



10<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Dear Parent/Carer

Belated Happy New Year to you all.

### **New staff**

Miss Priscilla Osei will be teaching RE in place of Mr Bailey. Mrs Brown takes over as Co-ordinator for RE. Miss Sharp has returned from the sabbatical term and resumes her KS3 Science role.

The following events are important to particular year groups:-

### **Preference Process**

Year 9 will begin the process of choosing their exam courses for Year 10 after the information, advice and guidance at Preference Evening on 17<sup>th</sup> January and Parent Consultation Evening on 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

Senior staff will be providing guidance and explaining the national changes to the curriculum.

### **Year 11 Consultation Evening**

The Year 11 Consultation Evening will be held on 8<sup>th</sup> February. This is an important evening to ensure all students gain full support from parents/carers. We hope you will all be able to attend.

### **Parent Survey**

Many thanks to those parents who took the opportunity to complete the Parent Survey before Christmas. We had some very useful feedback that we shall use in our future planning of provision for students here at Uplands. We are delighted that the overwhelming majority of you say that your child is happy, feels safe, is well looked after and is taught well at Uplands.

One query that was raised by a few parents was a request for further information regarding the amount and format of homework that students receive. I have endeavoured to give a brief summary of our homework policy below:

At Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9) the majority of subjects set Independent Learning Projects (ILPs). ILPs usually take the form of a term long project that allow students to explore a subject topic in creative and independent ways. ILPs require students to be disciplined about organising their work over a period of time but the aim for many of these projects is that they

reinforce learning and also provide students with opportunities to develop vital skills such as organisation, time-management, planning and research.

At Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11) there is a more flexible approach to homework as befits the nature of this level of study. Some subjects set ILPs and/or weekly homework tasks and many set coursework planning or researching as tasks that students undertake outside of school. We do not follow a set format of what subjects should be studied on each night but instead allow subject teachers the flexibility to set homework according to the needs of the students they are teaching.

If you did not take the opportunity to complete our survey and would like to do so, please email Andrew Smith at [andrew.smith@uplandscs.com](mailto:andrew.smith@uplandscs.com) and he will be happy to send you the link.

### **Uniform**

Please can we remind you of a few school regulations regarding our college dress code and ask for your support in ensuring your child complies with it.

- With regard to the wearing of boots, these have been tolerated in exceptionally bad weather. However they are not part of the uniform and will be replaced by black plimsolls.
- The only outerwear permitted is a coat. As stated in the student planner, hoodies, non-college jumpers, tracksuit tops, cardigans etc should not be worn. Denim and **leather jackets** are not permitted.
- Scarves should be black.
- Any garments worn under blouses or shirts should be white and not be visible at all.
- Jewellery should be limited to simple stud earrings. Nose, eyebrow and other facial piercings are not permitted.
- Extreme hairstyles and colours are not permitted.

Please note that any items which are not part of our dress code will be confiscated. We are sure you will wish to avoid this by ensuring your child complies with the College's agreed policy. Thank you.

### **Local Authority update on penalty notice for poor attendance at school or when in alternative provision**

The following notice has been sent as a directive to the school. There are two important changes:-

- Payment of a penalty notice.
- Holiday taken in term time.

Payment of a penalty notice can now be made with a debit/credit card.

### **Holiday in term time**

The holiday request form will be changed with a warning incorporated to warn that holiday taken in term time **may** incur a penalty notice. As Principal I will continue to use my discretion to consider your exceptional reasons and authorise where family circumstances make travel essential in term time. I am sure you will appreciate that these reasons vary,

however 'cheaper flights' as a bold statement is not considered a reason for missing school!  
A copy of this letter requesting holiday in term time is available on the school website.

In a similar way persistent lateness after the registration has closed also counts as an unauthorised absence.

### **Free School Meals**

If there have been changes in your circumstances, especially in the current climate, you may be entitled to free school meals. A form can be collected from Student Services to apply. Our Cashless System will enable each student to use this service discreetly.

### **Influenza Briefing**

As it normal practice children who are ill with an influenza-type illness should remain at home until symptoms have resolved.

As always, by practising good hygiene everyone can play their part in reducing the transmission of all viruses, including influenza.

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water to reduce the spread of virus from your hands to face or to other people.
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue when possible.
- Dispose of dirty tissues promptly and carefully.
- Make sure children follow this advice.
- Clean hard surfaces (e.g. door handles) frequently using a normal cleaning product.

### **PTA**

The next PTA meeting will be on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> January at 8.00 pm in the library.

Thank you again for your support of the college.

Yours sincerely



Jayne Edmonds  
Principal