



February Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers.

Reminder of key dates (February-April)

Saturday 4th February, 10-11.30am: Careers in Computing and Construction, a dozen of our Sponsors/Partners are in attendance to advise/guide students in our specialist provision.

Friday 10th February, 3.10pm: College is closed for Half Term.

W/C Monday 13th February: Half Term

Monday 20th February: Staff Training Day - College is closed to students.

Tuesday 21st February: College resumes, normal times, i.e. students onsite for 8:40am.

Friday 31st March, 1.10pm: College is closed for Easter.

W/C 3rd and 10th April: Easter Holidays.

Monday 17th April: Bank Holiday.

Tuesday 18th April: College resumes at the normal time.

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The College is taking effective steps to secure the improvements required.

Ofsted Monitoring Visit (16th January 2017)

In line with the processes outlined in the Handbook for School Inspection an HMI, Matthew Newberry, visited the College on Monday 16th January to assess our progress subsequent to the January 2016 Inspection. This process, termed a Section 8 visit, is an in-depth analysis of our data, systems and processes and if we had been found to be 'weak(er)' in any respect, a fuller section 5 Inspection could have resulted.

The outcomes of the visit will be summarised in a letter rather than 'a report', and we expect the full text to be released by Friday 10th February - should this be earlier we will notify you accordingly. The way the Inspection process 'works' is that we will retain the 'Requiring Improvement' judgement (of the 2016 Inspection) until we both further improve the progress of our students at Key Stage 4 (the key aspect identified in 2016) and undergo a full Section 5 Inspection and the letter should not occur until next spring at the earliest. So we take great heart from the verbal feedback of the HMI that the college is taking effective steps to secure the improvements required (in 2016) in order to become a good school.

It is worth sharing key data lines we recently presented, considered by the HMI, namely:



1) Aspects Requiring Improvement Improving/Improvements in 2016/17

Weak GCSE Results	5 + A*-C grades increased from 30% to 45% (8% below the national average)
Progress in English, significantly below average	3 levels of progress (LOP) 8% increase, just 0.3% below the national average
Weaker progress in Core Subjects	A*-C% in English & Maths increased from 38% to 55%, 4% below the national benchmark. (E, 55%, M, 59%)
PP/SEN students, lower than average progress	Attendance up by 3%. % of SEN/PP students achieving 3LOP increased in Maths & English



2) Aspects Requiring Improvement Improving/Improvements in 2016/17

Monitoring of the quality of teaching At KS4	Quality Assurance Weeks initiated (Termly reports to Gov. Body)
KS4 targets, not challenging	9/4 and challenging 9/5 targets and 3 LOP targets set for all subjects and monitored half-termly
Quality of teaching in GCSE/core subjects	More experienced staff and rapid improvement plans in English and Maths

3) Aspects Requiring Improvement Improving/Improvements in 2016/17

Use of assessment to inform lessons and progress	Half-termly assessments and reports of progress and Homework Policy, informing teaching and learning policy/practice
Accountability of staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New performance management systems• Student surveys, overall satisfaction up from 65% to 84%
Overall: Senior staff and Governors are taking effective action to secure the required improvements	

In addition to the above progress and work, the HMI connected upon the strengths noted in 2016 as still being significant, 'Good' aspects of our provision, including:

- The 16-19 Curriculum.
- The strength of the specialist courses at KS4.
- The breadth of employers' engagement throughout the above.
- The personal development, welfare and behaviour of our students.
- The breadth of learning support in the college.

We shared the above with students at last week's briefing, for it is their College and it is the upward trajectories in their experiences and progress which is at the heart of our current and future progress.

In short, I hope we all take great heart from the published letter - we are on the right lines!

Sincere thanks to the parents who completed the Ofsted questionnaires and to the students involved in discussions and meetings with the HMI during the visit.

If you would like to download a PDF of the above presentation, please [click here](#).

Recent Events and Evenings

An aspect of our development this year is the sharing of information (and expectations) on what our students learn and can do/are expected to do.

I was delighted that 60+ parents and students joined our KS4 Core Curriculum Evening (Thursday 26th January) and I am indebted to [Sarah Newell](#), [Siv Sockalingham](#) and [Mark Thompson](#) for their presentations and words on the new programmes of study for our Year 10 and 11 students.

Equally at the time of writing I am indebted to all staff and our dozen plus Sponsors/Partners for their support at this week's 'Careers in Computing and Construction Events'. While these include outlining our 16+ programmes to prospective students, the events are equally targeted at providing relevant up-to-date information and guidance to our current students. The College's progress is being recognised in the area, interest in our courses, and the superb opportunities available in our specialist areas is visibly growing - we are on the right lines!

