

COVID - 19 Unity Academy Daily Bulletin
19th March 2020

These are unprecedented times where the academy is relying on daily guidance from the Government, this guidance changes regularly and often this published information lags behind information in the press. This daily bulletin intends to keep all stakeholders as up to date as possible given the information we have and the fast moving situation.

School Closure Update

The school closure arrangements currently in place operate for the rest of this week.

Following the government announcement regarding school closures from Friday, we are putting plans in place to support vulnerable students and parents who are key workers. Further information will be released about this before the weekend. At the time of writing (12:30pm) we don't currently have the definition of vulnerable students or key workers.

Free School Meals

We will be using the Government voucher scheme for Free School Meals and will post vouchers to parents. At the time of writing (12:30pm) we do not have information from Government about how this will work and as such we can't provide details to parents as yet.

Patience with staff

These are testing times and staff (including leaders) are responding as quickly as they possibly can to announcements and changing circumstances. Please be patient with staff, particularly when calling into school, we are all doing everything we possibly can at this time to support children and parents and patience is appreciated.

As a parent myself I realise how worrying this time is for everyone and how uncertain times are, being abusive to staff who are doing everything they can to support in this situation will not help and will not be tolerated. I apologise for having to include this but it has become necessary.

Exams

The Government have announced that SATs and GCSE's will not take place. We do not have any information about how they will award grades to students and do not expect this until next week. We will ensure that children get the grades they deserve.

Year 11

It is likely that tomorrow will be the last day in school for Y11, this is not how we intended their time at Unity to end and we are devastated that this could well be the case. Staff are planning to make tomorrow a special day for Y11 children who are in and should it be necessary we will arrange an event similar to the prom in the next academic year so year 11

can still have their moment in the sun (or rain as the case may be at that time of year!). Year 11 students can attend in non uniform tomorrow.

Should it be the case that Y11 children do not now return to Unity I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to the students and parents of children in this year group who have made Unity such a special place to work for so many years. Your children are amazing young people and it has been an honour to try and help to support them to become the young adults they are today. I hope that they will remember the good times at Unity, the friends they have made, the challenges we have helped them overcome and the legacy that the year group left behind. For some, this is the end of a 13 year journey with us. I hope there is always a place in their heart for Unity, you will always be members of the Unity family.

Staff update

As of today, 56% of teachers are not in school and self isolating, significant numbers of support staff are also self isolating, this includes those with pre existing health conditions who are working from home as a precaution.

Confirmed Cases at Unity Academy

We are aware of significant numbers of students and staff who are self isolating. At the time of writing (12:30pm), Public Health England have not contacted us to inform us of any confirmed cases of COVID-19 amongst children, staff or families linked to Unity Academy.

Cleaning

Cleaning will continue in spaces of the school open to vulnerable children or those whose parents are key workers.

Children and staff who present at school with COVID-19 symptoms

Any children who present in school with the symptoms of COVID-19 will need to go home, we will move children to a separate, ventilated room, whilst we await a parent/carer coming to pick them up. Should any child display the symptoms, government guidance is that they **and anyone who lives with them** should self isolate for 14 days. Self isolating is recorded as a Y code in school attendance systems and will not impact on attendance for children.

For any child who is currently still attending school, if they display any symptoms in the morning, **do not send them to school.**

Staff who present with symptoms will be asked to follow the same advice and asked to go home immediately where they **and anyone who lives with them** should self isolate for 14 days. Government guidance does not, **at this stage**, indicate that any children who have been taught by the member of staff should self isolate.

School Closure Work

Work for students during school closure will be placed on the website - www.unity.blackpool.org.uk - copies of all work will be placed under the Remote Learning link - these will be updated should we have to prolong the closure.

Links to Google classroom and other online learning tools are also on the website.

Over the coming days the BBC will launch a range of national resources, there is also a Facebook group called Plan C which is supporting parents during this time.

Staff with underlying health conditions and those who are pregnant

These colleagues should work from home, self isolating for 14 days - an email was sent from Team FCAT yesterday. All colleagues who have family members at home with pre existing conditions (as defined on Government websites) are asked to contact Simon Brennan urgently, if they have not already done so.

An email will be sent later today to outline specific arrangements for those working from home.

Enquiries

Should you have any questions during this time please email generalenquiries@unity.fcat.org.uk - if you have specific emails regarding subjects or software, please use the email addresses on the website, under partial school closure.