

UTC Sheffield

111 Matilda Street, Sheffield S1 4QF

Inspection dates	2–3 February 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The University Technical College (UTC) Sheffield Academy Trust and the UTC leaders have successfully established a business-like culture and a vocational curriculum closely aligned to the needs of employers and universities.
- The executive principal and principal have skilfully managed the development and expansion of the college and have taken prompt and effective action to deal with any emerging weaknesses.
- Pupils respect teachers' good technical and academic knowledge and the experience they bring from industry. High-quality teaching resources are used well to develop good technical skills.
- Pupils' understanding of the world of work strengthens their commitment to learning and develops their sense of direction.
- The college successfully promotes a strong work ethic, good relationships and good behaviour. Staff know pupils well and provide effective support for their welfare and development.
- At GCSE, achievement in science is strong, attainment in mathematics is above average and progress in English has improved. Pupils successfully acquire industry-relevant skills that lead to higher level academic and vocational qualifications.
- A quarter of learners move on to an apprenticeship. This is a much higher percentage than the national average.
- The progress of post-16 learners has improved as the UTC has developed. Current learners are making average progress in academic subjects and good progress in vocational subjects. Post-16 study programmes are highly effective in developing learners' employability skills.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Outcomes are not consistently good in all subjects.
- Attendance at Key Stage 4 is below average and some pupils are not punctual.
- The promotion of literacy is not consistent across the curriculum.
- Teaching does not always focus and challenge pupils sharply enough on what the teacher wants them to learn.
- Target-setting for the most able is not rigorous enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the improved progress of current pupils results in higher outcomes across all academic and vocational courses.
- Improve attendance and punctuality at Key Stage 4.
- Improve learning, by:
 - developing pupils' skills in extended writing in vocational courses
 - communicating the focus for learning and challenge for pupils more effectively in some lessons.
- Ensure that target-setting systematically sets higher expectations of progress for most-able pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The innovative curriculum enables pupils of all abilities to study a specialist course in engineering or creative and digital media, as well as GCSE subjects. It has been well designed in partnership with major employers, The Sheffield College, Sheffield Hallam University, the University of Sheffield and Sheffield City Council to meet the identified skill needs in the region. Staff and pupils show commitment to the vision of the UTC and are highly motivated by the vocational learning.
- The executive principal and principal demonstrate a strong moral purpose to provide equal opportunities for boys and girls of all abilities and backgrounds to follow a pathway to an appropriate destination in training, education or employment. Leaders' drive and dedication has resulted in carefully designed pathways that enable pupils of all abilities to reach an appropriate destination at age 16 or post-16, including academic sixth form and higher education courses. 'Real' industry projects engage and challenge pupils, and give them good experience of the commercial constraints and disciplines of work.
- The extended college day prepares pupils well for the world of work. The time given for pupils to work independently to catch up, improve or extend their classroom work is used well by Key Stage 4 pupils, as well as post-16 learners. Booster classes are effective in supporting pupils in English and mathematics. Time for enrichment activities beyond the extended school day is limited but nearby music and sporting facilities are well used. Pupils involved in national engineering competitions are inspired by the opportunities to deepen their skills in mechatronics, industrial control and 'green' engineering, for example, by building an electric racing car or designing a digitally controlled pneumatic pump.
- Numeracy is fundamental to the specialist courses and is used and developed effectively across the curriculum. The use of literacy skills is developing well but implementation is uneven in the vocational subjects.
- Pupil recruitment has been successful, especially post-16, and the college is making good progress towards its admission targets. Pupils have usually made a positive choice to move schools which contributes to the high level of commitment shown by many pupils, some of whom travel a significant distance from within the wider city region.
- Senior leaders are reflective, identify weaknesses accurately, and act promptly and effectively to bring about improvements. Leaders have made well-considered changes to the curriculum to increase pupils' academic achievements and technical skills.
- Leaders have successfully tackled weaker teaching and brought about rapid improvement where staff and subject performance was weaker. Both senior and middle leaders have taken effective action to overcome inconsistencies in performance between different subjects. Weaker performance has not been rewarded by pay progression.
- Well-targeted coaching has helped teachers to make specific improvements in their teaching. Staff are taking an increasing lead in sharing good practice in the weekly professional development sessions.
- The college makes good use of its partnerships with other schools to check the accuracy of assessment and to improve the quality of teaching and the provision for special educational needs.
- Pupil premium funding (additional government funding to support disadvantaged pupils) has been used appropriately to provide learning mentor support for attendance, and additional support in English and mathematics has been effective.
- Target-setting does not take sufficient account of the faster progress expected of most-able pupils. Leaders are highly visible around the college. Their positive engagement with pupils promotes a strong sense of belonging. High expectations of pupils to behave as young adults encourages mature behaviour and independence. High levels of mutual respect and the business-like environment successfully promote the values of life and work in Britain and pupils' social, cultural and moral development.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Pupils feel very safe and supported in the college. They know when and to whom they should report any incidents or concerns. Staff are properly aware of any safeguarding issues affecting a pupil. Appropriate health and safety measures are taken to avoid risks posed by equipment or workshops. All staff and key governors are trained to identify emerging signs of extremism and radicalisation, and understand how to refer appropriately any pupils at risk.
- The UTC sends frequent reports to parents about their child's progress and effort. The college is systematic in its approach to following up any concerns about welfare or progress with parents.

