

# Daventry UTC

Ashby Road, Daventry, NN11 0QE

**Inspection dates** 29 April–11 May 2015

| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Not previously inspected             |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Requires improvement</b> <b>3</b> |
| Leadership and management      | Good                 | 2                                    |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | Good                 | 2                                    |
| Quality of teaching            | Requires improvement | 3                                    |
| Achievement of pupils          | Good                 | 2                                    |
| Sixth form provision           | Requires improvement | 3                                    |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching is not good because teachers do not have high expectations of what students can achieve in lessons. Too much time is wasted while students wait for the support or challenge they need to help them make better progress.
- There are few opportunities in lessons for students to boost their literacy skills. Teachers often do not check poor grammar and spelling.
- Teachers do not consistently mark students' work. There are too many examples of students' work not being assessed or students receiving feedback that does not help them to know how to achieve higher grades.
- The sixth form requires improvement because the quality of teaching is not consistently good. Too few students in the sixth form are making the progress of which they are capable. Work experience for these students is underdeveloped.
- The UTC does not make the best use of its industrial links in order to provide students with a regular programme of work-related opportunities. Resources in the technical subjects are not used to their full potential.
- The UTC has a policy of setting no compulsory homework, but this is not applied consistently.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leadership and management are good. The Principal has rapidly established a working environment at the UTC with high expectations for behaviour and conduct. Students have responded positively and report that many have become more motivated towards their education. Attendance and punctuality have improved substantially.
- Leaders have a rigorous system for tracking students' progress. This helps to identify those students who are underachieving so that they receive extra help and catch up quickly.
- Leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching. They take effective action to address weaker teaching so that rapid improvements are made.
- The engagement and learning mentors provide highly effective support for students in and out of lessons. This leads to students behaving well and they make good progress. Students feel very safe and cared for at the UTC, especially when they are having difficulties.
- The academic mentoring programme promotes British values well and enables students to be more vigilant of their own and others' well-being.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 32 lessons, visited academic mentoring sessions and enrichment sessions, and observed the behaviour of students around the UTC between lessons, at breaktimes and at the beginning and end of the day.
- Inspectors held meetings with the Principal; the deputy principal; the leader of academic mentoring; members of staff responsible for welfare and attendance and for maintenance of the single central record; the careers co-ordinator; the special educational needs co-ordinator; representatives of the governing body including the Chair of Governors; and representatives of the sponsors.
- Each inspector met with students from different year groups and looked at a wide range of samples of students' work. Inspectors also held informal conversations with students in classrooms and around the UTC.
- An inspector had telephone conversations with members of staff at the alternative provision attended by students from the UTC.
- A wide of range of documentation was evaluated by the inspectors including: the UTC's self-evaluation and development plan; records of attendance, exclusion and punctuality; samples of anonymised performance management records; minutes of meetings of the governing body; teaching and learning monitoring records; data used to track the progress of students; the single central record and safeguarding records.
- The inspectors evaluated the responses to 20 staff questionnaires and 12 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted on-line questionnaire for parents. Inspectors also met with, and received correspondence from, several parents who wished to express their views to the inspection team.
- Inspectors also visited the UTC on 11 May 2015 to gather additional information.

## Inspection team

|                                      |                         |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Amanda Carter-Fraser, Lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Martyn Ashmead                       | Additional Inspector    |
| Richard Pemble                       | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Victor Reid                          | Her Majesty's Inspector |

