

## **Information regarding Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) on iPads used at College**

While we understand the increasing prevalence of VPNs in various online spaces, we must emphasize that the use of VPNs on iPads is not permitted in College. They can be detected by the College monitoring systems and we will take appropriate action as necessary in line with the advice below.

The decision to restrict the use of VPNs is not a new position and has always been maintained with the well-being and safety of our students in mind, as well as to maintain an appropriate and focused educational environment. This has always been our policy and forms part of the ICT acceptable use agreement that all students sign when joining the College.

There are long standing reasons behind this policy:

1. **Student Safety:** VPNs can potentially expose students to inappropriate and harmful content that is not filtered through our school's internet security measures. It can also expose devices to the increased risk of viruses and malware. By disallowing VPNs, we aim to provide a safer online environment for all students and protect the integrity of the school's network.
2. **Compliance with School Policies:** Our school has established guidelines and policies to ensure a secure and controlled online experience. The use of VPNs may inadvertently bypass these measures, leading to potential breaches of our school's acceptable use policies.
3. **Data Harvesting:** VPNs have been found to contain malware or vulnerabilities that hackers could exploit to harvest sensitive information. Additionally, using free VPN services raises concerns as they might monetize user data through targeted advertising or other means.

We request your cooperation in reinforcing these guidelines with your child.

Please take the time to discuss the importance of responsible internet use, adherence to school policies, and the potential consequences of violating these rules.

From Monday 18 March 2024 if we detect that an iPad has VPN software installed, we will prevent it from accessing the internet until it is removed. Students will be informed of this in line with a coordinated approach to communication.

Parental understanding and cooperation are appreciated in creating a secure and productive learning environment for all our students.

For any concerns or questions please contact [itsupport@heathfieldcc.co.uk](mailto:itsupport@heathfieldcc.co.uk).