

# UTC@harbourside

Railway Approach, Newhaven, East Sussex BN9 0DF

## Inspection dates

22–23 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils and learners	Inadequate
16 to 19 study programmes	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate University Technical College (UTC)

- Many pupils and learners are disappointed that they have not received the education they hoped for when they applied to join the UTC.
- Too many promises made by the UTC have been broken too often.
- Teaching is not effective enough to enable pupils' and learners' rapid progress. Pupils and learners are slow to develop new skills and do not build quickly on prior learning.
- Pupils and learners feel inadequately prepared for examinations in the subjects that they are studying.
- The most able pupils and learners are not challenged enough, and very few are predicted to achieve the highest grades.
- Learners add little value to their education in Years 12 and 13.
- Too many pupils and learners are absent too often. Levels of persistent absence far exceed national averages.
- Bullying, especially in key stage 4, is frequent. Some of it is racial. Adults do not act decisively enough to stop it and prevent repetition.
- There is inconsistency in the treatment by staff of poor behaviour.
- Leadership and management are chaotic and ineffective, including in key areas such as safeguarding and risk assessment.
- Some leaders have too many roles to be able to do them properly and there are insufficient financial resources to run the UTC effectively.
- The curriculum meets the founding vision of the UTC pioneers but does not provide enough opportunities to prepare pupils and learners adequately for life in modern Britain.

### The school has the following strengths

- There is a continuing and strong commitment to the original vision of UTCs and the young people of the Newhaven area.
- A minority of learners benefit from a better personal experience at UTC@Harbourside than in their previous schools.
- There are generally effective strategies for supporting learning in technical subjects in the recently introduced 16 to 19 study programmes, and in experience of the workplace offered to pupils and learners.
- The new chair of governors acts decisively when she has access to reliable information.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) 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?

- Improve pupils' and learners' attendance and reduce persistent absence by:
  - pursuing relentlessly the strategies that have recently proved to be successful
  - extending its use of the full range of powers and sanctions available, in partnership with the local authority, including fixed-term penalties
  - raising the quality of provision so that pupils are motivated to be in school daily.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it better meets the needs of the diverse population and all groups by:
  - insisting that teachers plan learning for the full range of abilities
  - reducing the amount of teaching undertaken by non-specialists
  - increasing the amount of challenge in lessons for the most able learners and pupils.
- Reduce incidence of bullying and other unacceptable behaviours by:
  - resetting the UTC's expectations about acceptable conduct
  - challenging poor behaviour consistently
  - recording thoroughly and accurately information about any incidences or reports of bullying or unacceptable behaviour
  - analysing information about incidents to detect any patterns or trends and acting decisively to prevent further occurrences.
- Strengthen and improve leadership by:
  - clarifying roles and responsibilities
  - ensuring leaders have sufficient capacity to execute their roles effectively
  - focusing closely on key aspects of safeguarding, including the recording of information around incidents, and the quality of work on site risk assessments
  - reviewing the provision and quality of information available to governors so that they can act accurately and decisively as necessary.

