



# Loreto Secondary School Clonmel

Coleville Road, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary

8<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Sixth Year Parents/Guardians,

I am sure that you, like ourselves, have just heard the Minister's Press Briefing. We are thinking of all our Leaving Cert students and you - their parents/guardians. We know how important this information is to you and the full details (which we have just received) are outlined below for you.

Today, Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020, the Minister has issued a [statement](#) that, in order to achieve the fairest possible outcomes in the current circumstances, he is offering a system of Calculated Grades. A Calculated Grade is a grade that can be provided to students following the combination of school information about a student's expected performance in an examination and national data available.

The process of arriving at a Calculated Grade applies to:

- Established Leaving Certificate – subjects
- Leaving Certificate Applied – subjects and vocational specialisms
- Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme – Link Modules

A calculated grade results from the combination of two data sets:

- A school-based estimation of an overall percentage mark and ranking to be awarded to a student in a particular subject
- Data available from the State Examinations Commission – this includes data on past performance of students in each school and nationally

The combination of these data sets through a process of national standardisation can determine the grade to be awarded to each student in each subject, thereby resulting in a Calculated Grade.

There are two main phases in the process of arriving at a Calculated Grade:

- A school-based phase
- A national standardisation phase.

## ***The role of the school***

The role of the school is to provide marks and rankings that reflect:

- An estimation of the percentage mark in each subject that each candidate is likely to have achieved if they had sat the Leaving Certificate examination in 2020 under normal conditions
- A class ranking for each student in each subject – i.e. a list of all the candidates for a particular subject in a class in the order of their estimated level of achievement.

In providing the above estimated marks and rankings, there will be four main school-based steps:

1. The teacher's estimation of student marks and rankings

2. School alignment of marks for a subject through a subject alignment group comprising teachers who are teaching the subject to Leaving Certificate students this year
3. Oversight of the alignment process by the school principal
4. Transmission of the marks and rankings for national standardisation

Each of these steps is set out in detail in the booklet 'A Guide to Calculated Grades for Leaving Certificate Students 2020' available to download from the Government website [here](#).

**The earlier arrangement (communicated in March) that full marks would be awarded in respect of the orals and music performance tests was predicated on the written examinations proceeding this summer. As the examinations will not proceed, that arrangement will not apply.**

In addition to the Calculated Grades process, provision has also been made for a three-stage Appeals Process involving:

- A series of checks that data were correctly entered at school level and correctly transferred to the DES
- A review that the data were correctly received and processed by the DES
- If a candidate remains dissatisfied after notification of outcome of the above two stages, verification of the DES processes by independent appeal scrutineer

Finally, and in the spirit of fairness to all Leaving Certificate students, the option of sitting the Leaving Certificate examinations when it becomes feasible to hold them remains open to all students.

### **Next Steps**

- We understand that the steps as framed in the Guideline document will be implemented *once confirmation of agreement with all stakeholders is received*.
- For our current 6th year students the school year will now unfortunately conclude. But that does not mean that our teachers are not available to support the 6<sup>th</sup> years. We are working on a remote graduation which we will keep the 6<sup>th</sup> years informed about. To end their school time here in this manner breaks our hearts, as we know it must break their hearts too.

We will be in touch with our 6<sup>th</sup> Years on Teams next week. Although the journey over the last two years has come to an abrupt end, we are very proud of how the 6<sup>th</sup> Years have handled themselves since the school closure on 12th March. We want to thank our 6<sup>th</sup> Years for their cooperation, enthusiasm and attention to their studies, as well as acknowledge their great contribution to every aspect of school life.

I want to assure you of the continued support of myself and all the teachers for each of our students. More than ever our *Summer Term Prayer* is important for us all (see below), but especially for our 6<sup>th</sup> Year students. Our 6<sup>th</sup> Years, you their parents/guardians and your family are in my thoughts and prayers.

Anne Mc Grath

Principal



### Summer Term 2020 Prayer

*We pray for all in our school, the extended Loreto community, our family, friends, front line staff, all in our local and national community and today we think especially of our 6<sup>th</sup> Year students:*

that we may face the unknown with **hope** and embrace goodness in each new day.

