



Head of School Weekly Update

Welcome to this week's end of week update.

For this update, I plan to share some updates with you about key areas of operation in the school this week.

As always, I hope that you find this useful!

Punctuality and Attendance

Attendance will continue to be a key focus for this half term to ensure that students are able to access all the learning on offer at UTC Reading.

We are currently reviewing the attendance figures for all students and will be working with parents to ensure you are aware of all student attendance, both to school and to lessons.

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

Local Authority Parent Workshops

Understanding and supporting attention for learning 13/11/23 10.00 - 12.30pm. Free online session via MS Teams. For parents/carers with children of school age in a Reading school.

This workshop is targeted towards parents/carers whose children struggle with attention. This may include children who have a diagnosis of ADHD / ADD but is also open to parents of children who struggle with attention but do not have a diagnosis. The workshop explores how attention difficulties may present, support strategies and how SEN support may look in school. To book or for more information email Wilma.Williams@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Raising your child's self-esteem 29/11/23 4.30 – 6pm. Free online session via MS Teams. Any Reading parent/carer of a child aged 5-18. For any Reading parent/carer of a child aged 5-18.

Is your child struggling with feelings of low self-worth? Do they not recognise their strengths? compare themselves to others? lack self-confidence? This 90 minute MHST workshop is aimed at parents, carers and professionals. We will explore the causes of low self-esteem and discuss strategies to raise self-esteem and build positive self-worth. To book complete this form: <https://forms.office.com/e/izupGmac24>

Understanding Autism & Anxiety Workshop – 6/12/23 9.30 - 12.00pm. Free online session via MS Teams. For parents/carers of Reading pupils ages 6 -16.

A 2.5 hour workshop targeted towards parents/carers of children with a diagnosis of autism or those who may be awaiting a diagnosis. It looks at common drivers for anxiety in those with autism, especially in relation to coping with uncertainty and not knowing what might happen. The workshop gives parents a chance to share their experiences and to learn strategies and approaches to manage anxious feelings. To book or for more information email

Wilma.Williams@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Year 10 Engineering Personal Protective Equipment

Your children are preparing to move into their practical work and their NEA aspect of the course within UTCR's recently updated workshop. All students and staff who are using the workshop must wear personal protective equipment to safeguard them and keep them safe while carrying out practical work in our workshop. UTCR will be providing protective lab coats and goggles for the students to wear while carrying out practical work on the machinery. But if they wish to have their own, they can purchase these too.

Please can I ask that you purchase a pair of steel toe capped boots for while they are working within the workshop. These can be purchased from a wide range of places from sports direct, Screwfix, Wickes, amazon etc. Please can I ask that you make sure they are safety boots, and they clearly state that they are steel toe capped boots.

The workshop lessons are set to start week commencing Monday 27th November 2023, so all students must have these purchased and kept in school (in their lockers) for their workshop lessons.

Thank you for your support, we are very excited to start the practical workshop lessons with the students.

Green Careers Week

This week has been Green Careers Week; a week to celebrate sustainable careers, to raise awareness of what Green Careers are and to encourage students to consider careers that they may not have previously considered.

During tutor time this week, all students had an assembly on Green Careers, which gave insight into future careers, apprenticeships and university courses that they could study in the future. It also gave students suggestions about actions they could take to 'go green' on a personal level too!

I have included The Parent Guide to Green Careers Week so you can continue the conversation at home, you can find it here: <https://nationalcareersweek.com/gcwpg/>

Student Executive Board

I was really pleased to meet with the newly elected student executive board this week to discuss their plans for the future of UTC Reading. This group have some fantastic ideas and they are committed to bringing about sustainable change, led by the voice of students at UTC Reading.

Next week I will be sharing introductions to the student board with you, along with some of their key ideas and plans for the upcoming term.

Year 11 Next Steps Evening

A reminder that we are holding our **Year 11 Next Steps** evening at **UTC Reading on Tuesday 14th November from 5:30pm – 6:30pm**, and we would love for you to be there. This is an event that we run every year for all of our Year 11 students and their parents/guardians. The aim of the evening is to give you and your child an overview into the options available for their next steps at the end of Year 11 and to give you all an opportunity to speak with local schools and colleges. The evening will involve a presentation from UTC Reading with advice and guidance, as well as a small range of local providers in a careers-fair style. To sign up, please do so via this link:

<https://forms.office.com/e/U77EpJuKMe>

OFSTED Monitoring report

As you know, we welcomed inspectors from OFSTED into school for a monitoring visit on 4th October. We are pleased to be able to share with you their report from that visit, which you can read [here](#). While we look forward to a full graded inspection in the near future, at this stage the purpose of their visits is to assess progress and provide further support on the weaknesses identified in February.

We are delighted that the inspectors have recognised the progress we have made, citing improvements to the culture of safeguarding, to attendance and to the curriculum, and in particular strong improvements in behaviour management. They noted our well-structured PSHE curriculum, our dedicated personal and professional development sessions, and how we are using tutor time for topics such as citizenship and careers.

We know, and the inspectors acknowledge, that we have more work to do, but we are aligned on those areas and are working through a strong plan that will deliver sustained improvements. A key part of that plan is further strengthening of our Senior Leadership Team, and I'm delighted to announce that we have appointed two new Assistant Principals who will start with us in January. Both have extensive experience in secondary education and leadership roles within their current schools and impressed us with their solid abilities and their understanding of our vision for UTC Reading. One will take responsibility for behaviour and safeguarding; and the other for the quality of education, teaching and learning.

In Jennie's end of week update on Friday, she shared some crucial areas we are focusing on this half term, all of which form part of our OFSTED improvement plan and link to areas the inspectors have commented on. The first of these is curriculum information, including not only what is being studied by your child in each subject, but how that learning is sequenced so that topics are revisited and learning embedded. Secondly, she reiterated our focus on behaviour, punctuality and dress code; all of these have improved considerably since our inspection in February but remain a focus since they are the bedrock of positive learning behaviour. We, as ever, appreciate your support in these areas.

Parent forum feedback

We were really pleased to spend time with Year 10 Parents at the parent forum today, and found the discussion and feedback really useful in helping us understand the parent experience at UTC Reading.

We have further workshops upcoming, and if you are able to join us, please book a space here:

- [Year 11 parents](#) Friday 17 November 11.30am
- [Year 12 parents](#) Friday 24 November 2pm
- [Year 13 parents](#) Friday 1 December 11.30am

If you aren't able to attend, we would be very grateful to hear your feedback via [this form](#). We will also be running sessions for parents of children with SEND and will share information about this in due course.

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, Julie Hooper

SEN Team

Trust Lead for SEN and Safeguarding – Linda Stevens

SEN Coordinator – Siua Abnett

Curriculum Leadership Team

Director of Maths – Lewis Hart

Director of English – Thomas Trayers

Acting Director of Science – Carly Gale

Director of Design, Engineering and Technology – Jamie Chandler

Director of Computing – Ian Scott

Thank you as always for your continued support for UTC Reading.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J.A. Thomson".

Jennie Thomson

Head of School