

23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023

Dear Students, Parents and Carers,

**RE: West Midlands Bus Service strikes.**

With no end to the industrial action in sight, I am becoming increasingly concerned about the impact it is having on learning, projects, and ultimately on our students' futures.

Our curriculum cannot be effectively delivered remotely for a prolonged period. There is too much emphasis on projects and collaborative work. This time of year, is particularly challenging:

**Year 12**

Students are working to tight production schedules on their major collaborative projects. The concern is here that there is simply not time to adjust the schedule, and that students must work collaboratively on location in order to secure a grade. Every absence is felt by the whole team.

**Year 13**

Students are hoping to complete their BTEC by May half-term (that is 7 working weeks away), and then move on to summer placements and paid work. Obviously, we cannot permit students to graduate and sign-off early if their portfolio is not complete, or if we are not satisfied that the quality of their work reflects their potential. The reality here is that every day of college missed makes finishing early, and achieving their potential less likely.

Currently there is no sign that awarding bodies will make reasonable adjustments to grading or assessment considering travel disruption, and we have been provided very little guidance so far from government. Therefore, I feel it is critical I now lay out the academy's position.

**During Strikes - Getting to the academy**

**We require that students make every possible effort to get here every day.**

We understand that reduced services, having to walk, or needing to take longer routes, may impact punctuality, so we will relax the late-code. However, it is critical students still travel in and make use of our facilities and our support and guidance. The academy is open to students all day.

- The academy is walking distance from the city centre (30 mins)
- Students can take a train from Moore Street Station or Snow Hill to the Jewellery Quarter, which will cut down walking time (18 mins)
- The Beryl Bikes can be found all over the city and surrounding towns, and can be hired for the cost of a bus ticket (or less if you buy a 'minute bundle'). There is a parking rack at each end of our road. <https://beryl.cc/>
- We also have gated storage on site for students to store their own bicycles.
- Currently trains and trams are currently accepting NBUS passes.
- We are also encouraging students to lift-share, car-pool and share Ubers.

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### **During Strikes - If travel seems impossible**

If a student is concerned that they cannot get to the academy, the first thing they should do is reach out to their personal tutor who will work with them to look at transport solutions, timetables, and what kind of support we might be able to offer.

**Starting from Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March**, Students who are unable to travel into the academy:

- **Must notify us via telephone or email before 9am on the day.**
- **Must register at the start of each lesson via Microsoft Teams video/audio call** (via phone, tablet or laptop). Teachers will share live-lesson invitations via the app.
- **Must work to their normal timetable remotely and complete all work set.**

**Students who do not register, we be treated as absent, and this will affect attendance, and future references.**

### **Year 12 Careers Fair – Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March**

We understand that some Y12 students may struggle to get to the careers fair at Edgbaston Stadium tomorrow. However, as it is such an important experience, we strongly encourage learners to do everything they can to get there. If learners are struggling to get there on time, they must let us know by emailing [attendance@boa-stageandscreen.co.uk](mailto:attendance@boa-stageandscreen.co.uk) before 9am (there will be no online registration or specific remote learning set on this day).

I hope this guidance is clear. It is sad that we are having to send these tough messages, but with our young people's futures at stake it feels like we have no choice but to act.

I do hope that the negotiations between the UK Government and our transport workers will bring the strike action to an end soon but, until we receive any updates, it is better for us all to be on the same page.

Thank you as always for your ongoing support.

Please do get in touch if you need any support with planning travel, or accessing Microsoft Teams.

Sincerely



Mr Michael Painter  
Principal

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