



# Unity College

Policies for Parents, Carers & Students

Unity | Passion | Respect

# Home and College Agreement

At Unity College, we believe that students will have the best opportunity to achieve their full potential if the College, parents/carers and students work together in partnership.

The Home and College Agreement defines some of the relationships and responsibilities that are part of this partnership.

## **As a College**, we will:

- Provide a supportive, secure and caring environment in which every child can achieve their potential
- Monitor and update on your child's progress at parent meetings and in written reports
- Contact parents or carers as soon as we become concerned about a student's progress, behaviour, wellbeing, uniform or equipment
- Provide a carefully planned, broad and balanced curriculum that is ambitious for all children, along with a variety of enrichment opportunities
- Keep parents and carers informed about the work planned for each term
- Listen to any concerns that students, parents and carers may have
- Respond to communications from parents in a timely manner, following college policies
- Promote high standards of behaviour, and outline clear expectations in our behaviour policy
- Set homework that supports the delivery of the curriculum and mark it where appropriate
- Provide parents and carers opportunities to become involved in the life of the College
- Keep parents and carers informed about the College's achievements and activities
- Make sure that all students and their families are made to feel welcome in college and ensure their knowledge, expertise and opinions are valued

## **Governors** will:

- Seek financial efficiency and value for money
- Regularly review and approve college policies
- Ensure compliance with statutory obligations including Health and Safety Regulations
- Monitor and review all aspects of the school's work

## **As a Parent or Carer**, I will:

- Make sure my child attends college every day, on time and in full and correct uniform. I will notify the College if my child will be absent
- Ensure my child has all the necessary equipment and kit every day to fully participate in college life
- Support the College to make sure my child maintains a consistently high standard of behaviour
- Encourage my child to have a positive attitude towards college and to always do their best

- Make every effort to support my child's learning at home by encouraging them to complete their homework
- Make the College aware of any problems which may affect my child's learning or behaviour
- Make sure communication with the College is respectful, and that I make every reasonable effort to address my communications to the appropriate member of staff
- Understand that I should communicate with staff during core college hours, and although they may at times respond outside of those hours, I can't always expect that
- Treat all members of the College community with care and respect
- Attend all Parents' Evenings/meetings and participate in other college events
- Keep contact details accurate and up to date
- Fully support the College and its policies
- Avoid taking my child on holiday during term time
- Read all correspondence from the College and respond when required, including requests for parental feedback

**As a Student**, I will:

- Attend college every day
- Arrive at college and my lessons every day on time, equipped and ready to learn
- Wear the correct college uniform at all times
- Try my best to do my work and ask for help if I need it
- Do my homework on time and raise any issues with my teachers
- Speak to an adult about any issues I'm experiencing that may affect my work or behaviour
- Help to keep other students in the College safe by avoiding any bullying behaviour and reporting any bullying incident
- Speak to an adult about any concerns I have about my or other students' safety
- Bring to college all the equipment I need each day
- Treat all members of the College community with care and respect
- Understand and meet the College's minimum expectations and rules
- Look after college equipment and show respect for the College environment and the local community
- Take responsibility for my own actions
- Take responsibility for my own learning
- Have a positive attitude towards, and participate fully in, the life of the College

