

# Principal's Report to the Local Governing Board



**Prepared by**  
**Av Gill**  
**Principal**

For the Local Governing Board's Meeting to be held Thursday 24 March 2022

## Item 4: Matters Arising

### Actions for the Principal from November 2021 Local Governing Board meeting:

- (i) Finance Matter TO
- (ii) Updating of the risk management report (Item 7) Principal

The UTC have updated the existing risk management report in line with the new format being used across the trust. **See Appendix A.**

- (iii) Building expansion project – progress report Principal

Good progress is being made across all building works. The all-weather pitch and the new performance space have been handed over since the last governor's meeting.

The following information relating to the new teaching and sports blocks was provided on the most recent contractor's report:

- Internal blockworks complete to all areas
- Facing brickwork to Teaching Block commenced
- Roof liner installation complete to Sports Block, ongoing to Teaching block
- Teaching block and Sports Block G/F slab complete
- Promat board column encasement to both Teaching Block and Sports Block nearing completion
- SFS installation to both Teaching Block and Sports Block nearing completion
- Window and curtain walling installation to both Teaching Block and Sports Block ongoing
- Timber decking to Teaching Block roof area complete
- Hot melt and torch-on felt installation to Teaching Block complete
- Weather board installation to both Teaching Block and Sports Block nearing completion
- Self-adhesive membrane to both Teaching Block and Sports Block nearing completion
- RWP install to Teaching Block ongoing
- Internal partitioning to Sports Block commenced

Morgan Sindall are reporting that while they are 3 weeks behind now, they still believe they are on target for the scheduled completion date of 31/08/2022.

We have not yet resolved our parking issue. We are also still in the process of procuring the IT contract for the new build.

(iv) Update re Ofsted review of the T Level provision Principal

We were expecting a visit from OFSTED in December 2021 or January 2022 relating to our T Level provision. These visits were postponed due the pandemic and we have not received an update.

(v) Resolution of building air temperature issue Principal

The air handling system on the top floor is ineffective. We have raised this with the DFE and Mott Macdonald's who oversaw the original building. We have not yet had an update. We have tried to alleviate the temperature issue by installing security grills in front of the balcony doors that can now be left open which allows air flow on particularly hot doors.

(vi) Review of performance-related pay principles Principal

The attached guiding principles, **See Appendix B**, have been formulated to assist TTMAT schools to establish policy arrangements for awarding PRP. The principles were approved by the TTMAT Board on 14 October 2021, with the recommendation that these be adopted by each Local Governing Board.

(vii) External verification process Principal

We were pleased to welcome Sir Kevin Satchwell to the UTC in January in order to undertake a verification of standards. Sir Kevin met with a range of students and staff and undertook learning walks alongside myself and other members of the senior leadership team.

Sir Kevin reported:

- The school presented a very welcoming atmosphere and there was a sense of purpose that was clearly evident.
- The students communicated with confidence and they demonstrated that their learning was embedded.
- The general quality of the teaching observed was of a consistently high standard.
- The behaviour of the students was exemplary both in the classrooms and around the school in the social and dining areas.
- Students were articulate, confident and aspirational in line with the school's ethos.
- Pride in the school was truly exceptional and the appreciation of the leadership team and the Principal was clearly evident.

Sir Kevin also noted some small areas for development:

- The quality of marking could be taken to the next stage with dialogic marking.
- The quality of whiteboards in some of the teaching areas needed replacement.
- Encourage more peer to peer dialogue engagement in the teaching and learning environments.
- Plan to strengthen the leadership team as the schools grows.

The full report can be found in **Appendix C**

## Introduction

We are now learning to live with Covid-19 as the level of risk is significantly reduced. The UTC are engaging in many of the normal activities that were a feature of the school pre-pandemic.

In January we welcomed Year 11 parents to the UTC for the first time for an evening that was focussed on preparing our learners for the summer GCSE exams. We now know that examinations will go ahead though there will be adjustments to papers to account for lost learning.

