



UNIVERSITY
TECHNICAL COLLEGE BOLTON

Friday, 29 April 2016

Term 5 2016 Update

Dear Parents

Thank you for supporting the recent Parental Engagement Evenings. The feedback provided was most informative.

The vast majority of parents indicated that they were happy with the current model for Parental Engagement Evenings i.e. meeting Academic Mentors in October and meeting subject teachers in April. However, we will move the April meeting forward to March to provide more timely information about progress.

High commitment from staff – positivity, faith and belief in what the UTC is trying to achieve. Clear understanding of **OUTSTANDING**.

Great support from the University of Bolton.

Students have grasped the concept of what the UTC is trying to do – they recognise and value the range of experiences offered – particularly Explore & Discover Project Based Learning.

Parental Engagement evenings no matter how well organised by the team at UTC Bolton do tend to suffer if students do not book appointments in advance of the evening and do not leave sufficient time between staff. The evenings run until 19.00 so please try to ensure that your last appointment is no later than 18.30 as this will help to ensure that you are able to see all of the teaching staff.

Most parents also felt that they wanted more information about how they can support their child with independent learning at home and revision as well as how targets are set and what information is presented in the Progress Overviews. We will organise additional Parental Engagement Evenings to provide this information as outlined below. The team at UTC Bolton looks forward to welcoming you to these evenings.

Parental Engagement Session	Date & Time
How are Targets Set and What information is presented in the Progress Overviews?	Tuesday 17 th May 17.00
Independent Learning & Support & Challenge Workshops	Thursday 19 th May – 17.00
Courses Information & Revision Strategies	Thursday 26 th May – 17.00

Some parents raised concerns about communication. All information and communication is issued in hard copy (via students or via postal services for Progress Overviews) and is available electronically via the website. Consequently, parents without access to the internet are not disadvantaged.

The majority of teaching is good or outstanding. No teaching was judged inadequate. School leaders were accurate in their assessment of learning and teaching.

Student and parental feedback are vital if we are to ensure that students lie at the heart of what we do. We respond proactively to suggestions and as a result are able to improve services efficiently and effectively. Parental feedback in October resulted in the introduction of the Independent Learning Calendars. Regular student feedback via the Student Leadership Team has resulted in changes to the Every Day is an Interview behaviour ethos as well as longer break periods.

In those lessons that were securely good - activities were planned to individual needs. The use of annotated Medium Term Lesson Plans is recognised as a strength and was consistently seen across the UTC. High levels of student engagement were witnessed in a dictation race and dissection practical amongst other activities.



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I was disappointed that some students are misleading parents about supply teaching and teaching staffing leaving UTC Bolton. We prefer not to use supply teachers. Indeed, we have only used supply three times this year – much less than most schools. Instead, when staff are absent, including for professional development and training that will assist your child, they set work which is supervised by our own teaching team. This ensures that students are always taught by quality staff who know our school systems and procedures and have an established and effective relationship with students in their care. This is just one of a number of rumours and myths circulating about the UTC. **Each student has an Academic Mentor and this person should be your first point of contact if you wish to clarify something or raise a concern. Many parents are not using this avenue of communication as effectively as I would like. The e-mail address of all members of staff have now been shared via the Progress Overviews as well as via the website. Please use these channels to ensure that issues can be resolved quickly and efficiently. Do not let concerns build or subject yourself to rumour.**

A few students continue to be anxious about work experience and have passed this anxiety to their parents. As mentioned in my last update, we are working hard to provide students with a quality and specialist experience rather than the typical generic block placement that most schools offer. Our Explore & Discover Project Based Learning curriculum allied with our specialist suites such as Pharmacy and Clinical Dentistry provide students with a professionally simulated work related experience. So far this year students have already received over 25 days of work experience directly through the curriculum. **However, students can arrange self-placements if they**

wish and in the first instance they should discuss this with Mr Morley. Next term students in Year 10 are being given a choice about Project Based Learning with some students opting for dentistry and other opting for engineering. Year 12 engineering students are continuing with their project inspired by Warburtons, whilst the remaining Year 12 students undertake our first dentistry project.

No feedback was provided in relation to our proposed change to the UTC day from September 2016 – providing students with additional time for morning and afternoon break whilst accommodating an earlier finish time. Consequently, these changes will be implemented in September 2016. Changes to the arrangements at lunchtime will prevent us from allowing Year 12 and 13 students to leave at lunchtime. Students will benefit from an affordable and nutritious lunch time menu provided within the safe environment of our own Bistro. Support & Challenge Intervention Workshops will still operate until 17.00 on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Details of these workshops are available on the website and were distributed in hard copy with your child's Progress Overview at the Parental Engagement Evenings.

Finally, I am pleased to report some of **the outcomes of a quality assurance visit** to UTC Bolton which took place on the 26th and 27th April 2016 by an external consultant who is also a **registered OFSTED inspector**. I have included some of the key findings in the highlighted hexagons.

A reminder that UTC Bolton is closed on Monday 2nd May and Tuesday 3rd May 2016. Students return on Wednesday 5th May 2016.

Best wishes

David Goddard
Principal

Most but not all marking was SEE-IT marking - focussed on the progress of students - reflecting backwards and extending opportunities forwards through follow up activities and green pen responses.

Students actively listening to one another as well as the teacher. Skilful questioning that wasn't closed down and enabled students to think, express, develop and add (question bouncing). Student work was well presented - progress could be seen.

Student behaviour was never less than good.
Students feel safe and supported. They feel that bullying when it occurs is dealt with well.
The leadership of the UTC is making things happen and taking people with them on the journey.