



MERRY CHRISTMAS TO EVERYONE!

I'd like to thank everyone associated with the school for the fantastic contributions made – great and small – throughout 2022. We've ended the year with some very good news about the future of UCC – the details are on page 2.

This has been another exciting term. The Year 7s have now completed the first of their many terms in secondary school and I think they deserve a special mention – well done! What a super addition to the school you are – it's a privilege to have you as part of our community. You have all been so active around the school, building new friendships, learning your way around and – most importantly – working incredibly hard in your lessons. I very much look forward to getting to know you even better over the coming years.

It has also been great to see all the enrichment activities in this first term and to have shared the school experience with 200 potential new families as part of our Year 6 tours of the school in September. Without fail, our new Year 7 students are always able to share their experiences with the families, to offer pointers and advice to the Year 6 students and parents who come tour the school and always make them feel very welcome and us very proud.

As in previous years, students, parents and staff have collected and shared shoe boxes of gifts, supplies to the Salvation Army and raised many thousands of pounds for various charities – well done to all!

The students of UCC always have been, are and always will be, our greatest asset at the school – we should all be very proud of everything they represent. It amazes me to see how students and the wider community of UCC stay positive throughout the most challenging times. We really are a community that cares for one another, looks out for each other and supports one another in every way possible.

This is an incredibly important sentiment for this time of year. While many of us look forward to the festive period, time with family and the chance to catch up with friends, this is not the case for everyone and so I ask you to be a good neighbour, stay in touch and be mindful of those around us who are perhaps a little less fortunate.

Keep everyone safe and well, share a smile and some festive cheer and make sure we can all return to school safe and sound for 2023.

My very best wishes for the coming holiday.

Mr Gilby, Headteacher

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BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

In recent years, and behind the scenes, the school has been working incredibly hard to try to secure new premises or a significant investment in our existing ones.

On Friday 16 December we were delighted to find out that UCC is one of 239 schools nationally to be named in the latest round of the School Rebuilding Programme; just 3 schools in Cumbria are in this stage of the programme.

Needless to say, there is still a huge amount of work to be done and there will be a lot of unknown challenges on the way – but this remains a landmark moment for UCC and is fantastic news for the school and for the young people of Penrith and Eden.

This multi-million-pound investment will have a profound, long-lasting impact on our students, staff and the local community. It will build on the significant progress the school has already made. As one of the most improved schools in the county, we'll now be able to build on our recent successes and move further towards our ambition to be Best in County.

I'd like to thank those who have played a significant role in securing this opportunity for the school – Dr Neil Hudson, MP, who has worked tirelessly to raise the profile of the school; our colleagues at Cumbria County Council and all in the UCC community for their ongoing support.

Mr Gilby
Headteacher



We want to let students, parents and carers know that KOOTH is still available over the holidays. This amazing service offers support to students, parents and carers. Simply [click the link](#) to access the KOOTH website.

A promotional graphic for KOOTH. It features the KOOTH logo (a stylized 'k' with a face) and the text "Free, safe and anonymous online counselling and support". Below this, there is a quote: "I don't think I could've spoken to someone face-to-face." and three icons representing different services: "Chat to our friendly counsellors", "Read articles written by young people", and "Join live moderated forums". The website address "www.kooth.com" is prominently displayed, followed by "KOOTH DROP IN Every lunchtime in R54 12.50pm - 1.20pm". The background shows a group of smiling young people.

CHRISTMAS ACTIVITY BOOKLET



Carlisle Eden Mind and Your Voice have created a fun Christmas-themed activity booklet for students and parents.

The booklet offers a chance to self-reflect, plan goals over the Christmas holiday and pursue creative talents with Christmas-themed puzzles, word searches, mazes and colouring pages.

All you need is a printer, a stapler and some colouring pens or pencils. To get started:

- Free download (click [here](#))
- Print the file (set the page to landscape)
- Staple the pages together
- Get colouring!



