



6 June 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

For information: ongoing support structures in response to bereavement

This is an update to inform parents and carers of the support we have been offered by ESCC and that we have sourced ourselves for students following the sad news received just before half term. We appreciate this may not be relevant to all students experience but felt it was relevant information for all.

All expert advice is that routine and normality is the best support in most cases and so the details below are examples of what exists *in addition* to the safe, supportive environment of normal school life; it is a summary of the structures available, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have concerns about your child that you feel are not covered by the information here.

Week Beginning 3 June

We have ensured students who accessed support last term have been checked-in with and made aware of how they can continue to access support this week, we have updated parents regarding provision students have accessed and hope that dialogue is open for us to be informed about any changes or issues to be aware of. The support has included:

- The School Pastors have been in school on Monday and Wednesday as an empathetic ear and safe place to talk.
- ESCC Mental Health Support Team have been in school Tuesday and Wednesday of this week.
- The School Nurse Team will have a presence in College on Friday of this week.
- We continue to signpost the support services available (as attached).
It is worth stating that all the services that have had contact with students (and staff) have spoken very highly of the mutual support and empathy that they see running through the school community. None of this is easy but students can be very proud of how they have managed themselves and supported each other. We are grateful to the Educational Psychologists who worked with students before half term for the advice they gave them around this.
- All services have fed information back to our team and any perceived need arising from these conversations. Students who present with concerns or a potential need for ongoing support will be discussed with parents to determine the best options available.



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)

Week Beginning 10 June

- An opportunity to contribute to a Condolence/Celebration Book will be offered for those who wish to celebrate Aaron and share core memories they have. Details of how this will be organised within College will be shared with students in due course.
- Attendance at Aarons funeral. A number of staff and students will wish to attend this event and share the celebration of the positive impact Aaron had. We are already in dialogue with the students we understand to be close and most likely to wish to attend, if you feel this includes your child but you have not yet heard directly from us, please speak to the Head of Year so we can plan for the logistics of this. If, after the event, you feel that some processing time following the event is necessary, this is understandable but please do keep the pastoral team informed. We will have additional support in school and so getting back into routines and accessing support on site will also be important.
- School Pastors will have availability for students to speak to during next week.
- ESCC Mental Health Support Team will also be available Wednesday of next week and the School Nurse Team have also indicated a presence will be available throughout next week, referral to this will operate as previously via the pastoral team.

We have been working hard to secure ongoing and additional support for students and parents. The default offer from the local authority appears to mainly provide for the moment of an event, so we have worked hard to try and increase the capacity of what is available to support our students. I am grateful to all involved for the response so far.

I am also trying to secure a return visit from the Educational Psychologists for parents to be able to access expertise in supporting their children. We have been clear our community needs and deserves a holistic provision over time and I will continue to work hard to this effect.

Going forward, we will continue to work closely to further support students as they move away from the immediacy of the events into the longer term.

Yours sincerely



MS C BARLOW
Headteacher