Our ref: SCR/EJO

July 2019

Dear Parents / Carers

I write to remind you that the college will close after school on **Tuesday 23 July 2019 at 12.05pm** for the summer holiday. College will re-open on **Monday 2 September 2019** and lessons will start promptly at 8.45am.

On Monday 22 July some students have been invited to attend the Blackpool or Chester Zoo reward trips. If your child is attending one of these trips they do not need to wear uniform.

If your child is going on the Blackpool Pleasure Beach trip they must be in college by 8.40am at the latest. The students are due to return to college by 5.30pm.

If your child is going on the Chester Zoo trip they must be in college by 8.00am at the latest. The students are due to return from college by 4.30pm.

**It is important to note that students will not be under direct staff supervision whilst on the Pleasure Beach / Chester Zoo unless specific arrangements have been made. They MUST stay on the Pleasure Beach / Chester Zoo site at all times. There will be a staff presence at a pre-defined meeting point throughout the day at the Pleasure Beach. For Chester Zoo, specific arrangements will be made with the students to be in close communication with Unity staff throughout the day. If you wish to discuss this further, please contact your child’s House Leader.**

**For those students attending college on Monday 22 July the college day will run as normal from 8.45am–3.10pm and students will be expected to be in full uniform.**

The Blackpool and Chester Zoo reward trips for **2020** are already planned and your child must have at least 95% attendance, no more than 8 lates, have good behaviour and complete their homework set to be eligible to attend one of these trips. Students will be monitored from **June 2019 – May 2020** if they wish to be invited onto the trip next year.

I also write to remind you of some key dates between now and December 2019:

Week beginning 30 September-Friday 11 October 2019 - Year 11 Mock Examinations

October half term begins after college on Friday 18 October and re-opens on Monday 4 November 2019

(please note this is a two-week break.)

Year 10 Parents’ Evening and Year 11 Careers Evening - Wednesday 13 November 4.00pm–7.15pm

Year 11 Parents’ Evening - Wednesday 4 December 4.00pm–7.15pm

Christmas holiday begins after school on Friday 20 December and re-opens Monday 6 January 2020

Further key dates can be found on the college website.

Year 11 students will be undertaking a full series of mock examinations in September.  Students will be given a copy of the timetable before they break up for summer.  It is essential that students spend some time revising over the summer break.  All year 11 students have logins for GCSE Pod where they can watch videos on all subject areas. They should also have other revision materials for all their GCSE subjects.

I have been extremely impressed in how smart most students look in their uniform. It is essential that all students are always in full uniform 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. If your child is going to have a piercing can you ensure that he / she has this done at the beginning of the summer holiday, so it can be removed for the new term in September. Spray cosmetics including deodorants, hairsprays etc are not permitted at Unity College due to the sensitivity of the fire alarms.

I have noticed that a few students are wearing too much makeup for college. Please 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.

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. Our college library is open from 8.15am–8.40am and every lunchtime for students to use.**

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 Ingham at college.

A reminder that the Learning Zone is open after school, Monday to Thursday until 4.20pm 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 are 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. We have had this system in place for the last ten years ensuring that all members of our college community are safe. 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. I enclose our latest safeguarding booking for your attention.

Funding has become available to support the learning of students who have been in the care of the Local Authority and are now either Adopted, subject to a Special Guardian Order or Child Arrangement Order. If it would like further information, please contact Diane Taylor at college on 01282 683010.

As a college we are committed to bring up a generation of responsible young adults who are passionate about their environment and from September we will be launching several initiatives. The first initiative is to reduce the use of plastic bottles and wrapping in our canteen. To achieve this, we will initially reduce the choice of plastic drink bottles and install additional ‘water re-fill stations’ around the college. We will discourage students from buying bottled drinks and instead encourage them to carry their own re-fill bottles. It is pleasing and reassuring to see so many students already using their own water bottles and with your continued help we aim to remove the sale of plastic drink bottles in the college canteen by June 2020. Please encourage your child to bring in their own water bottle from September onwards.

Please find enclosed information relating to ParentPay. We would strongly recommend that you sign up to ParentPay which is a far more convenient way for parents to pay for school activities, school meals etc.

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.

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