

20<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Student,

You will have collected your GCSE results today and I wanted you to know you are much in the thoughts and prayers of the churches and people of Lincolnshire.

The past few months have been unlike any we have ever known. Our whole way of life through lockdown has had to be very different and the impact of this has been huge. Each of us has been affected in different ways, but in the Diocesan Board of Education (which helps support your school) we have been particularly conscious of the impact this has had on those, like you, whose education is at important stages.

There has been much debate around how GCSEs have been graded this year. I imagine that this week, as the method by which your grades have been debated and changed, you have probably been feeling even more uncertainty and concern than perhaps you might otherwise. I am really sad that you have been put in this position of uncertainty and I have written to the Secretary of State for Education about this.

If your results are all you hoped they would be or more, many congratulations indeed! Please do celebrate and enjoy whatever course, college, further education, apprenticeship or work you might be going on to.

However, if you are concerned, disappointed or upset at your grades do take time to reflect, seek advice and weigh up the various options before making decisions. You may decide to appeal, to sit exams or think about other directions. Your school will be well equipped to offer advice, support and encouragement. Talk to family and friends and those who you trust about what you might do. This year is the oddest year most of us have ever experienced and so take the necessary time to reflect.

Around this time churches pray regularly for those receiving exam results and making decisions about their future – that means we are praying for you. Whether this is something you share or not, know that we want you to flourish in what you do and the church is always a place of welcome and support for everyone in the community.

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The Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education is a registered charity No 115 1733  
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The diocesan family of schools always seeks excellence in everything we do. One of our core commitments around education comes from words that Jesus speaks in John's gospel 'I have come that they may have life and life in all its fullness'.

Education is about far more than passing exams and test results - important as that is. It is about the whole person, our character our values our creativity - in short it is about how we flourish as humans. That is why those words of Jesus are so important to us in the diocesan family of schools. They remind us that our experience of education needs to prepare us for life in all its fullness and variety.

We live in difficult and challenging times and you, as part of what is being called generation COVID, are at the sharp end of much of this. Today is but one small step on the huge journey of life. We hope and pray that whatever the next step you take will be one that leads you on a path of fulfilment and flourishing. If today has been good; great! If it has felt like a set-back then please do draw on the support offered by your schools and those who love you and care for you: we are here if you need us.

Each person is unique made, we believe, in the image and likeness of God. Every person matters and in our schools we want to see that everyone flourishes, discovers their gifts and reaches their potential.

You are in our thoughts and prayers as you take your next steps. We are all rooting for you!

With all good wishes,



The Ven Mark Steadman, Archdeacon of Stow and Lindsey  
Vice Chair of Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education