Jólabókaflóðið

The Accelerated Reader Millionaires' Club is growing rapidly as more and more students reach their word targets. To reward those who have already joined the club, we hosted our own version of a Jólabókaflóðið (an Icelandic book flood) this half-term.

The Jólabókaflóðið is a popular Icelandic tradition. Books are given as gifts to be read on Christmas Eve whilst eating chocolate and surrounding by cosy fairy lights. The library version involved delicious hot chocolate and hot chocolate muffins, a Christmas booky quiz, an indoor snow-ball fight and, finally, a relaxing 30 minutes of reading.

We thoroughly recommend holding your own Jólabókaflóðið on Christmas Eve!

YEAR 7 REVIEW

In the blink of an eye the first term is done!

And what a term it has been for this brilliant year group who have thrown themselves whole-heartedly into all that UCC has to offer.

We have had students excelling in their learning, with the year group collectively achieving in excess of 58,000 positive ATLs and over 3000 golden tickets; we have had students representing UCC in school sports teams and attending a wide range of extra-curricular clubs in many areas of the school; students have been on external visits and welcomed visitors to their assemblies, they have worked hard to develop new friendships and have developed their understanding of the importance of our ethos "ambitious, caring and equal". In short, in 14 weeks they have achieved a huge amount and they should be extremely proud of their excellent transition to secondary school; I for one am certainly a very proud Head of Year!

I wish you all a well-deserved and very enjoyable festive period and look forward to welcoming the students back in January to embark on their next term at UCC.

Merry Christmas!

Mr Castle
Head of Year 7



CHRISTMAS CRAFTS

Students in the Craft Club made ceramic and felt Christmas decorations and proudly took them home to hang on their trees.

Craft Club will continue on Wednesday lunchtimes next term. Come and join us!



CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICES

Two Christmas carol services were held at St Andrews Church, Penrith, with 60 students taking part and over 1000 students attending in the congregation.

Led by Rector, David Sargent, the services told the Christmas story, interspersed with readings, poetry and drama performances by Year 10 drama students.



CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION

Thank you to all those who entered this year's Christmas card design competition.

We've selected two final images, one of which will be the ultimate winner and sent out by the school.

The Art Department



CUMBRIA'S HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AND FOOD

An exciting programme is on offer for the winter holidays. Working with a range of partners, Cumbria County Council is providing activities that are fun, improve wellbeing and self-esteem and provide information and advice on healthy eating and nutrition.

Clubs and activities are run by established community groups, and creative arts, sport, leisure and youth organisations.

Check [here](#) for full details.



#proudtobeUCC



DAZZLING PERFORMANCES AT THE SHOWCASE

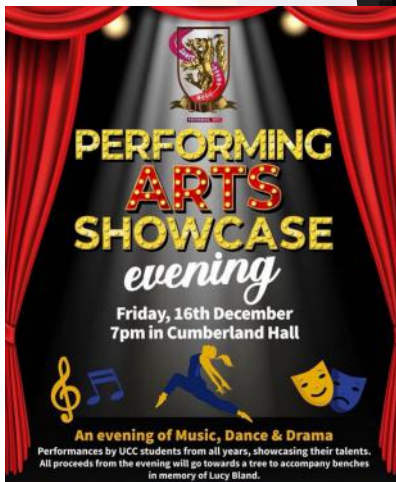
Over 60 students from Years 7 to 13 dazzled their audience with their talent in our Performing Arts Showcase on Friday 16 December!

The mix of dance, music and drama performances included comedy sketches, live bands, street dance, solos and the Sign Choir. Some of the performances will contribute to students' final GCSE exam results.

The evening was a sparkling success – but this doesn't just happen overnight! The students have worked tirelessly in rehearsals for the last half term, and put on a matinee performance on Friday afternoon for residents of a local care home to come along and enjoy.

I could not be more proud of each and every performer. It was an absolute pleasure to create and direct such a brilliant show to end the Christmas term. Roll on next year!

Miss Slattery



GOLDEN TICKETS

We were excited to do our first Golden Ticket draw on the last day of term. This new termly initiative celebrates all the good work the students have achieved over the last term.