- The governance of the school
 - Governors and the sponsors provide high-level expertise in technical and academic education, learning and skills. They have played a key strategic role in developing the UTC and in sustaining the active support and engagement of employers, higher education and the local authority. Their high level financial expertise contributes well to strategic decisions about the development of the UTC.
 - Governors are well-informed and rigorous in their scrutiny of college performance. They regularly receive presentations from senior and middle leaders and pupils about developments in the college. They have a good understanding of the pupil premium funding and its impact.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers' subject knowledge and technical expertise are strong across the academic and vocational curriculum. Pupils have a high level of respect for the expertise and experience staff bring from their work in the engineering and media industries. The quality of teaching resources is very high, with state-of-the-art engineering workshops and the use of the most up-to-date software packages on creative media and design courses.
- The good teaching of engineering and creative digital media enables pupils to make good progress in technical learning. They learn and apply new skills well and are proud of what they produce.
- Teachers consistently promote a good work ethic in classrooms and workshops. Calm, order and good relationships enable teachers to engage in effective dialogue and questioning with individuals and the whole class. Pupils also ask interesting questions.
- Teachers usually communicate clearly what pupils need to do to succeed at different levels. Teaching consistently provides well-structured practical tasks which allow pupils to learn in small steps to develop understanding and apply specific knowledge and skills.
- Engagement in computer-based lessons is occasionally weaker when the teacher does not employ strategies to take pupils' eyes off the screen to focus on the teacher and the challenge of the lesson.
- Teaching regularly and systematically makes effective use of assessment to praise what pupils have done well, identify where they need to improve and the next steps they need to take. Pupils value the clarity of the feedback they receive and say it helps them to improve.
- Additional resources for pupils with special educational needs, such as visual overlays or laptop computers, are often well used in lessons.
- The development of numeracy is a strength of teaching across the curriculum. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to apply and develop their mathematical knowledge and skills, for example in photography.
- Literacy is being developed well and pupils are being given more support and examples to show them how to write reports on technical matters like waste management. Opportunities are sometimes missed to get pupils to write explanations in full sentences or to give verbal explanations in extended sentences.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The UTC's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils value the culture of work-related learning and develop a strong relationship to the world of work. As a result, they apply themselves to learning with a healthy commitment to their own development.
- Careers information, advice and guidance are woven tightly into pupils' learning experience through the close relationships with employers and specialist links with further and higher education and apprenticeship providers. As a result, pupils develop their understanding of career pathways and their own sense of direction. Some pupils are so inspired by the excellent work-related opportunities on offer that they discover their passion for the future.
- Staff know pupils well. Informal interaction between staff and pupils and the mixed-age tutor groups quickly develop positive relationships between pupils, many of whom are new to the college. There is a palpable culture of respect between boys and girls and between pupils of different ethnic backgrounds.

