

25 February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

**I am delighted to inform you that Unity College will re-open fully on Monday 8 March for all students.** I want to ensure that we have a safe return for all students and staff. We would like to test your child prior to them returning on Monday 8 March 2021 to check that they do not currently have COVID-19. This will help to stop asymptomatic students (asymptomatic are people who have no COVID-19 symptoms but have COVID-19) from spreading the virus to others in college. Students taking the test will be supervised by trained Unity College staff. The ‘lateral flow’ tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. If you agree to your child being tested they will be tested 3 times in college and then they will be given home testing kits to test themselves twice weekly at home. **These tests are voluntary,** but I do encourage every child to take these tests. If you are happy for your child to be tested, please fill in the consent form attached. The first tests will take place **on Thursday 4 March and Friday 5 March 2021 any time between 8.00am and 4.30pm at Unity College.** Your child does not need to make an appointment. They can arrive at college any time between the hours in bold and have a test. Student MUST bring with them the completed consent form. We will not accept verbal consent or email consent. They do not need to come to college in uniform for their lateral flow test on Thursday 4 or Friday 5 March. The test should only take up to 15 minutes in total including waiting time. They should enter the college via the college decking area. They MUST wear a face covering and socially distance themselves from students and staff. If you are bringing your child by car please wait in your car for them in the car park opposite the college and do not escort your child into the building. Once your child has had the test they will be asked to leave the premises. We will only contact you if your child tests positive for COVID-19.

Your child’s second and third lateral flow test will take place the week beginning Monday 8 March 2021 whilst at college. If your child has been attending the key workers classrooms you do not need to send this form in again as your child is already being tested regularly if you have agreed to testing for your child and they will receive their home testing kits soon.

Further information about the lateral flow tests including the COVID-19 privacy statement and Data Protection frequently asked questions can be found on our website. We will support our students throughout this process, but if you need further clarification do not hesitate to contact us via email at enquiries@unity.lancs.sch.uk

**Please ensure that you regularly check the college website for any changes as this is the quickest method to get information out to parents.** [**www.unity-college.com**](http://www.unity-college.com)**.**

**From Monday 8 March 2021**

We will continue with our 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. There will be no clubs / revision sessions / learning zone until after the Easter holiday so all students must leave the college premises at their designated time.

**Year group bubbles**

Year groups will continue to be taught in specific classrooms for their year group and not mix with any other year groups. 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 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 therefore 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.

**Lunchtime and Breaktime**

The provision / lunch offer we had in place before the Christmas break for lunchtime and breaktime will continue from Monday 8 March 2021. Year groups will be kept apart during breaktime and lunchtime. The college canteen will be open but we will have a limited offer/choice of food available at lunchtime. We will not be able to offer a breaktime service at this time. 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.

**Unacceptable behaviour**

Disruptive students will be dealt with even more swiftly due to the restrictions in college. All students have agreed to follow a “Behaviour Pledge” in response to COVID-19. A copy of the Behaviour Pledge is also available on the college website. Poor behaviour will NOT be tolerated.

**Hygiene and face coverings**

Students MUST follow the strict hygiene measures and all 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.

Face coverings MUST be worn by all students unless they are exempt **including in the classroom.** They will be allowed to remove their face covering when outside, during lunchtime and for PE lessons*.* We are taking this additional precautionary measure for a limited time during this period of high coronavirus (COVID-19) prevalence in the community. These measures will be in place until Easter. As with all measures, we will keep it under review and update you via our website. I ask that your child has a **spare face covering** and a plastic bag to place the face coverings in when not in use.

**Uniform**

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. Student lockers will not be used 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 1250 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.

**Timetable 2021–2022 – year 8**

A decision has been made that year 8 will not be starting their GCSE’s until the start of year 10. This is due to recommendations from the government. Further details to follow.

**COVID-19**

You should not send your child to college if:

* They have any symptoms of COVID -19 - the main symptoms are:
  + a high temperature
  + a new continuous cough
  + a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste
* The household is self-isolating
* Your child or a household member has just tested positive for COVID-19.
* A member of their household (including someone in their support bubble) has (COVID-19) symptoms

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.

Please read through this letter with your child so that they fully understand what will be expected when they return to Unity College on Monday 8 March 2021.

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

Yours sincerely



S Cryer (Mrs)

Headteacher