

UTC Cambridge

Robinson Way, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB2 0SZ

Inspection dates

13–14 September 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
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 an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors have failed to ensure that the procedures to safeguard the most vulnerable pupils are effective.
- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because attendance, while improving, remains too low.
- The management of attendance and punctuality, an aspect of the personal development and welfare of pupils, is inadequate. Daily checks to ensure the whereabouts of pupils missing from school are not swift enough to ensure that they are safe.

The school has the following strengths

- The teaching, learning, assessment and outcomes for pupils have improved considerably over the last year. They are now good. A concerted effort from leaders, teachers and external partners has overcome the weaknesses in teaching and learning experienced in the college's first year.
- The curriculum meets pupils' needs well. Work experience, careers advice and support are very effective. Challenge projects, planned in association with industry partners, are highly motivational. They enable pupils to develop skills such as critical analysis and practical skills to a high standard.
- Outcomes are good. Early indications are that GCSE and A-level results compare favourably with those of similar institutions and past national indicators of success.
- Most pupils in different groups, such as the most able, make good progress because teaching captivates their interests.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are very productive, ensuring that additional help is provided when pupils require it.
- The 16–19 study programme is effective. At the end of Year 13, all the students who wanted to embarked on a university course.
- Most aspects of personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. Most pupils work hard, are committed to their studies and are motivated to succeed in readiness for the next stage of their careers or education. Pupils benefit from useful careers advice and guidance.

Full report

In accordance with sections 44(1) and 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure the safeguarding procedures for the most vulnerable pupils by:
 - establishing rigorous central processes for recording safeguarding concerns, the actions taken and the contacts made both with parents and wider agencies
 - establishing risk-assessment procedures to determine whether concerns are to be managed as safeguarding cases or as welfare and pastoral cases
 - establishing clear lines of responsibility for the management of individual cases and ensuring that, when staff are notified of concerns, they take action swiftly
 - making sure that senior leaders check and hold to account rigorously those that are working with vulnerable pupils.
- Establish a more effective system for monitoring the attendance and punctuality of pupils by:
 - making sure that checks on the whereabouts of pupils, including the most vulnerable and those that live a long way from the college, are carried out very quickly after the first lesson starts
 - changing attitudes to delays on public transport so that they are not perceived by the pupil population and staff as a mitigating excuse, but as a problem that needs to be solved
 - making a more concerted effort to improve the attendance rate so that it rises more rapidly than it has over the last two years.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Senior leaders and governors have not kept an adequate check on the procedures to safeguard some of the vulnerable pupils within the college. Staff responsible for safeguarding students have not been held to account for this work effectively enough. The procedures to support these pupils are in disorder. For example, it took staff too long to identify whether the known vulnerable pupils on roll were attending school on the day of the inspection because there was no routine procedure to check this.
- Many aspects of safeguarding are effective. The college adheres to safer recruitment guidelines and the record of staff suitability to work with pupils is kept up to date. In addition, records show that all staff have completed the necessary safeguarding training. Pupils spoken to say they feel safe in the college. Parents agree and many are delighted at how well their children, who have experienced difficulties in previous schools, have settled into the inclusive culture of the college.
- In the first year, the principal and other senior leaders did not make their expectations explicit enough to other leaders and teachers and so the quality of teaching and learning did not improve fast enough. Consequently, outcomes at the end of the year were disappointing. Last year, governors and other external partners challenged leaders to make faster improvements and brokered work with other schools to support this. There have been marked improvements to teaching and learning this year. Consequently, the outcomes of GCSE and A-level examinations ensured that most students were well prepared for the next stage in their lives.
- Some parents who responded to the questionnaire are critical of the leadership of the college, specifically because they do not think that the information they receive about the progress of their children is helpful enough.
- Last year, it was made clear to middle leaders what was expected of them when leading the development of the curriculum, teaching and learning. Now that expectations have been established, they are making an effective contribution to the development of the college.
- Procedures to track the progress of pupils and to manage the performance of teachers have been evolving since the college opened. Leaders have ensured that procedures are now fit for purpose.
- The leadership of teaching and learning is effective. For example, teachers that are newly or recently qualified speak extremely highly of the guidance and training they have received from the college's professional tutor. They have been subject to a well-structured programme of training and induction. School records show that their teaching has improved in all cases since they were employed.
- There are some outstanding features of the curriculum. For example, the weekly challenge lessons, where pupils work with partners from industry and health, give pupils an excellent insight into their possible future careers. These sessions also enable them to apply their scientific skills and understanding when tackling exciting and stimulating projects. This is a unique and highly successful feature of the college's work. Local external partners are extremely complimentary about these projects. They

recognise that, as a result of the projects, pupils are receiving a very good preparation for their future.

