

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



20 November 2017

Mr John Morrison  
Lincoln UTC  
Lindum Road  
Lincoln  
Lincolnshire  
LN2 1PF

Dear Mr Morrison

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Lincoln UTC**

Following my visit to your school on 6 November 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in February 2017. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that all leaders have the appropriate training and development in order that they conduct their role effectively
- ensure that subject leaders closely check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and take action to improve it
- ensure that the assessment policy is consistently applied
- ensure that the variability in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is eradicated
- ensure that all teachers consistently set activities for pupils who have appropriate levels of support and challenge, particularly for boys and the most able pupils in

Year 11.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the principal, a representative of the governing body and the subject leaders for English, science, mathematics and engineering to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school improvement planning documents relating to pupils' achievement and starting points were also seen and discussed. The principal accompanied the inspector and together they observed Year 10 and Year 11 English, mathematics, science and engineering lessons. They jointly scrutinised the work of Year 10 and Year 11 pupils. The inspector spoke with a group of the most able Year 11 boys. The school single central record of all staff was checked.

## **Context**

Since the previous inspection, the interim principal stepped down from the role in September 2017. A new principal was appointed. He was released early from his role working for the Aston Community Education Trust and has worked part-time since September 2017. He will become the full-time substantive principal in January 2018. Four members of the teaching staff have left the school. Four new members of staff joined the school in September 2017.

## **Main findings**

The pace of school improvement from the inspection in February 2017 to September 2017 was too slow. Insufficient successful actions happened to address the areas identified for improvement. There has been significant staffing turbulence. Outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 4 in 2017 were poor and worse than in 2016. Disadvantaged pupils achieved much less well than their peers and other pupils nationally.

The new principal has had a significant impact. Although currently part-time, his actions have begun to accelerate the rate of school improvement.

Planning for improvement is in place. It is focused and appropriately identifies those to be held to account to ensure that key actions happen. The principal has an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. He knows that pupils' outcomes, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and some aspects of leadership remain particular challenges to the school being judged as a good school at the next full inspection.

With clear determination, he has insisted on addressing teachers' often low expectations of what pupils can achieve. He has begun to address the issue of assessment, particularly the complexity of evaluating pupils' starting points as they enter the school. A suitably challenging process for setting targets for pupils and

assessing their progress is now in place. Pupils who the inspector spoke to knew their targets and felt these were both ambitious and realistic. Subject leaders said that there was now greater clarity about the expectations of what pupils will achieve. There is, however, much to do to ensure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is of high enough quality to ensure that the targets that pupils are set are achieved.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment observed by the inspector and principal was too inconsistent. In all lessons seen, teachers' planning was not meeting the needs of all pupils. In some classes, the most able pupils were not sufficiently challenged to achieve as well as they could. In some classes, some pupils who have particular difficulties were unable to access the work because they were unable to read some of the text in the activities set. In some classes, the pace of learning was too slow and pedestrian.

Subject leadership is not of high enough quality to drive the rapid improvement that is needed. Subject leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not effective. The assessment policy is inconsistently applied and pupils' workbooks are not well enough checked. This small school does have particular issues, including the small number of staff to complete all tasks needed. Even so, there is too much variability in the quality of teaching, which results in too much variability in pupils' outcomes.

Pupils do receive specific help to address their communication skills, particularly in reading. This help is worthwhile. More is needed for pupils to try out and consolidate the new skills learned within their lessons.

The most able pupils are not having their true abilities and talents fully exploited. They underachieved at the end of key stage 4 in 2017. In lessons, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge, wrestle with difficult challenges and benefit from teaching that capitalises on their many interests and aptitudes.

Governors are aware of the challenges to be faced in order to improve the school. There are new members to the governing body. Governors have plans to now more regularly check the progress made by pupils, including that of disadvantaged pupils. They are aware of the need to check that subject leaders' efforts to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are working.

Although the new principal is skilled and is addressing the correct issues at an appropriate pace, too much school improvement has been too slow to happen since the inspection in February. It is for this reason that I intend to return to the school to check that the pace of school improvement is sufficiently rapid and of high enough quality to have the positive impact needed for pupils.

## **External support**

The principal is very aware that, previously, full use has not been made of additional funding to support high-quality professional development. He is currently investigating a variety of options in order for all staff to benefit from external expert support. This is an urgent priority.

Links with the University of Lincoln are extremely strong and pupils benefit from a range of exciting chances to extend their learning and their understanding of the opportunities afforded by further education and by industry.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Lincolnshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jayne Ashman

**Her Majesty's Inspector**