The UTC are starting to host visitors on-site and recently held a careers interview event. Most recently our sixth form design students exhibited their sustainable furniture models at the university's School of Art as part of the British Art Exhibition.

In the summer term we will hold on-site transition events for all new students from Year 7 to Year 12. Staff are also in the process of planning for end of year leavers events and school trips.

There continue to be many reasons to celebrate. We are looking forward to the completion of the expansion of the school. We have had our highest numbers of applications into Year 7 with the UTC being close to six times over-subscribed. High levels of attendance have been sustained throughout the period of the pandemic. Sir Kevin's verification of standards report highlighted many areas of high-quality practice and as you will see later in this report results from the staff and student surveys indicate that there are many things that we are getting right.

The UTC continues to work effectively with the Thomas Telford Multi Academy Trust (TTMAT) which proves to be a fantastic source of collaboration on items such as the building expansion project, staffing, networking within curriculum areas, budget management and planning for future IT infrastructure. I have included the minutes of the most recent TTMAT Heads Collaboration -see **Appendix D**.

## The UTC's Vision and Curriculum statements

I have revisited our vision and curriculum statements to reflect our aim to offer students a UTC experience and also to help our young people to aspire to be the best they can be.

We have also adopted a 'Teach to the Top' mentality where every lesson is planned to cater for the most able students in the group with extra scaffolding and support provided to other students so that they can also aspire to the same goals.

The full vision and curriculum statements can be found in **Appendix E**.

## COVID-19 related matters

### Student and Staff Attendance and General Well-Being

Staff and student attendance have now returned close to pre-pandemic levels. We are still seeing the odd member of staff being absent due to the pandemic and current whole-school student attendance is running at 96%.

With regards to managing the pandemic we have had different procedures in place since the last governing board meeting. There have been occasions when we have lateral flow tested students on-site, times when home-testing was in place and times when masks became mandatory in not only communal areas but also in classrooms. We are now at the point where extra precautions are no longer mandatory. However, we continue to encourage good hygiene, one-way systems and some students are choosing to continue to wear face-masks.

Staff and student well-being and morale remains high. Staff and student surveys which were carried out anonymously this month indicate the following:

- 100% of staff are proud to work at the UTC
- 100% of staff like their job
- 91% of staff believe they are treated fairly
- 95% of staff feel recognised and are praised for the work they do
- 97% believe staff morale is high
- 88% believe the UTC works hard to promote a good work/life balance
- 90% of students report that they are happy at the UTC
- 94% of students feel safe at the UTC
- 89% of students feel well looked-after

### Catch-up and Intervention

The UTC have continued to run their 'UTC Extra' offer which includes employer-led projects, enrichment and intervention. As with previous years, staff are encouraged through subject leaders to identify small groups of learners with distinct and similar issues in their learning, to be addressed through after-school intervention sessions. In this way, the sessions are something different and not just another lesson. Often the sessions are delivered by other staff and not the classroom teacher. Intervention runs for 6 weeks at a time.

Throughout this academic year we have run a significant number of intervention sessions, with Y11 undertaking some 3800 student hours of additional learning. 100% of Y11 students have been involved with the programme. In Y13, 63% of students have been formally involved with the intervention programme and many more make use of their self-organised learning time for which they are timetabled. Y13 students have amassed 380 student hours of additional learning. Other year groups also benefit from the programme although on a smaller scale, with 250 student hours of additional learning in Y10 and small group support for numeracy in Key Stage 3.

