

Final Confirmation of the Opening of Doncaster UTC – September 2020

Message from the Brighter Futures Chief Executive Officer, Helen Redford-Hernandez

Dear Parents/Carers,

It is with great pleasure that we are at a stage where we are able to announce formally the opening of Doncaster UTC from September 2020. This is the culmination of many years' hard work and collaboration between industry and educational partners. Our key aim is to provide a world-class education which is ambitious, employer-driven, providing the young people of Doncaster with the right skills, knowledge and attributes to secure the best careers in science, engineering and creative digital technologies. Never has this been more important as the country and local economy emerges from the Covid19 crisis of the last few months.

The UTC will join the Brighter Futures Learning Partnership Trust from the end of July which has provided the overarching educational support since the initial business plan was tentatively approved by the DfE in 2017 and finally approved in March 2019. The Trust has worked in collaboration with the Principal Designate, Garath Rawson, since September 2019 to ensure that the foundations of the school are very strong and that any risks associated with opening a new school are managed effectively. The teacher and student recruitment figures speak for themselves and the UTC will continue to benefit from the established systems and processes of its 'sister' school Hungerhill and the wider Trust.

Many of the co-founders of the UTC now sit on the Brighter Futures Learning Partnership Trust Board and my role, as the former Headteacher of Hungerhill School, has evolved to take on the wider role of CEO of the Trust which includes working with the Principal Designate to ensure we open on time, meet essential Ofsted expectations and can deliver a curriculum which is unique to UTCs. I am pleased to say that we remain on track to open and have the full support of the DfE and the Baker Dearing Trust.

We are excited and optimistic about the future and know that our students will be given many additional opportunities to embrace the theoretical learning opportunities in the context of real-life problems and employer projects. Employability is the DNA of our curriculum and will permeate all our students' experiences. Our UTC leaders have developed an innovative and exciting curriculum with our University and Employer partners; we know your child will have the very best learning experience when they join us in September.

During the last few months, it has been wonderful to see the vision being brought to life by the Principal Designate and his newly appointed leadership team : the iconic build represents the regeneration of Doncaster town centre as well as offering our young people and families a different type of education. This has been an engineering feat given the current COVID crisis which has, not surprisingly, impacted on building supplies and labour. Despite these challenges, the building is close

to completion and the Brighter Futures Learning Partnership Trust will formally enter into an agreement with the DfE later this month enabling us to open on time. This said, I know this will not come as too much of a surprise, when we inform you that we will not be able to open in our fabulous new build until October half term. Whilst this may be disappointing for you as well as for us, we have worked with the DfE to source other suitable, local accommodation. We are delighted to announce that we have secured the National College for Advanced Transport and Infrastructure (NCATI) for the duration of this interim period. The choice of accommodation is perfect as we can still deliver our planned curriculum and employer projects, ensuring that students have a very different learning experience in specialist accommodation. Our thanks go to all the staff at NCATI who have supported us with this as it has taken enormous energy and planning to get it right.

It remains our intention to move into the new build during October half term. During our regular visits to the site, we can see the fantastic progress made by Willmott Dixon who have worked incredibly hard to pull back any lost time. We, and they share great confidence in that the build will be fully completed at this point, avoiding having to open, as previously agreed, in two phases. This will be to the benefit of all the students and staff as they will have full access to all the specialist rooms and indoor PE facilities.

We have purchased two minibuses to support our students with travel to NCATI, in the short term, should they need it. Further information can be sought from Garath Rawson about timetables and any associated costs. I am also working with the Local Authority and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTe) to ensure the existing bus services support travel to and from the UTC. We will keep you updated with any emerging news.

We hope that you and your child are as excited about the future as we are. We have all lived through some very difficult and uncertain times these last few months but I am sure you will feel that the certainty of opening, albeit in temporary accommodation for a short while, provides us all with thoughts of a better future for our children and the young people of Doncaster. As someone who has worked on the project for many years, I can only say that I know, from the calibre of staff we have appointed, the project will provide a Flagship School where innovation and technology transform learning and we deliver our key aim to empower every student to build a better future.

We shall look forward to meeting you all in September and wish you a very healthy and happy summer.

Yours faithfully,



Helen Redford-Hernandez

CEO Brighter Futures Learning Partnership Trust