



# THE ECCLESBOURNE SCHOOL

*'Learning Together For The Future'*

Head Teacher  
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Friday 3 April 2020

## **Easter Holiday arrangements and Grade Awards**

Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope that this letter finds you and your families well and that you are managing as well as can be expected under the circumstances. At the start of what would have been our Easter holiday period we are writing with a further update on arrangements during the national school closure.

School will continue to be open for children of key workers and vulnerable children during the holiday. Thank you for letting us know in advance if your child will need to be in school as this has helped us to plan our provision.

Over Easter we will not be setting further work and we don't expect students who are at home over Easter to complete work during the holiday. From Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April, work will continue to be set and collected by your child's teachers. Please encourage your children to not to get worried about doing too much or too little at this stage. Maintaining learning is important but there is an important balance to be struck and making sure children are safe and happy and giving them time to get used to working from home is important too.

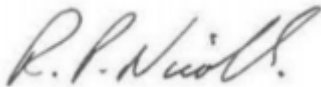
Last week Ofqual, the body responsible for overseeing the fairness of the examination system, told us that they would outline by Easter the process they will follow to make sure grades are fair across schools and colleges. Ofqual have published a letter for all students today which explains the approach they will take and this is included with this letter. Schools will be asked to send exam boards the grade they believe students were most likely to get if teaching, learning and exams had happened as planned. Schools will also need to provide a rank order of students within each subject. Ofqual will then carry out national standardisation to ensure fairness. There is no need for students in Year 11 or 13 to do any additional work after the school closed on 20<sup>th</sup> March or to complete coursework. Schools are not allowed to share grades with students, or their parents/carers or any other individuals outside the centre, before final results have been issued. We expect the deadline for submission of grades to be on or shortly after 29 May and publication of results to be in August.

We know that this has been a worrying time for our students and their families and so we welcome the assurance provided by Ofqual today. They have made clear that teachers, who know their students best, will be providing the information to allow the awarding of grades and certificates which will be indistinguishable from those issued in any normal exam year.

We would also like to update you on progress with securing refunds for cancelled school trips. Insurance claims have now been filed and we will continue to liaise with trip providers and insurers and will keep parents and carers informed as this situation develops.

As ever, if you have any questions or simply wish to touch base with us here at school please contact Reception or email [ronicoll@ecclesbourn.derbyshire.sch.uk](mailto:ronicoll@ecclesbourn.derbyshire.sch.uk) and a senior member of staff will do their best to help. We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy Easter.

Yours sincerely,



Robert Nicoll,  
Deputy Head Teacher



James McNamara  
Head Teacher



### **A message for all GCSE, AS and A level students this summer**

I understand how unsettling the past weeks have been for you, since the [announcement that exams have been cancelled this summer, and that you are urgently waiting for news](#). I wanted to let you know what we are doing to provide you with grades. Our over-riding aim in this is to be fair to students this summer and to make sure you are not disadvantaged in your progress to sixth form, college, university, apprenticeships, training or work because of these unprecedented conditions.

#### **How will grades be calculated?**

Your school or college will be asked to send exam boards two pieces of information for each of your subjects, based on what they know about your work and achievements:

- the grade they believe you were most likely to get if teaching, learning and exams had happened as planned
- within each subject, the order of students at your school or college, by performance, for each grade. This information will be used to standardise judgements – allowing fine tuning of the standard applied across schools and colleges

Your school or college will consider a range of things like your classwork and homework; your results in assignments and any mock exams; any non-exam assessment or coursework you might have done; and your general progress during your course.

This information will allow us, with exam boards, to standardise grades across schools and colleges, to make sure that, as far as possible, results are fair and that students are not advantaged or disadvantaged because their schools or colleges are more generous or harsh than others when

making those judgements. That means the final grade you get could be different from the one your school or college sends to the exam board.

### **Do I need to complete any new work for my school/college to submit a grade?**

Your school or college is not required to set additional mock exams or homework for your centre assessment grade, and you won't be disadvantaged if you were not set, or were unable to complete, any work given out after schools were closed.

### **Can I see the grades my school/college submits for me?**

No, this information will be confidential. Please don't ask your teachers, or anyone else at your school or college, to tell you the grades they will be sending to the exam boards or where they have placed you in the order of students; they will not be allowed to share this with you.

### **I am a private candidate – what does this mean for me?**

If you are a private candidate (for example, home-schooled, following distance-learning programmes or studying independently) the centre you are entering with should include you where the head teacher or principal is confident that they and their staff have seen sufficient evidence of your achievement to make an objective judgement. We are urgently exploring whether there are alternative options for those students who do not have an existing relationship with a centre and who need results this summer to progress. Unfortunately this is unlikely to be possible for all private candidates, some of whom may instead need to take exams in the autumn to get their grades.

We appreciate that this is a matter of real concern to private candidates and will provide an update as soon as possible. We have asked organisations that represent universities and FE colleges to consider the steps that providers could take when making admissions decisions this summer for any private candidates who do not receive a grade. They have told us that they believe that institutions will consider a range of other evidence and information for these students to allow them to progress wherever possible.

### **When will I get my results?**

We're working hard to get results out as soon as is possible – results won't be delayed after the dates they were expected in August, and ideally they will be issued a little earlier, so you can have the certainty you need.

### **Can I take my exams another time?**

We are working with exam boards to offer additional exams in the autumn term as soon as it is possible to do so. We'll let you know about these in the coming weeks.

The information we have published covers GCSEs, AS and A levels, plus Extended Project Qualifications and Additional Extension Awards in maths. You can find out more about which qualifications and students are included, and the current arrangements for those which are not, in our [detailed guidance](#); along with answers to other questions that you and your parents or carers might have. We will keep updating our guidance as new

information becomes available, including to share details about vocational and technical qualifications as soon as we can, so please keep an eye on our website.

Please be reassured that the grades you get this summer will look exactly the same as in previous years, and they will have equal status with universities, colleges and employers, to help you move forward in your lives as planned.

With every best wish,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S Collier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish underneath the name.

**Sally Collier**

Chief Regulator, Ofqual