The main prizes this time were:

- iPad
- Kendall Calling tickets (1 adult and 1 child)
- AirPods

Other prizes included cinema tickets for the Alhambra and Rheged, a Wakesurf voucher and Amazon vouchers.

Students are entered into the prize draw each time they are awarded a Golden Ticket in class, so increase your chances of winning next time by gaining as many Golden Tickets as you can!

Congratulations to all the winners!



memorial FUN RUN

UCC's student-led Sports Council worked with the PE Department to organise a fun run to raise money for Children's Cancer North, which supported UCC student Lucy Bland during her fight with leukaemia.

All students, along with pupils from Langwathby Primary school, were invited to run and to collect sponsorship money. Over 600 students took part in the event, raising an amazing £11,470.

Sam Bland, Lucy's brother, led the first wave of runners wearing an inflatable cow costume (Lucy's favourite animal). He then repeated the run to lead Langwathby students around the course.

The run involved various obstacles that were supervised by UCC's Uniformed Protective Services students, who demonstrated and encouraged the students through each obstacle. The conditions were incredibly muddy but the participants took this in their stride and embraced the challenges ahead of them; their attitude and effort were fantastic!

Well done and thank you to all the runners!





YEAR 9 REVIEW OF THE TERM

This term the Year 9s have continued to push themselves and demonstrate a fantastic work ethic. Collectively, the year group has received over 50,000 positive ATLs, which is incredible, and only the Year 7s have achieved a higher total. Seven individuals have already achieved their Gold Award for receiving over 300 positive ATLs. Well done to Jayden H, Matthew M, Elliot W, Bea M, Anna R, Erin B and Hannah D.

The year group has embraced everything that UCC has to offer, supporting the Salvation Army collection, the Shoe Box appeal, the UCC Carol Service and Performing Arts Showcase as well as a plethora of sporting fixtures, to mention just a few.

In 2023, the Year 9s start their GCSE options process and discussions about their future aspirations need to be at the forefront of their minds. I am confident that, with the determination and resilience they have already shown, the next hurdle of GCSEs will not be a problem for them.

Year 9s – have a wonderful holiday with your friends and families and Merry Christmas!

Mr Key
Head of Year 9

STUDENT LIBRARIANS

So many students are eager to volunteer their time to helping in the library that our wonderful team of student librarians grew again this half-term. We received over 70 applications for the available 10 roles. Shortlisted applicants were invited to an interview with the Senior Student Librarians, Olipher and Will. Those chosen to join the team will start officially in January.

The Student Librarian team is integral to the running of the library their help allows us to put on lots of different activities for students and maintain a calm, welcoming space. We are very grateful to all of them!

Miss McKay
School Librarian

Attendance Matters

At UCC we aim to fully develop the gifts and talents of each student. In doing so, we also prepare children for life after school and into the future. Attendance at school is a **legal requirement** and a crucial aspect in preparing for the future.

At UCC we work hard to promote good attendance for the students in our school and to raise awareness of the importance of this to support their development and academic achievement. As parents, we need your help and support to ensure your child reaches their full potential.

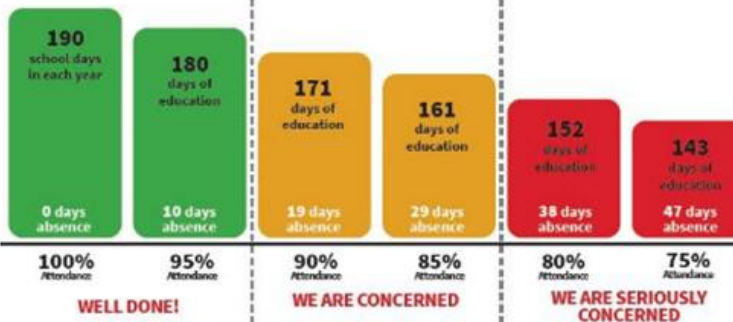
What does Good School Attendance look like?