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Daventry University Technical College (UTC) opened in September 2013. It offers a combination of academic and technical qualifications for 14–19 year olds. Students study up to eight core GCSEs as well as up to two additional GCSE options alongside the specialist subjects of electrical and mechanical engineering or construction engineering and design. A third specialist subject of environmental sustainability is due to be launched in September 2016. Advanced apprenticeships and/or A level courses are offered in the sixth form.
- The UTC's lead sponsor is Moulton College and the co-sponsor is the University of Northampton. In addition, a wide range of industrial partners are associated with the UTC including Cummins and Bloodhound SSC.
- In September 2013, 96 students started in Year 10. Students were admitted to Year 12 in September 2014. Most students join the UTC from several schools in the local area. A few students move from schools in neighbouring counties. In terms of the number of students, the UTC is small compared with most secondary schools.
- The proportion of students joining the UTC with low prior attainment is much higher than the national average. The proportion of students joining the UTC with high prior attainment is much lower than the national average.
- Almost four fifths of the students are boys. This is a much higher proportion than the national average for secondary schools.
- The proportion of students eligible for support from the pupil premium is similar to the national average. This is additional government funding to support students known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is well above the national average.
- In addition to the support received from the sponsors and some industrial partners, the UTC works with staff from several local schools for the moderation of assessments.
- A small number of students attend alternative provision on a full-time basis at Rushmere Academy, Cobblers Study Centre, Northampton College, and Edubase on-track education centre.
- Students at the UTC have not yet completed public examinations. Therefore it is not possible to comment on whether or not the UTC meets the government's floor standards. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 11.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by ensuring that:
  - students receive regular feedback and that they act on this routinely to improve their work
  - all teachers take into account the progress individual students are making when planning lessons so that all students, in particular the most able students, receive the support and challenge they need to make the progress of which they are capable
  - teachers have consistently high expectations of what students can achieve and regularly check progress in lessons so that students complete set tasks and move on promptly to more challenging work
  - the quality of the presentation of students' work improves
  - students have more opportunities to develop their literacy skills in all subjects
  - teachers set relevant homework that supports and consolidates learning in lessons.
- Improve the effectiveness of the sixth form by:
  - ensuring the technical equipment and resources are used to their full potential to enable more students to make better progress
  - establishing a programme of work placements for all students
  - developing further the links with industrial partners so that students have regular and frequent

opportunities to apply their studies, especially in the technical subjects, to the world of work.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The Principal has faced with resilience, and overcome, a number of setbacks during the UTC's early stages. The UTC's sponsors have given essential support, providing the alternative buildings in the early months after the UTC opened. They help the UTC to deliver the curriculum.
- Leaders made it a priority to engage with the significant proportion of students who joined the UTC having been disaffected from their previous experience of their education. The Principal has stipulated an unwavering policy for high standards of behaviour. This has enabled leaders rapidly to create a working environment that is founded on high expectations for discipline and conduct while nurturing an atmosphere of mutual respect and camaraderie, in which students feel very safe and cared for.
- Students have responded very positively to the ethos promoted by all staff in the UTC. As a consequence, absence and exclusion rates, that were very high, have reduced considerably, and are now in line with national levels. Students state they have a renewed interest in the subjects they are studying since starting at the UTC.
- Senior leaders show persistence in maintaining regular, productive communications with parents, in particular when supporting students who are less engaged in their education.
- Leaders make regular visits to classrooms. They ensure teachers receive intensive support so that their teaching improves swiftly. They recognise rightly the aspects of teaching that need to be developed further in order for the quality of teaching to become consistently good.
- The Principal has appointed 'engagement and learning' mentors who are especially effective in providing one-to-one support for students facing difficulties to help them get back on track. The engagement and learning mentors foster good relations between staff and students and play a significant role in boosting communications with parents. The appointment of these mentors was a shrewd move by the Principal as it has mitigated the impact of the weaker teaching identified by the UTC. This in turn has led to better achievement being made by the students.
- The UTC's curriculum reflects the technical specialisms and includes a range of options for students' studies alongside the engineering and construction courses at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. Students extend their experience of a range of curriculum subjects in compulsory enrichment sessions, including art, film club and rugby. These sessions give the students the opportunity to pursue particular interests and develop their skills and knowledge accordingly.
- Well-led programmes of religious education, personal health and social education and academic mentoring provide regular opportunities for students to develop their awareness of social, moral, spiritual and cultural issues. Leaders ensure that the curriculum reflects current affairs and local issues, promotes British values and enables students to tackle discrimination. For example, students were able to express well-informed views in readiness for the general election. They described with enthusiasm how they would be organising and hosting a primary school's election for their school council on polling day. These activities prepare students well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders use comprehensive tracking systems to monitor the progress of students. Leaders make sure that assessments are accurate by organising checks within departments, with other schools and through work with examination boards.
- Middle leaders are effective in tackling areas for improvement in their subject areas. They collaborate well to ensure the quality of teaching improves and that the assessment of students' work is accurate.
- Leaders are highly committed to establishing the UTC as a centre of excellence for technical and work-related education. They ensure equal opportunities for all students to access the experiences it offers, and to thrive.

