



Cottingham High School
and Sixth Form College
Harland Way
Cottingham
HU16 5PX
Tel 01482 847498

office@cottinghamhigh.net

www.cottinghamhigh.net

05 February 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Ongoing Strike Action – Update

We want to provide an update on our ongoing discussions with the NEU regarding both the Teaching and Learning Policy and the redundancy position. Regrettably we now find ourselves in an untenable position in relation to this dispute. Despite our best efforts to reach a reasonable resolution, our discussions have been frustrated by the lack of positive and constructive engagement by the NEU. Furthermore, there is nothing to indicate the strike will end soon as this continuing industrial action is funded by the NEU, who we understand are making payments to the teachers on strike whilst the strike continues.

We believe the NEU's actions in unnecessarily prolonging this dispute are causing harm to the school and putting an avoidable strain on our workforce. Put simply, the dispute is having a significant impact on our overall operation and our students. The disruption to other colleagues is significant as many have had to move departments to provide cover.

This is not a position we want to be in, nor is it one that can continue indefinitely, and we must take steps to minimise the disruption caused. The education and safety of our students remains our priority. We will continue to act in their best interests and do all that we can to keep the school operating. This must now be our only focus.

We have set out below our final position in respect of the two matters which form the dispute.

Teaching and Learning Policy

We did have some constructive dialogue with the NEU regarding the policy and sought to implement the changes suggested by them. However, they have refused to discuss the policy any further unless we make a commitment that the school will not make any redundancies.

We have made significant progress in developing the policy and have worked in good faith with the NEU throughout this process. However, despite this progress, the NEU has indicated that they are unwilling to move forward any further with this policy unless redundancies are reconsidered. We have explained that this is something we are unable legally (rather than unwilling) to do. For the avoidance of doubt, the policy includes the NEU's suggestions.

We do not believe it is fair or reasonable for an important policy to be delayed due to an unrelated matter and as a result of an unreasonable position taken by the NEU. As a result, the next step will be for the Headteacher to present the policy to the Local Governing Body.

Redundancy Position

Our position remains unchanged: two roles, as previously identified, are at risk, and no additional staff members will be affected. As part of the redundancy process, the school is

committed, as always, to keeping any redundancy dismissals to a minimum. During the consultation we will work closely with the individuals and their representatives in an attempt to avoid confirming either redundancy. We are unable to comment further regarding these procedures as both are now part of a fair, meaningful and confidential consultation process. No other Cottingham High School staff will lose their jobs or see their roles significantly reduced due to the Sixth Form closure. The redundancy figures remain exactly as communicated to the NEU in October 2024 and have not changed.

Recent communications give us no confidence that the NEU will adjust their position on redundancies as misinformation continues to be circulated referencing more staff being at risk. This is simply not accurate as stated.

Moving Forward

We remain committed to implementing the Teaching and Learning Policy in the best interests of staff and students. At this stage, there is nothing further to discuss regarding strike action.

Our focus remains on ensuring that students receive the high-quality education they deserve, and we will continue to choose to keep the school open to all year groups and provide cover, on a voluntary basis, for staff that continue to strike.

You may question *why, if we can do no more, do they continue to strike?*

- Our view is that it continues based on the belief that there will be more redundancies despite the fact we are in a redundancy process with two members of staff at risk.
- As shared with you previously, there continues to be inaccurate information about how the Trust manages its funds. This inaccurate information is being used to bolster the position on redundancies which is a rationale that is fundamentally flawed.

We, the Trust and on behalf of the Local Governing Body have faith in the leadership of the school. The commitment to remain open is testament to their unwavering focus on your child's education.

Thank you for your continued support. We are deeply disappointed by this situation but by working together we can ensure your child is well supported.

Please book an appointment to speak to the Headteacher should you have any questions.

Yours faithfully



Vince Tennison, Chair of Cottingham High School Local Governing Body



Mark Brown, Trust Executive Director of Education