



Headteacher's Welcome

It has definitely been an interesting start to 2023! Ministerial visits and meetings about the £35 million new UCC school buildings have rounded off my half term – there are certainly exciting times ahead of us!

You'll find this newsletter filled with useful information, stories and pictures of what's been happening in recent weeks here at UCC. Please take a few moments to have a look and celebrate those recent achievements with us.

With Spring approaching we can begin to capitalise on the better weather, brighter mornings and longer days. Moods and energy levels change over time and we can make the most of the highs to shield us from the lows.

Once again, Year 13 students were exemplary in the way they approached their recent mock exams and, similarly, our Year 11s are now preparing well for their next round of mocks immediately after the February break. With this in mind – **well done!** – to all our students, who have worked incredibly hard and who continue to work hard at school and outside the classroom.

I mention **attendance** in every edition – it's one of the keys to success and I know parents work incredibly hard to make sure the child(ren) in their care are in school and ready to learn at every opportunity. Our ambition continues to be 100% attendance, so it is really important for everyone to try and improve their attendance further, whatever the starting point. It is so important not just because of the strong link between attendance and attainment but, even more crucial, because of the relationship between being on time, in the right place and doing the right thing for life *after* school. I know how hard it is and I know we can rely on your support.

Thank you to those who attended our recent very successful Sixth Form Open Evening. Applications are now open ([click here](#) to open the application form) and we have already received a number for September 2023. If you, or someone you know, would like to find out more about what life is like in one of the top-performing sixth forms in Cumbria, and the

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UCC Health and Wellbeing Hub Update

The Health Hub continues to support students both physically and mentally, and we've had some great feedback! A Year 7 student who found the Well-being Champion Sessions really helpful said: "Thank you for getting someone to talk to me. It helped me a lot with talking about my feelings after I've been feeling depressed a week ago. I feel much better now and brighter."

Year 10 students have been attending sessions with Spiral commented: "I found it really helpful, what she said made a lot of sense and I think the strategies she gave me will help"; "I thought it was really good and would definitely like to attend another session."

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A Year 9 who has been attending sessions with LINK said: "I've found it really helpful talking to someone who doesn't work in school. I managed to talk about everything and felt loads better for it."



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courses/support on offer, please visit the school [website](#) or contact us via email (admin@ullswatercc.co.uk).

As always, we are committed to our firm stance on standards and behaviour and the fact that every student deserves to be in a disruption-free classroom where they can be safe, happy and successful.

We'd like every student to have as broad an experience

of life as possible while they're at school – to take part and have a go! A huge number of clubs and activities are available to choose from, as well as trips, visits and interventions. Please encourage your child(ren) to take every opportunity available to expand their horizons and cultural capital. Check what's available [here](#).

Finally, **thank you** once again for all you bring to the UCC community. I hope you enjoy the half-term break!

Mr Gilby, Headteacher

POSITIVE INTERACTIONS

This term saw the launch of an exciting development in our approach to supporting positive interactions, behaviour and Personal Development education in school. In response to student comments, and working alongside students, we have devised a new approach to ensuring that UCC has a zero-tolerance culture to all forms of identity-based prejudice.

#notinourschool will focus on challenging sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic or ableist behaviours and will complement our existing UCC RESET programme and our PSHE and RSHE curriculum.



With an emphasis on education and safe discussion, we will also encourage students to share their concerns and to report any issues through a new email address, or anonymously using the Whisper link on the student menu of the school website; students can also text anonymously when they are away from school. Messages will be picked up by senior members of staff in school and responded to.

Click [here](#) to see full details of this new initiative on the school website.

We will continue to work hard at UCC to ensure a safe, inclusive school environment where all students feel they can share concerns and where their opinions are taken seriously.



Mrs Shaw
Assistant Headteacher
(Pastoral)

EDUCATION MINISTER VISITS UCC

We were delighted to welcome Education Minister Robert Halfon MP and Dr Neil Hudson, MP for Penrith and the Border, to UCC. They came to find out how we provide students with information, advice and guidance on the range of post-16 and post-18 education and apprenticeship opportunities available to them.



STUDENTS VISIT 156 REGIMENT RLC

Year 12 students on the Uniformed Protective Services (UPS) course visited 156 Regiment RLC (Royal Logistics Corps), a reserve support regiment based in the north west of England.

Students were trained in leadership and teamwork, including learning how to strip and assemble Army rifles, and took part in command tasks. They were also shown around the barracks, including the Man support vehicle (SV) trucks, which are used to supply the machine power to keep the Army operating at its highest level.

Visits like this one help students to build the knowledge and skills required for future UPS course units. We would like to thank 156 Regiment for facilitating this visit.



