



9 June 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

As a College we are very aware that the national cost of living crisis has impacted our community significantly, as it has across the country.

Sadly, recent reports from the Department for Work and Pensions suggest as many as one in seven children in our own area, Wealden, have been seriously affected, in turn potentially impacting their life chances in the future.

Our position as a public sector organisation means our ability to step in and support is limited. The College is itself facing increased bills and unfunded costs which will mean our budgets are stretched even further. We are also aware that many families will not need or even want additional support.

However, it has always been our view that no child's ability to access their education or the significant wider-curricular opportunities we offer should be dependent on socio-economic factors. With this in mind, we are mindful that we will support where we can and where help is wanted.

Below is a reminder of some of the actions we are taking to support.

The main message will always be **to contact us if you feel your child or family would benefit from additional support.**

- **Free School Meals:** A Free School Meal is a statutory benefit available to school-aged children from families who receive other qualifying benefits. Currently a school meal costs £2.45, so over 40 weeks of the school year that is a potential saving of £490.00. Being registered for Free School Meals can lead to a range of other support so is well worth exploring details and [checking your eligibility.](#)
- **Pre-loved Uniform Supplies/Lost Property:** Replacing lost or outgrown uniform/kit does not have to create added pressure as our "Lost Property" is open every lunchtime for students to check; please do try and make sure items are named so that we can return them as soon as possible. Our Supporters of Heathfield group (SOHCC) also offer a range of pre-loved uniform and provide regular points of sale in the term for affordable replacements.



Distinguished School



Tel: (01435) 866066 e-mail: office@heathfieldcc.co.uk

Cade Street, Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 8RJ Website: www.heathfieldcc.co.uk

Headteacher: Ms Caroline Barlow B.A. (Hons)

- **Enrichment Week:** We have increased the number and range of free activities in Enrichment Week 2023 by absorbing some of the costs within existing budgets. The Heathfield Experience provides trips that all students are encouraged to go on for their wider cultural entitlement. Trip letters will show how to access help on an individual basis if needed. Payment plans or support are also available.
- **Sanitary/Hygiene Support:** As a school we are provided with basic sanitary support for female students to avoid 'hygiene poverty'. We have decided to extend this to provide basic hygiene supplies for both genders (eg: shower gel, shampoo, or other items as required). Students or parents can contact Pastoral Managers confidentially for more information, all products will be discreetly supplied.
- **Free Breakfast for all student:** Recent studies have shown that nearly half of all young people skip breakfast. We want all of our students to be readily prepared for a day of learning, so Porridge is freely available to all students, every morning, from the canteen.

East Sussex Support

In addition, there is a range of support that might be accessible from East Sussex:
<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/community/cost-of-living-support>

We will continue to communicate with SOHCC and other parent groups about what else we can facilitate that would help our community support each other at this time.

Once again, please do contact us should you have any questions or concerns.

Yours sincerely



MR B POLLARD
Assistant Headteacher
bpollard@heathfieldcc.co.uk