

Lincoln UTC

Lindum Road, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN2 1PF

Inspection dates

11–12 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The determined and ambitious leadership of the principal, senior leaders and governors has rapidly transformed the quality of provision at the college. They have successfully created a strong and supportive culture that staff, pupils and parents and carers have embraced. Morale is exceptionally high.
- The curriculum is innovative in its design and its leadership is highly effective. The courses offered stimulate the interest and enthusiasm of pupils.
- The programme for careers education and guidance, together with annual relevant work experience is excellent. Pupils are very well prepared for their next steps in education, employment or training.
- The sixth form is outstanding. The leadership is highly effective in ensuring that students are well supported. As a consequence of good or better teaching, students make strong progress across almost all subjects.
- Pupils' behaviour and conduct are impeccable. The school's ethos is very positive and inclusive, underpinned by high expectations. Pupils rarely miss a day. Many are prepared to commute long distances to attend this college.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are highly effective. Leaders have established a strong culture of vigilance at the college.
- Pastoral support is highly effective, including the support for pupils experiencing difficulties with their mental and emotional health and well-being. Pupils benefit from a comprehensive life-guidance programme as part of their personal development.
- The quality of teaching is good across most subjects. It is particularly strong in science, mathematics and English. Pupils receive well-planned lessons, which enable them to make good progress.
- Teachers and leaders engage well with local schools and colleges to share good practice and ensure the accuracy of their assessment work.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are making good progress as a result of the closely targeted support they receive. The leadership of this provision is highly effective.
- Overall, the progress made by current pupils is good across most subjects. However, the progress made by the most able pupils is not always as strong as it could be.
- The progress made by current pupils in a small number of subjects, such as computer science and engineering, is not as strong as in science, mathematics and English.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve outcomes at the end of key stage 4 by ensuring that a higher proportion of pupils achieve the higher grades at GCSE, particularly the most able pupils.
- Ensure that all pupils experience a consistently high level of challenge across the curriculum, particularly in engineering and computer science.
- Further develop strategies which ensure that all pupils become more confident in extended writing, including the use of more complex and technical vocabulary.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The principal, with senior leaders and governors, leads with ambition and determination. The ethos of the college is exceptionally positive, underpinned by a strong set of values to which all members of the college community subscribe. Pupils describe it as a welcoming and inclusive place to be. They strongly value the opportunity to learn in a very supportive environment.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers would recommend the college. A typical comment from parents was, the college is 'a wonderful school with many caring and dedicated staff members'.
- The principal has a thorough and comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the college. Regular checks are made on the quality of the college's provision, including safeguarding and pastoral care. Leaders have used this information, together with external advice, to transform the college over a remarkably short period of time. No time has been wasted in the implementation of new strategies to improve pupils' well-being, accredited qualifications and their employability skills.
- Leaders have implemented a very well thought out life-guidance programme to prepare pupils for life beyond college and in the world of work. The careers education and advice that pupils receive is excellent and complemented by a strong commitment to annual work-experience weeks, in a range of purposeful placements, for all year groups. Pupils are very well prepared for their aspirations.
- The leadership of the curriculum is highly effective and innovative. Leaders, including subject leaders, have ensured that the curriculum is successful in stimulating pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning. All pupils study three separate sciences in biology, chemistry and physics. The most able pupils can advance their learning in mathematics by studying additional mathematics and statistics. Since September 2018, the introduction of the new 'project' curriculum, to develop the college's 10 specific skills and attributes has been universally welcomed by pupils and staff.
- Leaders have improved the way in which they set targets for pupils and check their progress against these targets. The progress of current pupils is consistently good across the majority of subjects, including those which in the past have been weaker. Leaders consistently pay specific attention to the needs of pupils as individuals and provide precise support when it is needed.
- The strong development of pupils' understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural themes lies at the heart of much of the college's curriculum. Many enriching activities are provided, allowing pupils to explore themes, such as understanding different faiths, environmental sustainability and participating in cultural exchanges, for example to Hong Kong.
- The impact of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning, together with their understanding of fundamental British values, is reflected in the impeccable conduct of all pupils around the college site and within lessons. Pupils and staff describe the college community as friendly, harmonious and respectful.
- Pastoral care is a distinctive strength of the college. Pupils and parents recognise the

extra mile staff will go to in order to ensure pupils' academic, social and emotional well-being.

- The college's programme for the professional development of staff is strong and has had a rapid impact on improving the quality of teaching, learning and the accuracy of assessment since the last inspection. Staff report that leaders are mindful of their workload and well-being, such that staff morale is exceptionally high. One member of staff stated that the college has 'a fantastic approach! If there is ever an issue the leadership team is extremely supportive and responsive to the needs of staff'. Staff say that they are proud to work at the college.
- The leadership of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is highly effective. Pupils receive highly personalised support from leaders and additional adults within the college. Given their starting points in Year 10, these pupils are making better progress than has been the case in the past. Parents report that they strongly value the support extended to these pupils.
- The pupil premium is used effectively. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress, particularly in science and mathematics. Leaders have a thorough understanding of pupils' barriers to learning and work tirelessly to help them overcome them.
- Pupils are very appreciative of the extra-curricular activities to extend their learning. There is a strong focus on sport, exemplified by the time devoted to this on Monday afternoons. Pupils also enjoy creating their own learning groups, such as learning Japanese.