We take school absence very seriously. We identify students whose attendance drops below 96% and offer support and intervention to help improve this. It is important for parents or carers to work together with school when a student is near the 10% persistent absence threshold.

365
days in a
year

190
school
days in a
year

175
non school
days in a
year



Meet the UCC Attendance team



Mrs Broomhall
Attendance Officer



Mrs Higgins
Senior Attendance Lead



Mr Davies
Attendance Lead

Who to contact to report absence or discuss any barriers that may impact on your child's attendance.

- **Attendance Team**
01768 210206 option 3
- **Email**
attendance@ullswatercc.co.uk
- **Text**
07860 095537
- **Form Tutor/Head of Year**

vision: **BEST in County**

Ambitious

Caring

Equal

UCC is an ambitious, caring community where everyone is equal

#proudtobeUCC

vision: **BEST in County**

Ambitious • Caring • Equal



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#proudtobeUCC



a message FOR YEAR 11 and 13

The Year 11s and 13s have been working hard and recently completed their first set of mock exams. Staff have commented on how well they have done and on their mature approach to their studies.

Please remember that these exams are about finding out **what you don't know**, so we can fill those gaps ready for next summer.

The recent mock results are in line with where we expect them (and as a consequence you...) to be, and in line with the same time last year.

Last year's Year 11s and 13s achieved some of the best results the school has ever seen and I am confident you will go one step further this year to secure the grades you deserve and which – most importantly – will open the doors for your first steps into the world.

Remember, we are here to help – use us and, as always, we will do everything in our power to help you succeed!

Mr Gilby, Headteacher

CHRISTMAS IN AFRICA

Year 9 students have been learning how Christmas is celebrated in some countries in Africa. These are our Ethiopian Christmas cards.

Mrs Leathers
Head of Geography



SALVATION ARMY FOOD BANK COLLECTION

A phenomenal effort as always by UCC! A grand total of 71 boxes was collected and distributed to The Salvation Army, and also to refugee women and children in Carlisle.

The fantastic Sixth Form Early Years students also volunteered at the Salvation Army, spending a day wrapping gifts for families and packing up food parcels.

Our students can always be relied upon to do a fantastic job, with care and compassion.

Mrs McCormick
Head of Child Health & Social Studies



UCC STUDENT IN BBC REGENERATORS HALL OF FAME

The BBC Bite Size Regenerators Scheme is a celebration of young people taking action to protect the planet. The purpose is to inspire young people to live a greener life and to encourage others to look after the planet.

UCC student Isabella Park has been highly commended for her volunteering work with the environmental charity Action for Conservation, who are restoring 198 acres of land for biodiversity.



Isabella is also a member of the UCC Eco Council and has been involved with creating a community garden, done litter picks and raised awareness for environmental issues on social media. The BBC judges were impressed by Isabella's work and said they can't wait to see the impact that it has!



THE 2023 INTAKE TO UCC

This year we have 250 first-choice applicants to Ullswater and anticipate around 270 students joining us in September – we are once again incredibly popular and oversubscribed. This intake will make us one of the largest, if not *the* largest, 11–16 school in Cumbria.

Having invested in excess of £500,000 on the school site, infrastructure, equipment, staff, students and training in the last 3 years, and operating with an in-year financial surplus for some time now, our surplus carry-forward will allow us to continue to invest in the young people of Penrith.

This, alongside strong governance, leadership, enrichment and academic performance, should see us secure our Ofsted Good in the coming months of 2023.

Mr Gilby, Headteacher

SCULPTURE VISIT

Year 10 Art students enjoyed a visit to The Hepworth Wakefield and the Yorkshire Sculpture park this half term. It was a fantastic opportunity for the students to stand before some of the sculptures they've been looking at in their lessons and to make notes and first-hand sketches to support their own work at school.

Mrs Krawczyk, Art Department



DISCOVERING HEALTHY BABY FOOD!

Year 12 Early Years students have been learning how to promote healthy lifestyles to young children. As part of their studies they planned healthy, balanced and nutritious menus for children. They particularly enjoyed partaking in a game of guess the baby food. Yum!