- Leaders ensure the effective allocation of pupil premium funding to support the progress of disadvantaged students.
- The UTC's arrangements for safeguarding students meet statutory requirements and are effective.
- Leaders monitor closely the progress, attendance and behaviour of their students who attend alternative provision. UTC staff review arrangements regularly to ensure the students have the most appropriate support to help them to do well. Students receive helpful careers information and guidance through the academic mentoring programme.
- Most students can say what they would like to do when they leave the UTC. Leaders have organised a range of high quality events for students to develop their employability skills, including visits from apprentices from a sponsor's company to help them develop their practical skills in the workshops.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors know about the areas of strength and those for development in the UTC. They draw helpfully on their own professional background in education or relevant training in order to carry out their roles effectively.
  - Governors accompany senior leaders on learning walks and have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning in the UTC. They support the Principal appropriately to ensure effective measures are in place to tackle underperformance and improve the quality of teaching. They are actively involved in managing the performance of staff so that good teaching is rewarded. Governors support the more rigorous target-setting put in place this year. They have a good grasp on the interpretation of data presented to them by senior leaders, and ask relevant and challenging questions. Governors hold leaders to account for decisions they have made.
  - The sponsors are represented well on the governing body and this helps them, in their respective roles, to recognise ways in which they can provide further support to the UTC.
  - Governors are aware of the UTC's financial constraints and have a clear understanding of the priorities for further investment in staffing and resources. They have an accurate overview of the expenditure of pupil premium funding and the difference it has made.
  - Governors have attended safeguarding training and have a sound, up-to-date understanding of safeguarding requirements.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of students is good.
- Students are very keen to express what a difference it has made to them to start attending the UTC. Students told inspectors that coming to the UTC was a 'fresh start' for them. They can describe how their behaviour has improved. Half-termly reports to parents include scores for attitudes to learning, which have improved steadily.
- Senior leaders greet the students in the morning, check uniform and monitor punctuality. Attendance and punctuality have improved rapidly as students are clear about what is expected of them. They are proud to wear their uniform and appreciate the mature image business-style dress conveys. Students state that reward systems, such as a ticket for a prize draw if they have 100% attendance in one week, or an invitation to weekly Cake Club with the Principal, have been a real incentive to improve their behaviour.
- Senior leaders are vigilant in their overview of behaviour. This helps to identify when students are having an unsettled day and prevents any concerns escalating. The engagement and learning mentors provide exceptional support for students so that they can manage their behaviour well and make progress in lessons. The UTC staff are in regular touch with the alternative provision to monitor the behaviour and safety of their students, who are doing well.

- Students conduct themselves calmly around the site at break times and between lessons. Although there are comparatively few girls, they are fully involved in life at the UTC. Students socialise well and there is a positive rapport with staff on duty.
- Students, including in the sixth form, have a positive attitude towards their learning. There are few interruptions to learning due to low-level disruption. Students are attentive and in the large majority of cases respond promptly to instructions from their teacher. There are a few instances when students are not completely focused on doing their best. This is when teachers do not have high enough expectations of what the students can achieve. Off-task chatting leads to a slower pace of learning than the students are capable of; their work is incomplete and not presented tidily.

