



6th October 2022

ATLP/WEST COVENTRY ACADEMY STATEMENT INDUSTRIAL ACTION BY NEU MEMBERS

We are wholly disappointed at the decision by some members of the National Education Union at West Coventry Academy to take part in strike action.

A total of 40 members of the NEU have voted for six days of strike action in response to an increase in the number of lessons teachers are asked to teach in line with the national Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. In response to their concerns, the Trust has paused the planned increase until September 2024 and will continue to engage with staff around our workload and wellbeing charter.

Regrettably, as a result of the NEU industrial action, the school is not able to remain fully open on those days to all students. This is a cause of concern for all of us. Our priority is to minimise disruption to our school community and ensure that learning continues.

Across the six strike days, all students will have access to remote learning, and all year groups will have at least one day in school. Mock examinations and trips will go ahead as planned. All vulnerable children can attend school as normal, and children who are in receipt of free school meals will be provided for.

We have written to all parents and carers with the plans relating to their child/ren. We have also been talking to students in assemblies and will continue to support them throughout this time.

Every effort has been made to avoid the planned strike action and reach an agreement with the regional representatives of NEU. Despite those negotiations and the concessions made by the Trust, the NEU has refused to stand down strikes.

We sincerely regret the impact this will have on everyone in schools: students, teachers, staff and parents. We are particularly disappointed in this decision following the severe disruption to children's education over the last two years due to the pandemic. The NEU's decision to take teachers away from classrooms – especially at a time when students may need additional support - is unacceptable.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to children and young people. We thank our school community for its patience and continued support.

Ana Neofitou, Headteacher, West Coventry Academy
Richard Gill CBE, CEO of the Arthur Terry Learning Partnership (ATLP)



Why some NEU staff members at West Coventry Academy voted to take industrial action

West Coventry Academy joined the Arthur Terry Learning Partnership (ATLP) in January 2021 with a significant financial deficit, which the school and the Trust have worked tirelessly to reduce.

When West Coventry Academy joined the ATLP, it was made clear that teacher allocations would increase in line with the national Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

There were some staff concerns over the increase, so senior leaders met with NEU representatives to find a way forward. In order to support the school on its school improvement journey and in response to feedback from union representatives about the impact of increasing allocations, the Trust took the decision to pause any further increase in allocations for two years, so that staff at West Coventry can understand and gain benefits from collaborative planning and other work reduction methods. Furthermore, the Trust continues to further develop its own wellbeing and workload charter, of which teacher allocations will form part of the consultation.

The Trust feels strongly that it has listened and acknowledged the feedback from union colleagues about how staff feel about increasing allocations at West Coventry Academy. By pausing the increase, this will ensure that there is time to adapt, develop, grow and benefit from collaborative planning and being part of a multi-academy trust. Simultaneously, this will also allow for the ongoing work around the development of the wellbeing charter.