Our Ref SCR/EJO

December 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

The term ends on **Friday 20 December 2019 at 2.10pm.** If you need your child to stay in college until 3.10pm on the last day of term, please contact main reception and supervision until 3.10pm will be arranged for your child. The college will re-open on **Monday 6 January 2020 at 8.45am**.

The winter season is upon us and I hope that I will not have to close the college **due to snow** or other adverse weather conditions. A decision to close the college is not undertaken lightly and I will only close the college for health and safety reasons. It is an extremely difficult decision and I must take into consideration a number of factors including how safe it is for students and staff to travel to and from college safely. I also need to ensure that I have enough staff on site to teach and supervise students for the full day. Many staff do not live locally and travel a distance to college each day, so they are not able to walk to work. I will endeavour to make a decision regarding any closure by 7.30am and will post a message on the college website. Please do not ring college as I may not have anybody available to answer the telephone as they may not be able to get to the college. If the college is open but as a parent you are unable to get your child to college due to the conditions on the roads or public transport is cancelled, you must use your judgment as to whether to send your child to college on that day.

Students are expected to be in full uniform including a blazer at all times. I have been very impressed this term with how smart students look. If students are going to wear a jumper in college it must have the college logo and be a V-neck. It is essential that all students are in full uniform at all times creating a “dressed for business” atmosphere throughout the college. Students can wear black/ white socks or black tights. The fashionable over the knee socks **are NOT permitted** at college as they are not appropriate for school.

Students must not wear any jewellery except for a watch. Please ensure that your child does not have a piercing done over the Christmas break. Any piercing should happen at the start of the summer break in 2020 so that the earring(s) can be removed during the college day.

A number of students will be hoping to receive a new mobile phone or another electronic device for Christmas. We will not take any responsibility for any mobile phone or any other electronic device including an iWatch that goes missing in college. If it is an expensive piece of equipment, I strongly encourage you to have it insured.

Your child MUST have the correct basic equipment for learning. Can you please ensure that your child has everything they need each day including: basic writing/drawing implements such as a pen and pencil and also any specialist equipment/clothing e.g. food ingredients/PE kit for their lessons. Students must also have an age appropriate private reading book in their bag each day. If they do not have one of their own they can borrow one from the school library which is open at breaktime.

On Wednesday 18 December 2019 we are holding a Carol Concert at Unity College starting at 7.00pm. All parents are encouraged to attend this festive evening.

On Thursday 19 December 2019 there will be the year 7 Christmas disco in college for students who have had good attendance, punctuality and behaviour this term. Further details will follow in the coming weeks.

A reminder that on Wednesday 8 January 2020 it is Year 9 Parents’ Evening from 4.00pm–7.15pm. Please check the college website for other parents’ evening dates for 2020.

I attach a document about “Staying safe online over the festive period”. I encourage you to read this through with your child.

I take this opportunity to remind you about certain attendance issues. Holidays should not be taken in term time and will not be authorised. All holiday requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher prior to booking the holiday and we will continue to refer for penalty notices for unauthorised holidays and for persistent poor attendance. I would like to thank those parents who have supported us in this matter and continue to do so. I attach a copy of the holiday dates between now and August 2021. The holiday dates are also available on the website and I draw your attention to the two week break in October 2020 where many parents have taken advantage of this to book holidays.

If your child is poorly can you please contact the attendance team at college first thing in the morning. Can you also try to ensure that students do not have time off college for doctors or dentists appointments unless it is an emergency appointment. A reminder that the first port of call for any concerns regarding your child is via your child’s Personal Development Tutor (PD tutor). You can contact the PD Tutor via telephone on 01282 683010. I am aware that a number of parents have had difficulty in getting through to staff via the telephone. On our website there is a list of email addresses for parents to contact their child’s House Leader or a Student Leader or a member of the Senior Leadership Team

I wrote recently to inform you that we would be removing the sale of plastic drinks bottles in the college canteen. From **6 January 2020** plastic drinks bottles will not be available for sale at Unity College. There will be ten water stations around the college for students to fill and refill their own bottles during their social time. Re-usable water bottles will be available to buy at a subsidised rate during the first two weeks of term. An ideal stocking filler or festive gift would be to buy your child a re-usable water bottle if they do not already have one.

I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support for Unity College as we work together to offer the very best learning opportunities and experiences for your child. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours faithfully



Mrs S Cryer

Headteacher