



Firstly – thank you!

A sincere thanks to all the students, parents, staff, governors and everyone who makes UCC such a special place.

Where to start...

This year has been the most testing in recent history and for so many reasons. Looking back on the year at Christmas and taking some time to reflect on all the events is always a good opportunity to learn.

If we knew a year ago what we know now, could we and would we have done anything different? I don't think so – the staff and students were amazing when we announced our closure back in March. The effort and input from everyone during lockdown incredible. The extra lengths people went to to look after each other has really shown all of us how fortunate we are to be a part of the Ullswater community.

Our return in September was full of questions and, once again, everyone responded with courage, vigour and positivity. It has been wonderful to walk the corridors, go into classrooms and speak with students and colleagues throughout the last term. Rest assured that even in the middle of a global crisis, standards have been high and the quality of learning and engagement, as well as safety, continues to be our main focus.

I want to pass on a special thank you to all of our parents and carers – these weeks and months have been very difficult and you have done an incredible job, especially when we have had to make very difficult decisions about isolating some students – thank you!

We have all learnt and evolved our approaches over recent months, there will be many things we will want to keep and lots that we will want to forget. Recent government announcements have afforded us a little more hope that we may be able to return to something more like 'normality' soon.

My very best wishes for the festive season. I am very optimistic for 2021 and looking forward to the coming year in anticipation of all that can be achieved.

As always, stay safe, look after each other and I look forward to seeing everyone again in 2021.

Mr Gilby, Headteacher



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CONGRATULATIONS evie!

We're delighted that Evie Wallace, in Year 8, won this year's Christmas card design competition, winning a print of her design and a gift box.

Happy Christmas from Evie and everyone at UCC!

a message FOR YEAR 8

As 2020 draws to an end and the Year 8 pupils head out for Christmas, I want to extend the thanks of the Year 8 team to all the parents and carers who have supported these wonderful youngsters in the return to school life. With a most unusual start at UCC last academic year, and after a long period away from the rigours of school life, I have been impressed with the way the Year 8s have thrown themselves back into the demands of learning. We have seen a huge number of positive attitude to learning (ATL) awards and plenty of really supportive team spirit in the year group – it is really wonderful to see how well the Year 8s support their friends and peers in a positive way.

I very much wish you all a restful Christmas holiday and I hope to welcome everyone back in the New Year refreshed and ready to fully engage with the next part of their learning journey with enthusiasm.

Merry Christmas!

Mr Forrest
Head of Year 8



THE UCC LIBRARY – CHANGING ALL THE TIME

UCC Library has continued to radically transform this half-term. With new furniture and hundreds of new books being added to the stock every week, we are well on the way to offering a first-class library service that is relevant to all student needs.

Beah Lamis, Year 13, describes the changes as “a great step forward for UCC. The library is now very welcoming and a lovely place to work. There are so many new books that I can’t wait to read.”

The introduction of a manga and graphic novel section has been particularly popular with students. Books in this section include *Naruto*, *One Punch Man*, *Death Note*, *The Walking Dead* and the *Simpsons* series.

The library is open for all students to borrow and return books after school.

GILL LEWIS AUTHOR VISIT

Mrs Pickup’s Year 8 class was thrilled to take part in a virtual visit from award-winning author, Gill Lewis. Having read and adored her book *Sky Hawk*, the students were excited to have the opportunity to meet her and ask questions about her work. Gill joined the group via the wide screen and the insightful questions asked by the students generated lots of conversation, ranging from what inspires her – as a small child, Gill was discovered force-feeding bread to a sick hedgehog under the rose bushes and as a young girl she aspired to become a vet; once qualified, her work took her to the wilds of Africa – how Gill researches her books, where she writes (hint: in an incredible tree house!), why conservation is important and the possibility of her work being turned into a film.



As a result of the visit, Gill has invited the students to be among the first in the world to read her new book, *A Street Dog Called Pup*, which will publish in April. The students will then take part in her publicity tour and interview her for a national publication.

The class (and Mrs Pickup) recommend Gill’s books to everyone, but be warned: you may need a tissue!

SALVATION ARMY FOOD BANK COLLECTION

The food bank has witnessed an unprecedented demand for emergency food this year. Before the pandemic hit, food banks were seeing a steady stream of desperate people coming to them because they could not afford to buy food. For many, their financial situation has been exacerbated further due to the lockdown which, while essential to curb the spread of the virus, has particularly bitten those on zero hours contracts and self-isolating people who don't have family close by.

