



Our Ref: SCR/JBR

February 2015

Dear Parent / Guardian

The college re-opens after the February half term break on **Monday 23 February at 8.45am**. The college will be closed for the Easter break from Monday 30 March 2015 to Friday 10 April 2015. The college will re-open on Monday 13 April 2015 at 8.45am.

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 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.

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 jeans are not acceptable as part of the college uniform.

I am delighted with how many parents are now attending Parents Evenings. I am aware that in some subjects there are long queues particularly in English and mathematics. We are going to try a new system with our next parents evening which is year 7 on Wednesday 18 March 2015 where on arrival you will be given a five minute allocated appointment time to see your child's English and mathematics teachers. These teachers will be based in the Auditorium and it will be essential that parents and teachers keep to the time slots. You will be able to meet with your child's other teachers before, in-between or after your allocated times for mathematics and English. We will review this system and if successful we will roll it out for all Parents Evenings.

We continue with our 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.

In February 2015, the college is putting on the production Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat. The musical runs from Wednesday 25 February to Saturday 28 February with a matinée and evening performance on Saturday 28 February. You can buy tickets now from the college website www.unity-college.com or at college.

I write to remind you that 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. If the fire alarm is set off by your child due to spraying an aerosol I will forward any bill from the fire brigade to you and I may also issue a fixed term exclusion to your child for not following college rules.

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

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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 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.

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