



*Specialising in English and The Arts*

Our ref: SCR/JBN

April 2014

Dear Parent / Guardian

Unity College has a vision to be outstanding by 2016. I attach a copy of the College Vision for you to read so that as a key stakeholder at Unity College you can share in the college's aspirations for the next two years and continue to support us as we strive to offer an outstanding education for your child. As part of this vision we have a huge focus on literacy and oracy with an ambition that all students read well and develop a love of reading. The college has recently invested in a new college library and as parents I request that you continue to encourage your child to read widely and often at home.

This time last year I wrote to you about the changes to the college day which started in June 2013. I also stated that these changes would be reviewed at the end of this academic year. The changes included a reduced lunchtime and a finish time each day of 3.10pm rather than 3.30pm. From the colleges view this has been a very positive move. I write to request that if you have any feedback regarding these changes can you let me know by the end of May 2014.

The college re-opens after the Easter break on Tuesday 22 April 2014 at 8.45am. The college will be closed for the May Bank holiday on Monday 5 May 2014. College will close after Friday 23 May and there is a staff training day on Monday 2 June 2014. When students return to college after the Whitsun break on Tuesday 3 June 2014, they will move up into their next year groups. Therefore the current year 7 will become year 8; year 8 will become year 9 and so on. This will mean that your son / daughter will have a new timetable and may have new teachers. Year 8 students have recently selected their option preferences for their GCSE studies. We will be writing to parents shortly to inform you of which subjects your child has been allocated.

I have been extremely impressed in how smart the students look in their uniform. It is essential that all students are in full uniform at all times creating a "dressed for business" atmosphere throughout the college. Hair styles and colour must also conform to a "dressed for business" ethos with no unnatural hair colours or extreme hair styles. Please ensure that your child is in the correct full uniform every day. A reminder that jewellery at Unity College is not permitted except for a watch. We do not allow any piercings. I have noticed that some students are wearing too much makeup for college. Can you remind your child that if they wear makeup this should be minimal and subtle, otherwise they will be asked to remove it when they arrive at college in the morning.

A reminder that the Learning Zone is open after school, Monday to Thursday until 4.30pm and it is open every day before college from 8am to 8.40am

The parking situation is much improved. A reminder that in the mornings parents can come onto the college site and drop their child off on the turning circle only. Please ensure that you park in the drop off area. Please leave promptly after dropping off your child. Do not park on the college car park, including the disabled parking bays. Please drive slowly and give students the right of way at the crossing at the entrance of the college.

Towneley Holmes, Burnley, Lancashire, BB11 3DF

Tel: 01282 683010 • Fax: 01282 683012

[www.unity-college.com](http://www.unity-college.com) • [enquiries@unity-college.com](mailto:enquiries@unity-college.com)



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At the end of college parents ARE NOT able to enter the college site to collect their child and access for parents in cars will be prohibited from 2.30pm until 3.20pm. Please park on the car park opposite the college if you are collecting your child. I am aware it is a pay and display car park, as long as you do not leave your vehicle you will not have to pay. Please park sensibly on the pay and display car park to allow cars to enter and leave the car park. DO NOT park along Towneley Holmes road as you may be issued with a fixed penalty notice. The only cars able to access the college between 2.30pm and 3.20pm are to collect a child who has a disability. Please refrain from parking at the back of college as this also causes congestion for local residents.

If you are picking up your child up after an after college club you will be able to collect your child from the turning circle on the college site.

If you are coming into college during the college day for a meeting you will be able to park on the college site including the turning circle.

There is always on going publicity in the national newspapers about drugs and weapons being used by students in and outside of school. If a student is caught selling drugs or the intent to sell drugs to anyone at Unity College that student will be permanently excluded immediately.

I also want to ensure that Unity College is a safe environment for students and staff. Following the guidance from the Department for Education and Skills on "Screening and searching of pupils for weapons" there will be spot checks by myself and Mrs Hodgson, Deputy Headteacher, using hand held metal detectors. This measure is a precaution and it is not meant to alarm parents or students, it is intended to ensure that we do not have knives in college and that we continue to have a safe learning environment at Unity College. If a child is caught in possession of any knife at Unity College I will not hesitate to permanently exclude them from Unity College.

