

**July 16<sup>th</sup> 2020**

Dear Parents and Carers

Although there will be some further communications for individual groups of parents, this will be my last email to you all at the end of a school year which has been without parallel in my (almost 40 year experience in schools). Time has flown so fast and the pace of change has been so relentless that I still find it hard to step back and get some perspective on the last few months. Maybe that will come a bit later. There are, however, a few things that I do want to say at this stage.

First, I want to echo the comments that so many of you have made and thank the staff of the Academy for everything they have done since we stopped operating normally on 20<sup>th</sup> March. As one parent put it:

***Thank you for everything that you, yourself, have fought for this year, the teachers holding their virtual classes and all those fab people who have looked after the kids in school, the helplines that were set up, foodbanks etc etc. Fantastic, I'm really proud that my son is at Macclesfield Academy.***

The contribution our staff have made is all the more remarkable when we remember that, at the same time, many of them have been caring for their own children, parents and other family members and, in some cases, managing their own medical conditions. I do not have the words to express my gratitude for their commitment and my pride in what they have achieved.

Second, I also want to pay tribute to what so many students (often with tremendous parental support) have achieved through the remote learning. As many of us have discovered, working at home presents a whole new set of challenges and I have been hugely impressed by some of the work that our students have produced in very difficult circumstances. Many examples of this have been posted on the latest news section of the website in the months that we have been closed. Now that we have reached the end of term, I want to make it clear that, although there are examples on the website and on Show My Homework of reading and projects which students may wish to undertake over the summer, no-one should feel under any pressure for these to be completed. I fully understand that both students and parents need a break and the most important thing is that they return refreshed, eager and ready to learn in September.

Thirdly, I do just need to look ahead to results day in August. The GCSE results will be published on 20<sup>th</sup> August and we expect the results for the technical awards to be issued on the same day. Because of the continuing safety measures we need to have in place, it will not be possible to have the usual "free for all" results day for up to 350 students. Instead we will post out results to students in Year 9 and Year 10. These will be posted on 21<sup>st</sup> August so should arrive by the middle of the following week. Each of our Year 11 students will be invited to a 1:1 meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> August. They may bring a parent to this meeting if they choose to do so. The purpose of this meeting will be to share the results and to discuss the next steps including the results of applications to post 16 providers where these are known. Details of these appointments will be sent out by email over the

next couple of weeks. As you know the results this year will be “calculated grades” produced by the exam boards and informed by the “Centre Assessed Grades” that schools submitted in June. It may be that some students wish to try and improve their grades in the special Autumn exam series and this is something we can discuss at these meetings. The Government information on the calculated grades and the Autumn exams was updated earlier this week and can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2020/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2020>

Finally, I want to end with some more thoughts from parents:

***Could we just thank you, your wonderful staff and support staff. It feels like 'thank you' does not do justice for all that you have done for our children, you are all amazing and we are so fortunate to have you all looking after our children and trying your best on a daily basis to make sure they are educated as well as making them feel significant and cared for.***

***Thank you so much for your thorough and always encouraging emails and communication whilst school has been closed.***

***I appreciate you, staff and governors have worked so hard for all students safety and well-being.***

***[Our son] has enjoyed his Monday's back in school. Most definitely the routine and friendships that school provides for him is just as important as what he learns academically. Macclesfield Academy is truly a lovely community, Thank you.***

***As a family we are looking forward to [our son] returning to school in September and, if anything good has come out of this whole experience, it's how much we will appreciate the things in life that we always took for granted. I hope so anyway.***

All I would add is that we have tried throughout to do our very best for our students and their families through this very difficult time but that this would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of so many parents. At a personal level I want to thank you all and to echo the words of the final extract above: it is easy to take for granted some of the most important things in life like family, community and education. While none of us would ever have wished for the events of the last few months, if they have helped us to appreciate some of these things a bit more, that can only be a good thing.

I am signing off for 2-3 weeks now. I will be in contact again in mid August once the details for our opening in September are finalised.

In the meantime, I wish you all a restful and refreshing summer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Hedge', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

**RICHARD HEDGE**

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