

Welcome to the latest update from EMS.

You'll see that students have been achieving create things in national and local events but there is so much more to celebrate which often slips under the radar. For example, on more than one occasion, students have handed in money which they've found and another has lost. Others have given up their spare time to support younger students, providing inspiration and support.

Whilst we celebrate the students who are achieving great things, and bask in their reflective glory, we're most proud of the quiet and frequent acts of kindness from students and staff which make this such a special place to be.

### All – FOR ACTION – Parent Survey

At this time of year, we like to take stock of the last term and review our plans for the coming months. A vital part of this process is receiving feedback from students and parents by means of annual surveys. This is not simply a box-ticking exercise, we consider the results of these surveys carefully and use them to inform the school's development. Staff are always encouraged by your positive comments and the concerns you raise enable us to focus school improvement where it matters most.

We'd therefore be grateful if you could spare a few moments to complete our online survey. Microsoft estimates that it will take you 7 minutes to complete, although if you have significant comments, it may require a little more time.

**There is a link in the email accompanying this update.** Please respond by the end of January.

### All – FOR INFORMATION – COVID Update

There has been an update to the rules for isolation. Following a positive COVID test result, students and staff will now need to isolate for at least 5 days and up to 10 days, depending on their Lateral Flow Test (LFT) results.

To end the isolation before 10 days, they must have negative LFT results for two days in a row. A test should be taken on day 5 and if negative another taken on day 6. If the day 6 test is negative, isolation can be immediately broken. If either test is positive, they must wait for whichever is the sooner of either two consecutive negative results, or 10 days since testing positive.

Yesterday, the requirement to wear face masks in lessons was lifted to the delight of most of the students and teachers. If students wish to continue to wear face masks they may of course continue to do so.

Booster vaccines are now available to all 16 and 17 year olds. They were previous only available to those who were vulnerable, or had household members who were.

Our updated COVID guidance (version 16) is attached in the email accompanying this update and is published on the parent page of our website: [Exeter Maths School | Parents Page \(exetermathematicsschool.ac.uk\)](https://www.exetermathematicsschool.ac.uk/parents)

## Yr13 – FOR ACTION – Note of Examination Dates

We have now added the dates of summer examinations to the parent page of our website under the “Dates for your Diary” section and the “External Examinations” tab. The information contains only the exams to be sat at EMS’ The Exeter College examination timetable will follow: <https://exetermathematicsschool.ac.uk/parents-page/#dates>.

You will also find additional JCQ (Joint Qualifications Council) Candidate Information regarding these exams in the same area of the website.

**IMPORTANT:** the examination boards reserve **Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June** as a contingency day; if exams need to be delayed for any reason, they will be rescheduled for this date. We therefore recommend that students do not book holidays before then.

## All – EMS NEWS – Poetry by Heart Competition

A big thank you to Claire for organising this event, to Shirin for supporting the students whilst they prepared and to our esteemed literary judges, Anne and David. Congratulations to Georgie who is now recording her poem to submit for the national competition.



A summary from Claire:

*On Wednesday, on the 19<sup>th</sup> Jan, six students all took part in our first competition of “Poetry by Heart”. Madison, Ben and Arlo, Georgie, Bee and Mel; each memorised some poems then stood and said them well beneath the quote by Descartes, each giving of their best, while Anne and David listened to decide on who was best. When all had said their poems the judges both conferred, while we made conversation so they would not be heard. They gave each student feedback, supportive, fair and kind, for all showed understanding (though some words slipped from mind). So Georgie was the winner of a little book of verse and a pi shaped cookie cutter. Then we had to disburse.*

*So thank you, Anne and David, and let’s sing praise all week to six brave mathematicians who dared to stand and speak!*

I’ll end this post with some words from the judges:

David and I were blown away by the quality of the students’ performances. Not only had they each learnt 2 demanding poems by heart but they performed them showing real understanding, making excellent contact with the audience, their enjoyment infectious. The best injected light and shade into the recitals and the very best added in some drama. Learning poetry by heart is a demanding discipline- performing in front of judges and your peers takes courage. We - the judges - left the building with a new spring in our step, buoyed up by the quality of the experience. Claire Willman’s encouragement and work with the students - and her own unscheduled, brilliant performance of a poem - showed just why she’s qualified to lead in this sort of timeless entertainment!

## All – EMS NEWS – British Mathematical Olympiad Results

Following their excellent performance in the Senior Maths Challenge in November, eleven students took on the challenge of the first round of the British Mathematical Olympiad (BMO1). Between them, they achieved 3 certificates of Merit and 5 certificates of Distinction – very impressive for such a tough challenge. Year 13 students with distinctions are Kate C, Matthew J and Liam T; year 12 distinctions were gained by Alex S and Cally B.

## All – EMS NEWS – National Cipher Challenge

Over the course of the autumn term, thousands of teams of students from across the nation competed in a series of missions as part of the University of Southampton's National Cipher Challenge. Eight teams entered from EMS, many of whom were individual students, and all performed exceptionally well, gaining top 25 spots on the national leader board. Four EMS teams (Georgesatchy, BigNotSmart, ExeCel and Pukqem N1Tech) were equal first nationally going into the final challenge - a race against the clock to finish first.

BigNotSmart (really year 12 student Cameron H) and Georgesatchy (really George S, also year 12) performed exceptionally well, achieving a place in the top 15. This shortlist was then considered for prizes based on their submissions, which described their methods for solving the final code. The judging panel met on Wednesday and we await with bated breath to find out whether prizes have been won!