

Unity College

Towneley Holmes, Burnley, Lancashire BB11 3DF
Tel: 01282 683010 • Fax: 01282 683012
www.unity-college.com • enquiries@unity.lancs.sch.uk

16 December 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

As we come to the end of a busy term, I wanted to take the opportunity to thank you for your support and to share some information about changes to the structure of the College day.

The College Day

We return to college on **Tuesday 3 January 2023**. The start and finish times of the College day will remain unchanged. We are, however, making some changes to the structure of the College day; we have spoken to students about these in assemblies this week. PD will move to the start of the day and we will have just one break and lunchtime instead of splitting them. The new times of the day will be:

08.50 – 09.10	PD
09.10 – 10.00	Period 1
10.00 – 10.50	Period 2
10.50 – 11.10	Break
11.10 – 12.00	Period 3
12.00 – 12.50	Period 4
12.50 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30 – 14.20	Period 5
14.20 – 15.10	Period 6

Students **must** be in PD by 8.50am. If students arrive after 8.50am, they will be marked as late. Moving PD to the start of the day will allow PD tutors to ensure that children are well-prepared for the day ahead, that they are wearing their uniform correctly and that they have the correct equipment. Having a single, slightly extended lunchtime will allow us to offer more clubs and activities.

Staying Safe

Following the tragic deaths of four children in Solihull, we have spoken to children this week about staying safe near frozen lakes and have increased our staff presence in Towneley Park at the end of the College day. Please can you reiterate the following with your children?

- Children should not go on the ice under any circumstances
- Stay away from the edge of bodies of water as uneven terrain can make slips and falls more likely
- Whenever possible, stick to well-lit routes away from water
- Keep dogs on a lead when they're near the ice, and don't throw sticks or toys on to the ice
- If a pet falls in, do not go on to the ice nor into the water to rescue them; move somewhere where the dog can climb out and call them to you

Mental Health Support

There is a range of support available for your children, and for parents, over the Christmas break.

Kooth

Kooth is an online counselling and emotional well-being platform for children and young people, accessible through mobile phones, tablet or PC. It is free, safe and anonymous. www.kooth.com

UNITY

PASSION

RESPECT

Shout

Text YM to 85258.

Shout provides free, 24/7 text support for young people across the UK experiencing a mental health crisis. All texts are answered by trained volunteers, with support from experienced clinical supervisors. Texts are free from EE, O2, Vodafone, 3, Virgin Mobile, BT Mobile, GiffGaff, Tesco Mobile and Telecom Plus.

Texts can be anonymous, but if the volunteer believes you are at immediate risk of harm, they may share details with people who can provide support.

Childline

Call 0800 11 11

Young people under 19 can confidentially call, chat online or email about any problem big or small, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Childline also hosts online message boards where young people can share their experiences, have fun and get support from other young people in similar situations.

NHS Urgent Mental Health Helpline

[Mental Health Helpline for Urgent Help - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Offers mental health support and advice, help to speak to a mental health professional, and can arrange an assessment to help decide on the best course of care.

Samaritans

Whatever you're going through, you can contact the Samaritans 24/7 for support.

Call 116123 or email jo@samaritans.org

Young Minds

Young Minds offers three different services to parents and carers who are concerned about their child's mental health, up to the age of 25. Click [here](#) to find out more about Young Minds' parents' helpline, webchat and email service.

Parents' Evenings 2023

Year 10 – X half	Wednesday 11 January 2023
Year 10 – Y half	Wednesday 18 January 2023
Year 8 – X half	Wednesday 1 February 2023
Year 8 – Y half	Wednesday 8 February 2023
Year 9 – X half	Wednesday 15 March 2023
Year 9 – Y half	Wednesday 22 March 2023
Year 7 – X half	Wednesday 19 April 2023
Year 7 – Y half	Wednesday 26 April 2023

Adverse Weather

The winter season has certainly arrived this week! Although I hope that I will not have to close the College due to snow or other adverse weather conditions, our planning for the 'worst case' scenario is robust. Deciding to close a school is one of the most difficult decisions that a Headteacher ever

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has to make. It is a complex decision and it really is impossible to please everyone. Ultimately, I will only close the College if the safety of students and staff would be endangered by remaining open. Please be aware that many staff do not live locally and travel a distance to college each day: it isn't just the weather in Burnley that I need to take into account! Any decision to close the College will be made by 7.30am and will be posted on the College website and on the Lancashire County Council website: [Unavoidable school closures - Lancashire County Council](#)

Uniform Expectations

Children are looking much smarter in their uniforms. I am grateful for parents' and carers' support with our raised expectations.

As a reminder, the College uniform is:

- Black Unity College blazer
- White shirt – long or short sleeved (*shirts must be tucked in at all times*)
- Black tailored trousers or skirt (*skirts must be of a modest length - no more than 5cm above the knee*)
- Black Unity College V-neck jumper (*optional*)
- Unity College house tie
- Black sensible shoes/black trainers (*no logos; no coloured soles or laces*)
- Black or white socks or black tights (*no over the knee socks*)

Please note that:

- Make-up, if worn, must be minimal; false eyelashes must not be worn
- No acrylic or artificial nails; if nail-varnish is worn it should be a neutral colour
- Hair should be of an appropriate style and a natural colour
- No jewellery, with the exception of a watch
- No piercings of any sort, including retainers

I ask for your support in ensuring that students do not use the holiday as an opportunity to have new ear or facial piercings because they will be asked to remove them when they return to college on 3 January. Similarly, please do not allow your child to have nail or eyelash extensions or to dye their hair an unnatural colour. Please do not wait until the last minute to remove any temporary hair colourings because often this proves more challenging than anticipated!

Finally, on behalf of staff and governors, I wish you and your families a very happy, healthy Christmas and New Year.

Yours sincerely



Jane Richardson
Headteacher