Unity College is a smoke free college. We have a clear policy that is available to read on our website. If your child is caught smoking on the college site I will not hesitate to inform law enforcement officers and encourage them to issue an immediate £50 fine to the child. We will also follow the sanctions set out in the policy with any child caught smoking on the college premises. Electronic cigarettes are also not allowed and are treated the same as cigarettes. Lighters and matches are NOT allowed in college and if students are caught in possession of these items there will be a serious sanction. We have regular searches of students to ensure that students do not have cigarettes on them in college. Any cigarettes found are confiscated and destroyed.

Due to the sensitivity of our smoke alarms in college I can no longer allow students to bring in aerosols eg deodorant or hairspray, however roll on deodorants are permitted.

Please inform us if you have a change of address, telephone number or other contact details. It is vital that we keep your child's records up to date. If your child needs to take any medication whilst in college they must bring in a

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letter from a parent / guardian with full authorisation and instructions. Your child must take it to the first aid room. The medication must be clearly labelled. Any medication will be stored securely in the first aid room. If there is a medical emergency it will be the decision of the first aider and a member of the senior leadership team as to whether an ambulance is needed.

If you need to contact a member of staff about any issues this can be done via telephone, email or letter. It is not always possible to respond immediately due to teaching commitments therefore we will endeavour to respond to you within 24 hours.

Could I take this opportunity to remind you about certain attendance issues. Holidays should not be taken in term time and will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. All holiday requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher prior to booking the holiday. We will continue to refer for penalty notices for unauthorised holidays and for persistent poor attendance.

There is also a focus on the punctuality of students and to this aim we have set procedures for dealing with students who are late. This includes the use of detentions, internal exclusions and ultimately the possibility of penalty notices for parents of persistent offenders. In addition students who are late after the register has closed will be given a U code in the register instead of a late mark and this will count as an absence from the morning session. This will affect their % attendance and the usual procedures for poor attendance will apply.

Under the Data Protection Act, all schools must inform parents and guardians about Privacy Notices (formally known as Fair Processing Notices) which relates to the personal data that is held in the college about your child. These details can be found on our website, or alternatively, if you don't have access to the internet a hard copy can be collected from college. Please note that all college policies including our safeguarding and child protection policies can be found on the website.

I urge you as parents to check if your child is entitled to Free School Meals and have not yet claimed them. By parents claiming this entitlement extra funds come into college for students. If you have any questions about your entitlement please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Clark at the college.

Year 11 will continue with their current timetable until Friday 23 May 2014. After the Spring Bank break revision sessions will be available for year 11 students prior to their examinations. Students WILL be expected to attend ALL revision sessions during the college day. When we return after the Easter break year 11 will therefore only have 23 days left in their normal lessons. Further information about your child's GCSE timetable can be found on the college website. Your child should now be preparing for their GCSE examinations and revising each evening and over the weekend. Between now and your child's final examination it is critical that they are focussed on their revision and preparing for their examinations. There are a number of revision clubs running to further support your child

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between now and the GCSE examinations. As a parent if you are concerned about your child being stressed about the GCSE examinations do not hesitate to contact your child's House Leader for support.

Year 11 will be expected to be in full uniform between now and their final examination. They are also expected to be in their full uniform for their GCSE examinations. After their final GCSE examination if any year 11 child would like to donate any part of their uniform to the college it would be much appreciated

A reminder that the year 11 Prom is on Thursday 26 June 2014 and your child should have received a letter about this.

I would be grateful if you would read this letter and the College Vision through with your child so that they fully understand the expectations of the college. I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support to Unity College as we work together to offer the very best learning opportunities and experiences for your child.

Yours faithfully

*S Cryer*

S Cryer (Mrs)  
Headteacher