

# Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School

Ysgol Uwchradd Gatholig Archesgob McGrath



January 26<sup>th</sup> 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

As you might be aware from media coverage, the National Education Union (NEU) have notified schools of their intended industrial action. In Wales, the dates are:

- Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023.
- Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023.
- Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023.
- Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

At the time of writing, NEU members are planning on being on 'strike' on these days meaning they will not be in school.

**I regret to inform you that the school will be closed to all pupils on Wednesday February 1<sup>st</sup> 2023.** At this stage, I am unable to confirm the position for the other dates. I will review the situation and update you of our intentions as soon as possible in advance of the other specified dates.

The decision to close to pupils has not been taken lightly. In coming to a decision of this nature, the school has worked closely with HR and Education officers from the local authority, taken advice from other professional associations and consulted with all BCBC secondary schools via the Bridgend Association of Secondary Headteachers.

Our primary consideration is the health and safety implications caused by potentially having a significant number of our staff absent from work.

It is worth noting that as an employer, we are bound by specific rules linked to any industrial action taken. This means that on these days, we are not permitted to:

- Know in advance the exact number of staff who will participate in the strike to help assist with our management of the disruption.
- Recruit agency staff to substitute those staff who will be on strike.
- Redistribute the duties of absent staff to those who are in different unions. This includes the supervision of children, either in person or remotely, outside their normal working terms.

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For the reasons stated above, those staff who will attend work as normal on this day will not be able to provide online work for your child. Therefore, I suggest the following:

**Pupils in Years 10 – 13** can access materials from the WJEC website. These include knowledge organisers and past-paper questions. By following their normal school timetable, pupils can prepare revision materials and/or complete tasks in readiness for the summer exams. GCSE pupils can also access online resources from MathsWatch, GCSEpod and BBC Bitesize.

**Pupils in Years 7 – 9** can work on any ongoing home-learning tasks and assessments, catch up any work missed due to any previous possible absence and make sure their exercise books are as well-presented and up-to date as possible. In addition to this, pupils in these year groups can also make use of the materials available on MathsWatch and BBC Bitesize.

We will continue to work closely with our local staff union representatives in order to keep up-to-date with the situation and will notify you once there are any further updates.

**All pupils who would normally be entitled to free school meals will be provided with a packed lunch to take home with them on Tuesday January 31<sup>st</sup>.**

Apologies once again for the disruption this school closure will cause.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A Howells', is written over a white background.

Ashley Howells

Headteacher