The UTC should continue to review its governance arrangements. Those responsible for governance should also review the effectiveness of the UTC's use of the pupil premium.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Senior leadership is chaotic. The substantive principal was not present during the inspection. Another senior leader was also absent. There is a lack of clarity about who is responsible for which aspects of the UTC's leadership.
- The deputy principal is determinedly trying to rescue the UTC. He is supported by a willing group of staff, stepping up into leadership roles. However, existing leaders have too many jobs to do either to teach properly or to lead effectively.
- Aldridge Education, in partnership with the new chair of governors, increasingly provides meaningful support to the leadership team through an experienced executive headteacher. He is currently working at the UTC for two days a week. Prior to his very recent appointment into this role, he acted as the UTC's improvement partner with a focus on raising standards. It is too soon to see the benefits of his influence on pupils' and learners' progress and outcomes.
- There is no meaningful middle leadership currently, as weak senior leadership capacity means middle leaders are carrying out functions normally associated with senior leadership posts. There have been too many changes in subject leadership for pupils and learners to have confidence in the academic advice and guidance that they are entitled to receive.
- The part-time special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has been in place for just over a month. There is a lack of reliable records of past work with pupils and learners who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. There is minimal detail on plans and provision maps for pupils, where they exist at all.
- The impact and effectiveness of leaders' use of the pupil premium is not accounted for well. The use of this additional funding has not made enough difference to the performance of pupils for whom it is intended.
- Performance management processes have so far failed to drive up the quality of teaching or have sufficient impact on pupils' and learners' progress over time. The small size of the UTC means that staff teams do not have sufficient capacity for self-supporting challenge and improvement.
- Leaders seek support from other providers within the Aldridge Education multi-academy trust (MAT) and through a local teaching school alliance. This helps leaders develop an overview of the UTC's effectiveness. They judge rightly that aspects of its work require improvement and some of it is inadequate. However, some of their judgements are too generous.
- The curriculum is too thin. There is no meaningful physical education. The UTC fails to meet the Secretary of State's requirements for the provision of mandatory religious education. Pupils have limited choice of subjects, which inhibits their chances of meeting the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) threshold and offers insufficient breadth of study. There are no opportunities for pupils to experience the creative arts.
- The UTC's contribution to pupils' and learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is limited. The Aspire enrichment programme is severely hampered by

funding limitations and, in the past year, by the need for pupils and learners to catch up on missed learning. For example, inspectors observed an uninspiring assembly which did not focus enough on checking and developing learners' understanding of British values. Pupils and learners hold assemblies in low regard.

- Pupils and learners also view the 'Coliseum' programme as, in the words of one, 'an extreme waste of time'. It does not provide the opportunities for discussion and debate that would enrich pupils' and learners' understanding of the world as originally intended.
- Leaders remain fully committed to the UTC's vision and founding mission. They ensure that the science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects are available to all learners at an appropriate level.
- The UTC and its trustees have forged effective links with employers in the local area. This means that pupils and learners have secure opportunities to learn about the world of work and develop employability skills. This extends to active engagement with uniformed groups and services such as the navy, which, for example, during the inspection, contributed to an open evening event for pupils, learners and their parents and carers.

## **Governance of the school**

- The chair of the governing body is to be commended for taking over at a time of considerable uncertainty. The proposal for the UTC to join the Aldridge Education MAT was paused by the Department for Education at the start of the academic year. The chair of governors inherited a considerable mess. With some of the trustees, she is trying to sort it out on behalf of pupils, learners and their parents. She has been hampered in her work by poor information, inaccurate reports from the school and overly generous self-evaluation processes. Governors are now aware of:
  - the scale of the financial challenges facing the UTC
  - the weak recruitment of pupils and learners for the 2018/19 academic year, adding to the challenges caused by poor retention of pupils from Year 11 into Year 12
  - the scale of poor attendance compared to other providers of similar type
  - the ineffectiveness of teaching
  - the historic weaknesses in recording and reporting of incidences of unacceptable behaviour and conduct
  - the ineffectiveness of some safeguarding arrangements.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Although the policy framework is sensible and clear, inspectors found breaches of protocols, procedures and practices.
- Some serious safeguarding matters are not recorded in keeping with the UTC's own policies. For example, chronologies are not clear and some entries into the system are

backdated unhelpfully. Records, such as exist, are not routinely analysed to explore patterns or trends and thus enable leaders to intervene decisively to prevent bullying, racism or other unacceptable behaviours.