- Staff have good access to information about the particular needs of individuals which enables them to provide relevant support. Case studies show the positive impact of support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Citizenship provides good opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe in different circumstances. A corridor display written and produced by pupils gave good advice about online safety. Staff are consulting with pupils about how to develop young people's understanding of the risks of radicalisation.
- Attendance by post-16 learners is good. Attendance is below average at Key Stage 4, particularly for girls and disadvantaged pupils in Year 10. Action is beginning to have an impact but more needs to be done to bring about more rapid improvement. Some pupils are not always punctual to school, or to lessons, and a few need to borrow equipment before they are ready to work.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They behave well in the vast majority of lessons and have good attitudes to learning. Pupils say that a small number of lessons are disturbed by low-level poor behaviour and this was seen in a small minority of lessons.
- Pupils are well motivated by the vocational curriculum. They enjoy being treated as mature adults in a college environment. Pupils of all ages develop good employability skills by taking responsibility for catching up and improving their work in independent study time.
- Pupils take pride in their appearance and business dress and are proud of the college. In some subjects, work between the regular assessments is not marked and pupils respond by taking less pride and care in presentation.
- The rate of exclusion is very low. Where necessary, appropriate intervention by external agencies helps pupils improve their behaviour.
- Behaviour in the open spaces, the corridors and the dining room is good. Pupils behave safely on the stairwells.
- There is very little bullying. Pupils know about different types of bullying and say staff deal with issues well.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils acquire skills and qualifications that enable a quarter of learners to move on to an apprenticeship. Others progress to a range of graduated courses that lead to higher-level academic and vocational qualifications.
- Rates of progress in vocational and academic subjects have improved. UTC data show that current pupils in Year 11 and learners in Year 13 are closer to their targets at this point of the year than the equivalent groups in 2015. This is supported by the high proportion of good learning observed across subjects and age groups during the inspection.
- College data show pupils at the end of Year 11 made at least expected progress from their assessment on entry in Year 10 in English and mathematics. These data also show that disadvantaged students made as much progress as others in the college, from their starting points at the beginning of Year 10.
- Pupils with special educational needs made more rapid progress at Key Stage 4 than during Key Stage 3 at their previous school and the great majority of current pupils are meeting their targets.
- In 2015, GCSE results were significantly above average in science, above average in applied engineering and broadly average in media.
- In GCSE mathematics, attainment was significantly above average. Low and middle ability pupils made above average rates of progress but higher ability pupils did not make enough progress. Current teaching has been re-focused and was observed to be stretching the most-able in mathematics effectively.
- In 2015, the progress pupils made in GCSE English was below average, especially for disadvantaged pupils. Senior leaders and the curriculum leader quickly identified that not enough time was given to English and this has now increased. More stringent assessment has led to more rapid action to tackle underachievement, resulting in improved progress in English by pupils of all backgrounds.
- In 2015, GCSE outcomes in design technology, German and geography were low. Current pupils are making better progress in these subjects as a result of improved teaching.
- Overall UTC outcomes, as measured by the average point score at GCSE, appear below average because the engineering qualification, chosen by employers, was reduced in value in the national performance tables.

Current pupils are following a similar engineering curriculum now divided into three qualifications which gives more credit in the performance tables.

- In 2015, progress in post-16 academic courses was below average, especially for those with lower GCSE grades on entry. As a result, the college raised the entry requirements. College data show that the progress of current academic A-level learners is in line with national expectations.
- In 2015, the published results for post-16 Level 3 engineering did not reflect the positive outcomes for learners who successfully moved into engineering apprenticeships before their course ended and did not gain marks on modules not taken. Current UTC data show that post-16 learners are making good progress in engineering and improved progress in media.

