

Widespread industrial action now confirmed for schools

16 January 2023  Sarah Linden

The National Education Union (NEU) announced this afternoon that their members across England have voted in favour of taking industrial action. Unlike the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT), the NEU were successful in meeting the ballot turnout requirement, with 50% or more of their eligible members voting and at least 40% of those voting in favour of taking industrial action. NEU report that 90% of their voting members voted in favour of strike action for a fully-funded, above-inflation pay rise.

NEU have confirmed they will be taking seven days of strike action in February and March, although any individual school will only be affected by four days strike. The first strike will take place on 1 February, affecting a reported 23,400 schools in England and Wales. The full list of strike days in England published by the NEU so far are:

- Wednesday 1 February - all England
- Tuesday 28 February – Northern, North West, Yorkshire & the Humber regions
- Wednesday 1 March – East Midlands, West Midlands & Eastern regions
- Thursday 2 March – London, South East & South West regions
- Wednesday 15 March – all England
- Thursday 16 March – all England

Whatever action the unions take and whenever it starts, one thing is clear: this action is going to be disruptive to pupil learning if not managed carefully. The Department for Education (DfE) require academy trusts to engage in appropriate contingency planning, taking steps to minimise any disruption to pupil learning and to keep schools open as far as possible.

Trusts should consider carefully what steps they are taking to plan and prepare for industrial action. If schools are to close, then trusts should expect to be challenged if appropriate consideration – and where possible appropriate notice – is not given.

Planning and preparation are key to minimising further learning loss that many students will already have suffered through the pandemic. Industrial action also raises difficult personnel issues regarding strike participation and pay.

Browne Jacobson will shortly be sharing details of our 'Industrial Action Support Pack', which provides essential, detailed guidance for employers dealing with industrial action and which supplies a suite of letters, risk assessment and preparation checklists to support employers in managing the disruption.

Additionally, we will shortly be publishing details of our upcoming free webinar: 'Industrial Action Essentials: What you need to know' which will be taking place before the end of January 2023, prior to the commencement of industrial action.

Free webinar →

</insights/industrial-action-essentials-what-you-need-to-know>

Support pack →

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