- The teaching of fundamental British values and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils are woven throughout the curriculum. Pupils spoken to were knowledgeable when discussing related issues. For example, they spoke confidently about the ethical considerations surrounding stem-cell research, which was informative and thought-provoking.
- The college provides a suitable range of extra-curricular activities that give pupils the opportunity to pursue their interests beyond the formal curriculum.
- Funding to support the very small number of disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. The college has very sensibly used the funding to overcome some of the barriers experienced by pupils. For example, it provided information technology equipment to enable pupils to work independently. There is no information available to compare the progress of these pupils to others nationally because this is the first year that pupils in the college have taken GCSE and A-level examinations. However, school information indicates that this group makes good progress.
- Partnerships with other local providers, such as The Parkside Federation, have been extremely effective in supporting senior leaders to improve the quality of teaching and some management procedures. These have been facilitated by the advisers from the Department for Education (DfE). Regular visits have taken place where the need for improvement has been identified and shared with governors and leaders. A number of audits of safeguarding, some carried out by external advisers, have failed to identify the weaknesses in the college's support for vulnerable pupils.
- It is recommended that, because of the specific nature of the college's weaknesses, newly qualified teachers may still be appointed.

Governance of the school

- While governors and trustees have failed to ensure that some safeguarding procedures are secure, other aspects of their work are effective.
- The principal is held to account for her work. Past weaknesses and challenges have been identified by governors and, where necessary, they have brokered additional support to strengthen the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors are reflective about their contribution to the college. They have recently carried out a useful review of governance that has accurately identified where they can make further developments to the future strategy for improvements. Consequently, there is no need to require an external review of governance.
- Governors have checked carefully the progress of pupils, including different groups of pupils, particularly after the disappointing results in 2015. They have a thorough understanding of what should be expected from good progress and attainment.
- Staff are rewarded appropriately and governors hold leaders to account to ensure that teaching continues to improve.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. The procedures to safeguard vulnerable pupils are poor.
- Case files are disorganised. Records of contacts with parents or outside agencies lack the relevant detail. It is unclear whether contact has been made in a timely fashion or whether action should be taken. Plans to support some of the pupils are unavailable or they cannot be easily accessed.
- Risk assessments have not been carried out to determine whether concerns about pupils should be treated as safeguarding cases or welfare cases.
- It is unclear who is responsible for the supervision of individual child protection cases. When questioned, senior staff have difficulty in identifying the status of cases because they have not checked carefully enough the work of those responsible or maintained a good enough oversight of the caseload.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- In nearly all subjects, such as mathematics, English, geography and computer science, pupils benefit from good-quality teaching. In the science subjects, the curriculum is innovative. Teachers demonstrate a good subject knowledge and convey an enthusiasm for their subject to the pupils. Consequently, most pupils are highly motivated to succeed.
- The relationships between the teachers and pupils are very positive. Pupils appreciate that they receive the help and advice needed to ensure that they can improve their work.
- Pupils benefit from using very sophisticated resources in their science studies that enable them to produce work of a high standard.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are promoted effectively across the curriculum. The pupils spoken to, who are mainly looking forward to going into careers in science and technology, recognised the importance of developing their literacy and numeracy skills. They spoke about the importance of being able to give presentations articulately and of being able to read and understand complex technical language.
- Teachers are effective at enabling the most able pupils, including the very few disadvantaged most able pupils, to make good progress in lessons. The practical and challenging scientific and problem-solving work in lessons really stimulates these students to achieve as well as they can and to develop their skills of analysis and critical thinking.
- A number of pupils who arrive in Year 10 find computer science particularly challenging, as they have had no experience of this course in their previous schools. Teachers within this subject are skilled at quickly teaching pupils the necessary skills to succeed.
- Some pupils report that they are disappointed they are unable to continue with the modern foreign language they had studied at their previous secondary school. This is because the college only offers Spanish. The college has tried to solve this problem

