



18 June 2021

Dear Parents & Carers

I hope this letter finds you well, although it appears we are again managing a period of change and adaptation in the light of recent announcements. I will attempt in this communication to set out important aspects that affect different sections of the College, not all will apply to you. I will also signpost the continuing success and achievements of our students who continue to be a source of pride.

Changes to Covid-19 Safety Controls and Removal of Restrictions

You will be aware, from the Government announcements on Monday, that the removal of restrictions expected on 21 June is now delayed until 19 July, with a review in two weeks. This has an inevitable consequence on a range of plans, not least those involving Year 6 transition and Year 11 leaving events.

We will be writing to those affected students and families separately today but I can provide the information that these events cannot happen in the way we had planned and certain aspects are clearly not permissible at all under the wording of the current DfE guidance. Rather than wait another two weeks we need to make decisions and rescope our plans now to allow families due notice of any adjustments required.

The current DfE guidance, in line with Step 3 of the roadmap, is that face coverings will no longer be recommended for pupils and students in classrooms or communal areas. We will continue with this position for now. However, in line with Public Health guidance if we start to get a number of cases in the local area we will re-introduce the wearing of face masks in communal areas where distancing is less possible and ultimately, possibly in classrooms.

Our reading of the guidance, as it stands, means that due to our use of “bubbles” and current control measures, most events that are currently planned in College should still be able to take place including Enrichment Week, a form of Sports Day and the House Cup Event. We are exploring options to celebrate a form of Honours Awards although clearly this will look very different than it has been traditionally.

Summer Uniform

Thank you to all parents and carers for ensuring that students are correctly equipped and dressed for College as requested. We do appreciate the effort that is involved in this work both at home and at school. You will be aware that in Term 6 when the weather allows we do not require the blazer as compulsory wear, although it is advised they still carry it with them.



Distinguished School



At times of unusual and sustained periods of hot weather we have previously allowed PE Shorts to be worn instead of trousers, however, these do not maintain the smartness that our students are known for and was not a permanent solution. We had previously (in 2019-20) been researching options for a black tailored short that could be worn throughout Term 6 by all students but these efforts were interrupted by the Pandemic. Continuing the exploration this year we have struggled to find a supplier that offers a gender-neutral version to be able to recommend.

We continue to source options and believe our main supplier (among others) will be able to source what is required, so we can advise that a smart tailored short as described in the College Policy on the website is possible in hot weather. All items within the College uniform policy remain gender-neutral. The College determines when this becomes applicable which would usually be in line with the removal of the blazer. Rather than delay further whilst awaiting confirmation on stock, we are happy to implement this in the light of current weather forecasting but caveat that the style must be appropriate. Please be clear to understand what styles would **not** be acceptable before purchasing, if in any doubt please check with the College.

Please be assured, in hot weather we ensure students all have access to shade, water and if necessary alternative locations to make sure they are safe and well throughout the day. We continue to advise them to avoid over-exerting themselves and to use options available to them.

Ofsted Review on Peer on Peer Abuse / Safe Streets

The well-publicised review by the Schools' Inspectorate concluded that sexual harassment has become "normalised" for young people, in school, online and in other unsupervised spaces including parks and house parties. There are many schools named on the 'Everyone's Invited' website, including ours, however this highlights the value of our current safeguarding procedures, culture of support and community ethos. Students and parents will already be aware of the steps taken to address these issues and positively promote discussion within College.

Within the College we have a clear Behaviour Policy which includes a need to identify and report any kind of harassment or abuse, sexual or otherwise. Our students are aware that we encourage them to log any "unkind" words or actions; we monitor and escalate our response accordingly. We work hard to sustain an inclusive, considerate and supportive community. It is entirely right that this national issue is being debated and behaviours are being challenged. The issues are obviously not unique to schools, they exist in all parts of society. No-one, regardless of age or gender, should have to put up with any kind of sexual harassment.

As a school we have robust safeguarding and pastoral systems, these are regularly audited by Senior Staff, Governors and the Local Authority. Please be assured we always take any concerns or allegations extremely seriously; however, we do rely on being informed. Therefore, we have been working closely with students across the College to review our reporting procedures and options available to students to raise issues of concern. These are currently outlined on our Action Against Bullying page of the College website https://www.heathfieldcc.co.uk/?page_id=937437.

It is important that all agencies work together on these matters and we are aware that in the light of the issues arising out of the Sarah Everard case there is more research being gathered surrounding safety of females and what the Police might be able to do. On the request of Sussex Police, we are asking female staff and students to go to the link below and complete the survey. Please feel free to engage as female parents and carers if you wish by Sunday 20 June 2021: <https://www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/events-surveys/safer-streets-funding-consultation/>

Parent Views

Can we remind you of the option to download and use a free survey app called Parent Ping: <https://bit.ly/parentping>. This will ask you a few questions each day and show you how other parents' respond. If enough parents sign up to this it will allow us to receive a bespoke report and have an input on the questions set.

Headlines and Highlights

EduArtsFest: On both the 21 May and 11 June The Sussex Express covered our contribution to the National celebration of Arts in Schools: <https://www.facebook.com/Heathfield-Community-College-224757737673118/>

Thought for the Day: Three local Churches will have been involved in delivering a message to our students by the end of June. This spiritual, moral input is much valued, see our website for messages on World Earth Day, Father's Day and soon to arrive Public Service Day. https://www.heathfieldcc.co.uk/?page_id=872784

Eco-Reps: Our students and staff have been busy this month with crisp packet recycling campaigns as well as the planting of 15 new apple trees on site courtesy of a very kind donation: <https://www.facebook.com/Heathfield-Community-College-224757737673118/>

Duke of Edinburgh Award: Large numbers of our students are involved in this scheme at both Bronze, Silver and Gold Award level and it was a pleasure to see them out for practice walks again getting ready for their expeditions: <https://www.facebook.com/Heathfield-Community-College-224757737673118/>

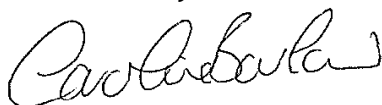
Leadership: Do have a look at the page celebrating our student leaders in this week's Sussex Express: <https://www.facebook.com/Heathfield-Community-College-224757737673118/>

Dates for the diary:

Thursday 24 June	Year 12 Virtual Progression Evening	
Friday 25 June	INSET Day	
Thursday 8 July	Sixth Form Open Morning	9am
	Year 6 Virtual Welcome Evening	6pm
Friday 9 July	Sixth Form Open Morning	9am

Thank you as always for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



MS C BARLOW
Headteacher