



17<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

**Re: Year 11 Results Day Update**

Following on from our previous communications regarding GCSE Results Day on 20<sup>th</sup> August, we now write to provide you with further information. We are sure that you will be following developments in the media surrounding GCSE gradings, as such this letter is accurate as of Monday afternoon 17<sup>th</sup> August.

Your son/daughter should have received a letter with their log in details for their school email address. If they have not received this, please contact Mrs Pickles directly on [c.pickles@stjamesheadle.co.uk](mailto:c.pickles@stjamesheadle.co.uk)

It is imperative that they can access this account and if they have been unable to login please contact [t.millar@stjamesheadle.co.uk](mailto:t.millar@stjamesheadle.co.uk)

Results will be emailed to students no earlier than 8am on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> August. They will also be sent by post and these will arrive a few days later. As a school and in the interest of openness and transparency we have taken the decision to release the Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) of individual students at the same time as the final grades awarded by the exam boards. These are the grades awarded by St James' staff and submitted to the examination boards.

Should students wish to talk to a member of staff about their results for any reason or have any queries around next steps in terms of college/apprenticeships etc, we will have staff available on 20<sup>th</sup> August. Students may contact Mr Cawley, Head of Year 11, using the school mobile number, 07989 201022 or Mrs Harrop, Key Stage 4 Pastoral Manager, who will also be available on 07989 201024. Please do not send messages, they will only be able to respond to phone calls. Please be aware staff can only talk to the student about their grades' or parents with the child's explicit permission. Mr Pontifex and Mrs Pickles will be available for any further queries and can be contacted through Mr Cawley or Mrs Harrop.

The National Careers Service has also set up an exam results helpline during August 2020. Young people or their parents can contact the helpline on 0800 100 900 to speak to a professionally qualified careers adviser if they need advice on their next steps. The helpline will be open from 8am to 10pm from Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> August until Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August. After these dates, young people will be able to access ongoing support from the National Careers Service at any time by calling 0800 100 900, visiting [nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/contact-us](http://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/contact-us) or searching for the National Careers Service on Facebook and Twitter.

We appreciate that there may be some concerns around the awarding of grades this year, and we would like to take this opportunity to reassure you of the following:

- The grades submitted to the exam boards were agreed by St James' staff following an internal quality assurance process and are not the sole responsibility of any individual teacher
- The standardisation model developed by Ofqual and the awarding organisations is statistical and may not reflect the grades submitted by the centre. **This means the final grade students get could be different to the one we sent to the exam board.**
- A summary of this is as follows:
  - Grades were awarded this year based on what our school decided a student would achieve based on work and achievements throughout the course. The rank order and grade submitted by the



# ST JAMES'

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

- school reflected what a student would have achieved had teaching and learning continued as normal and the exams had taken place
- Exam boards checked grades to ensure they were accurate, and the standard was consistent between schools
  - As there was no common approach to grading in advance of these CAGs being submitted, they have been standardised across exam boards using a model set by OFQUAL so that national results are broadly in line with previous years
  - Exam boards have looked at; each centre individually, CAGs submitted compared to previous years results and taken in to account prior attainment of pupils. Exam boards may adjust grades of one or all students but the rank does not change
  - This brings consistency between schools and means students can compete on a level playing field
  - The information taken in to account by the exam boards when standardising included; the centre's historical performance in each subject, the prior attainment of the centre's students in previous years, the prior attainment for those students sitting the subject this year, compared to previous years and information submitted by our school this year
- Ofqual say that this was the fairest possible approach available under extreme circumstances. It is a rigorous process which means that grades awarded this year are as valid as in any other year and will allow pupils to progress to the next stage of their lives in the normal way

The Government has also released additional guidance about understanding the grades this summer, this can be accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/your-results-what-next>

Ofqual released information about resits and appeals on Saturday afternoon 15<sup>th</sup> August but then withdrew it on Saturday night. When we have received the new guidance we will write to provide clarification.

I do not think we have ever felt as powerless, angered, saddened and frustrated for a group of students in our entire careers as they face this uncertain landscape which seems to change daily. We can assure you that we will do all we can to support our students in these unprecedented times.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

Mr A Pontifex  
Headteacher

Mrs C Pickles  
Senior Deputy Headteacher