# Teachers at St Matthew's C of E Primary School strike over pay and management concerns



Teachers at St Matthew's C of E Primary School in Bolton commenced a six-day strike on Wednesday, March 19, as part of an ongoing dispute over pay and management practices. This action is primarily being undertaken by nearly two dozen members of the National Education Union (NEU), who have expressed significant concerns regarding performance-related pay, which they argue is ineffective and overly burdensome. The NEU has also highlighted issues surrounding what they term 'poor management' at the school.

As a result of the strike, the school is experiencing considerable disruption. Notably, the nursery and one Reception class, along with ten other classes, have been closed to pupils; only two classes and an additional Reception class remain operational during this period. The NEU has planned additional strike days for March 25 and 26, and again from April 1 to 3.

Union representatives have indicated that the decision to strike follows a unanimous vote among their members, citing ongoing concerns that have persisted for some time. Despite attempts to negotiate with the school's headteacher, the NEU described the progress as "slow and extremely limited." As reported, Joanne Squires, the Bolton NEU branch secretary, stated: “Members are dedicated professionals who work hard for the pupils at St Matthew’s and deserve to be properly remunerated each year, without jumping through bureaucratic hoops and filling in endless paperwork to prove their worth to the school."

The picket line outside St Matthew's saw teachers holding placards with messages highlighting their commitment to education and their concerns about current practices. Slogans such as "Happy staff = happy children" and "If teachers are outside, something is wrong inside," were visible, underscoring the sentiment that educational quality is at stake.

Peter Middleman, the regional secretary of the NEU, elaborated on the negative implications of performance-related pay, stating that it not only increases workload but can also undermine collaborative working among teachers. He noted that many educators face obstacles in achieving pay progression, even when they meet established targets. He also mentioned the need for the removal of performance-related pay requirements, as recommended by the School Teachers’ Review Body.

In communication with parents, Alison Worthington, the school's deputy head, acknowledged the impact of the strike on school operations, informing them that a risk assessment had been conducted to ensure the safety of children and outlining the school's plans for partial operation during this period.

A spokesperson for Bolton Council confirmed that attempts had been made to resolve the matter collaboratively with NEU representatives. Despite these efforts, they were unable to reach a sufficient agreement prior to the initiation of industrial action, resulting in the current disruption to the school’s timetable.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://st-matthews.bolton.sch.uk/news/2025-03-11-strike-action-letter> - This URL provides information about strike action at St Matthew's CofE Primary School, which aligns with the disruptions caused by the teachers' strike. It includes letters to parents regarding strike actions and school operations.
* <https://www.neu.org.uk> - The National Education Union (NEU) website would contain information about the union's stance on performance-related pay and management practices, which are central to the strike at St Matthew's.
* <https://www.bolton.gov.uk> - Bolton Council's website might provide updates or statements regarding their involvement in resolving the dispute between the NEU and St Matthew's CofE Primary School.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/school-teachers-review-body> - The School Teachers’ Review Body website would contain recommendations and reports on teacher pay and conditions, including performance-related pay, which is a key issue in the strike.
* <https://www.tes.com/news/education-news/teachers-strike> - The Times Educational Supplement (TES) often reports on teacher strikes and educational issues, providing context and updates on similar disputes across the UK.