

Head of School Weekly Update

Dear Year 10 Community,

Welcome to this week's end of week update, which doubles as a start of term update for all parents in Year 10.

For this update, I plan to share some key information with you around the curriculum for this term, expectations around uniform and behaviours, and share with you a clear understanding of the focus for personal development this term.

I hope that you find the detail in this update useful.

Curriculum update for the term for all Year 10 students

Attached to my communication this week, you will find a document called the year 10 curriculum update. Having discussed this with numerous parents, I understand that sometimes it can feel like there is a disconnect between the UTC and parents in terms of understanding what students are learning.

I wanted to share with you the update so that this becomes clearer, and we are transparent with parents about what topics are being taught in each subject, and to give you the information about which courses we deliver at UTCR.

I have created these updates so that they contain the basic information about where we are at in the sequence of learning for this term. There are also live links to the specification for each course so that you can refer to the overall aims for the individual subjects.

Our Heads of Department have worked really hard to consider the sequence in which the topics are taught and planning this sequence to ensure that students revisit their prior learning throughout the year so that we are supporting them to know more and remember more in each of their subjects.

I hope that you find this update useful, and my vision is to share this with you 3 times a year (autumn, spring and summer) moving forwards so that we can work together to support the learning of your child.

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 has been 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.utcreading.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/04/2022-2023-Dress-Code-V2.pdf>



Punctuality and Attendance

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.

Our expectation is for all students to achieve at least 96% attendance and any student who doesn't meet this expectation will be invited to meet with the UTC team to implement support plans to achieve this.

Behaviour expectations

Students have attended assemblies this week where we have reiterated the expectations of safe and respectful behaviours around the UTC.

This term will have an intense focus on behaviours for learning. This focus aims to ensure that disruption to lessons is minimized, students focus entirely on their learning without distractions, and we are developing our aware and professional attributes throughout the UTC.

We are specifically looking to reward those students who are punctual to lessons, who engage in their learning throughout the sessions and continue to make sustained progress in their learning. There are also opportunities this term to showcase these professional behaviours with external speakers visiting the UTC and employer events on numerous occasions.

We will be celebrating those students who meet our expectations consistently in our end of term celebration in December with awards, certificates and prizes for their professional behaviours.

Personal Development theme for the term – managing risk and keeping safe

This term, our focus for personal and professional development learning moves to identifying and managing personal and external risk.

I am really pleased at the engagement that our students have already shown for this topic and the openness they have shared about their own understanding of risk and how to manage it.

The focus areas for this educational theme will be around identifying risk inside and outside of school and how these can be managed. We have invited a number of external providers with additional specialist training to support us with this education. Some of these external providers include Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Thames Valley Police, The NHS School Nursing Service and many more.

I am really looking forward to our students engaging with this education and developing their own understanding of personal and public safety inside and outside of the UTC.



Thames Valley Police Safety Partnership

In addition to the educational talks and activities being carried out this term with our theme of safety, we are collaborating with Thames Valley Police to continue our ongoing positive partnership with them. Thames Valley Police are continuing to attend schools on an unannounced basis to conduct safety checks. These checks will include the use of drugs dogs and the use of safety arches, and this term we will begin our annual engagement with this programme at UTC Reading

The purpose of these checks is to maintain the current high safety standards in schools for both the students and staff, as well as the wider community. In Reading drug use and knife carrying in school is not common place, these safety checks will continue to offer reassurance and help prevent knives being carried in our schools in the future.

All students know what they should and shouldn't have in their possession, so these checks should not cause any disruption and act only as an opportunity to provide reassurance.

Parent engagement and feedback sessions

I would like to invite parents to work with us at UTC Reading to give us feedback on the school and things that are going well or could be improved.

I would like to invite a group of parents to meet with myself and Wayne Edwards, Executive Principal next week to discuss these areas in person.

The link to sign up to the face to face event can be found here:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/749178712697?aff=oddtcreator>

Unfortunately we can only host a limited number of spaces for this event, however I would welcome all parents having the opportunity to share some feedback with us about their experience of UTC Reading.

If you are unable to attend the face to face session, I would like to invite you to provide your feedback using this form so that you can share your views:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=JcuAJKXI-UOYkvqEr2KwoL-4uSneZKRNgVo3WYkxY9UQ0RFTIhJMIRHQhCWlg3UUJLSzRFOFYzUC4u>

I would like to thank you in advance for your engagement with this feedback as this is a really important way for us to work with our parent community to ensure that we are all working together to support students in receiving an excellent quality of education and aiming for fantastic destinations at the end of their UTC journey.



Key Contact details

Senior Leadership Team

Executive Principal – Wayne Edwards

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, Charlotte Tennant

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 you and sets out a clear vision of our aims for this term.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your engagement and support for UTC Reading, and I look forward to working with you to continue to transform the lives of our young people through their learning.

Kind regards,

J.A. Thomson

Jennie Thomson

Head of School