



# THE ECCLESBOURNE SCHOOL

*'Learning Together For The Future'*

Head Teacher  
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Wednesday 29 March 2023

## End of Term

Dear parents and carers,

At the end of a long and incredibly busy term we would like to wish all our parents, carers and friends a very happy and restful Easter holiday and to share with you some of the highlights of the Spring Term. We are very proud of the range and quality of our extra-curricular experience which you can read about in our latest newsletter. So much has happened this term from school trips to Germany, New York and Spain to our Spring Concert, Spoken English Finals and Stars In Your Eyes competition. I hope that you enjoy the newsletter which gives an insight into the richness of life at Ecclesbourne.

## School Improvement

We would like to update you on the work staff and students have been doing in response to our inspection. We are proud of the progress made so far and determined as ever to continue to make our school even better. To keep you well informed of the work we are doing we are regularly updating our Ofsted Action Plan and our progress can be seen by following this link: <https://bit.ly/3M25zN6>.

Having reorganised our Strategic and Pastoral Leadership Teams to create more capacity, undertaken a suite of additional training, recruited student leaders to assist our work on diversity and wellbeing and introduced improved systems for recording pastoral concerns we wanted a fresh pair of eyes to test the progress we have made. Hence, the school commissioned an independent review of its safeguarding by OFSTED trained safeguarding consultants and the feedback received this term demonstrates that the school's safeguarding is highly effective. The report highlights:

- Overwhelming evidence from discussion with staff and leaders of a strong, collective commitment to safeguarding and an understanding of the responsibility of all staff to keep children safe. The culture of safeguarding is strong. There is a strong and collective commitment to safeguarding demonstrated by the SLT, staff and Governors.
- The safeguarding culture is embedded within the school's vision and values and evident within its' curriculum design, which impacts upon students' understanding and feelings of security.
- The school has responded effectively and promptly to the changes within Keeping Children Safe In Education 2022. School leaders have a strong understanding of the most prominent risks faced by the pupils who attend the school, and this has been disseminated effectively so that teachers and support staff were aware of these concerns.
- The Pastoral Leadership Team ensures any cause for concern children are supported effectively and continuously in relation to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, and inclusion matters.
- All staff spoken with presented as committed, knowledgeable, vigilant, and well trained in key safeguarding matters. Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) have been effective in training staff in safeguarding including in professional and timely use of the My Concern system for recording pastoral concerns.
- There was clear evidence of the regularity, depth, and effectiveness of training in safeguarding.
- The Safeguarding Governor was knowledgeable about the risks faced by the school's students within their local community. They reported good levels of challenge/enquiry from the other Governors in relation to safeguarding information presented to them. They reported that she has good relationships



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with and confidence in the Head Teacher, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the wider safeguarding team.

- Calm and settled atmosphere viewed in classrooms and students moved around the building with purpose and independence. Students in meetings presented as respectful, thoughtful, and confident.
- Behaviour and attitudes to learning in lessons appear to be a significant strength throughout the school.
- Leaders take an active stance against prejudice and discrimination and take clear action in response to comments or actions which discriminate against people with protected characteristics. Behaviour incidents are recorded, categorised, and tracked effectively.
- Students said that reports of bullying and/or prejudiced language are taken very seriously by school leaders and that intervention action, including sanctions, is likely.
- The number of serious incidents leading to suspension are well below national averages. Reintegration procedures following suspensions are thorough. The school's approach to internal exclusion (attachment to a senior leader or pastoral leader) is effective.

In response to advice from the independent safeguarding review the school has invested in an electronic signing in system and strengthened Reception routines. Additional training has been provided for Governors.

## Governor Elections

Following elections for parent governors and the appointment of a further two governors this term we are delighted to announce that Suzanne Dixon, Huw Lloyd, Sanjeev Chopra and Shamsa Hussain have joined the board. I am sure you will want to join me in welcoming them and wishing them success in their new roles. Governors serve a four-year term and have a vital role in helping to set the strategic direction of the school and ensure that the school delivers the very highest quality of education for our students. More information about the governors and the governance structure of the school can be found on the school website.

## Parent Voice

We are grateful to our parents and carers for taking the time to complete our Parent View survey this term. These form an important part of our planning processes and help us strive to be even better. We have compared responses to other high performing similar schools to provide some context and these are shown in brackets. 93% (88%) of respondents said that the school has high expectations for their child. 95% (94%) said there is a good range of subjects in the curriculum and 96% (92%) said their child can take part in extra curricular activities. 92% (89%) said their child does well at Ecclesbourne. 91% (81%) were satisfied that the school lets them know how their child is doing. 90% (84%) said that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved. 93% (92%) said their child feels safe at school. 91% (91%) said that either their child had not been bullied or that any bullying was well dealt with. 85% (75%) said that the school makes them aware of what their child will learn in the year. While it is pleasing to receive positive feedback, we are focused on using it to make further improvements in all aspects of our work and we will continue to do so. We will ask for further feedback later in the year.

## Student Leadership

As we look forward to the Easter holiday I would like to commend our students who deserve the highest praise for the way they have worked and conducted themselves this term. We have been so impressed with Year 11 and 13 as they enter the final stages of preparation for their GCSE and A Level examinations next term. Our Year 12 House Captains and Co-Head Prefects have begun their year in post following some of the most competitive applications we can recall. The standard of applications and the quality of the interviews was



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deeply impressive. This term more than 30 Lower Sixth students have been coming into school early on Fridays to do subject mentoring for Year 11. This is typical of how our school works and has its echo in the way House Captains nurture and support students from Year 7 onwards in the arts, sport and charity fundraising. Student leadership is a crucial part of what makes Ecclesbourne special and as usual the energy and positive attitude of all our student leaders in Lower School, Upper School and the Sixth Form have been notable this term.

Anyone associated with education knows how exceptionally challenging the last three years have been. However, in this school, no matter the challenge, the strength of our community and the joy of seeing our young people thrive and shine sustains us all. If you have the time, I strongly recommend that you check out the latest newsletter which includes performances from this year's Stars In Your Eyes competition for a taste of the magic of which our children and staff are capable. <https://sway.office.com/bKECSh6toqT5ZlqM?ref=Link>

We would like to thank you for your continued support for the school and for all your kind messages of encouragement for our teachers and support staff. We wish you a restful and restorative holiday and look forward to seeing you in the summer term.

Yours sincerely,

James McNamara  
Head Teacher