In response, UCC has donated 91 boxes of food and supplies for vulnerable families struggling during the pandemic, bringing some Christmas joy for children and families who might not otherwise get a gift.

A huge thank you to the Year 13 Early Years students for organising the collection.

Mrs McCormick
Head of Child, Health and Social Studies



CHRISTMAS CARDS OF KINDNESS

Year 12 students hand made close to 100 Christmas cards this term for residents at three of Penrith's care homes. Each card contained a personal message and the inspiration for the project was the news that many older people feel extremely lonely over the festive period and will become more isolated than ever before during the global pandemic.

At the same time, the Year 12 Health and Social Care students made Christmas cards for the residents of Housing 21, in Penrith. Residents are encouraged to live as independently as possible but can get help with personal care, meals, medication and general domestic duties if they need it. The residents cannot have full family visits or leave their flats at the moment and have been delighted to receive personalised cards and letters from the students.



TRIPLE A FILM

Four students from UCC took part in a project with the Triple A charity to produce a film to raise awareness for professionals working with young people with autism preparing for adulthood and independent living. The film was aptly named *Talk to Me. One Size Does Not Fit All*.

The project started at the beginning of 2020 and the students took part in the planning stage before then filming with a professional film company.

Working both in front and behind the camera with other young people in the community, our students played a full part in the making of this film.

The students also took part in virtual interviews and a virtual film launch earlier in the term.

A huge well done to Ty, Seb, Devonne and Chris!

Mrs Ridley
SENDSCO

YEAR 11 UPDATE

The last half term was full-on, with the first series of mock exams being completed by this amazing year group. Even with the inconvenience and stress of periods of isolation, the Year 11 students approached their exams with a brilliant attitude and were quite simply exemplary in their exams.

Moving forward, the new year will see mock results and parents' evenings on 5th, 6th and 7th January, giving students, teachers and parents the chance to discuss current progress and – more importantly – the steps needed to be made towards the next milestone, which is the second set of mocks in March.

Obviously in the current climate we are very conscious of how much learning the students have missed and intervention sessions are well underway, with many students accessing the extra support to help them catch up. We will roll out intervention sessions for as many students as possible. It's at times like these you realise you work in an amazing school with staff going well above and beyond with what they are offering the Year 11s. Tutor times, before and after school, break and lunchtimes are all being used by staff and students to cram in as much teaching and learning as possible, and where learning has had to move online our staff have moved their expertise to this format. I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank the staff of the Year 11s as I know how hard you are working to support these young men and women.

As ever, my adoration, respect and pride for this year group remains sky high and I am honoured to see them progress towards the summer exam series. I know it's been tough, and it will continue to be so, but you all have the characteristics to smash this...which I know you will.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas!

Mr Castle
Head of Year 11

ENTRY-LEVEL PERFORMING ARTS GROUP

VIRTUAL WORKSHOP WITH ELIZA GUTTERIDGE FROM 'THE VOICE'

Warming-up with breathing exercises and strengthening the core muscles, Eliza's workshop outlined how a singer has to keep their voice in good shape. Blowing bubbles and talking down straws were part of the fun warm-up sessions.

Eliza sang a tear-jerking version of *White Christmas* which inspired some solo artists to stand up and sing for us.

This was a truly magnificent way to research the music industry and discover how music feeds the soul. Eliza is returning (albeit remotely) in the New Year to continue her workshops as part of the entry-level unit 'Introduction to Performing Arts'.

Mrs Pickup



6TH FORM AUTUMN CAREERS PROGRAMME

Sixth form students were involved in a series of online and virtual workshops over the second half of the Autumn term.

The purpose of the programme was to inform students of career possibilities with their A level courses and to help them make informed decisions about future career plans. Talks included:

- Student finance and financial awareness sessions sponsored by Penrith Building Society
- Modern apprenticeships with BAE Systems
- Graduate careers with Northumbria University
- Careers in law, criminology and policing with Edge Hill University
- Careers in teaching with the University of Cumbria
- Safer driving with Cumbria Police



MUSIC LINKS

UCC CHRISTMAS ALBUM

Students and staff have created a Christmas album with a variety of Christmas music for the holidays. Find this [here](#):

UCC CHRISTMAS SERVICE

The performing arts department have worked flat out to create an online Christmas service. Students will have seen this on the last day but it is also able to be viewed again [here](#).