Mrs McCormick
Head of Child Health & Social Studies



UCC's amazing music DEPARTMENT

I am immensely proud of the many different ways students in the Music Department represented the school this term.

At the Remembrance Day parade, student musicians played the Last Post and Reverie in various locations across the school, led by Samuel Popple, who performed a poignant and humble rendition in the main quad with the cadets, Uniformed Protective Services and Year 9 students.



The choir took part in this year's Penrith Schools Music Association concerts at St Andrews Church – after a hiatus of three years. They performed faultlessly and to much praise, demonstrating the musical talent we have at UCC to the local community. A big well done to the new Year 7s, some of whom had never performed in public before – a fantastic feat and something you should be very proud of!

In the same week the Music Department held its first Christmas Concert ever! Nearly 100 performers took to the stage to perform a variety of Christmas and non-

Christmas music. Again, the performers were fantastic and it made me immensely proud to see how far the quality of performance has come on in just this term. Students can now work extremely well together and I am proud to be part of such a vibrant and community of caring musicians.

Musicians were also part of the Performing Arts Showcase in the last week of term. It was great to see dance, drama and music combining and showcasing just how talented UCC students are!

Finally, the UCC Brass Group and UCC Singers performed and led the school carol service on Monday 19 December. To stand up in front of the whole school and lead the carols is again something that should be recognised as very, very positive and very, very nerve-wracking!

LOOKING FORWARD...

There is a lot to look forward to next half-term. We are preparing for a spring concert and also an evening showcase of GCSE and BTEC Level 3 performances.

In July, 64 students will go on tour to London and rehearsing and selecting the repertoire will begin in earnest in January!

FINALLY...

From everyone in the Music Department – have a very Musical Christmas and an even noisier New Year!

Mr Bryant, Head of Music

PS: Why not make it your new years' resolution to sing or to learn a new instrument, or just to practise regularly!

UCC PARENTS' GROUP

Parents of students at UCC are sometimes surprised to find that although they are always warmly welcomed at the school and at school events, UCC doesn't have the sort of formal parents' group that many schools do.

The parent governors wonder if this is something parents might welcome: opportunities for involvement, opportunities to help enhance a very positive school community, opportunities to offer support and even particular expertise.

To judge whether developing such a forum to enable parents to work closely and creatively with the school, we'd be grateful if you could [follow this link](#) and complete the survey is a first step towards such a scheme. Do please help us by making your responses as full as you can ...



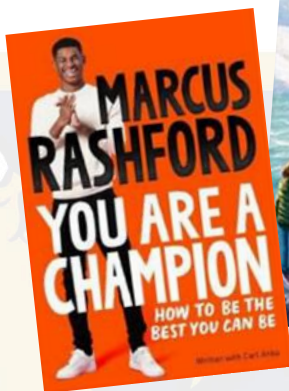
YEAR 7 CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

After nearly a term of waiting, Year 7 were delighted to receive Christmas presents from the library at the end of the term.

Using the Bookbuzz programme run by the national charity BookTrust, each student selected a book they would like to receive for Christmas from a choice of 17. The most popular titles were *You Are A Champion* by Marcus Rashford and *House of Clouds* by Lisa Thompson.

Most students eagerly ripped off the wrapping paper as soon as they received their present, but a small number showed impressive restraint and may still have theirs under their Christmas tree!

Huge thanks go to Year 12 students Lucy Benson and Kira McDonald for their help in wrapping the presents.



A number of extension activities will run next half-term for Year 7 students once they have read their books:

- Double Accelerated Reader Points and Words when they pass a quiz on a Christmas present book.
- A creative writing competition to write an extra chapter for their book. What happens next? Or maybe, what happened before? Entries should be handed in to the library before Feb half-term for the chance to win prizes.
- A crafty competition to create a Book in a Box inspired by a Christmas present book. Students can use any size box to create a scene or location from their book. There are lots of ideas online if inspiration is needed. Bring boxes to the library before February half-term for the chance to win prizes.

