistant Headteacher

### **Staff Recruitment**

We are busily recruiting the extra teachers needed for September. In the meantime, we are seeking a new clerk to the Local Advisory Board. The clerk is responsible for a wide range of functions at the school which makes it an interesting and varied role. It is a flexible part time role which requires attendance at evening meetings, so it is possible to do the role alongside another job. All details of the clerk role (and any new posts) can be found on our [website](#).



## New Management Information System (MIS)

As mentioned before Easter, we have now switched to a new IT system, Arbor. The launch has gone well and over the coming weeks and months the new system will add further capabilities which should improve communications and raise standards. I am really grateful to all of the staff who worked through the holiday to facilitate the switchover.

## Tie Consultation

We are going to move to a new uniform supplier this summer (I hope that this will be welcome news for all of those parents who have struggled with our current supplier over the last couple of summers). As part of the switch we have the opportunity to make some minor tweaks to the uniform (such as updating the logo to match the current design). We won't be making any significant changes so there will be no need for you to purchase new or additional items. It does give us the opportunity to consider whether having four ties (one for each house) is the best option or if the time is right to move to return a single tie design. We are therefore consulting all stakeholders on the following options:

<b>Option 1</b> <i><b>Bold</b></i>	<b>Option 2</b> <i><b>Traditional</b></i>	<b>Option 3</b> <i><b>School Badge</b></i>	<b>Option 4</b> <i><b>Houses</b></i>
BS59 Navy & Gold	TS4 Navy & Gold	P8 Navy	<b>Keep the current ties</b>
			<b>(Navy with house colour stripe)</b>

If you would like to participate in the consultation then please use this [link](#). The deadline is Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April.

## PTA Clothes Bank

The PTA now has a clothes bank installed on the school site which is available for donations outside of school hours. This replaces the collections for Bag 2 School. Please follow this link to see what items can be donated: <https://astrarecycling.co.uk/>.

## Toilet Upgrade Works

Unfortunately, there is an overrun on the holiday works to upgrade the toilets in English. The ground floor will now open a week on Monday, with the first-floor toilets completing in the following weeks. Further works are planned this year and I will keep you informed.

## Being a Good Neighbour

Please be considerate so that we can be a good neighbour to local residents. If you are able to drop off and pick up from roads a few minutes' walk from the school it will help to alleviate the intense pressure on roads very close to the school and therefore help to minimise the disruption.



## **SEND Voices Guide for Parents**

Attached with this week's update is a flyer from SEND Voices with a link to some useful SEND information for parents.

I would like to wish Eid Mubarak all of our families celebrating today! Have a great weekend everybody.

Best wishes,

**Nick McSweeney**

Headteacher

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