16 to 19 study programmes

are good

- The highly effective study programmes provide learners with vocational and employability skills that increase their chances of securing sustainable employment and apprenticeships with employers in major employment sectors in the region.
- Technical vocational qualifications within the study programmes are developed in partnership with major employers, with the result that learners' assignments are assessed against the outcomes of real industrial and commercial projects. For example, learners in engineering create lean manufacturing solutions for a manufacturing company, while creative media learners design software for local games companies.
- A large number of employers provide high-quality work experience and work placements for learners on study programmes, and hold frequent exhibitions and career events in partnership with the college. Learners develop strong employability skills, which are reinforced through the college's tutorial system.
- The majority of teachers on the study programme have recent industrial or vocational experience in their subjects, so act as positive role models and sources of advice for learners wanting to follow a career in industry.
- The large majority of learners on vocational courses develop good technical skills, such as non-destructive testing techniques in engineering, and film and animation production in creative digital media. The good practical skills development is reflected in the steady increase in the proportion of learners who achieve their qualifications across most subjects.
- In 2015, more than half the Year 12 learners re-sitting GCSE mathematics gained a grade C or above but fewer improved their GCSE English grade.
- Learners on academic courses did not make consistently good progress in 2015 and outcomes were below average in physics and product design. Current learners are making better progress as a result of better teaching.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment on study programmes is good. The majority of lessons are well planned and prepared, with an effective mixture of teaching techniques that keep learners engaged and enthused. Learner behaviour in classrooms is good, and they approach their learning in a productive and purposeful way.
- The retention rate of learners from Year 12 to Year 13 increased significantly from 2014 to 2015. This was the result of increasing entry requirements for academic courses and providing a more graduated range of vocational courses that more closely match the needs of different groups of learners.
- Learners' destinations on leaving the study programme are positive. The majority of learners enter higher education or secure an apprenticeship, with the rest staying on for a further year at the UTC or entering employment. Learners' decisions about their future career and educational options are informed by effective information, advice and guidance, which are regular features of the planned tutorial programme and open days with universities and employers.

School details

Unique reference number	139695
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10008148

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Technical
School category	University technical college
Age range of pupils	14–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	486
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	288
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Wright
Executive principal	Nick Crew
Principal	Alex Reynolds
Telephone number	0114 260 3970
Website	www.utcsheffield.org.uk
Email address	admin@utcsheffield.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- UTC Sheffield opened in September 2013.
- The University Technical College (UTC) is funded by the Department for Education and co-sponsored by Sheffield Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Sheffield Hallam University and The Sheffield College. It is governed by the Sheffield UTC Academy Trust.
- The UTC offers technical qualifications either in creative and digital media or advanced engineering and manufacturing, as well as GCSEs and A Levels. The UTC admits pupils from the Sheffield city region and beyond.
- Pupils study their technical subject for a substantial proportion of the week. The college day is longer than in most secondary schools.
- The UTC is small compared with the average secondary school. In its first year, pupils were admitted into Year 10 and Year 12.
- A high proportion of pupils are boys and a low proportion are girls.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students supported by pupil premium funding is average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is well above average.
- The college does not use alternative provision.
- In 2015, the UTC met the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at GCSE.

Information about this inspection

- Almost all teachers were observed, some more than once. A few observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors visited tutor time and observed and spoke to pupils in independent study time and at breaks.
- Meetings were held with trustees of the Sheffield UTC Academy Trust and members of the governing body, senior and middle leaders, groups of pupils and a group of employers.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including college policies, safeguarding documents, school self-evaluation and monitoring records, pupil progress information, attendance and exclusions data and pupils' work.
- Inspectors took account of 44 responses to the Parent View online survey, 38 responses to the pupil survey and 28 responses to the staff questionnaire.

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