



22 November 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

**RE: WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP**

We know and greatly value the work of many groups and individuals within our community who do incredible work to provide young people with engagement, purpose and healthy activities. We appreciate this work and are very grateful to them; the self-esteem and sense of community they give influences the approaches young people bring to school. We are also grateful to the many parents and families who engage with us proactively to inform us of any developing tensions between friends or issues they want to raise at a low level, before anything has escalated or misunderstandings have developed. Thank you for this partnership.

Fundamentally, the College's core purpose is to educate young people, to provide learning and activities which ensure excellent qualifications and skills meaning they can thrive in their lives beyond school. It is important to state however, the College does not exist to provide a venue where social disputes are settled which have originated outside of school. Doing so takes time and resources that could be far better spent supporting young people with personal or educational difficulties.

Building on the positive practice of the vast majority there are some simple ideas, suggested by parents, that help ensure we are able to work effectively in partnership:

**Be aware of friendship highs and lows, regularly check group chats and social media.** Some students are likely to respond strongly to rumours and gossip, often these are later proven to be untrue. It is important to let the College know if there have been unpleasant exchanges or falling out. Staff will not intervene in out of school events but are able to subtly monitor and support any tensions to be managed maturely and reasonably. It may be no intervention is needed; it might be that someone to talk to would help or College can ensure individuals are kept separate until tensions diffuse.

**Share screen shots of anything that causes you concern. Let College know if you are concerned it will affect focus or well-being in school.** Whilst the College cannot "sanction" actions taken outside of school, staff can advise, educate and inform. The College can also take preventative measures to ensure students experiencing significant difficulty with each other are safeguarded whilst at school. To know issues exist and not let College know, is detrimental to our ethos, culture and the safety of all at school.



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

**Model adult calm and perspective**, especially in response to possible rumour and gossip. Young people, due to their stage of development, feel and view things far more personally and with enhanced emotions compared to adults. A community of adults working together can hear and empathise with concerns and support young people in their genuinely felt fears, whilst working to avoid them becoming overwhelmed with emotion or reacting negatively.

To reiterate, we are aware and grateful for everyone's commitment to the supportive and inclusive community that we have developed together around the College. Young people are surrounded by enough potential causes of anxiety and difficulty in the wider world, we know the College provides an important safe, calm space for them where they can learn, grow and develop: "*pupils feel happy and safe in this vibrant and nurturing school*" (Ofsted May 2023). We will always act firmly in response to any inappropriate behaviours that compromise this ethos - a regular message that will be reiterated to students. Thank you for continuing to work proactively with us to ensure this only strengthens over time. It is appreciated.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Barlow', written in a cursive style.

**MS C BARLOW**  
Headteacher