- Risk assessments were not found relating to important UTC activities such as the off-site physical education location. Pupils and learners are required to change for physical education in the toilet areas. They find this to be unpleasant and unhealthy.
- Teachers and instructors do not reinforce frequently enough key messages about safety in workshops, especially when handling tools or other equipment.
- Leaders have not systematically ensured that pupils and learners have access to sufficiently good quality education about how to stay safe online and in relationships.
- The new designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is radically overhauling the UTC's work in this area and her impact is beginning to be seen in better outcomes. Notably, attendance is better now than at the same point last year, though it remains overall very low compared to national averages.
- Pupils confirmed that it would be safe to 'come out' at the UTC, and that they have positive role models from the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. They reported, however, patterns of worryingly consistent bullying, including some of a racial nature.
- The turbulence in and variability of leadership and practice mean that a large minority of the pupils and learners are anxious about their time at the UTC. This is counter to the UTC's published mission to support the most vulnerable young people within the community.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Inadequate

- Teaching, learning and assessment are too ineffective to accelerate the pace of learning required for pupils to catch up on lost time and weak teaching in the past.
- Teachers do not adjust their teaching to meet the wide range of pupils' and learners' needs. Whatever their starting point in a subject or lesson, pupils and learners receive the same resources, materials and tasks. This is despite the UTC's claim to be providing education for a range of pupils with diverse needs.
- Many pupils find the work too easy and get bored, or too hard and struggle to keep up. Learning gains over time are, therefore, variable, with very few pupils making the most of time in class.
- Teachers frequently teach outside their specialism due to budgetary constraints. This means that some pupils' and learners' misconceptions are reinforced. Errors in teachers' subject knowledge are usually left unchecked as there is no line management structure to review performance.
- In some technical lessons, learners have not been taught to clamp their work securely before sawing or drilling. As a result, they are at risk of serious injury.
- Assessment practice is weak and has little impact on learners' progress over time. For example, poor work and presentation are rarely challenged. Pupils' and learners' portfolios are generally disorganised and are not developing into useful resources to

support their revision.

- However, new leaders have implemented a system for tracking progress. It helps them analyse how well each pupil or learner is doing against nationally agreed benchmarks. It is too early to judge the reliability of this system or the lasting impact of this on raising standards of teaching or improving outcomes overall for pupils and learners.
- Some teachers have the correct technical knowledge to deliver their subject accurately. Notable areas include the new technical qualifications in plumbing and electrical trades, computer studies and English.
- Teachers make effective use of presentation technologies such as interactive whiteboards and visualisers.
- Teachers generally use questioning well, though there is considerable variation among the staff. Some use the same type of questions whatever the context.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Insufficient time, thought and effort are given to planning programmes of personal, social, health and economic education. Consequently, pupils and learners do not have access to good-quality education about matters to do with their personal health and well-being.
- Pupils and learners are hugely disappointed with the UTC's failure to live up to their expectations. This has inevitably had a negative impact on some of their well-being and attitudes to learning.
- Year 10 pupils are very clear that the size of the cohort means that relatively minor disagreements too often get blown out of proportion. They are also clear that some of them have a miserable time at the UTC, due to bullying, some of a persistent nature and which results in a few pupils being isolated.
- Learners in key stage 5, and some of their parents, however, are adamant that they have had a better time at the UTC than in their previous school because they fit in better and are less at risk from bullying.
- Leaders sometimes work effectively with external agencies when pupils' or learners' emotional or mental health is at risk or there has been a crisis. However, not enough is done to prevent such situations or intervene before there is a problem.
- The new SENCo is able to show that many of the pupils and learners who have SEN and/or disabilities also have social or emotional needs as a secondary condition. Not enough is done to meet these additional needs.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Pupils and learners are generally compliant so that lessons proceed uninterrupted. However, teachers lack the necessary skills to motivate and inspire them. As a result, pupils and learners display poor attitudes to learning and frequently opt out of active participation, particularly in subjects where practical activity is not common.
- Too many pupils are absent too often. The UTC's published information about attendance shows that pupils attend far less frequently than their peers elsewhere. Although leaders were able to show the improvements in pupils' and learners' attendance in the current year, and reductions in the numbers of pupils and learners persistently absent, overall levels of attendance remain well below national averages.
- A small minority of pupils are regularly absent with understandable reasons. Others, however, are absent without good reason. The new DSL has redoubled efforts to help these young people overcome whatever barriers to attendance they may be experiencing. Other leaders are working to ensure that the UTC's work overall improves so that pupils and learners become keen to attend for fear of missing out.
- Inspectors found that incidents that happen outside the UTC are not well managed and, too frequently, upset relationships within the UTC and get in the way of pupils' and learners' studies.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Inadequate

