



12th May 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian & 6th Year Student,

Recent times have been hard to fathom none more so than the last week, which has been life changing for so many of our students, parents, & teachers not only in PSS, Wexford, but, throughout the country. It is a year that the Leaving Cert class of 2020 will never forget, the Leaving Cert is always a milestone in all of our lives and as I have mentioned to the students we are all here to support you and do our best for you throughout the whole process.

As I mentioned in our online assemblies with the 6th years recently, I personally miss you all, I miss the noise, the laughter, the random chats on the corridors. I feel I am blessed to have met each and every one of you twice over the course of the last 2 years as part of academic tracking, I know you all miss the school as well, and I know all of the excellent staff we have at PSS, Wexford miss you all also.

I would like to commend our 6th year students in the way they have carried themselves over the last 5 or 6 years, but, also during the last couple of weeks. Commendation also needs to be mentioned for our wonderful staff at the school for all of their hard work & dedication that they have done and will continue to do for your daughters over the last 5 or 6 years and in particular over the last couple of weeks.

We have all been waiting for a decision to be made with regard the Leaving Certificate class of 2020, eventually this decision was made, while many will welcome the decision some may be upset and experiencing a new anxiety and stress, which is totally understandable.

There are 4 stages to achieving calculated grades I think it is very important that Parents/Guardians & students familiarise yourself with the documents below and on our website.

Leaving Certificate 2020
How Calculated Grades work

- 1 Estimation of Scores and Rankings by Teacher**
The subject teacher estimates percentage mark the candidate is likely to have achieved in Leaving Certificate 2020.
The teacher estimates class ranking of each candidate in order of predicted level of achievement for each subject.
- 2 In-school alignment by Teachers**
Subject teachers review the estimated marks and rankings of students.
Teachers finalise their estimated marks and rankings following alignment process.
- 3 Oversight of Marks and Rankings by School Principal**
The principal reviews estimated marks and rankings, and signs off on behalf of the school.
The principal may return the estimated marks and rankings to the relevant group of teachers for further consideration.
- 4 National Standardisation by Department of Education & Skills**
Marks and rankings submitted by schools will be examined and may be adjusted using statistical methods to ensure a common national standard is applied.

Find out more at [gov.ie/leavingcertificate](https://www.gov.ie/leavingcertificate)

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL

Educating the Students of Wexford Since 1818
"Our Best Always"



We held another assembly & staff meeting yesterday the 11th of May with staff and 6th year students to go through the published announcements and documents below:

<https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2020-press-releases/PR20-05-08.html> Press Release

<https://www.education.ie/en/Learners/Information/State-Examinations/a-guide-to-calculated-grades-for-leaving-certificate-students-2020.pdf> Guide to calculated grades

<https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2020-press-releases/PR20-05-08.html> FAQ

We have tried our best to provide as much clarity to students & our staff as we can at this time. We will work through the process as outlined above over the coming weeks and have no doubt that students will be rewarded for the work they have put in over the past few years in preparation for the Leaving Cert exams.

In general terms, our approach will be guided by the maxim that it is better to be right, than to be first. I firmly believe we need to get this process right and we will do our utmost to make sure that all are treated fairly, transparently & all are treated in an equitable manner. I will not be rushing out of the starting blocks to be the first school to complete the process. Slow & steady to make sure the process is done correctly. We know from the document what we must do as a school to determine Calculated Grades.

On a more serious note and I mentioned this to the students at assembly yesterday, which is in relation to canvassing. That Parents/Guardians or students who seek to influence the Leaving Cert grade awarded will be reported to the DES. Any canvassing or emails or phone-calls of such activity will be reported to me straightaway & it is under my remit to inform the authorities of any such canvassing,

A very important point of information for all involved in this process, Students, Parents/Guardians, & teachers that it is ultimately the DES that determines the final grade, not the teachers or school.

We are in extremely challenging times which were fraught with uncertainty and lack of clarity. There was growing frustration, stress, and anxiety among students around the country and there was no safe way based on the advice that the Dept of Education had received to run exams safely.



PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL

Educating the Students of Wexford Since 1818
"Our Best Always"



This letter will not be the last contact between students, parents, and teachers however, it is essential that there is no further engagement or correspondence between teachers, parents and students regarding grades and classwork to ensure the integrity of the process. So, teaching classes ended for 6th years yesterday the 11th May 2020.

Teachers may get in touch with their individual classes to say goodbye etc. As I mentioned to the students yesterday, we are going to have an end of year celebration online for 6th year students before the end of May. I will also hold another assembly with 6th years next week, just to keep them up to date with any new information from the DES. We are all working towards an end of school celebration and my preference is to do it in person rather than virtually as I do not want to see them on a screen for the last time. A hug, handshake, and a sharing of a cup of tea and cake is my preference. All our students at PSS, Wexford are too good to let them leave school without any form of celebration.

Hopefully, if everything is okay in September we will have our 6th Year Graduation in the normal manner in either our School Gym or one of the local churches, this all down to how the health situation will be at this time. But, for now we will celebrate in some form online.

I ask that any questions should be directed to me at applications@preswex.ie subject LC 2020 queries.

All our online assemblies are recorded on Stream and have been emailed to our 6th years.

In terms of access to the building and emptying lockers etc hopefully when we are allowed back to school on the 18th of May, we can set up a timetable for 6th years to come in and access the school. I will inform the students and parents by text or by email.

Wishing you and all your families every best wish.

Yours Sincerely,

William Ryan