Hand in hand with this regular programme we have been keen to encourage our staff to support the COVID Catch-Up programme. This has been offered above and beyond our school intervention programme and staff have been remunerated for this work. Typically, sessions have taken place in

holiday time and on Saturdays as half or full day sessions, but there have also been some twilight sessions available. Again, these have focussed on small group support for KS4 and KS5 students. To date, the following amounts of catch up support have been provided on a targeted basis:

Year Group	Percentage of year group taking part in catch up sessions	Student hours provided through catch up sessions
10	42%	100
11	89%	425
12	31%	85
13	46%	43

### Quality Assurance Processes Including Staff and Student Surveys

As part of the quality assurance process staff and student surveys were carried out in March 2022. These were anonymous which allowed both staff and students to freely express their views. The results are extremely encouraging. The full survey results can be found in **Appendices F and G**. There are areas to follow-up on and this work has begun.

Other quality assurance processes being undertaken since our last governing board meeting include daily SLT learning walks, lesson observations of all staff, Sir Kevin Satchwell’s visit as discussed earlier and a detailed whole-school book scrutiny. A deep dive into science is planned for later this month

The whole-school book scrutiny found that books are marked regularly and all staff adhere to the principles of yellow-box marking, though this is not interpreted in a consistent way, and students show pride in the presentation of their work. Areas for development included allowing students time to digest, reflect and act on teacher comments.

The book scrutiny was followed up with whole-school staff CPD to focus on the recommendations for improvement and to develop a consistent approach to high-quality marking and feedback across all curriculum areas. The full report can be found in **Appendix H**.

## **Governor metrics**

### **See Appendix I**

#### **Staffing**

At Easter we will bid farewell to our current Course Leader for English who will take up a post closer to home. We have therefore recruited an English teacher to start at Easter. Roberta Ward who is an experienced English teacher currently working at the UTC will take on the role as Head of English. I have every confidence that Roberta will do a fantastic job.

We have taken on an Academic Mentor to join our Learning Support team, currently this post is 95% funded by the National Tutoring Programme.

We have been very busy interviewing and recruiting for a number of roles starting in September 2022. These include an Assistant Principal with responsibility for Science, another English teacher, 3 PE teachers, a Maths teacher, a part-time Head of Humanities and a maternity cover in Performing Arts. We have further roles to recruit for in Maths (x2), Construction, Geography, DT and Computer Science.

We will also lean on Sandwell Academy to provide some teaching in Music from September 2022.

#### **Fire Alarms**

Though we now have use of the all-weather pitch which will be the future muster point we are not ready to use it for congregating on as access is through temporary steps. For this reason, our most recent fire drill was held on the University's courtyard at the front of the UTC.

#### **Student Recruitment**

We currently have similar numbers of applications into Years 10 and 12 as we had at this stage last year. We are having another Open Evening on 28<sup>th</sup> April to try and push these numbers up to allow 3 large classes in Year 10 and I would want in the region of at least 60+ students in Year 12 as well as good recruitment onto T-levels.

We now have our 150 named students who will start Year 7 in September 2022. We had close to 900 applications which means there will be many disappointed families.

#### **Attendance and Exclusions**

Current student attendance levels are much better than the year-to-date figures as we move out of the pandemic.

Exclusions are low.

Non-Covid staff sickness levels are low with a total of 55.5 days lost (27 teaching/28.5 support staff). A sickness bug at the beginning of January affected a number of staff.

Covid-19 staff absence is monitored separately, as at 1/3/22 107.5 teaching days and 96.75 support days have been lost. Staff have worked from home when they have been well enough so the time have not been totally lost, just a different way of working for staff and students. All sessions have been covered in house with no supply staff used.

## Careers

All Year 11 and 13 are continuing to engage with individual careers interviews and we are collating destination data. A significant number of Year 11s have applied to our Sixth form (31) and 93% of Year 13 have gone through the UCAS process. However, for many of these students this is not their preferred choice of destination with many still seeking higher apprenticeships. We are supporting these students with applications and interview techniques.

Year 10/12 have a week's Work Experience on 14<sup>th</sup> March, and are now also receiving 1:1 career advice to think about their future after Year 11, this will enable us to tailor make our careers programme by inviting employers from those sectors. For up and coming events we have invited guests from sectors such as the NHS, Banking, Finance and Construction.

