



Longbenton HIGH SCHOOL

29th June 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

Strike Days - Wednesday 5th and Friday 7th July

You will be aware from previous parent comms that additional strike days were announced by the NEU a few weeks ago. Whilst we were not expecting these additional days to be added to the term; these strike days are covered by the existing ballot of members taken in January. **As before, we are unable to staff the school and run lessons for all year groups 7-10, so I have had to take the decision again to close to students on these dates next week.** Year 12 lessons, where staff are not striking, will still run but there will be disruption across these two dates.

You may also know that all four teacher unions are balloting members to continue with coordinated strike action in the forthcoming autumn term. The government have refused so far to publish the report of the independent pay review body which have recommended a 6.5% pay increase for teachers. I have had to set my staffing budget for the 23/24 financial year without this information.

Headteachers are currently leading schools in this context: the number of vacant posts nationally has increased by over 40% since 2021; one in four new teachers leaves the profession within three years; we are onto our seventh Education Secretary within five years; a decade of chronic underfunding in public services means the pressure on schools to solve social issues is intense. School funding is insufficient. At the risk of being overtly political, this is a crisis which the government is failing to deal with, hence the ongoing teacher strike activity.

Uniform Policy

Some students and parents requested that we consider an amendment to our policy earlier this month regarding hot weather and shorts. This has been discussed via school council, the Equalities Team and at the full governors' meeting. Our full policy has also been amended to include better reference to protected characteristics and will be available for parents to see in full by the end of term. In the meantime, if students would like to wear shorts instead of trousers or skirts on days when heat is excessive, they can, with the following caveats:

- **Shorts must be smart and formal black 'dress shorts' and of an appropriate length** ie just above the knee (example [here](#) and [here](#)).
- They should **not** be: cargo shorts with pockets; they should not be nylon shorts or sports shorts; they should not be cycling shorts or lycra; they should not be jogger/sweatpant shorts.
- Students should **not** wear PE uniform shorts; these are for PE lessons only.



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If students arrive to school wearing the incorrect uniform they will not be allowed into lessons; they will be asked to get changed or will be isolated until uniform is corrected. This may involve parents being asked to bring the correct uniform to school for students to change into.

Training Day - Friday 30th June - and other key dates

A reminder that **we are closed to students for our summer term training day on Friday 30th June**. There was a reminder about this in the key dates sent at the start of this term and in the mini comms sent out earlier this week.

Key dates - Summer Term 2023

Friday 30th June - **Year 11 Prom**; Saturday 1st July - **Year 13 Leavers' Dinner**

Monday 3rd July - **Y5 Sports Day hosted at LHS**

Monday 3rd July - Friday 7th July - **Year 5 Parent Tours** (for students starting Y7 Sept 24)

Friday 14th July - **Y7-9 data posted home**

Week beginning 17th July - **Year 12 Work Experience week**

Wednesday 19th July - **Sports Day**

Friday 21st July - **Last day of term (12.15pm finish for all students)**

17th August - **A Level Results (from 9am)**

24th August - **GCSE Results & 6th Form Enrolment (from 9am)**

Monday 4th September - **Training Day (school closed to students)**

Tuesday 5th September - **Year 7 and 6th form only**

Wednesday 6th September - **Year 7 and 6th form only**

Thursday 7th September - **Years 10 & 11 return to school**

Friday 8th September - **Years 8 & 9 return to school**

Yours faithfully

Kelly Holbrook
Headteacher