but, so far, leaders have been unsuccessful in enabling pupils to continue with their initial chosen languages.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. The procedures for checking the attendance of pupils take too long to ensure that they have arrived at school on time and are safe. Parents are given too long to respond to requests about the whereabouts of their children if they have not arrived at school.
- The careers advice and guidance that pupils receive is very helpful. The college has built up effective links with a range of industries and health and academic providers. For example, the day before the inspection, key stage 4 pupils were involved in a careers event where they met with representatives from 11 science or information and communication technology-based businesses. Pupils reported how the activities they took part in helped them to decide which A-level examinations they needed to take in order to be well prepared to go into the career of their choice.
- The college has attracted pupils with a love of the sciences, and also some that have experienced difficulties in previous schools, or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The college has provided most of this group of pupils with a working environment in which they can thrive and succeed.
- Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, or who were spoken to during the inspection, are delighted with how well their children have settled into life at the college.
- Pupils are taught adequately about the dangers of bullying and how to avoid various types of abuse through assemblies, 'big question' events and tutor time. Pupils spoken to explained confidently how to keep safe, for example, from online abuse and were well aware of other dangers that they may be exposed to.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Attendance and punctuality rates remain too low, although there are signs of improvement for some pupils. Too often, excuses to do with public transport delays are given as a reason for arriving late. While it is understood that Cambridge is very busy during rush hour, not enough is done to try to overcome this problem so that pupils arrive in time to get a good start to the day.
- Pupils behave in a mature and sensible manner, both in lessons and around the college. Many are thoughtful and confident when speaking to adults. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere.
- Behaviour and exclusions logs show that staff manage the few incidents of poor behaviour effectively.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2016, exam results at GCSE and A level were positive. For example, almost all Year 11 pupils took three separate science GCSEs and 70% gained all of them at grades A* to C.
- This is the first year that pupils at the college have taken these exams. At the time of the inspection, there were no published national comparisons. Indications are that these results will compare favourably against national measures when they are published.
- Pupils in most groups make good progress from their starting points. The most able make good progress, producing work in lessons that is of high quality. Consequently, GCSE results in mathematics, biology, chemistry and physics show that over a third of all Year 11 pupils gained the higher grades.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities varies. Some make good progress, but leaders have yet to ensure that the interventions provided enable them to do as well as they can.
- In each year, the number of disadvantaged pupils is too low to report on their progress without identifying individuals. There is no published information to compare the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils in the college with all others nationally.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics and English. Mathematics is central to the work of pupils in most of their subjects and they use and apply their skills proficiently. As well as developing literacy and reading skills, the college is effective in training pupils to speak articulately with representatives from the business community and industry.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- All students left Year 13 in the summer to embark on a university course or to move into a career. This is because the college ensured that they made good enough progress to gain the qualifications they required to achieve this.
- The standard of students' practical work is good. In lessons such as applied science, students are challenged to ensure that they meet exacting tolerances and produce high-quality work. Students are encouraged to analyse their work critically and only draw conclusions when they have sufficient evidence to do so.
- The college has invested heavily in new and modern buildings for specialist science provision. Well-resourced practical working environments encourage students to manage their activities in a professional manner. Rooms are well equipped, which creates a positive learning environment.
- Students have access to a wide range of good-quality work experience and work-related learning. Employers are passionate about the opportunities they provide to students through the challenge projects. In addition, the college has established good links with employers for work experience beyond the projects, such as working with

the local hospital.

- Knowledgeable teachers have established positive working relationships with students that support good progress. As a result, students are engaged and well behaved. Students work well together and during group sessions most of them concentrate on the tasks they have been set. For example, students presenting their findings from project work support their peers by asking relevant questions.
- Teachers assess students' continuing needs for the development of English and mathematics based on their GCSE results. The success rate of those that resit their English GCSE is good. However, the analysis of the skills of students that are not retaking exams does not give sufficient detail to teachers to enable them to help these students make good progress.
- Students following the BTEC vocational courses are now making good progress. This was not the case last year, when some students did not attain as highly as they could have done.
- In the first year, the retention rate on courses in Year 12 was very low. A concerted effort by school leaders to better match options to the needs of the students has led to a marked rise in retention rates which, while still in need of improvement, are closer to what would be expected.

School details

Unique reference number	140265
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10021383

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

Type of school	Secondary technical
School category	University technical college
Age range of pupils	14 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	121
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jon Green
Principal	Melanie Radford
Telephone number	01223 724 300
Website	http://utccambridge.co.uk/
Email address	info@utccambridge.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school complies with DfE guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is smaller than average.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- A very small proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- The specialism of the University Technical College Cambridge is science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The main sponsors are Cambridge University Health Partners and Cambridge Regional College. The college is governed by a board of trustees who are also governors.
- The college does not use alternative providers, nor does it have specialist provision on

the premises.

- The Parkside Federation has been contracted to provide support to the college.
- There are no previous examination results prior to 2016 to ascertain whether the college meets current floor standards.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons and tutorials to observe teaching, learning, pupils' behaviour and their work. They held meetings with senior and middle leaders, groups of pupils, a representative from the DfE, a representative from The Parkside Federation, partners from industry and governors.
- Inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at the safeguarding policy and procedures, self-evaluation and improvement planning, minutes of governors' meetings, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance and other information provided by the school leaders.
- They considered the response to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, 32 free texts sent by parents and carers, one email and 45 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire from staff.
- Ofsted received a safeguarding complaint. Inspectors did not investigate the complaint, but scrutinised the safeguarding procedures associated with the complaint.

Inspection team

Tim Bristow, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Shane Langthorne	Her Majesty's Inspector
Adrian Lyons	Her Majesty's Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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