For Sixth Form Entry

Open Event: Careers in Computing & Construction

Saturday 4th February 10-11.30am

Forthcoming College Activities

W/C 27th February: Community Project Week.

27th February–3rd March: Berlin Visit.

Monday 13th and Tuesday 14th March: National Apprenticeship Show.

W/C 20th March: Assessment week (Interim grade sheet to all parent(s)/Carer(s), Thurs 30th March.



As a result of student feedback, the UTC will be offering a cultural trip to Berlin, Germany, where there will be an excellent range of activities on offer with a Computing, Construction and History focus.

Key Points of This Half Term

There have been four main thrusts to our work in the current Half Term:

- Continuing to support and enhance all our students' progress and learning.
- Broadening further the range of the involvement of our sponsors and Partners in our students' experiences and opportunities. Please [click here](#) for an example.
- Successful meetings with the Funding Agency to finalise our financial recovery plans.
- Preparing for and securing positive outcomes in the Ofsted 'visit'.

All the above have gone well – our roll is growing and the range of courses available at Key Stages 4 and 5 is increasing: we look forward to continuing to work with you to enhance every student's prospects in the next phase of their development. Given how busy the past month has been, please forgive me for not including an extensive section on 'Student news' – this will be a major part of next Half-Term's Newsletter: it truly has been a very busy January!

Finally, for information I have attached the presentation we discussed with students at last week's briefing on the recent Green Paper on 'Developing British Industry'. While there are many themes in the strategies being proposed which do not impact upon ourselves, equally for the UTC 'movement' the premise of vocational pathways being given equal esteem and of the 15 'core technical skills' leading to (almost) degree equivalent provision is a welcome long overdue endorsement of our specialist provision, and both Construction and Digital Technology are included in the skills the Green Paper/Government wishes to see being given a higher profile in the coming years. Bucks UTC is well placed to develop further the specialist provision the Green Paper sees as an integral part of our country's broader economic development - interesting days and opportunities should be ahead for the UTC and our students!

To download a PDF of the Green Paper, please [click here](#).



Computing Students Get Their 'Heads in the Clouds' at Rackspace HQ

Bucks UTC Sixth Form Computing students were recently invited into Rackspace's London office for the day, for a unique insight into the way the world's top cloud-management company operates.

Rackspace employees showed the students through the office, highlighting the value of the unique Rackspace culture and how that culture drives their customer service focus. The students



Year 10 Student Undertakes 'Graduate Computing Qualification'

The Microsoft Technology Associate qualification is a stand-alone qualification that is created and validated by Microsoft and is often undertaken by graduates who are new to the computing industry.

As part of the UTC difference, we teach the MTA as the start-up course to all Year 12 and Year 13s. However, it was a Year 10 Alex BurrIDGE who completed the online learning course first as part of

met and spoke with Rackers from Technical Support, Service Delivery, Marketing and Human Resources, gaining an insight into the work Rackspace does.

In addition, students received tech demonstrations and received job application advice from industry experts. Rackspace also announced that one-day-a-week work placements, will be available to Year 13s.

To read the full story, [click here](#).



Successful Parents' Information Evening for KS4 Curriculum

We are delighted by the turn out of Parents and Carers for the KS4 Information evening held on the 26th January 2017.

Heads of departments, including Siv Sockalingham (Maths), Mark Thompson (English) along with Vice Principal Sarah Newall (Science), were able to guide attendees through all important GCSE curriculum components, along with learning techniques, essential equipment and revision resources.

We have made sure to make presentations from the evening accessible to all, for your perusal.

To view the KS4 Presentations, [click here](#).

Best possible wishes.

Tony Widdell

extension tasks during his regular Computer Science lessons.

This is a fantastic achievement and Alex will be taking the mock exam soon with a view of being entered for the actual exam season which would give him a valid and internationally recognised qualification for the computing industry.



Construction Students Visit The Crystal, London, to Inspire Sustainable Building

Construction students recently visited what is regarded as one of the world's most sustainable buildings, The Crystal in London, to take part in an exhibition that educates and engages both young people and working professionals with environmentally-friendly design.

The Crystal exhibition is a rich resource of educational content dedicated to urban planning and sustainability. The exhibition uses a unique, interactive approach that encourages students to challenge and change the way they think about our cities, now and for future generations.

If you'd like to explore The Crystal, [click here](#) for a virtual tour.

A reminder that Key Dates for 2016/17 are available on our [website](#).



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Bucks UTC offers specialist courses in Computing and Construction. It brings together Bucks New University, Aylesbury College and major local employers including Taylor Wimpey, Cisco and Intel in equal partnership, offering students the right skills and motivational, work-related learning experience to improve their employability within the Computing and Construction sectors.