GAMING CAN DO YOU GOOD!

National Online Safety's #WakeUpWednesday campaign provides schools with a new platform guide to share with parents each week – the current guide is on the impact of gaming.

Tackling the question “Can gaming help children to ‘level up’ in real life?” the guide explains how safe and healthy gaming might actually have some benefit for young minds.

Gaming is phenomenally popular with children and young people. In 2021, for instance, more than three-quarters of teenagers played online games, with almost 70% of primary-school-aged children doing likewise.

If enjoyed in moderation and supported by a healthy routine (staying hydrated, good sleep habits, taking breaks and so on), gaming can actually benefit a person's mental health. As long as we stay alert for potential risks, games can be much more than what we see on the surface: they can be a way to socialise, an avenue for creativity and a route to solving problems.

The top ten tips in the guide outline how gaming online can sometimes work to a child's advantage. These include a sense of achievement, learning about teamwork and encouraging creativity.

Click [here](#) to access the National Online Safety website and [here](#) to visit the online safety page on the UCC website.



GUESS THE BABY FOOD!

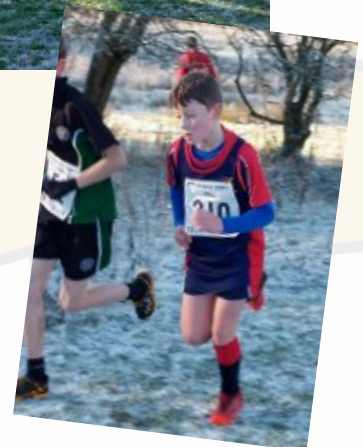
Child Development students have been learning how to support young children during mealtimes. For a fun plenary they had to “guess the baby food”. There were some keen, and some reluctant, participants!



CROSS-COUNTRY SUCCESS!

UCC students performed amazingly well in the recent County cross-country event – in very cold and slippery conditions!

Congratulations to all who took part, and to the seven UCC students who qualified for the Cumbria county team – we're incredibly proud of you all!



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.



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Ambitious

Caring

Equal

UCC is an ambitious, caring community where everyone is equal

#proudtobeUCC

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**

attendance matters

It is crucial that children attend school regularly – good attendance is essential for a successful education. Missing out on the introduction of a new topic or skill can put a student at a great disadvantage. In Years 10 and 11 – when students are preparing for their GCSE examinations – poor attendance can and will have serious consequences.

We accept that there are occasions when children will be unable to attend school through illness but we believe that good attendance is really important. If a student is absent, they need to make sure they catch up all missed learning. Their teachers will provide them with the work to do this and their Form Tutor will check that missed learning has been completed. **Excellent attendance = Excellent progress!**

Students with excellent attendance are rewarded with merits and those with 100% are entered into the prize draw each half term – with the possibility of winning an iPad at the end of the school year. Attendance matters!

All school absence should be reported by 8.55am each day:

- Call: 01768 210206 option 3 or
- Email: attendance@ullswatercc.co.uk



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HELP WITH COST OF LIVING

ENERGY PROVIDERS PRIORITY SERVICES REGISTER

All energy suppliers have a **priority services register**. This is a free service to help people who have additional needs and is available to customers in England, Scotland and Wales. You can sign up by contacting your **local network operator** and energy supplier. All energy suppliers keep their own register and signing up lets your supplier know that you may have additional needs or require extra free support. You may be eligible to register if you:

- have reached state pension age
- are disabled or have a long-term medical condition
- are recovering from an injury
- have a hearing or sight condition
- have a mental health condition
- are pregnant or have young children
- have extra communication needs

You might also be eligible for other reasons, for example if you need short-term support after being in hospital – it's best to contact your network operator to check.

Once you've registered, it's important to keep your supplier or network operator updated if your circumstances change.

COST OF LIVING BOOKLET

Cumbria County Council has produced and delivered a booklet to all homes in Cumbria to provide local information for residents on a range of helpful topics.

[Click here](#) to see a copy of the booklet.

HELP FOR HOUSEHOLDS

Support is available to help with the cost of living. You may be able to get additional payments to help you if you're getting certain benefits or tax credits.

Check the **Gov.UK website** for more information on support and help for households.



GRANTS AND BENEFITS TO HELP YOU PAY YOUR BILLS

You can get help if you're struggling to afford your energy bills or top up your prepayment meter. You might be able to take advantage of certain benefits, grants and help offered by the government and energy suppliers.

The Citizens Advice website provides information about the help and schemes available. [Click here](#) to find out more.



WARM SPOTS

A 'Warm Spot' offers a warm, welcoming space for people to visit this winter if they need it. Warm Spots are run by a range of organisations including churches, village halls, local councils and libraries. They all have their own opening days and times and the services available vary. If you need help staying warm, visit <http://cumbria.gov.uk/warmspots>

There are hundreds of spots across Cumbria. They are free, friendly and you won't be judged.



