August 2020

Dear

I am delighted to inform you that Unity College will re-open fully in September 2020.

I want to ensure that we have a safe return for all students and staff. Your child will be offered a full and enriched curriculum and opportunities to catch up where they have missed out on key learning. I want to get the students back to college full time as quickly as possible, however in order for us to go through the significant changes in college due to Covid-19 there will be a staggered start to the first week.

These are unprecedented times and we will review the situation daily regarding all the changes that we have had to put in place. We may have to change things swiftly if we find any concerns or issues. The information in this letter adheres to the current published guidance where possible. 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.

If the government guidance changes I will contact you as soon as possible. Please ensure that you regularly check the college website for any changes as this is the quickest method to get information out to parents.

**First week back**

**Tuesday 1 September**

Year 11 arrive at 11.00am via Bronte’s entrance. They will leave at 3.10pm

Year 7 arrive at 12.30pm via sports hall entrance (they should have their lunch at home before they arrive) They will leave at 2.55pm

**Wednesday 2 September**

Year 11 arrive at 8.35am via Bronte’s entrance. They will leave at 3.10pm.

Year 7 arrive at 8.35am via sports hall entrance. They will leave at 2.55pm.

Year 10 arrive at 8.35am via mathematics entrance (back yard). They will leave at 3.10pm.

Year 8 arrive at 11.15am via CLC entrance. They will leave at 2.55pm.

Year 9 arrive 12.30pm via playing field entrance (they should have their lunch at home before they arrive). They will leave at 3.05pm.

**Thursday 3 September onwards:**

All students from all year groups will be expected to be in college. There will be staggered start and end times for each year group. It is vital that your child adheres to these times.

**Start and end times to the college day from Thursday 3 September 2020**

We will have a staggered start and end to the day. Students will also need to enter and leave the college through different entrances/exits - see below

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Start time** | **Leaving time** | **Entrance** | **Exit** |
| 7 | 8.40am | 2.55pm | Sports hall  | Sports hall / Bronte’s |
| 8 | 8.35am | 2.55pm | CLC entrance  | CLC entrance/playing fields door |
| 9 | 8.45am | 3.05pm | Playing fields door | Playing fields door |
| 10 | 8.35am | 3.10pm | Mathematics entrance | Mathematics entrance |
| 11 | 8.30am | 3.10pm | Bronte’s entrance | Bronte’s entrance |

Students on arrival at college must go to their designated entrance and wait until the door opens. If your child arrives early they will be expected to wait outside at the designated entrance. They MUST NOT socialise with any students from other year groups. The doors will open just before the designated start time. Your child will be expected to sanitise on arrival at the sanitising stations. It is vital that your child is not late for college as the doors will close soon after the designated start time. If your child is late they will need to arrive via the attendance pod. At the end of the college day your child should leave the college premises immediately. For the first couple of weeks there will be no clubs/revision sessions/learning zone until we can review the situation so all students must leave the college premises at their designated time.

**Year group bubbles**

Year groups will be taught in specific classrooms for their year group and not mix with any other year group. This will reduce the movement for students around the college and staff will move classes to teach students. Students will go to rooms for specialist teaching e.g. food technology, resistant materials, music and art. When arriving at a specialist classroom students will be expected to wipe down their desk/chair. Wipes will be provided for this.

Due to the size of the college community I will need a minimum of 52 classes and then additional specialist classrooms which is a huge challenge so every single available space has been used/converted into classroom space. This will mean that a number of lessons will be taught in non- specialist classrooms. This is not ideal; however, this is the only way that we can keep year groups apart and minimise the risk of spreading the infection which is my key priority. The sports hall, fitness suite, dance studio and auditorium will be used as classrooms.

PE lessons will have to be outside and students will need to bring the correct PE kit for the lesson. Changing rooms and equipment will be sanitised after each year group lesson.

**Student timetable**

I attach a copy of your child’s timetable. On arrival into the college building your child must make their way to their first lesson of the day. They SHOULD not congregate in the canteen area or sit in that area. If your child has a mobile phone I suggest that your child takes a picture of their timetable in case they forget/lose their paper copy.

**PD groups**

We have a vertical tutoring system at Unity College and as we cannot mix year groups we will need to alter this system on a temporary basis. This will be explained to students on the first day.

**Unacceptable behaviour**

Disruptive students will be dealt with even more swiftly due to the restrictions in college. All students will be expected to agree to follow a “Behaviour Pledge” in response to Covid-19. I attach a copy of the pledge that MUST be followed at all times. A copy of the Behaviour Pledge is also available on the college website. Poor behaviour will NOT be tolerated.

**Hygiene**

Students MUST follow the strict hygiene measures and any new expectations/rules in the college due to Covid-19. Students will be expected to wash their hands regularly/sanitise on arrival at college, on entering a classroom, before lunch and after going to the toilet. They will also need to wipe down their area/desk before use in specialist areas.