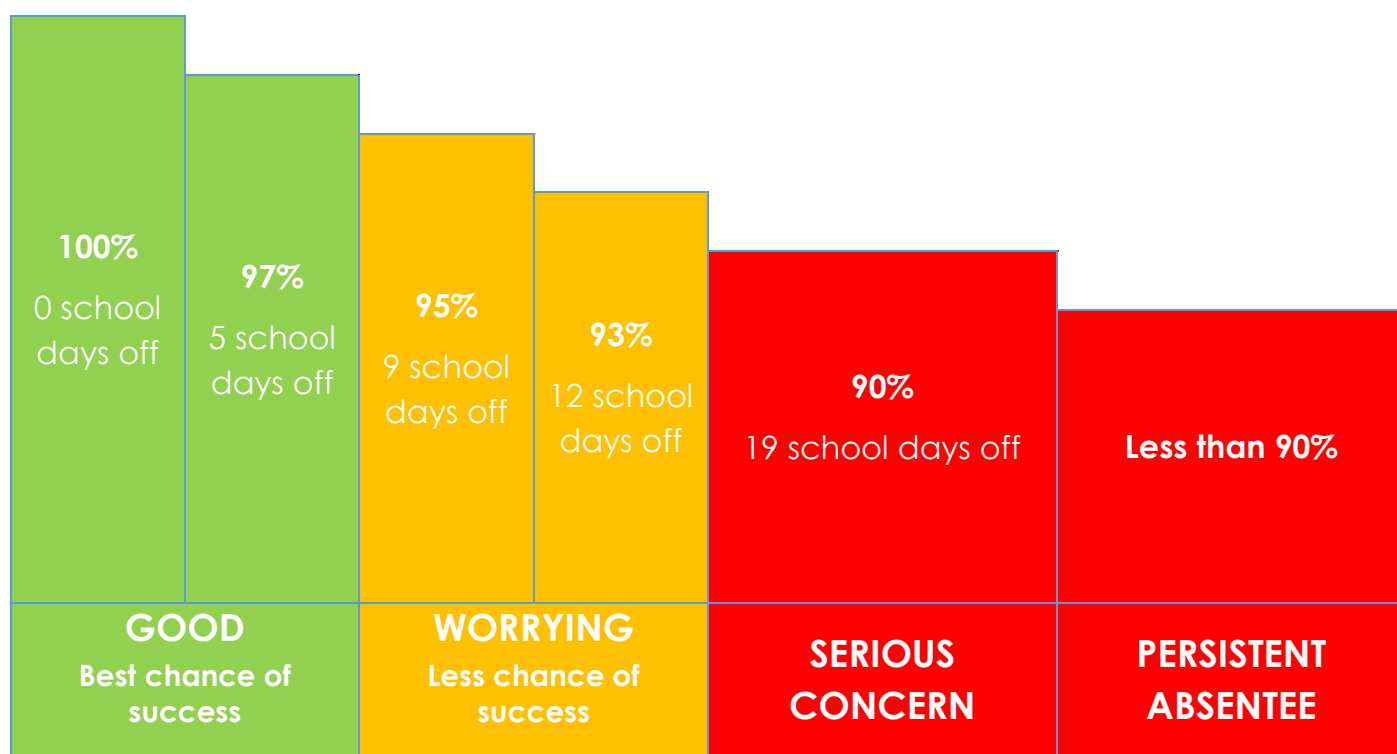
## Attendance and Punctuality

Unity College is dedicated to working with students and their families to secure excellent punctuality and attendance. We believe that regular attendance is the key to enabling young people to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults.

Every day of absence from college means that learning time is lost and, whilst we understand that illness can't always be avoided, just a few days of absence can have a huge impact on a child's attendance figure and their education as a whole.

Research shows a direct link between attendance and attainment. Students with good attendance also make better progress socially, learn to work with others, and are better prepared for the transition to higher education, training and employment.

### Attendance Over Time



### Parent and Carer Responsibility

You have a legal duty to ensure that your child attends College regularly. You should know what to do if your child is absent, the times of the College day and the process for requesting leave in term time. You must ensure that the College has up-to-date contact information for you and emergency contacts.

### If your child is absent

If your child is going to be absent from college, you **must** inform the College as soon as possible and, at the latest, by 8.30am on the first day of absence. You can ring the Attendance Team by calling 01282 683104 or email [attendancesaff@unity.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:attendancesaff@unity.lancs.sch.uk). We will ring, send a text or conduct a home visit if we do not hear from you. If your child has a medical appointment, you must contact the College to explain the reason for absence in advance.

## If your child is late

If your child is late, they **must** sign in at the Attendance Pod. They will be marked as Code L on the register and you will receive a text message to inform you of their lateness.