RETURN TO SCHOOL

We look forward to welcoming everyone back to school on **Monday 27 February 2023**. Check our website for [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 health 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 downloaded from the school website.

FUTURE DATES

Please make a note of any relevant dates in your diary:

- Year 11 Mock Exams: start Monday 27 February 2023
- Year 7 Online Parents' Evening: Wednesday 1 March and Thursday 2 March 2023
- UCC Careers Fair: Thursday 9 March 2023
- Year 8 Online Parents' Evening: Tuesday 21 March, Wednesday 22 March and Thursday 23 March 2023
- UCC Awards Evening: Thursday 30 March 2023
- Closing date for applications to Sixth Form: Friday 31 March 2023
- End of Spring term: Friday 31 March 2023

PARENT GOVERNORS

We were unsuccessful in attracting candidates in the last parent governor election.

This is an important and very interesting opportunity to see more of, and contribute to, the development of UCC. The potential for development and change in the next few years is enormous and as a governor you will be at the forefront of that process.

If you are interested in being a parent governor, and we have one vacancy, please contact Eleanor Flood, Clerk to the Governors by emailing: clerk@ullswatercc.co.uk. Ask to be put in touch with David Carter, Chair of Governors, if you would like to discuss the role further.



Free school meals and clothing grant

£500,000 worth of additional funding has been allocated to the school clothing grant fund as part of a new £2m cost of living reserve fund. This means that eligible parents will now receive a clothing grant worth £50 for each primary school child, up from £25, and £100 for each secondary school child, up from £35.

If you're eligible, make sure you apply for free school meals if you haven't already so that you receive your school clothing grant too. It only takes 5 minutes.

HELP WITH SCHOOL MEALS AND CLOTHING

Your child may be able to get free school meals and/or clothing vouchers if you receive any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of not more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if your household income is less than £7400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals.

If you receive working tax credits you may not be eligible for free school meals or clothing grants.

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

Free school meals are available to statutory school-aged children attending full-time education (full days only 9am to 3pm), excluding private nurseries and further education colleges.

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.

LIGHTS and action!

Year 10 GCSE Photography students have been experimenting with different lighting options.



a HOST OF GOLDEN DAFFODILS

Ceramicist Helen Ratcliffe came into UCC to run a workshop for one of our Year 8 art groups.

Working in small teams, the students made an incredible 89 ceramic daffodils! These will be fired and glazed, and form part of the Ten Thousand Daffodils installation at Lowther Castle this spring. The daffodils will then be sold to raise money for a number of charities. Click [here](#) to find out more.

We hope the daffodils made by UCC students will raise around £2,225!

Many thanks to Helen and her team! The students enjoyed the workshop; they developed new skills and had the opportunity to take part in an exciting community event.



GIRLS' RUGBY CLUB

The Girls' Rugby Club has started – with a great turn out! It's on every Wednesday lunchtime and is open to all year groups.



FRENCH ENRICHMENT

As part of the French A-level enrichment programme, UCC welcomed retired local doctor Steve Bober, who spent time working with Médecin Sans Frontiers (MSF) in French-speaking Africa during his career.

Dr Bober talked about the people who volunteer with the charity and the type of work they complete around the world.

We're very grateful to him for coming to UCC.



GYMNASTIC CHAMPIONS!

Five gymnastics teams from UCC took part in the recent County Gymnastics Championships in Carlisle. They all excelled and were fantastic ambassadors for UCC.

After a tough competition between the 21 teams entered, UCC qualified to compete at the National Schools Gymnastic Finals in May – a fantastic achievement!

Outstanding performances by our U14 A-team members saw them winning team Gold and making a clean sweep in the individual medals – taking Gold, Silver and Bronze.

The UCC U19 team narrowly missed taking the U19 title, finishing with the team Silver and also the individual Silver medal.

The UCC U14 B and C teams placed 6th and 7th and our U19 B team took 4th place in their category.



Congratulations to all the gymnasts who took part - what amazing achievements – we're very proud of you!

Mrs Smithies



exam GOOD WISHES

Year 11 Health and Social Care students sat their exam recently.

They revised hard and enjoyed an after-school pizza revision session, with extra information toppings.

Good luck!

Mrs McCormick



FACT OR FIB?

Robbie Dee from CFM visited UCC to record students reading “facts or fibs” for his radio segment “Every Day is a School Day!” Over 90 students chose to take part in researching facts and creating a fact/fib challenge to record for Robbie’s Show.

Tune into CFM at 7:40 am every morning to hear them!