



14 May 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

I write with two important messages which we ask that you discuss with your child.

### Equality and Diversity

We work towards Heathfield being as positive and inclusive an environment as possible, however we are aware that our wider society is becoming increasingly divisive with young people hearing and seeing unwanted and discriminatory language.

We are very aware of the dangers of that discrimination being brought into the College environment. We understand that young people sometimes make mistakes as part of growing up. Mostly these can be dealt with sensitively with a combination of consequence, support and education.

However, it is important our core message is clear; **discrimination is not tolerated at Heathfield**. Any use of racist or sexist language is completely unacceptable and has no part in our culture.

Whilst we proactively monitor patterns and seek out student feedback, we are grateful for the reporting of any issues of concern. This allows us to act firmly on isolated serious incidents and also on casual comments that, left unchallenged, erode trust and safety, impacting the ethos and experience for all.

### Online trends and disruption

It has been brought to our attention that there is content circulating online - specifically within student WhatsApp groups regarding an intention to disrupt learning and the College environment.

We are aware that algorithms present young people with deliberately contentious and inflammatory content, however, they have a choice to ignore it or choose to act on it. To support them in making the right choice, **we ask all parents and carers to discuss the contents of this letter with their child.**

While young people may not fully control what appears on their feed, they are responsible for their subsequent actions and the potential impact on their future.



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

Cade Street, Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 8RJ Website: [www.heathfieldcc.co.uk](http://www.heathfieldcc.co.uk)

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

**With particular regards to WhatsApp, we ask that you review their WhatsApp groups and private messages.**

**Check Group Memberships:** Identify any large "Year Group" or "Invite-only" chats that are not moderated by adults.

- **Review Recent Content:** Look for any shared videos, memes, or text strings encouraging "protests," "walk-outs," or the disruption of lessons and exams.
- Remind your child that being a passive member of a group where harmful content is shared can still lead to serious consequences. "Just being in the group" is not a valid defence if disruption occurs.
- **Privacy Settings:** We recommend setting WhatsApp privacy to "My Contacts" for group invites to prevent them from being added to anonymous or large-scale disruptive chats.

There is no lack of opportunity for students to raise concerns or suggest changes to school life, regular feedback shows clearly this has impact and things change as a result. Form Tutors, Pastoral Managers and Heads of Year are always happy to listen and represent student views.

We will take a very firm stance on this and **we will not tolerate any student involved with sharing and promoting such content or taking part in any attempt to disrupt school life at any point** - even more so at a time of public examination. Serious sanctions will be applied and we will not rule out taking significant steps to safeguard and protect the calm and focused environment of our College.

We are very appreciative of the ongoing support from parents and carers for this work, our staff and all our young people.

Yours sincerely



**MS C BARLOW**  
Headteacher