Gatsby benchmark's have been evaluated and the UTC are achieving 100% in all 8 benchmarks. **See Appendix J.**

We are continuing to work alongside employers to run events, many of which are now on-site.

During this month we have Year 11 Mock Interviews, Year 13 finance support, Year 10/12 Work Experience, Year 11/13 Employer Mentoring, Careers Story and we are delighted that the Annual Careers Fair is now back on at the UTC with over 40 exhibitors attending to showcase their sector.

Our Director of Careers is attending other local Careers Fair events to promote the UTC.

We have the following plans in place for offering careers provision to our students:

- TTUTC Newsletter to go out to students, parents, and employers in March.
- Careers in the Curriculum – A careers badge has been designed for teachers to use in lessons and for students to recognise when career education is part of the curriculum. This will also form a display in classrooms to promote which jobs make use of skills taught in different curriculum areas.
- Tutors will create a display of their students' future aspirations.
- Mock interviews and guest lectures as well as regular site visits.
- Y10/11/12/13 – Careers Fayre and Careers Story, Virtual and face to face Work Experience Y12 – UCAS Statements, Student Finance and Apprenticeship information events.
- The Unifrog platform (funded for 1 year by Aspire to HE) has been an invaluable tool for the students in terms of course information and a single source of apprenticeship opportunities. It has also helped in preparing UCAS applications.

## Employer Engagement

Employer engagement goes from strength to strength with the work on T-Levels consolidating our already strong practice. The following email was received during February half term, and is typical of employer attitudes to their involvement with the UTC:

*'Hi Simon*

*I arranged a call with Gatsby, Rose and Dan to discuss more opportunities to get involved with promoting T Levels to parents.*

*Not sure if your ears were burning, but we made sure Gatsby knew the reasons why T Levels are working for us, is you.*

*They are keen to speak with you too, as they would like to include you and other employer partners in future PR etc.*

*Hope this is ok – we all used the phrase ‘Best Practice’ around what you have done for us’*

We are getting significant national interest from DfE, AoC and EtF on our approach to T-Levels and relationship forming with employers. This is both great recognition but also somewhat demanding on time with many scheduled interviews about our approach. One of our students on placement is part of a case study being recorded by Gatsby, and the DfE have spoken with me further about creating other video case studies.

As the UTC has grown, so have the demands we make on employers who have risen to the challenge admirably. We are about to hold our largest Careers Fayre to date, and now operate Employer projects with Y7 students and Y8 students as part of their Innovate, Design and Build curriculum. These ran with Y7 for the first-time last year, with great success. Over the school year, there are some 140 events that take place involving employers, from site visits and guest lectures. To provision of resources and exemplar materials. This regular contact with employers helps students to develop the ‘soft’ skills so necessary in their life after school and employers regularly feedback that our students stand apart from others in this regard.

The impact of COVID has thankfully been minimised with regard to our engagement programme with many events being virtual. Now that we are learning to live with COVID, many are returning to face to face sessions, but we have maintained the opportunity to make use of remote technologies to widen our net – for example, students working on a project with the Dawlish Sea Wall, were able to hear directly from one of the project team based in Dawlish and ask questions.

A particular highlight of the year came in December when we were able to take students to London to be lowered into the Thames Tideway Tunnel and walk along its length – a pretty unique opportunity to see first-hand one of the largest civil engineering projects in Europe.