- It is not possible to comment on a proven trend or pattern in performance since there is only one set of historic results data from which to draw inferences. However, the evidence in this information clearly shows that outcomes in 2017 were inadequate.
- The performance of pupils in Year 11 in 2017 was well below average. For example, the new progress 8 measure was well below the national average. The new attainment 8 measure overall was also well below the national average.
- The average progress 8 score for disadvantaged pupils was low and compares well neither with that for other pupils nor with that for disadvantaged pupils in all other schools nationally.
- The percentage of pupils attaining a grade 4 in English and mathematics was well below the national averages. The percentage of pupils attaining this important benchmark at grade 5 was half that of the national average.
- No pupils achieved a set of qualifications that enabled them to meet the EBacc benchmark.
- The performance in key stage 5 subjects in 2017 was also worryingly low for learners who have committed to specialist education, often at great expense to their parents. The overall value added across all the subjects was unsatisfactory. Due to the very small size of the cohorts in each subject, further analysis is relatively meaningless.
- At A level, the subject with the largest entry was mathematics. These candidates' performance, however, returned a negative value-added score. Electronics returned



the highest value-added score from a cohort of five learners.

- No pupil in key stage 4 is currently on track to achieve the very highest grades at GCSE or at A Level in the current round. This means that even the most able pupils and learners are failing to make the most of their time at the UTC, and are failing to reach their potential.
- Too many pupils or learners are not successfully building on prior knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Leaders demonstrated through their new system for tracking pupils' and learners' performance, implemented in September 2017, that current progress is better than at the same point last year. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils. It still does not compare well with other pupils with the same starting points.
- In 2017, performance in technical subjects was marginally better than in academic subjects.
- Most pupils move on to the next stage of their education, employment and training, but there is, as yet, no evidence that these next steps are taken successfully. A few pupils have been successful in securing places to continue their studies of STEM subjects in higher education.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

## Inadequate

- Outcomes for learners on the 16 to 19 study programmes are not good enough. This is especially the case for those who are studying level 3 academic programmes aimed at facilitating their entry to careers in STEM subjects such as medicine or electronics.
- Learners report that many of their expectations have not been met. They do not feel challenged to excel and feel unsupported in many aspects of their academic studies.
- Learners report that they feel 'lied to' by the UTC to get them to join and have been let down since. These are a selection of the incentives promised to learners which have only partially been made available, or not at all: free membership of a local gym, scuba diving and sailing.
- There is limited space for learners to study quietly on their own. Some learners report that the UTC has not provided them with timely and good-quality support for their progress towards success in their awards. Historically, this was most notable in level 3 vocational awards.
- In some BTEC courses, for example, learners did not have early enough access to module briefs to be able to submit work at the standard they would have liked. As a result performance was capped.
- Learners report too much learning from books when they thought they had opted for something much more practical and active.
- Learners feel their chances are hampered by non-specialist teachers of their subjects.
- Sudden staff turnover has further limited learners' access to subject-specialist support.
- There are insufficient opportunities for learners not resitting English or mathematics GCSE to develop English or mathematical skills. Some post-16 learners still display very



weak standards of written English.

