



Parent update – March 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to give you an update on upcoming events, a clear plan detailing what you can expect in terms of communications from us and an update against our Ofsted action plan.

From now on we will be communicating with you more frequently to ensure you are kept up-to-date with everything that is happening as well as keeping you abreast of our future plans.

You can now expect the following regular communications from us:

- A termly update from myself covering staffing changes, updates against our Ofsted action plan as well as any other strategic issues.
- A monthly update (starting immediately after Easter) from Acting Principal, Jon Oliver, detailing any upcoming operational issues such as trips, activities, examinations details etc. The first of these communications every term will also detail the curriculum that your child will be following that term and specific advice on how you can help your child.
- A termly update from Assistant Principal, Hollie Danby, detailing how we are preparing your child with wider personal development skills, such as careers advice, industry partner activities, keeping safe, and life in modern Britain.
- Finally, you will receive a monthly Newsletter that will retrospectively showcase the past month's activities and celebrate achievements.

All communications will be sent via email (a copy sent to students' e-mail) with a copy placed on the UTC Swindon website under the section 'Parental Guidance'.

Staffing

As you will be aware the Principal, Angela Baker-Dench, has been unwell for some time. Due to personal reasons it is with regret that Angela will not be returning to work at UTC Swindon.

Engineering Teacher, Louise Goodlad, will also be leaving the UTC to pursue other career opportunities.

I would like to thank Angela and Louise for their work at UTC Swindon and wish them both the best of luck for the future.

As for new arrivals, I am pleased to announce that we have a new Engineering Teacher, Simon Preston, joining the teaching staff immediately after the Easter holidays. Simon specialises in mechanics and previously taught at Norton Radstock College (Bath College).

Post Ofsted Action Plan

In light of our recent Ofsted inspection the Board of Governors and the Senior Team have been working on rapid improvements through a Post-Ofsted action plan. Each term I will briefly update you on all actions taken against this plan.

The main actions taken to date are outlined below:

Create Leadership Capacity to support rapid improvement. The Board of Governors has appointed an experienced Executive Principal, Joanne Harper, and we have created further teaching capacity to make more time for leadership roles carried out by Jon Oliver (Acting Principal) and Hollie Danby (Assistant Principal)

Improve the Quality of Teaching and Learning. All staff will be completing the Teacher Effectiveness and Enhancement Programme during the summer term. This will allow all staff, regardless of experience, the opportunity to review their teaching and bring new techniques into the classroom. In order to complete the training, we will need to add two further training days; these will be 25th April and 23rd June 2017. We have also invested in a new assessment package that will enable us to identify students strengths and areas for development. Teachers will be able to plan very precisely for each student and ensure appropriate levels of challenge and support are available.

Review the curriculum making better use of industry partners to bring this aspect of our provision to life. A thorough review of the curriculum has been completed and we are working closely with our industry partners to establish more real life projects.

Establish a culture of Engineering Excellence. We will be completing some work over the summer to ensure the UTC building lives and breathes engineering and showcases its amazing engineering history and heritage. As mentioned above we are also revitalising the industry partnerships so that students have further access to real work and career development.

Developing employability skills. We are also ensuring all students complete relevant work experience placements and receive as many opportunities as possible to gain information, advice and guidance to support their career planning.

Reviews of Governance and Pupil Premium. Both processes are planned for the Summer/Autumn term 2017.

Improve Attendance. Attendance has improved since years one and two but there is still work to be done in this area and we will need all students and parents support to ensure that students attend the UTC except when they are too unwell to be here. We have close monitoring systems in place and are now able to identify any groups of students who are not attending as regularly as they should and put action plans in place to improve the attendance.

Multi-Academy Trust (MAT)

We are working towards joining the Activate Learning Education Trust (ALET) from 1st September 2017. There are no further updates at this time but I expect to contact you during next term with more information.

Swindon Advertiser article

The Swindon Advertiser recently wrote an article that explored my background, reasons for being in the educational profession and my teaching career to date. You may be interested to read this article to give you more of a feel of my educational background and philosophy. [Click here to read the article.](#)

Dates

Friday 7th April 2017, 1.00pm – we will operate our normal early dismissal on this day. Dismissal will follow a student briefing which will take place at 12.50pm.

Monday 24th and Tuesday 25th April 2017 – Teaching training days – no students.

Wednesday 26th April 2017, 8.30am – start of term for all students.

Monday 29th May – Friday 2nd June 2017 – May Half Term.

Monday 19th June – Friday 30th June 2017 – Year 12 Work Experience.

Friday 23rd June 2017– Teaching training day – no students.

Monday 3th July – Friday 14th July 2017 – Year 10 Work Experience.

Kind regards



Joanne Harper
Executive Principal




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