

Unity College

Towneley Holmes, Burnley, Lancashire BB11 3DF
Tel: 01282 683010 • Fax: 01282 683012
www.unity-college.com • enquiries@unity-college.com

Our ref: SCR/JBN

March 2017

Dear Parent / Guardian

You will be aware that we are oversubscribed in a number of year groups. Break time and lunchtime are very busy periods and I have noticed that students have to queue for quite some time for food at break time and lunch even though we have two lunch sittings. I am proposing to re organise the college day so that we have split break times and three lunch sittings from June 2017. There will be no change to the start or end of the college day and no change to the number of lessons that students have each day. The teaching and support staff have already been consulted and are in agreement with the changes and I will be meeting with the Governing Body to seek their approval at the end of March. I will be having assemblies with all year groups in the next few weeks to explain these proposed changes. If you have any concerns about these changes do not hesitate to contact me at college prior to Friday 17 March 2017.

I have been extremely impressed in how smart most 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 due to health and safety reasons, this includes ear piercings, face piercings and tongue piercings.

I have noticed that a few 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.

There have been a few students arriving in college wearing a hoodie or a non-Unity jumper. These are NOT allowed at Unity College and must not be worn at all in the college. If they are seen being worn in college they will be confiscated. Hoodies and non-Unity jumpers are being worn as a "coat" by some children either underneath the blazer or instead of the blazer and these items stop the uniform looking smart and "dressed for business". Please ensure that your child does not wear such items on the way to and from college, a waterproof warm coat is an ideal item to be worn on top of their blazer. If there are financial difficulties in providing your child with a suitable coat please do not hesitate to contact me at college.

Some skirt lengths are also causing me concern as they are not of a modest length. If your child is going to wear a skirt for college please ensure that it is a modest length and appropriate for college. Also we will only accept tailored trousers; black leggings and skinny black jeans are not acceptable as part of the college uniform.

We continue with our huge focus on literacy and oracy with an ambition that all students read well and develop a love of reading. **All students must have a reading book in their bag every day** and as parents I request that you continue to encourage your child to read widely and often at home.

At Unity College we offer students the opportunity to go on a number of day trips and visits. Each year Unity College also offer residential trips to students. Parents have requested that they are given notice of all

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residential trips at the same time and well in advance to help make them make decisions regarding these trips and to have time to budget for them. I enclose an information sheet about the proposed trips on offer at this point for the next two years and when your child can get a letter from internal reception about the trip including deadline dates for deposits. I will also explain this to students during assemblies.

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.

From June 2017 there will be increase in the cost of the standard college lunch from £2.15 to £2.25. This is the first increase we have had since 2015 and is necessary to ensure that we can continue to offer the quality and quantity of food offered each day.

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. Students cannot arrive in college until 8.00am as we cannot guarantee supervision. Also some students are staying in college after 3.10pm and not attending a supervised club or activity and this is not acceptable. If your child is in college after 3.10pm they need to be supervised in a club or activity by a member of staff or be in the Learning Zone. They cannot just sit around college after 3.10pm without being supervised for health and safety reasons. They will be asked to leave the premises or be escorted to the Learning Zone.

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. 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

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.

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 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.

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If you need to contact a member of staff, this can be done by 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.

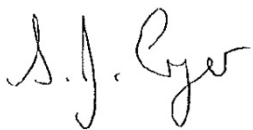
Under the Data Protection Act, all schools must inform parents and guardians about Privacy Notices (formally known as Fair Processing Notices) which relates to the personal data that is held in the college about your child. These details can be found on our website, or alternatively, if you don't have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

Enclosed with this letter is a copy of our new Safeguarding Information Sheet. Please take some time to read the information on the sheet and share this with your child. The information sheet includes general guidance on safeguarding, on-line safety, handy tips on how to keep your child safe and useful websites which give further detailed information. We will be sending updates out on a regular basis to ensure our students are safe, especially in the ever-changing world of technology.

The college will be closed for the Easter break from Monday 3 April 2017 to Monday 17 April 2017. The college will re-open on **Tuesday 18 April 2017 at 8.45am**. On the last day of term Friday 31 March 2017 we are having a **non-uniform day to raise money for our House Charities**. In addition to this students have requested that we also raise money for Cancer Research. Therefore the money raised from our non-uniform day will be split equally between the charities. The minimum donation for taking part in the non-uniform day is £1.00 and students must wear clothing that is suitable for a college environment.

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 (Mrs)
Headteacher