COVID – SCHOOL TRACKING UPDATE

Like other schools, UCC will continue to support with Covid track and trace at the start of the Christmas holidays.

Students and staff: if you test positive and your **symptoms began up to and including Sunday 20 December**, school **must** be notified so that we can support with contact tracing. Use the admin email address (admin@ullswatercc.co.uk), which will be monitored until 24 December.

If there is a positive case in this time period, and your child's bubble is affected, you will be informed by text and email.

If **symptoms begin any time from Monday 21 December**, please follow the instructions given by NHS track and trace – you do not need to contact the school after this point.

Please let us know of any self-isolation required for the first day of the new term.



HELP WITH SCHOOL MEALS AND CLOTHING

With the current situation proving difficult for many people, please be aware that free school meals and clothing vouchers are available if you receive one of the following qualifying benefits:

- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- An income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) that as of April 2012 does not exceed £16,190. *Note:* From 1st May 2009 where you are entitled to Working Tax Credit during the four week period immediately after your employment ceases, or after you start to work less than 16 hours per week, your children are entitled to Free School Meals, this may be extended
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Universal Credit

Please note that you may not be eligible for free school meals or clothing grants if you receive working tax credits.

Children who receive Income Support or Income Based Jobseekers Allowance in their own right are also entitled to receive free school meals.

HOW TO APPLY

Where possible, all parents and guardians should **apply online** – you will receive an immediate response advising you whether you are eligible or not.

If you are unable to apply online, please contact the free school meals team – telephone: **01228 606060**

Please note: Children who currently receive free school meals and clothing grants do not need to apply each year.



12 PINS OF CHRISTMAS!

The UCC Music Department Staff, Year 12 students Isabelle Boothman, Rachel Huschka, Georgina Gale and Rae Reay as well as Year 10 students Liam Ludgate, Ellie Harrison, Lizzy Hudspith-Spence, Ella Philips, Amelia Bowden and Liza Bardy, have become international stars of Christmas!

They were videoed singing a part of the *12 Days of Christmas* with other members of the public, community groups, choirs, NHS members and many more, including celebrities like Kiera Knightly, Joe Lycett and Ringo Starr!

The idea of this video was to spread the word about #PinYourThanks, a personal and heartfelt way of saying 'Thank You' by sending celebrity designed pin badges that raises money for the NHS and Volunteering Matters and is run purely by volunteers! If you want to see it [here](#).

RECYCLE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE

Will you have a real Christmas tree to dispose of after Christmas? Hospice at Home is organising their annual fund-raising initiative to recycle trees after the festive season and at the same time raise vital funds to provide hospice care in the local community.

Last year, the charity collected over 1,100 trees, raising almost £12,000. Penrith is one of the areas in which the charity is collecting trees.

Book your tree for collection at www.charityxmasreecollection.com, and make a donation of your choice to Hospice at Home.

On Friday 8th January 2021 volunteers and local businesses who have pledged vans and staff teams to help will collect the trees and take them to be recycled locally.



CONTACT US

We are always pleased to hear from parents. Please get in touch with us if you have any concerns:

E-mail:
admin@ullswatercc.co.uk

Or visit the school website:
www.ullswatercc.co.uk

MODULO – ORCHESTRAS

FOR ALL!

At the moment, music making at UCC has been stopped in all but a few ways. To enable a group of Year 8s to perform music together, the department has signed up to a programme called Modulo, which is run by Orchestras for All.

The Year 8 students have taken part in the introductory virtual meeting, where they met students from around the UK and learned a few more notes or chords on their instruments.

We hope to have a Year 8 Modulo rehearsal in person at UCC in January, when we can put together all of the music the students have learnt during his course.

Mr Bryant
Head of Music



WELCOME BACK! DATES FOR JANUARY 2021

At the time of writing, the return to school in January 2021 is still being planned. We will update our [website](#) and social media with further details as we get them.

What we do know is:

- Staff return on Monday 4th January 2020 for a training day
- Year 11 and 13 students return on Tuesday 5th January
- Other year groups return in the week commencing Monday 11th January

There has been a lot of press coverage about the rapid testing that schools will carry out from January 2021. We are still in the process of planning this. Again, we will put information onto the school website as it becomes available.

