

# Head of School Weekly Update

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Dear UTC Community,

Welcome to this week's end of week update.

This has been a good week for UTC Reading and I am pleased that we have been able to show resilience, respect and professionalism throughout the week.

For today's update I wanted to focus on some expectations at UTC Reading, and feedback from our OFSTED visit this week.

We will be focusing on these expectations with students over the coming week too, to ensure we maintain the high standards we expect across the school.

## *Visit from OFSTED – message from Wayne Edwards, Executive Principal*

As you know, we welcomed inspectors from OFSTED into school yesterday for our first monitoring visit since our full inspection last academic year. We are limited as to what we can say currently but will share the full report with you when we receive this in a few weeks' time. In the meantime, I'm pleased to say that they recognised the huge effort and change in the last six months, and that their views on progress align both with ours and with the external experts we have had in school over that period.

I wanted to thank you for your patience with us during the inspection, and your support of the school over the last six months. As I said earlier in the week, as a whole community we have risen to the challenge of rebuilding the reputation of UTC Reading and are continuing to focus on putting in place solid foundations relating to Teaching and Learning, Relationships & Behaviours, Employer Engagement and Aspirations.

We are hosting our first open event next week and look forward to showing this, with the support of students, to the many families who have booked to visit us. We can't wait to share with them what makes UTC Reading special.

## *Dress code and expectations*

After an absolutely fantastic start to the academic year with our dress code, I would like to clarify the expectations around our dress code as we head into the winter months. This will also be shared with students in assembly next week to remind them.

- Formal shoes and suit jacket (or UTC branded jacket) should be worn every day
- No phones or headphones to be seen in school without express permission from a teacher in a classroom for education purposes
- Lanyards must be worn for identification purposes at all times
- No outdoor coats and jackets to be worn in corridors or lessons
- No trainers of any kind should be worn to UTC

If you would like to check the dress code for UTC Reading, it can be found here:

<https://www.alet.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/2022-2023-Student-Dress-Code.269125211.pdf>



### *Punctuality*

I am aware that the traffic, roadworks and road closures around central Reading can be a challenge to all of our community, but punctuality to school is important to maintain good quality education.

I wanted to remind parents and students that lessons start promptly at 8:45am and students need to be in the building before this so they can get to their classrooms on time.

Please do ensure that you are making every effort to be on time, and if there are exceptional circumstances and you are late for any reason then let reception know on 0118 938 1020.

Students who are late to school without reason, or persistently late will be expected to stay after school to complete the learning they miss due to lateness.

### *Key dates and upcoming events*

- **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October** – Whole School Careers Fair (Separate communications will be sent out about this)
- **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October** – Year 10 students will be having reading and lucid exact assessments at 8:45am – 10:45am in the Pink & Green Zone. No preparation needs to be done for this, it is an ability test and used to identify if students require any further support.
- **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October** – Open Evening, the school will close and students can depart from 3pm (Students who have volunteered for the event will receive separate details of their role for the evening)
- **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October** – Late start, students must arrive at 9:30am for a 9:45am lesson
- **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October/Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October** – Year 13 Architecture Mock Exam 9am – 3pm (not affected by late start on Thursday, students in Year 13 architecture need to be in before 9am to begin the exam)
- **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October** – Student Executive Board Presentations and Voting

### *Safeguarding update – safe use of social media*

Over recent weeks we have been discussing social media, its uses and the wider impact of the use of media on topics like body image and mental health through our personal and professional development programme.

I would like to share the information from the NSPCC with our community about understanding the risks of social media and how you can support your child.

You can find the information using the following link:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/>



### *The Whisper Button – Anonymous Reporting Service*

I would like to remind all members of the community about the anonymous reporting service that we run for students so that they are able to raise concerns with us, or report things in the school.

Students can use the online web link or send a text message to access the Whisper button.

We are really pleased that this is being used by our community and has enabled us to communicate freely with students who have not wanted to publicly raise a concern in the school.

I am pleased to report that the current average response time to a whisper report is 5 hours (including those sent in on weekends and after school hours).

Please do remind your child about the option to use this system, or speak to a member of staff at any time about any concerns they may have.

#### *Key Contact details*

##### **Senior Leadership Team**

Executive Principal – Wayne Edwards  
Acting Head of School – Jennie Thomson  
Assistant Head of School – Stephanie Mitchell  
Acting Assistant Head of School – Anderson Ramdeen

##### **Safeguarding Team**

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Jennie Thomson  
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads – Anderson Ramdeen, Jackie Wynter, Wayne Edwards, Stephanie Mitchell

##### **SEN Team**

Trust Lead for SEN and Safeguarding – Linda Stevens  
SEN Coordinator – Siua Abnett

I hope that the information contained in this update is useful to our community.

I will be sending out some further details next week about parent forum events where you will be able to come and visit with me at UTC Reading to discuss your feedback about the school and to help us with improvements moving into the future.

Thank you for your continued support for our community, it is very much appreciated.

Kind regards,

*J.A. Thomson*

Jennie Thomson  
**Acting Head of School**