A Swap Box will be in the library, so students can swap their book with each other if they wish to.

Miss McKay, School Librarian

INSPIRED PORTRAITS!

Year 8 students have been creating some incredible portraits inspired by Deb Weiers.

Great work!



CUMBRIA COUNTY COUNCIL – WAYS TO WELFARE

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected people in lots of ways and whilst Cumbrian communities have been fantastic at supporting each other, many people are finding they need a bit of extra help and support.

These webpages give you information about support available to people in Cumbria, online and on the phone:

- [Care and health](#)
- [Get help with food](#)
- [Find out about help with housing and heating](#)
- [Wellbeing and mental health](#)
- [Debt and money](#)

Don't wait for problems to get worse, there are organisations that can help and it's better to get advice sooner rather than later.

The Ways to Welfare service can receive a high volume of calls. Please be aware that you may experience delays and bear with the team while they do their best to meet this increased demand. Thank you for your patience.

IF YOU NEED URGENT HELP

With the cost of living on the rise there will be people in Cumbria who are struggling, whether that's emotionally, financially or just because they need practical help to get in touch and seek support.

If you're unsure where to go for help, visit the new [Cost of Living](#) webpage.

A cost of living leaflet with all the information on this page can be downloaded in PDF format to allow for printing or sharing [Cost of living leaflet \(PDF 1MB\)](#)

WARM SPOTS IN CUMBRIA

Over 130 venues across Cumbria have opened to provide a warm space for people looking for a somewhere to warm up, have a hot drink (free or at cost) and – if you want to – a chat this winter; some offer a much wider range of facilities, activities and support.

Cumbria County Council has created a new website to help people find the Warm Spot nearest them and what is on offer there: go to www.cumbria.gov.uk/warmspots



MUSICAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Music Department offers our students some fantastic opportunities:

Riff Club is being set up by Mr Stone, one of our Learning Support Assistants, for budding singers, guitarists, bassists, drummers or keyboardists. Come along after school and on a Friday and join with others to make a band – this opportunity is also open to acoustic singer songwriters.

Have you tried Streetband yet? It's a fabulous way to de-stress and enjoy making music with others. All staff and students are welcome in Cumberland Hall on a Monday after school (4–5 pm).

Similarly, the UCC Guitar Group is open to any bassist or guitarist who would like to perform. You will be taught the songs by Year 11 students and Mr Sidney (UCC's Guitar Tutor) – it's a lot of fun!

Mr Bryant
Head of Music



HELP WITH SCHOOL MEALS AND CLOTHING

The current situation is proving difficult for many people; 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.



RETURN TO SCHOOL

We look forward to welcoming everyone back to school on Wednesday 4 January 2023. Term dates can be found on our website: <https://ullswatercc.co.uk/info/term-dates/>

HELP FOR STUDENTS AT UCC

- In light of the financial squeeze the country is experiencing at the moment, we would like to highlight some of the support available to UCC students :
- Free breakfast for every student – free toast, jam and water; tea, coffee, and juice are available in the Westmorland hall from 8:15am.
- Period products – are freely available in the girls' toilets and from the student hub.
- Stationery – every classroom has a box of pens, pencils, rulers, etc. for students to borrow during the lesson; for sixth form students, folders, dividers, plastic wallets and lined paper are available in the study room.
- The sixth form bursary is available for families who are finding it a challenge to provide their young people with books or equipment to support their studies, with the cost of transport to and from school or with the cost of lunches. Bursary guidance and forms can be collected from the sixth form office or downloaded from the school website.

COST OF LIVING SUPPORT

With the cost of living on the rise, there will be people in Cumbria who are struggling, whether that's emotionally, financially or just because they need practical help to get in touch and seek support.

It can be daunting to search through what is on offer and to find what you need. Cumbria County Council provides information for Cumbrian residents on a range of helpful topics:

- Food support
- Financial support
- Domestic abuse support
- Energy-saving advice
- Mental health support

Click [here](#) to access the Cumbria County Council web page.