



1 April 2021

Dear JCG and VCJ parents

Many of us will have seen and been shocked by the widespread national news stories in the wake of Sarah Everard's horrific murder, including allegations of young people behaving inappropriately, illegally and immorally. There have also been many accusations in the UK of schools that have failed to listen to their students and that any responses have been ineffectual and unlikely to bring about real change. Our two Colleges have also seen a period of enormous bravery, reflection and discussion, and it is clear that we must take action.

The Leadership Teams of both Colleges have been listening carefully to our students recounting their experiences, whether they be within the classroom, walking through the school sites, on school buses, at parties or online. The stories and testimonies have been difficult to hear but there is an acknowledgement that we must address these issues together. In partnership we are committed to leading positive change within our Colleges and building inclusive and respectful communities where all feel safe.

Our College Leadership teams are committed to working even more closely together and to be stronger and more effective in bringing about a necessary change of attitudes and behaviours.

To this end, we have already done or committed to the following:

- Our Leadership Teams have met twice to discuss the issues, identify solutions and long term actions.
- Representatives from the VCJ Leadership Team have met with JCG Sixth Formers and Y10 students separately to hear their views on how things can change. We are grateful for their openness, honesty and courage.
- It is planned for our two new Student Leadership Teams, appointed in both schools today (Thursday 1 April), to form a working party to produce a shared statement of values about what a culture of respect looks and sounds like.
- We have increased the number of members of staff on duty in shared spaces between the two Colleges to oversee appropriate behaviour between students.
- Our PSHE leaders will work together on jointly auditing our respective programmes and, together with the school student councils, look to ensure that they address topics relevant to both schools.
- After Easter, our students will receive a presentation from the Police and Dewberry House on Public Sexual Harassment and the options for support.

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Let us be clear that any language and behaviour that is sexist, misogynistic, demeaning or offensive is unacceptable and wrong. Both Colleges commit to a zero-tolerance stance. We must call out when we see or hear such language and behaviour, and not leave it alone. We also recognise that bringing about any positive and lasting cultural change that we all wish to see will require careful planning and a long-term commitment to involve our wider school communities – parents, staff and students. This is the first step towards a shared and common set of principles that we will embed throughout our two schools and which we will share with you. Our students will tell us when we get it right and we are guided by them.

We would also like to signpost you to the following agencies, should you or any member of your family need further support:

- Jersey Action Against Rape - www.jaar.je tel. 01534 482 800
- Sexual Assault Referral Centre - www.dewberryhouse.je tel. 01534 888222
- The **YES project** (Youth Enquiry Service) offers information, advice and counselling for Young People up to 25 years old. It is free to call on 0800 7350 010 and is open from 12pm – 8pm every day.
- **Kooth Jersey** provides a safe, moderated and non-judgmental place for young people to talk, connect and chat with others and know they are not alone. The service offers drop-in or bookable sessions with professional counsellors between 12pm and 10pm on weekdays and between 6pm and 10pm on weekends. Young people can access Kooth by visiting www.kooth.com and selecting 'Jersey Kooth' during the sign up process.
- The **Children and Families Hub** offers support and help for safeguarding concerns. Please call the hub on 519000 or email childrenandfamilieshub@gov.je
- If a child is at immediate risk call the **police** on 999.

Your support, as ever, is hugely appreciated and if you would like to discuss any aspect of this letter please do contact us.

Yours sincerely



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Principal, Jersey College for Girls



Alun Watkins
Headmaster, Victoria College