### Safety

- The UTC's work to keep students safe and secure is good.
- Students state they feel very safe at the UTC. They appreciate that the site is very secure. They are respectful of health and safety requirements in lessons and approach practical work with maturity.
- Staff receive all necessary safeguarding training. They regularly receive up-to-date information on any safeguarding issues in staff briefing. Procedures for safeguarding are rigorous and effective. The UTC has regular and frequent contact with a range of outside agencies to support the welfare of vulnerable students, including those attending alternative provision.
- Staff and parents express strongly that they are confident that students are safe at the UTC.
- Students state that incidents of bullying are rare. They are clear about different forms of bullying through their personal, social and health education programme and assemblies. They are very confident that they could speak to any teacher if they had concerns and that these would be resolved quickly. They appreciate that teachers are out and about at breaktimes if they want to speak to them.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- There is a stark contrast in the quality of teaching within and between departments, including the specialist subjects.
- In too many lessons, teachers do not check learning frequently enough to evaluate the progress learners make and adjust their teaching in accordance with the progress students are making. Too much time is wasted while students wait for help or further tasks, particularly when additional support from engagement and learning mentors is not available. This limits progress, especially for the most-able and disabled students and those who have special educational needs.
- The marking of students' assignments and their work in books requires improvement. The comments teachers make are often too brief to help students make rapid progress.
- Leaders have clear expectations that teachers must take every opportunity to boost literacy skills in lessons. However, while there are examples of good practice, for example, in history and information and communication technology, students' literacy skills are not developed as a matter of routine.
- The UTC's policy of not setting homework is ineffective. As a result, students do not have the opportunity to complete homework that will support their learning in lessons and help them make better progress.
- The quality of teaching in a small minority of subject areas has been affected adversely by a period of staff turnover and absence. This has led to some limitations in the opportunities for students to; for example, carry out practical work and to learn through the expertise of subject specialists.
- Engagement and learning mentors effectively support the learning and progress of students identified with special educational needs, low levels of self-confidence or esteem. Learners speak very highly of this

support and the positive difference it is making to their progress and enjoyment of study.

- The majority of lessons are characterised by positive relationships between students and their teachers. Students interact and support each other well.
- Some teachers regularly carry out formal assessments of students' progress using past examination papers and end-of-topic tests. Students use this assessed work to identify where they have made mistakes, how to correct them and plan their revision. This is especially the case, as seen in some lessons in mathematics and English, when teachers guide students' careful analysis of completed work using mark schemes. In these instances teachers use skilled questioning to challenge and extend students' thinking further.
- Students' interest and understanding are boosted when their learning in mathematics is applied to real-life and work-related situations across the curriculum. Students readily take advantage of opportunities to develop their reading, writing, communication and mathematics skills. However, these skills, and especially students' oracy skills, are not being developed systematically in all subjects. For example in technical subjects students are not routinely encouraged to read widely and extend their confidence in the precise use of industry-specific terminology.
- Themed days and "Well-Being Thursdays" are highly effective in enabling students to assess risks and take care of their health. Teachers plan these sessions well and give much thought to whether sessions are best delivered to mixed or single-sex groups, in order to make the most of the experience for students.

### **The achievement of pupils is good**

- The UTC opened in September 2013, with students starting in Year 10. Year 12 students started in September 2014. Therefore, there have not yet been any published examination results.
- Students complete base-line assessments when they join the UTC in order for teachers to find out how much progress the students have made through Key Stage 3. These tests indicate that most students when they join the UTC have made less progress than the national average since the end of Key Stage 2.
- Achievement is good despite teaching that requires improvement. This is because the positive relationships between students and staff, the exceptional support given to students by engagement and learning mentors and the regular and effective use of formative assessments, encourage students to be motivated by their studies. As a result, most students, who have fallen behind in Key Stage 3, catch up.
- The UTC has mostly thorough systems in place for regular assessments using past examination papers and end-of-topic tests, and detailed tracking of progress in all subjects. All subject areas have established reliable means of moderation, through for example, collaboration with other schools and work with examination boards, to ensure the accuracy of predicted grades. These data indicate that students will make expected progress in English, mathematics and other subjects at close to, or higher than, national levels. The achievement of disadvantaged students is improving so that they are making progress at levels close to others in the school. The proportions of disadvantaged students making expected and better-than-expected progress in mathematics and expected progress in English and are on track to be in line with national levels for non-disadvantaged students.
- Students who are disabled and those who have special educational needs are making good progress. This is especially the case in subjects such as English and business, when students receive sustained and highly effective support in lessons from 'engagement and learning' mentors.
- In most subjects, including mathematics and the technical subjects, fewer students make better-than-expected progress from higher starting points. This reflects the slower pace and lack of challenge for most able students seen in many lessons.