- Learners benefit from helpful information, advice and guidance. Many received independent advice from their previous schools which enabled their transfer to the UTC at Year 12. Year 13 learners are currently receiving adequate support for the Universities Central Application System (UCAS) process if they are seeking a place at a university.
- Teaching is better in the new technical subjects such as the City and Guilds qualifications in plumbing and electrical installation. This is currently undertaken by a member of staff from Brighton Aldridge Community Academy.
- A few parents are delighted that, in their view, their children are thriving for the first time in their academic career. They attribute this to the good quality pastoral care offered by some of the staff, the specialist curriculum that is available for learners who enjoy mathematics and technical subjects, and the small size of the classes.

## School details

Unique reference number	141394
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10040911

This inspection of the school 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 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	128
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dianne Smith
Principal	Adanma Umunna
Telephone number	01273 916170
Website	<a href="http://www.utc-harbourside.org">www.utc-harbourside.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@utc-harbourside.org">info@utc-harbourside.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The UTC does not meet requirements on the publication of information on its website about: its work with pupils and learners who have SEN and/or disabilities, including an accessibility plan; how the effect of the pupil premium will be measured and when its use will next be reviewed; the committee structure of the governing body; how the UTC meets the requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes and the progress learners make in those programmes.
- The UTC operates as a stand-alone academy sponsored by four partners: Aldridge Education, Lewes District Council, Veolia Waste Management Ltd and the University of Brighton.

- The UTC is currently being led by the deputy principal, who took up the post in April 2018 after the substantive postholder began a period of extended leave of absence. The deputy principal is supported by an executive principal from Aldridge Education.
- The governing body comprises representative trustees of each of the sponsors. At the time of the inspection, plans to incorporate the UTC fully into the Aldridge Education Multi-Academy Trust have been paused. The chair of governors assumed this role at the start of this academic year.
- As above, the UTC does not currently comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish on their websites.
- UTC@Harbourside is very small, with only 128 pupils and learners on roll currently in four year groups.
- Numbers in key stage 4 have declined since it opened in 2015. In key stage 5, the numbers in each year group are greater and have been more consistent.
- In key stage 4, there are many fewer girls than boys. In key stage 5, the proportions of female learners are even smaller. In 2017, females made up only 13% of the cohort in Year 13.
- Nearly all the pupils and learners are from White British backgrounds and hardly any speak English as an additional language.
- The proportions of disadvantaged pupils and learners are above average.
- The proportion of pupils and learners receiving support for their SEN and/or disabilities is treble the national average.
- The proportion of pupils and learners who have an education, health and care plan is well above the national average.
- The community that the UTC serves has average levels of deprivation.
- The UTC does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The UTC did not meet the government's current floor standards for key stage 4 in 2017.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 20 parts of lessons. They also undertook two learning walks of the UTC. Most subjects were observed. Over half of these observations were conducted jointly with leaders.
- Inspectors viewed pupils' and learners' work in lessons and also a sample supplied by pupils in key stage 4.
- Inspectors held meetings with five key stage 4 pupils and six key stage 5 learners. They took into account 26 responses to Ofsted's confidential online pupil survey and spoke with many pupils and learners in lessons and around the premises.
- Inspectors held a formal meeting with two parents, conducted a further two phone calls to parents and reviewed an email received via Ofsted's call centre. They also considered 17 responses to Ofsted's survey Parent View and 12 free-text comments supplied through that tool.
- Inspectors met regularly with the deputy principal and the UTC's improvement partner, who is an executive principal with Aldridge Education. They also met other members of staff in leadership roles, including the member of staff responsible for assessment, the part-time SENCo, the designated safeguarding lead, and subject and key stage leaders. Some members of staff undertake multiple roles.
- Inspectors talked with teaching and non-teaching staff and considered 13 responses to Ofsted's confidential online staff survey.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of governors on two occasions as well as other governors. He conducted phone calls with the Department for Education's adviser for the UTC, the local authority designated officer for safeguarding and one of the East Sussex safeguarding team.
- The principal and another senior leader were not present at the time of the inspection.

## Inspection team

Simon Hughes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Derrick Baughan

Her Majesty's Inspector

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