If your child arrives after registers have closed, they will be marked as Code U. This is classed as an unauthorised absence.

## Requesting Leave

By law, maintained schools cannot authorise any leave in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Taking a child out of college in term time will affect their attainment and progress as much as any other absence. **The Headteacher will not authorise holidays in term time.**

Leave of absence in term time **will not** be granted unless:

- A request for leave has been made in advance by a parent or carer with whom the student normally resides. *(An email or letter, addressed to the Headteacher, requesting leave of absence should be sent to the College or emailed to [head@unity.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:head@unity.lancs.sch.uk)) and*
- The Headteacher considers that the circumstances are exceptional and grants the request

Holidays taken during term time without permission will result in a penalty notice being issued.

## Attendance Procedure

Unity College follows Lancashire County Council guidance when managing attendance. We may:

- Send letters of concern to parents and carers
- Send persistent absence letters to parents and carers
- Convene attendance strategy meetings in college
- Make referrals to external support agencies
- Make a referral to court

We will always seek to work in partnership with parents and carers if their child's attendance is causing concern; however, all schools must inform the local authority of any student who fails to attend school regularly or who has been absent without permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

## Penalty Notices

In accordance with the Lancashire Code of Conduct, we may request the local authority to issue Penalty Notices in relation to:

- Leave of absence which is taken without a prior request being made
- Leave of absence taken after a request has been declined
- Days taken in excess of an agreed period of leave, without good reason

Other unauthorised absence that meets the required threshold, including sessions marked as late after the register has closed (Code U)

# Unity College

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Dear Parent/Carer,

We are pleased that you have chosen to send your child to Unity College.

At Unity College we operate a Cashless Catering system to deliver the catering service to our students at lunch and break times. This system uses biometric finger scanning technology to store data from the student's thumb.

A single scan of the thumb will take a unique reading and convert it into a set of digits which will be used to identify the student. The image taken by the scan is not stored in the system and **cannot** be reconstructed, thus providing a high level of security.

Commenting on this technology, the Data Protection Commissioner said:

*"I would encourage you to employ the system using finger print images. It seems to me that the use of bio-metric identifiers allows users to verify their identity without the risk of intrusions into privacy. I would certainly like to be able to point to it as a good example of good practice."*

Cashless Catering is widely used by schools and colleges throughout the country and proving to be very successful. Alternatively, students can be issued with a pin code.

**Please note that we do not accept 'cash' and therefore all payments, whether for lunch, trips or other services, must be paid online through ParentPay. Your online login details for ParentPay will be issued in due course. Please remember to register for the service as soon as you get your login information**

Students who receive free school meals will be provided with a free meal and drink at lunchtime only. Please note the free meal cannot be carried forward if missed, and is only available on the day.

Students at Unity College can have a locker and these will be allocated on a 'first come first serve' basis as there isn't enough for all students. In order to maintain these lockers, a small one-off **non-refundable** payment is required. This is **£5** per locker (or **£3** per locker if your child is entitled to free school meals). If you would like your child to have a locker, please fill in the application in your registration form. You will then be notified once a locker is available and asked to pay online via ParentPay.

We look forward to welcoming you to Unity College.

*A Rahman*

**Mr A Rahman**

Director of Finance and Resources

# ICT Acceptable Use Policy

Digital technologies have become integral to the lives of children and young people, both within and outside college. These technologies are powerful tools, which open up new opportunities for everyone and can stimulate discussion, promote creativity and raise awareness of context to promote effective learning. Young people have an entitlement to safe internet at all times.

## **This Student Acceptable Use Policy is intended to ensure:**

- That young people will be responsible users and stay safe whilst using the internet and other digital technologies for educational, personal and recreational use
- That Unity College systems and users are protected from accidental or deliberate misuse that could put the security of the systems and/or users at risk
- That parents and carers are aware of the importance of Online Safety and are involved in the education and guidance of young people

## **This Student Acceptable Use Policy relates to:**

- The use of college systems and devices (both inside and outside of Unity College)
- The use of own devices within college (where allowed) e.g. mobiles phones, cameras etc.
- The use of own equipment out of the College in a way that is related to being a member of Unity College e.g. communicating with other members of the College, accessing college email, VLE, website etc.

