

A real future for the children, parents, staff & community of Unity College

The Diocese of Peterborough and The Local Authority, together with the other sponsors have completely failed to engage with parents, students, staff and the community with their academy proposal for Unity College.

Unity College - a REAL future

This is our vision of a REAL future for Unity College which we call on parents, students, staff, governors and the Local Authority to support now!

Real change, real transformation, sustained improvement in learning and teaching, dramatically improved exam results, raised morale, appropriate behaviour and all round high quality schooling can all be achieved without Academy status. Committed and strong governance, active support from appropriate bodies, highly effective leadership and management can all be achieved from the solid foundations now being laid.

Every child matters

Unity College will continue as a Church of England School committed to serving the whole of the community regardless of their faith. As a Church of England School, Unity College will require its Principal to be a committed practising Christian, who will continue to promote and uphold the Christian values, ethos and practice upon which the school is founded. This will include embracing and respecting other faiths within the community and fully supporting those of no faith.

Every child matters at Unity College. Every child will be given the opportunity to develop and learn to the very best of their ability, equipping them for a rewarding life into the future. We are committed to changing Unity College for the better. Not just for students in the future but for the students at Unity College now.

Leadership and change

We demand that the Governing Body be further invigorated with new dynamic members who can help drive through change at Unity College. There will be a full complement of parent governors. The Governing Body must be allowed to act independently without interference from the Diocesan Director of Education.

If Bishop Stopford School and Moulton College truly want to help the students of Unity College then we would call on Headteacher Margaret Holman and Principal Chris Moody to join the Board of Governors as non-executive directors, so they can share their expertise with us, provided that they can demonstrate how their very different (from Unity) colleges can make a really valuable, practical difference to our college.

Unity College will continue to be led by its current Principal who was appointed on a permanent contract specifically to address the problems created by years of mismanagement by the Diocese of Peterborough and the Local Authority. We are under no illusions of how big a task this is. Unity College is six months into significant period of change for the better. We want this progress to continue to a successful conclusion, even though it may be painful and difficult in the 18 months ahead.

We call on the Local Authority to immediately pick up the pace and delivery of real support for Unity College as demanded by OFSTED. We do not want just monitoring. We require the actions, funding and expertise the Local Authority have been stalling over.

The Governing Body and the Strategic Leadership Team will be charged with delivering the transformation towards positive aspirations, improved standards, better attitudes and expectations for students, parents and staff.

Save Unity College



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A REAL alternative vision for Unity College • Say no to this academy now!

This will involve taking firm, fair and effective steps, steps to sort behaviour and attitude problems with a clear view to making the school a better place of learning for everyone. We are confident the parent body will support us in this.

Exam results and added value

The current benchmark for schools in the UK which central government uses as an indicator as to the success level of Unity College is the achievement of 5 A*-C grades GCSE including Maths and English. In 2008 Unity College achieved a figure of 22%. We commit to the achievement of at least 33% 5 A*-C grades GCSE by 2011, with results rising to a sustained figure above 40% in the longer term. We believe that this is realistic with the high percentage of children with EAL and SEN.

For many of our students who have English as a second language, we acknowledge the challenge involved, but we will take specific steps to give them the tuition they require which will enable them to access other areas of study and reach their true potential.

Unity College will actively work to raise its contextual value added (key stage two to four) to 1000 by 2011.

We have faith in the Governing Body, Leadership Team and staff to achieve these levels. We will ensure the appropriate accountability to keep the plan on track.

What will we teach?

The key issues identified by OFSTED will receive the highest priority with regard to hauling the college out of the special measures category. The Governing Body, Leadership Team, staff and Local Authority will draw on the knowledge which exists in abundance in the family of Northampton schools in order to achieve this. The Leadership Team and staff will deliver a mutually supportive process of raising expectations and encouraging engagement in the fun of learning.

The key stage 3 curriculum will be broad and balanced with an emphasis on ensuring the necessary literacy, numeracy and learning skills needed to achieve progress. There will be continuity with primary school programmes, particularly on ensuring that students are involved in their learning through 'doing', are excited by learning and develop the skills of enquiry. Students will learn and practise transferable skills that make learning at all levels accessible. The best of "Learning 2 Learn", sustaining citizenship programmes and "Open Minds" will be used.

RE, citizenship and ICT will be, alongside literacy and numeracy, at the heart of the learning programme. Some students will be offered an accelerated learning programme; others will receive catch up support.

The key stage 4 curriculum will be based on pathways which span the complete range from full GCSE courses, mixed GCSE and Diploma courses to fully vocational programmes. Students will, through guided choice, follow programmes that meet their personal needs and ensure both achievement and motivation. Again, literacy and numeracy will underpin the programme and rigorous efforts will be made to ensure that all students meet their personal target.

Vocational courses

We recognise the need to provide some students with a practical focus alongside the need to develop their academic strengths. The Governing Body and Strategic Leadership Team of Unity College will actively draw on the expertise of educators like Moulton College or Warwickshire College to develop a real world range of vocational courses to offer Unity College students as a complement to their academic studies.

Sorting out the budget deficit

The budget deficit created by the lack of accountability from the Diocese of Peterborough and Local Authority will be addressed. The Governing Body along with the Diocese of Peterborough and the Local Authority will commit themselves jointly to repaying the current budget deficit of some £450k with a managed pay-back scheme over a 3 year schedule.

The Governing Body will take the necessary steps to ensure that the financial controls required to make sure this overspend never happens again are firmly in place and audited regularly by independent agencies.

What do we want to happen now?

We call on all parents, students, staff, governors and The Local Authority to stop this unwanted academy now and support our vision of a REAL FUTURE for Unity College.