- The small minority of Year 12 students completing AS-level studies are all on track to make expected or better-than-expected progress. This represents good progress from their low starting points.
- The UTC has not entered students early for GCSE examinations.
- The small number of students attending alternative provision are making progress, and gaining qualifications, in courses that have been carefully chosen to suit their specific needs.

### **The sixth form provision requires improvement**

- Students were admitted into Year 12 at the UTC in September 2014. Students follow one of four pathways from individual Level 2 courses in engineering and construction to a combination of A levels and Level 3 courses in the technical subjects. Currently 27 students are studying a range of courses. Approximately one third of these students are studying subjects at AS level, mostly in combination with Level 3 courses in construction and/or engineering.
- Options for students are carefully planned based on their key interests, their prior attainment and their career aspirations. As a result of the planning of programmes on an individual basis, students are interested and engaged in their studies and want to do well.
- Achievement in the sixth form requires improvement. Almost all Year 12 students are studying the technical subjects. Most are on track to achieve at least expected progress. However, too few make better-than-expected progress and a small minority are making slow progress.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form varies significantly across different subjects and requires improvement. Teachers do not routinely take into consideration the differing needs and range of abilities of learners. The most able are not consistently challenged by the work teachers set for them and, as a result, too few students are encouraged to achieve above expectations.
- Where students learn most quickly, teachers have high expectations of students' behaviour, effort and use information about what students already know and can do to plan activities that will challenge them further. For example in a Level 3 technical programme in engineering, a group of teachers skilfully planned an exercise that required students to evaluate the design constraints of a racing vehicle cockpit and how this influenced the selection of the driver. By the end of the lesson, students had successfully extended their knowledge and understanding of how vehicle design specifications needed to take account of the different heights and body measurements of potential drivers.
- The leadership of the sixth form requires improvement. Senior leaders have not established a regular programme of work-related learning to support students' achievement, especially in the technical subjects. Few sixth form students benefit from organised work experience to extend their understanding and application of their technical skills to support progress and employability for the next stage of their education, employment and training.
- While project-based learning activities set by local employers provide high-quality real-world contexts for students to develop their technical knowledge and skills, senior leaders do not ensure the UTC's industrial partners are sufficiently involved in the delivery of the curriculum.
- AS classes comprise between one to three students. The students benefit from their teachers knowing them well and guiding and supporting them individually so they make good progress. For example, in Year 12 mathematics lesson students, with a range of target grades, collaborated very successfully to improve their answers to examination questions. Through the careful planning and management of discussions, the teacher ensured all the students were challenged and achieved to their full potential.
- The behaviour of students in the sixth form is good and they have positive attitudes towards learning. Sixth form students are respectful to themselves and others. These students have a good understanding of the impact good behaviour has on their ability to make progress, they are positive about their teachers,



and relationships in the classroom are good.

- Completion rates of modules are affected by students joining through the academic year but they are supported well by academic mentors so that they catch up quickly.
- Sixth form students are keen to be involved in the student leadership team. They appreciate the business-like approach to recruitment and allocation of their responsibilities. Their meetings and proposals have given rise to changes, such as the timing of the UTC's day.

## What inspection judgements mean

| School | Grade   | Judgement            | Description  |
|--------|---------|----------------------|--|
|        | Grade 1 | Outstanding          | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
|        | Grade 2 | Good                 | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
|        | Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.   |
|        | Grade 4 | Inadequate           | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

## School details

|                                |                  |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 139373           |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Northamptonshire |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 450273           |

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

|   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                         | Secondary                       |
| <b>School category</b>                        | University technical college    |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                    | 14–19                           |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                       | Mixed                           |
| <b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>     | Mixed                           |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>    | 165                             |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b> | 27                              |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                  | The governing body              |
| <b>Chair</b>                                  | Norman Critchlow                |
| <b>Principal</b>                              | David Edmondson                 |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>     | Not previously inspected        |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                       | 01327 877684                    |
| <b>Fax number</b>                             | Not applicable                  |
| <b>Email address</b>                          | david.edmondson@daventryutc.com |

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