

TO ALL PARENTS/CARERS

**EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S
SERVICES**

Shelagh McLean

Head of Education and Children's
Services

education.operations@fife.gov.uk

21 September 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

Fife Primary Schools (including their associated nursery classes); Standalone Nurseries and Family Nurture Centres; Secondary Schools; Special Schools; Pupil Support Classes; Pupil Support Centres and Childcare Services, will be closed to pupils on Tuesday 26th, Wednesday 27th and Thursday 28th September 2023 due to industrial action.

I want to bring to your attention that the single status Trade Unions have not yet reached an agreement regarding a pay settlement.

As schools/settings will not know in advance how many of our single status school based staff will join the planned strike action (including our Pupil Support Assistants, Early Years Officers, clerical and administrative staff, travel escorts, janitors, cleaning and catering teams, and childcare practitioners) I am sure you will appreciate we are unable to open our establishments to children and young people unless appropriate arrangements are in place for these roles.

We have determined that, even though some staff may come to work, we will not be able to operate safely; we will not be able to provide individualised pupil support arrangements; we will have limited/no first aid provision; we will not be able to provide catering; nor guarantee that any cleaning required can take place over these days.

Therefore, to help families plan, I am writing to advise that we've made the difficult decision to close all our educational settings to **pupils** on Tuesday 26th, Wednesday 27th and Thursday 28th September 2023, should there be no change in terms of the pay negotiations.

As I indicated in my previous letter, I know this may be challenging or inconvenient for many families. I fully appreciate how difficult it is for parents, carers and pupils when we must close some, or all, of our schools and I can only ask for your continued patience and understanding.

We will continue to work on alternative arrangements right up to the date of the strikes but at this stage it is very likely we will be unable to make provision for any school or nursery, therefore they will be closed to pupils. If there is any change based on individual school risk assessments, and suitable catering arrangements are available, I will contact individual schools.

All primary age pupils will continue to have access to a wide range of online learning resources and educational activities, and more senior pupils will have work and study they can continue with, on their own, at home. Secondary age pupils have access to a wide range of national online learning resources (including GLOW, Teams, Scholar, SQA Past papers, BBC Bitesize, West OS and e-Sgoil) and we ask that they make use of these resources across their subject areas. Your school will confirm specific arrangements for your children.

A direct payment for school meals, covering these three days of industrial action, will be made into the bank account of a parent/carer where children are registered for free school meals (FMR).

All schools will reopen as normal on Friday 29th September 2023.

I will update you immediately if the dispute is resolved, plans change, or further action is notified.

Yours faithfully,
Shelagh McLean
Head of Education & Children's Services
(Early Years and Directorate Support)