

# Oakwood School &



## Assessment Centre

Mrs Lynn Laverty  
Principal

8<sup>th</sup> November 2023

**RE: Planned Industrial Action - Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> November and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

Dear Parent/ Guardian

We have been advised by staff that they have received notification from the union Unite that non-teaching members across the organisation are being called upon to take strike action from 15<sup>th</sup> November (commencing at 00:01) and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

UNISON is also on strike on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November and NIPSA are striking for 2 hours on the same day.

The support staff in Oakwood bring immeasurable value to the children with whom they work and are critical to the safe operation of the school. Given the age and acute vulnerabilities of our pupils, we require a much higher staff/pupil ratio to ensure safe provision than most other schools. Oakwood School has a very high number of support staff who are Unite members, hence, provision in Oakwood will be greatly impacted. We fully respect their right to engage in industrial action.

A risk assessment has been conducted which considers the impact that this action will have on the health and safety of pupils, staff and visitors, and whether the school can run a full or amended curriculum, to determine whether it is possible for Oakwood to operate safely during the strike.

Should this strike proceed, the Senior Leadership Team along with the Board of Governors have determined that because of the degree of staffing deficiency and associated risks, the school will close for all pupils from Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023.



Harberton Park, Belfast, BT9 6TX  
Tel: (028) 9060 5116 Fax: (028) 9061 3514  
Email: [llaverty505@c2kni.net](mailto:llaverty505@c2kni.net)  
Education Authority, Belfast



# Oakwood School &



## Assessment Centre

Mrs Lynn Laverty  
Principal

Advice and support from therapy staff will remain available throughout this period.

The Senior Leadership Team has been advised that teachers and non-teaching staff, not affiliated with Unite, UNISON and NIPSA cannot cover for colleagues during a period of strike action, therefore we simply cannot safely provide face to face teaching for pupils in these circumstances.

This decision has been difficult to arrive at. We know that face-to-face attendance in school is crucial for our pupils. However, we are in no doubt that on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November we simply cannot deliver this safely.

We understand that this will cause disruption to our pupils and families. Should the situation be resolved at any stage before Wednesday, we will of course immediately let you know.

If you require any additional support at any time, please contact your class teacher, either by telephoning the Office, or via Seesaw.



Lynn Laverty  
(Principal)



Harberton Park, Belfast, BT9 6TX  
Tel: (028) 9060 5116 Fax: (028) 9061 3514  
Email: [llaverty505@c2kni.net](mailto:llaverty505@c2kni.net)  
Education Authority, Belfast