The College will try to ensure that students have good access to digital technologies to enhance their learning and will, in return, expect students to agree to be responsible users.

## **Acceptable Use Policy Agreement Statement:**

**I understand that I must use Unity College ICT systems in a responsible way to ensure that there is no risk to my safety, or to the safety of the ICT systems and other users.**

I agree the following:

### **1. For my own personal safety:**

- I understand that the College will monitor my use of the systems, devices and my digital communications
- I will keep my username and password safe and secure: I will not share it, nor will I try to use any other person's username and password. I understand that I should not write down or store a password where it is possible that someone may steal it
- I will be aware of 'stranger danger' when I am communicating online
- I will not disclose or share personal information about myself or others when online (this could include names, addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers, age, gender, educational details and financial details, amongst others)
- If I arrange to meet people offline that I have communicated with online, I will do so in a public place and take an adult with me
- I will immediately report any unpleasant or inappropriate materials, messages or anything that makes me feel uncomfortable when I see it online

## **2. I understand that everyone has equal rights to use technology as a resource and:**

- That the College systems and devices are primarily intended for educational use and that I will not use them for personal or recreational use unless I have permission
- I will not try (unless I have permission) to make large downloads or uploads that may take up internet capacity and prevent other users from being able to carry out their work
- I will not use the College system or devices for online gambling, internet shopping, file sharing or video broadcasting, unless I have permission from a member of staff to do so
- I will only print college work with staff permission and I will not intentionally waste limited resources such as paper or printer ink
- At the end of each session, I will close all programmes and log out of the device and college systems

## **3. I will act as I expect others to act toward me:**

- I will respect others' work and property and will not access, copy, remove or otherwise alter any other user's files, without the owner's knowledge and permission
- I will be polite and responsible when I communicate with others, therefore I will not use strong, aggressive or inappropriate language and I appreciate that others may have different opinions
- I will not take or distribute images of anyone without their permission

## **4. I recognise that Unity College has a responsibility to maintain the security and integrity of the technology it offers and to ensure the smooth running of systems within college:**

- I will only use my personal devices in college if I have permission. I understand that, if I do use my own device within college, I will follow the rules set out in the relevant policies and in this agreement, in the same way as if I was using college equipment
- I understand and will not try to upload, download or access any materials which are illegal or inappropriate or may cause harm or distress to others, nor will I try to use any programmes or software that might allow me to bypass the filtering/security systems in place to prevent access to such materials
- I will immediately report any damage or faults involving equipment or software, however this may have happened
- I will not open any hyperlinks or attachments in emails, unless I know and trust the person or organisation who sent the email, or if I have any concerns about the validity of the email (due to the risk of the attachment containing viruses or other harmful programmes)
- I will not install or attempt to install or store programmes of any type on a college device, nor will I try to alter computer settings
- I will not use mobile devices to take pictures/videos in college unless given permission to do so by a member of staff
- I will not use social media during the College day



**5. When using the internet for research or recreation, I recognise that:**

- I should ensure that I have permission to use the original work of others in my own work
- Where work is protected by copyright, I will not try to download copies (including music and videos)
- When I am using the internet to find information, I should take care to check that the information that I access is accurate, as I understand that the work of others may not be truthful and may be a deliberate attempt to mislead

**6. I understand that I am responsible for my actions, both in and out of college:**

- I understand that the College has the right to take action against me if I am involved in incidents of inappropriate behaviour, that are covered in this agreement, when I am out of college and where they involve my membership of the College community (e.g. cyber-bullying, use of images, sharing of personal information etc.)
- I understand that if I fail to comply with this Acceptable Use Policy Agreement, I will be subject to disciplinary action. This may include loss of access to the Unity College network/internet, consequences outlined in the Behaviour Policy and in the event of illegal activities, involvement of the police



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