**Lunchtime and breaktime**

Year groups will be kept apart during breaktime and lunchtime. Students will be informed on the first day of the timings for their breaks and lunch. The college canteen will re-open but we will have a limited offer/choice of food available at lunchtime. The lunch offer initially will be a packed lunch meal deal which will include a hot or cold sandwich with a drink/cake/fruit. Individual foods will not be available to buy e.g. just a biscuit or drink. Your child may decide to bring a packed lunch with them each day rather than having a packed lunch available from college. If your child is entitled to free school meals they will be provided with a packed lunch each day. Students who wish to have a school packed lunch will need to inform their teacher at the start of period 1.

Initially we will not be able to offer a breaktime service. Students will be expected to go outside to a designated space for breaktime unless the weather determines that they should stay in their classrooms. Your child may want to bring a snack with them for breaktime.

In order for us to provide a college packed lunch you must ensure that you have deposited enough money on your child’s account through ParentPay. The current system of children depositing money onto their account in college will not be available initially due to the thumb scanning/pin number system. A letter has been sent out previously about activating your ParentPay account. If you have not yet activated your account a letter will be sent to you again. If you have any issues activating and uploading money onto your child’s account we will ensure that your child is offered a college packed lunch and we will be in contact with you regarding the issue.

Initially water fountains will not be available to use so students MUST bring their water bottle filled with water from home each day.

**Social distancing**

The latest guidance is that staff should keep 2 metres apart from students and from other staff. Where this is not possible staff will be able to wear face coverings if they choose to. Students should socially distance where possible and should not be hugging/holding hands/having any other unnecessary physical contact with each other. Students need to ensure that they keep 2 metres apart from all staff.

The government guidance is clear that students do not need to wear face coverings in the college building. However, to allay any fears as a parent that you may have due to the current situation in East Lancashire with the current local lockdown restrictions, your child can wear a face covering in the college building. We cannot provide a face covering for your child and any face covering must be a plain colour. If your child is going to wear a face covering please make it very clear to them about the safe and responsible use of the face covering. We will review this decision daily and also once the local lockdown has been lifted.

**Uniform**

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 MUST NOT share their equipment with other students. 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. Year 11 prefects and year 7 students will be given a tie on the first day. Student lockers will not be used initially due to the zoning of the college.

**Getting to college**

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 your child does 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 from other year groups. If your child is coming into college using public transport they will need to wear a face covering.

**Coming to college by car**

It is likely that there will be far more students arriving by car due to the current situation. I ask that parents drop off their child in the local vicinity and not all try to enter the college site to drop off their child in the morning as I am very concerned about congestion. Students could be dropped off a short walk away from the college as this would help with any traffic congestion. Parents can drop their child off in the morning on the college site at the turning circle but if this becomes a safety issue, NO cars will be allowed onto the college site in the morning. I will review this after the first few days. The car park opposite the college can be used to drop students off. I also ask that parents do not congest the area by Brunshaw School as this is already very busy in the mornings and after school with Brunshaw parents. At the end of the college day parents will not have access onto the college site to collect their child. If your child has a disability or serious injury and you need to apply for a parking permit to come on site at the end of the college day to collect your child please contact Mrs Hodgson, Deputy Headteacher, a.hodgson@unity.lancs.sch.uk. Parents can park on the car park opposite the college. You will not need to pay to park as long as you do not leave your vehicle. There are over 1260 students at Unity College and the start and end to the college day will be extremely busy even with staggered starts and ends to the day. The safety of all our students is paramount and I ask that all parents follow these restrictions.

**Parents coming into college**

Parents should not come onto the college site/main reception without a prior appointment, this includes dropping off and collecting your child. If you need to come into college for any reason parents MUST contact the college in advance and make an appointment. Parents will not be able to just turn up at main reception. If you contact the college either by telephone or e-mail (enquiries@unity.lancs.sch.uk) we will endeavour to speak with you as soon as possible. I request that only one parent/carer attends college for any meeting. I also ask that parents do NOT congregate at the college gates at the start and end of the college day.

**Covid-19**

From September onwards, government guidance stipulates that you should not send your child to college 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. We have strict procedures in place if any member of the college tests positive 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. If you have recently changed your home or mobile number please e-mail these details to enquiries@unity.lancs.sch.uk including the full name of your child.

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

* your child is classed as clinically extremely vulnerable.
* 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 as soon as possible. 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.

Please read through this letter with your child so that they fully understand what will be expected when they return to Unity College in September.

I take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support at this very challenging time. If you have any concerns regarding your child returning to college full time please contact Mrs Hodgson, Deputy Headteacher, via e mail a.hodgson@unity.lancs.sch.uk

Yours sincerely



S Cryer (Mrs)

Headteacher