July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I write to you at the end of a very challenging term for everyone. Unfortunately, due to Covid – 19 we have not been able to do all the transition work that we would normally do for year 6 students prior to them starting in September. I urge you to spend some time with your child looking at the transition section on our college website regarding starting at Unity College. I am delighted to inform you that the government have stated that schools will re-open fully in September 2020. When your child starts Unity College they will have a full induction.

We want to ensure that we have a safe start / return for all students and staff. There will be a great deal of planning over the summer holidays so that when we re-open in September for all students, your child will be offered a full and enriched curriculum and opportunities to catch up where they have missed out on key learning. I am not in a position yet to fully inform you of these plans and I will write to you again during the summer break with further details. All of this planning will depend on the current situation of Covid-19 in the local area and any further advice that the government sends to schools in the coming weeks.

As part of the detailed planning we may have to put in place a number of changes (where possible):

* A staggered week of welcoming students to Unity College in the first week of the autumn term.
* Year groups may be isolated to limit their interaction with other students from other year groups.
* A staggered start and finish time for students from different year groups.
* Students may be expected to arrive and leave from different entrances to reduce the contact between year groups.
* Year groups to be kept apart during breaks and lunch.
* PD groups to be altered due to our vertical tutoring system (students in different years are currently in a tutor group which will not be feasible with the current guidance).
* Teachers will need to keep two metres away from students, and other staff.
* Students to sit facing forwards in the same direction in all classrooms where possible.
* Students may have to be taught in non-specialist classrooms.
* Changes to the teaching of some subjects e.g. PE, music, science, technology to ensure that they can be delivered safely.
* Ensure persistently disruptive students are dealt with even more swiftly due to the restrictions in college. All students will be expected to sign and agree to follow a “Behaviour Pledge” in response to Covid-19. Poor behaviour will NOT be tolerated.
* Ensure students follow the strict hygiene measures and any new expectations / rules in the college due to Covid-19.
* The college canteen will re-open but we may have to have a limited offer / choice of food available at lunchtime and we may not be able to offer a break time service. To ensure queues are reduced some students may decide to bring a packed lunch with them each day.

In September students will be expected to wear full school uniform and will be expected to have their own basic equipment i.e. pen, pencil, ruler at all times. Your child will be given a tie on their first day so you will not need to purchase a tie for them. Hand sanitiser and antibacterial wipes will be available in college for students, however if your child wishes to bring in their own hand sanitiser and wipes this is also acceptable.

The latest guidance is that your child tries not to use public transport when they come to college unless it is absolutely necessary and either walk, cycle or get a lift depending on circumstances. I also ask that they do not congregate with other students either before they arrive or after they leave college. If other students are on their way into college students must socially distance from other students. If your child is coming into college using public transport they will need to wear a face covering but will be expected to remove it when they arrive in college. Government advice for students and staff is to NOT wear face coverings in school.

From September onwards, government guidance stipulates that you should not send your child to school if:

* the household is self-isolating.
* your child or a household member has just tested positive for Covid-19.

Please contact the attendance office at college to inform us of the situation. If your child shows any symptoms or they inform us that they have symptoms in college of Covid-19. we will take swift action. Your child will need to be collected as a matter of urgency and they must then be tested for Covid-19. It will be vital that we have the correct telephone contact details so that we can contact you rapidly in this situation. We will have strict procedures in place if any member of the college tests positive for Covid-19. I will forward further details in my next letter.

I am aware that there are a number of students who fall into the categories below:

* your child is classed as clinically extremely vulnerable. You will know this as you will have a letter to direct your child to shield.
* your child is clinically vulnerable AND has medical advice advising to shield.
* a member of your household is classed as extremely clinically vulnerable.

If your child is in any of these categories please contact a.hodgson@unity.lancs.sch.uk and she will get in touch with you regarding how we can work together to get your child back into college from September 2020. There is an expectation that ALL students will return to school from September 2020. The government have informed us that we should be fining parents if their child does not attend college from September 2020 onwards.

I will write to you by Monday 24 August 2020 with specific details regarding how Unity College will fully re-open safely for all students and staff. Please continue to check the college website for any updates. For further details about government guidance about the re-opening of schools in the autumn term go to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-andcarers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-coronovirus-covid-19-outbreak>.

 I take this opportunity to thank you for your support and patience at this very challenging time.

Yours sincerely



S Cryer (Mrs)

Headteacher