



Belfast City Council



St Mary's University College Belfast
A College of Queen's University



Dear Principal

St Patrick's Day – Thursday 17 March

As educators across primary, post primary, further and higher education we share a common commitment to the safety, wellbeing, and academic progression of pupils and students, and particularly in the context of the ongoing pandemic.

As we approach St Patrick's Day, we are writing to ask for your help in delivering an important message from the Police Service of Northern Ireland, Belfast City Council, Queen's University, Ulster University, Belfast Metropolitan College and the University Colleges to students in your school.

We work alongside local churches and voluntary groups throughout the year to ensure that university and college students and long-term residents can live safely and considerately alongside each other in the Holyland area of south Belfast.

Over recent years it has become clear that this area has become a popular destination on St Patrick's Day for many young people from across Northern Ireland who travel to the area to party and socialise. Many of these young people have come to the attention of Belfast City Council as well as the PSNI for a range of issues including noise, on street drinking and antisocial behaviour. Some of this anti-social behaviour could lead to penalties which could have an impact on future travel and job opportunities.

Our message to your students, is to celebrate the holiday away from the residential streets of the Holyland. Our aim is to work collectively to protect local children, older people, students and other residents who feel particularly vulnerable on St Patrick's Day when large numbers of young people congregate in the streets to celebrate.

Furthermore the influx of young people, other than residents, could present a public health risk during the ongoing pandemic. The collective agencies are working together to encourage young people not to come to this area over St Patrick's Day in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and antisocial behaviour.

I would also appreciate if you could encourage parents to be aware of where their children are going and if they are planning to celebrate St Patrick's Day in Belfast that they only attend officially organised events.

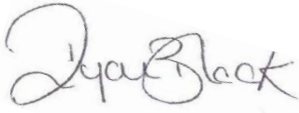
We would very much appreciate you sharing this message with pupils in your school and with their parents. Your support in communicating this out will be invaluable.

Thank you for your support in this matter.


Professor David Jones
Pro-Vice-Chancellor,
Education and Students
Queen's University

Professor Duncan Morrow
Director of Community
Engagement, Ulster
University

David McDowell
Head of Learner Success Belfast
Metropolitan College



Ryan Black
Director of City and Neighbourhood Services
Belfast City Council



Chief Superintendent Simon Walls
Police Service of Northern Ireland



Professor Jonathan Heggarty
Principal
Stranmillis University College



Professor Peter Finn
Principal
St Mary's University College

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