

Dear Parents/Carers,

March 2021

Firstly, I hope you and your families are safe and well. It has been fantastic to welcome all the students back to school after the last lockdown. Covid testing in school has now been completed and those participating in the home testing should now have their tests. We will continue with contact tracing over the Easter holidays. Parents and carers only need to inform us of a positive case where your child has developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school by emailing info@pleckgate.com

I would like to thank you for your support during this challenging year and would like to share a few important messages with you as we approach the Easter holiday.

Importance of work & learning routines

As we prepare for the summer term, it is important that all students and families understand that there is work to be done at both school and home to ensure the learning of our young people recover. We are very confident that we can ensure every child who engages with their subjects and works hard, will be successful. Please, where possible, spend time talking to your child about school, check that your child has completed their homework to the best of their ability, and crucially that they are submitting work back to their teachers. One thing this pandemic has reminded us of is that every minute in school is precious.

Year 10 students

The journey for every child to recover their learning is central to our work in school, but perhaps the most time sensitive work is with our year 10 students, who in just over a year, will be sitting GCSE examinations. Year 10 students have already taken part in tests for us to know which aspects of their learning require the greatest attention. This is the sole reason these tests have taken place; it is our job to plot a journey to ensure students are in the best position moving into year 11. Put simply, each year 10 student who works hard and engages fully in their learning will be successful, we will make sure of that, but hard work is KEY!

Year 11 GCSE grading

As you read this letter, we should have received additional guidance and assessment materials from the exam boards, but unfortunately this has been delayed until after the Easter break. When these materials arrive, they will support school in ensuring students are awarded grades that they have demonstrated they deserve. The grades will be based on the work that students have already produced and will continue to produce over the next couple of months. Students will have advance warning of assessments and will receive feedback on how to improve. Teachers will mark work in line with the exam board marking guidance, so grades will be entirely based on what a student shows they can do. It is therefore crucial that every student has full attendance, is working hard and following the advice and guidance of their teachers.

Travelling

abroad

As always, Pleckgate does not authorise holidays abroad, and at the moment, you can't legally travel abroad to go on holiday. In light of the huge impact the pandemic has already had on student's learning, all absences should be avoided. If you do need to travel overseas (and are legally permitted to do so), you may be required to complete a mandatory outbound ['Declaration to Travel' form](#). You must state the reasons for travel before leaving the UK. In addition, you should consider the public health advice in the country you are visiting and consider the rules in place at your destination and the [Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office \(FCDO\) travel advice](#). On return to the UK, if you are travelling to England you must either quarantine in the place you are staying or in a managed quarantine hotel for 10 days due to COVID-19. What you need to do depends on where you travel in the 10 days before you arrive in England. You must also get 2 coronavirus tests after you arrive in England. You'll need to book these before you travel.

Visiting school & drop off/collection

We are still discouraging visitors from site in line with our COVID safe opening risk assessment so please only come to school reception if you have an appointment. In addition, our school site does get very busy at the start and end of the school day so in order to keep children safe I urge you to consider not driving onto school site in order to reduce the congestion and increase the safety of the children walking to and from school. We have a school bus run by Moving People that you can book via our website on ParentPay if the distance is too far for your child to walk. If you do need to drive onto school site then please drop off your children in the drop off spaces only and only park in a visitors car park space if you are staying for 2 minutes or more at the end of school. Please refrain from dropping off or collecting children on the roadside, roundabout or parking on the double yellow lines or grass verges. Please also consider our neighbours Blackburn Northern Sports Club who require access to their car park throughout the day.



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Easter Free School Meal Vouchers

Free School Meal Vouchers will be provided again for the holidays. They are to be used on Blackburn and Darwen markets. Each pupil will receive £30 worth of vouchers. They expire on the 19th June, enabling parents to use the vouchers during the May holidays, should you wish. These will be distributed to pupils on Thursday in school.

Thank you for the trust you have put into the school and your ongoing support as we move forward together.

Mr M Cocker

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M Cocker', is written below the name 'Mr M Cocker'.