A survey conducted with the Employer Group in January 2022 returned the following responses (scores range from 1-5, with 5 being best)

Clarity of Information for Events	4.80
Timeliness of Information Sharing	4.60
Clarity of Information for Work Experience	4.75
Timeliness of Information for Work Experience	4.60
How well are the UTC meeting your future recruitment needs?	4.80
How well does our delivered curriculum meet your sector needs?	4.80
How well do the UTC promote and develop employability?	4.60

Written comments include:

*‘It’s just so inspiring for us to be working with these young people.’*

*‘Always keen to promote my organisation as I am to promote UTC - true partnership’*

*'In my dealings with the SLT at UTC I have found them to be engaging and enthusiastic and every student I have had the pleasure to meet has been the same'*

*'The UTC have shown the correct way to recruit students, especially those on T Levels, not overcommitting and ensuring employers are prepared to back the UTC with work placements before signing up students. The recognition of employer's engagement through LinkedIn is a great way of highlighting opportunities for others to engage with the UTC, as well as recognising the support of current employer group staff. The size and variety of the employer group is testament to the skills of the SMT at the UTC.'*

*'The work of the team at the UTC is best practice and the engagement with the employer group is excellent, seeking comments about the way the curriculum can be linked to our projects is 'what this is all about' in terms of preparing young people for a career in our industry.'*

*'Out of all the schools and colleges we engage with across the region TTUTC is "head and shoulders" above all others regarding their passion and enthusiasm for employer engagement. Simon and team proactively approach industry to equip their students with the skills, knowledge and behaviours they need to get into work. Evidenced by one of our partners Colas Rail recruiting two TTUTC students for Chartered Surveyor L6 degree apprenticeships in 2021 due to not only the outstanding academic results but the BTEC content ensuring they could "hit the ground running". I cannot think of any improvements to the current processes'*

*'Colleagues who have experienced engagement with TTUTC students and staff have thoroughly enjoyed participating in career activities including employer projects, open days and hosting WEX students. Simon and team are a joy to work with and bring such enthusiasm and creative ideas to their employability programmes and initiatives.'*

*'Very collaborative and proactive - Simon and the team are always accessible'*

An update of current provision is provided in **Appendix K**, using the success criteria suggested by Baker Dearing Trust, this exemplifies the extent of our programme developed to a continuous journey across the 4 years of study (KS4/5 only) with us. **On average a student at the UTC will have 34 opportunities a year to engage with employers or University staff.**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our governors and employer partners for the support they offer in this area.

## **2022 Admissions onto T-Levels**

Current recruitment for T-Levels is steady. We have received 14 applications so far (5 external students/9 internal students), all of which are suitable and have been progressed to the next stage. Alongside a team of employers, students will all be interviewed and then subject to the interview being successful, they will be given a conditional offer of a placement. We have 14 placement offers currently from Employers but are confident that this will grow further following our next employer group meeting, allowing for recruitment to continue.

## **Safeguarding matters including, vulnerable children and the current status of DBS checks & child protection training**

We currently have 26 Key Stage 3, 13 Key Stage 4 and 10 Key Stage 5 students who either receive external agency involvement or school level support or both for Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns. There are 10 Looked -after (LAC) children and 5 children on a Child In Need or Child Protection plan.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has provided appropriate safeguarding training and introduction to the CPOMS reporting system to new staff and trainee teachers on placement that have started at the UTC since the last report.

The Single Central Record was last audited by DSL, JRO and myself on 18.1.22. All new staff and governors are recorded and 1 staff member removed who has left the UTC.

Laura Passmore, Conduct Manager, has been made Deputy DSL alongside Pip Shaw. This is to support the ability to act quickly on incidents reported on CPOMS should the DSL or Pip be unavailable due to other commitments in school or off-site. The safeguarding policy and information on the school website has been altered to reflect this.

The DSL has begun training to be the Senior Mental Health lead for the school utilising the DfE supported grant to access training from the University of Wolverhampton which will allow her to lead practice in the UTC to promote emotional wellbeing and identify and respond to mental health needs. The DSL has also joined the Education Wellbeing Network forum led by the Wolverhampton Education Psychologist team that brings together educators across the city to discuss issues affecting schools and provide support, training and access to professionals.

Staff have received CPD on County Lines from the local West Midlands Police team to support safeguarding update training and PSHE/RSE CPD for delivery by staff. Staff will also undertake CPD on PREVENT (radicalisation and extremism) and contraception methods.

