



Whitstable Junior School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As you will remember we wrote to you in January outlining the following regarding some upcoming strikes by the National Education Union. We are now approaching the second of those dates which is next Thursday 2 March.

"In the South East area, these are scheduled for:

- Wednesday 1 February 2023
- **Thursday 2 March 2023**
- Wednesday 15 March 2023
- Thursday 16 March 2023"

As previously, it remains possible that an agreement will be reached which may mean that these strikes do not go ahead, but we wanted to let you know what we think is most likely to be the case for Thursday 2 March.

As per DFE guidance, schools are expected to remain open wherever possible, but only if there are sufficient staff available to do so safely. Whilst this will vary from school to school, it seems certain that the vast majority of schools will be affected again.

Therefore, **we are advising Year 6 parents of Whitstable Junior School that some of you may have to plan for alternative arrangements for their children for Thursday 2 March at this stage.** We will message all parents of the affected classes individually with details of how this will affect your child and for how much of the school day.

Year 3, 4 and 5 are unaffected again as it stands. So we anticipate that **school will be fully open for all of Year 3, 4 and 5.** The reason that some classes will be closed and some will be open is that teachers belong to different trade unions and the NEU is striking while other unions are not.

So that all the children can enjoy a full world book day experience, after some consideration **we have decided to hold World Book Day one day early on Wednesday 1st March instead.**

We acknowledge the disruption that this will again cause some parents, but this disruption is the inevitable and intended result of strike action of course, and a decision that no teacher will have taken lightly and will lose a day's pay as a result. Let us hope the dispute can be resolved as soon as possible.

Those striking are keen to see a fully funded fair pay settlement for both teachers and support staff which does not further impinge on already stretched school budgets, so that the impact on schools and children is reduced.

We will keep all parents up to date if there are developments which emerge or any changes to those details between now and Thursday 2 March.

Many thanks for your understanding at this complicated time,
Mrs Roy and Mr Cooper

