



# Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre

*Striving for Excellence*

Principal • Mr Alan Johnson

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Although today is officially the end of our second term, and in normal circumstances I would be writing to celebrate the many successes of our students, myself and the Newent Team will still be in school over the next two weeks supporting the fantastic work of the key workers keeping us all going in these trying times. We started today with what seemed like a really good idea from Miss Gordelier. She suggested that we vary what has become our daily routine with input from Joe Wicks and his PE workout. Everyone did really well in what is an excellent way to start the day. Well.... maybe not everyone... not the Headteacher. I was soon to discover just how far away my toes were as I began the first exercise with our students. I for one will be joining Joe every morning in the weeks ahead.

I have had a number of emails from parents seeking further clarification and reassurance about how grades will be awarded to students in Y11 and Y13 given that the government has taken the decision to cancel formal examinations for these year groups in response to the unprecedented challenges in dealing with the coronavirus pandemic.

Until today, the information that we have already shared with you was everything that we knew. We like all other secondary schools and sixth form colleges were still awaiting complete clarity from the government. As has been the case with each new announcement, we hear the news at exactly the same time as you. They have today, Friday 3 April, set out details about how GCSEs, AS and A levels will be awarded this summer and published further guidance for teachers, students, parents and carers. I have copied the relevant link below and I have also included the letter from Ofqual to all GCSE, AS and A level students in England as an attached PDF document.

How GCSEs, AS & A levels will be awarded in summer 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/how-gcses-as-a-levels-will-be-awarded-in-summer-2020>

Exam boards will be contacting us after Easter to submit, by no earlier than 29 May 2020, the following:

- the grade we believe that each student would be most likely to have achieved if they had sat their exams and completed any non-exam assessment. These judgements will balance different sources of evidence such as:
  - classwork
  - bookwork
  - any participation in performances in subjects such as music, drama or PE
  - any non-exam assessment – whether or not complete
  - the results of any assignments or mock exams
  - previous examination results – for example, for any re-sitting students or those with relevant AS qualifications
  - any other records of student performance over the course of study
  - the rank order of students within each grade for each subject – for example, for all those students with a centre assessment grade of 5 in GCSE maths, a rank order where 1 is the most secure/highest attaining student, and so on. This information will be used in the statistical standardisation of centres' judgements – allowing fine tuning of the standard applied across all schools and colleges
- a declaration from myself.

Please rest assured that we will move heaven and earth to ensure that no student is disadvantaged by the exceptional circumstances we are all facing. To make sure that grades are as fair as possible across schools and colleges, exam boards will put all centre assessment grades through a process of standardisation using a model that is still being developed with Ofqual.

One further point that I do think is worth repeating is that the government has indicated that there will be the possibility of sitting an examination at the earliest reasonable opportunity in the new academic year - they are still working across the sector to plan for how and when these additional exams will take place. While there is no further detail as yet on this process it is my understanding that it may form part of any appeals process where appropriate. They will consult on proposals for specific appeal arrangements soon. As ever as soon as I hear any further information I will share it with you all. But with this in mind it is worth ensuring that students in Y11 and Y13 continue to follow their revision schedule not only to give themselves the body of stored knowledge for the next steps in their learning but also to enable them to make best use of any appeal if required.

### **Distance Learning**

Given the short amount of time that everyone had to introduce a distance learning model when the decision was taken to close schools it is inevitable that some things will go more smoothly than others. I am acutely aware that in a desire to ensure that students have enough work to occupy their time we have in some cases overset work. This has in some cases caused unwanted stress and anxiety for some families with children having too much to do. We are constantly reviewing the work that we are providing to young people and I urge you to make contact with class teachers should you have any questions about the work set. You can email staff using the following format [firstinitialsurname@newent.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:firstname.lastname@newent.gloucs.sch.uk) with any queries relating to subject work. Please note that that any and all queries relating to school life (including password resets) can be directed to the admin email or anyone on SLT. Finally please provide feedback directly to Mr Phillips with comments upon the 'Distance Learning' work set so far.

As we all become more familiar with distance learning may I offer a reminder of resources available to keep your family safe online such as:-

- Thinkyouknow (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online)
- <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>
- Internet matters (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- [https://www.internetmatters.org/?gclid=EAAlQobChMIktuA5LWK2wIVRYXVCh2afg2aEAAYASAAEgIJ5vD\\_BwE](https://www.internetmatters.org/?gclid=EAAlQobChMIktuA5LWK2wIVRYXVCh2afg2aEAAYASAAEgIJ5vD_BwE)
- Parent info (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- <https://parentinfo.org>
- LGfL (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- <https://www.lgfl.net/online-safety/default.aspx>
- Net-aware (support for parents and careers from the NSPCC)
- <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

I will provide another weekly update next Friday. Until then please stay safe and have a restful Easter break.

Regards



Alan Johnson  
Principal