As part of the UTC Assembly programme which helps to support delivery of the statutory RSE curriculum, students have had assemblies on hate crime (Year 7); criminal responsibility and impact on careers (Year 12); grooming and sexting (Years 7 & 8); choices around peer pressure and driving situations involving texting, drinking and drugs (KS4 & 5).

## **Health & Safety**

Standard H&S checks have continued as normal. Extra cleaning is still in place for COVID-19. The daytime cleaner regularly walks round school wiping door handles/door edges/bannisters and any points of multiple contact.

### **Fire Alarm**

We had a fire alarm activated by smoke from a science experiment 15/11/21. Smoke escaped from Science 4 and activated the sensor in the corridor. The building was evacuated safely.

### **Minor Incidents**

There were 210 minor incidents since the last report, 13 of these were due to 2 students having fainting issues, both families have this under investigation with the medical profession.

## H&S Visit

We have a 3-year contract in place with Peninsula for an Annual H&S evaluation and the first of these visits happened in November 2021. Peninsula have confirmed that H&S is found to be generally satisfactory – see the report attached in **Appendix L**. 77 items were found satisfactory with 6 items needing further action. Action has been taken on the 6 highlighted items, see below:

2.24 Autoclave – this has been sent off for examination and testing by the science tech

5.11 Air con – the contractor did this at Feb half term

5.4 5-year electric inspection – the contractor started this at Feb half term and will return at Easter

6.1 DSE risk assessment – the RA was reviewed and shared with staff on 30/11/21

6.3 Manual handling risk assessment – reviewed and updated 30/11/21

6.10 Risk assessments – all reviewed and updated 30/11/21

For info there are several regular checks in place:

Item	Supplier	Frequency	Comments
Lift	Otis	Quarterly	Contract in place
Fire extinguishers (30+)	Diamond Fire	Annual	Contract in place
Fire Alarm	Alarm & Vision	Every 6 months	Contract in place
Air Con	Bromyard Building Services	Annual	Contract in place
Air Handling system	VES	Annual	Contract in place
Scissor lift	Speedy Hire PLC	Annual	Contract in place
DT equipment	WSM	Annual	Contract in place
BMS	AES	Annual	Contract in place
Intruder Alarm	Alarm & Vision	Every 6 months	Contract in place
Emergency Lighting	Alarm & Vision	Every 6 months	Contract in place
Gas systems	Bromyard Building Services	Annual	Contract in place
Electrical Systems	Bromyard Building Services	Every 5 years	Contract in place
Water systems	ROC Compliance	monthly	Contract in place

In addition to this the site manager performs weekly checks on the call points, fire doors, emergency lighting and monitors water temperatures.

#### **Lockdown**

A lockdown drill is planned for the summer term.

#### **Building update**

Morgan Sindall (MS) have replaced the vinyl flooring in the kitchen and servery to the correct grade of vinyl for the location.

MS have now replaced the 2 fridges, 2 freezers, 2 service trolleys that were disposed of.

The boiler has been replaced in the plant room (£19k). Painters are booked for Easter to paint the outside rendering.

General maintenance issues are addressed timely to keep the building in good repair.

**End of Principal's Report to the Local Governing Board.  
Summary of Annexes Overleaf**

## Summary of Annexes

- A - March 2022 TTUTC risk management report**
- B - PRP Guiding Principles**
- C - Sir Kevin External Verification of Standards Report Jan 2022**
- D - TTMAT Heads' Collaboration Minutes**
- E - Vision and Curriculum Statements**
- F - Student Survey March 2022**
- G - Staff Survey March 2022**
- H - TTUTC Work Scrutiny Summary**
- I - Governor Metrics March 2022**
- J - Gatsby Benchmarks**
- K - Employer Engagement BDT Review March 22**
- L - Peninsula H & S Report**