



Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

## Headteacher's Weekly Update

We have had a really productive start to the half-term. Year 11 have been very focused throughout their WAVE Exams this week. It has, no doubt, been a tough week for Year 11 but absolutely vital preparation for the summer; I hope that their wellbeing session this afternoon was beneficial for each of them.

### National Strike Action by the NEU

The next day of strike action will take place on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March. The strike action is the result of a national dispute over pay.

As with the last strike, due to the number of teaching staff who are members of the NEU, there will be disruption to our usual provision on these days. I feel that our previous approach was, thankfully, very effective. Therefore, we will have the same approach for Thursday.

**On Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March students in only Years 11, 12 and 13 must attend school. Students in Years 7-10 must, regrettably, remain at home.**

Year 11 have a second week of exams, so it is vital that they continue to have in-school provision to be able to sit those exams. Years 12 and 13 can be more easily accommodated because they do not present the same challenges in terms of supervision.

**Year 11:** students will sit their internal exams as planned. When not in an exam, students will have their lessons as usual if their teacher is in school. If any of their teachers are striking however, the students will be supervised to complete independent revision.

**Sixth Form:** will have their lessons as usual if their teacher is in school or will study independently, as they would normally during a non-contact period, if their teachers are striking.

Students in **Years 11-13** should come to school with revision materials so that they are able to work independently if required.

**Years 7-10:** 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.

For all pupils in receipt of free school meals, they will be able to collect a high-quality packed lunch after school on Wednesday from the canteen.



I appreciate that families may be frustrated by this action, but as headteacher, I need to deal with the situation in the most pragmatic way I can, in the knowledge that my first duty must be the health and safety of all members of the school community.

There are two further dates for strike action (Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March). I will update you with our provision for those two days on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March in my usual weekly letter. There is the possibility that further dates will be announced in the future.

### **Year 7 Parents' Evening – Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March**

As you know, on Thursday there is a parents' evening for Year 7 and this will continue as planned. As a result of the industrial action, some staff may not be available to hold appointments and, regretfully, these appointments cannot be rearranged. I understand that this may be frustrating to families and please accept my sincere apologies. Parents will receive confirmation prior to the evening if their child's teacher is unavailable for their appointment.

### **Year 11 Exams Continue Next Week**

Year 11 are now halfway through their exam fortnight. Guidance to support them can be found on our [website](#). If you would like any subject specific advice please email subject teachers directly. For other advice please feel free to email the Year 11 team:

- Miss Horne ([ehorne@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk](mailto:ehorne@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk)), Head of Year 11.
- Mrs Panesar ([lpansar@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk](mailto:lpansar@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk)), Assistant Headteacher, can assist with academic enquiries, with a particular focus on English, Maths and Science.
- Mrs Guinn ([sguinn@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk](mailto:sguinn@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk)), can support with mental health and wellbeing. Please contact us if you are concerned about pressure building up.

### **Turkey-Syria Earthquake**

We continued to receive donations over the holiday and so our final total for the UNICEF relief programme is £2005. My sincere thanks to all who supported the fundraiser.

### **Year 8 1984 Trip to Wellington College**

We have been offered an amazing opportunity to take 30 Year 8 students to a production of 1984 at Wellington College on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March (1.30-5.30pm). The trip is free but the turnaround time is relatively short. Mrs Lloyd and Miss Pass have written a letter for Year 8 parents to invite you to register interest for your child(ren) which can be done by emailing Mrs Lloyd ([mlloyd@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk](mailto:mlloyd@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk)). If the trip is oversubscribed places will be allocated randomly. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions.

### **World Book Day Reading Challenge**

The library is challenging each student and teacher to read as much as possible on Thursday and record the number of pages they have read. Each year will have a winning tutor group announced on Friday and they will receive some yummy biscuits to share together!

Next week there will also be lots of activities and a bookmark design competition in the library to celebrate World Book Day.



### **World Book Day £1 Book Tokens**

Students can download a token to get a free book via this [link](#). The book token barcode can either be scanned from your phone or printed out and shown in-store. Book tokens are valid until 26<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

### **PTA – Bag Drop Volunteers**

The PTA are helping with the Bag Drop again this year for the Wokingham Half Marathon. They are a bit short of volunteers – can you help? Children always enjoy helping finding the bags and putting them in number order.

We are fortunate to have this opportunity every year and we always receive a donation to the PTA for helping. To sign up please click on this [link](#).

### **PTA – Quiz Night**

The annual quiz will take place at 7.30pm on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March in the hall. Tickets are £5 an adult and £2.50 per child for teams of up to 8. Tickets can be purchased via this [link](#).

### **WBC Arts Survey for Children and Young People**

Wokingham Borough Council has asked us to share that they are consulting with children and young people living in the Borough, on their relationship with arts and culture. Their survey is running until 19<sup>th</sup> March. They hope to gain understanding of how young people are involved in arts activities and events. The survey can be found [here](#).

I hope that you all have a lovely weekend.

Best wishes,

**Nick McSweeney**

Headteacher

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