Governance of the school

- The governance of the school is strong and highly effective. Relationships between governors and senior leaders are very positive and constructive. Together, they strive for excellence and have a strong vision for the future direction of the college.
- Governors are kept very well informed by senior leaders and have a good understanding of the college's strengths and areas for development. Governors are proactive in their role and visit the college frequently to support its development priorities.
- Governors are highly skilled and knowledgeable. They use their expertise to hold senior leaders stringently to account. For example, governors asked searching questions about the college's new curriculum structure prior to its implementation in 2017. They also question the accuracy of the college's performance-tracking system in order to ensure its reliability.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have established a strong culture of vigilance at the college. Leaders are passionate in ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils. The skills and expertise of the link governor are highly effective in supporting the safeguarding culture of the college.
- All staff understand what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's well-being. The training for staff and governors in safeguarding is thorough, including regular updates through the college year. Staff are vigilant of the signs that pupils may be at risk of

harm. Pupils know to whom they can talk if they have any worries or concerns.

- Leaders have invested in key resources to support pupils' mental health and well-being. Pupils with specific concerns are able to see a trained counsellor or gain access to the Lincolnshire 'healthy minds' service. Leaders are also proactive in engaging with parents, sharing advice on, for example, how to manage stress and anxiety.
- Leaders have paid specific attention to the security of the college site and the safety procedures for the use of hi-tech equipment. Leaders know the whereabouts of all sixth-form students who have greater freedom to leave the college site during social time. Leaders also ensure that all pupils who use specific machinery in engineering and technology must pass essential safety protocols before using any equipment without direct supervision.
- The checks made during the recruitment of staff are secure and monitored effectively by leaders and governors. Procedures are in place to ensure that all visitors to the school are suitably vetted.
- The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, agreed that their children feel safe, happy and well looked after by the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Relationships between staff and pupils are mutually strong and respectful. Pupils report that their learning is well organised and they appreciate the care that is extended towards them by staff. Pupils also say that they enjoy the freedom that comes with self-directed learning, such as the 'project' element of the curriculum.
- The implementation of the project element of the college's curriculum is having a striking impact on the development of pupils' future employability skills. In several sessions, pupils spoke enthusiastically with inspectors about their learning. In one example, pupils were designing and testing transportation devices against specific success criteria. All pupils talked about the skills they were gaining in teamwork, problem-solving and building resilience.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong and used effectively to question pupils, checking understanding and promoting independent thinking. Questioning enables pupils to apply their prior knowledge to new situations and articulate their thinking. This was seen, for example, in a Year 10 science lesson on neutralisation.
- Additional adult support is well deployed to ensure that pupils with SEND are well supported in their learning. These adults help to reshape learning activities and questions, so these pupils make better progress.
- Expectations are mostly high. Most teachers successfully, and increasingly, incorporate challenge in their planning and questioning. Some teaching is very strong, for example in science, mathematics and English. Teachers know their pupils well and ensure that activities are appropriately sequenced, so little time is wasted. Consequently, pupils in these subjects engage well with their learning and report that they feel well supported. However, this is not fully reflected across all subjects. The level of challenge and pace of new learning is not always as strong in, for example, product design and engineering.
- The school's policy on providing feedback is used consistently by all teachers. Pupils are informed about their successes in learning and how they can further improve their work.

Pupils are beginning to improve their ability to use and apply the advice they receive from their teachers.

- Teachers ensure that their assessment of pupils' work is accurate and reliable. Assessments are well planned and staff regularly check their accuracy with each other and with staff from different education settings. This has improved teachers' ability to assess accurately in most subject areas, although this is still developing in some subjects, such as engineering and computer science. Assessment in English is particularly strong.
- Most teachers pay specific attention to pupils' use of literacy and communication skills. Inspectors saw many examples of teachers drawing pupils' attention to the correction of spelling, punctuation and grammar, particularly in English. However, opportunities are somewhat limited for pupils to write at length across the curriculum, and to consistently apply technical subject vocabulary, particularly by the most able pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The college's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. The college's sense of community and care is a distinct strength of its provision, underpinned by the college ethos of nurturing professional and respectful relationships.
- The college places a strong emphasis on supporting pupils' aspirations and career destinations. Pupils receive excellent advice from staff, impartial advisers and local employers, including, for example, Siemens and Lindum Construction. Strong links also exist with the armed forces, particularly the Royal Air Force. The college's work to support pupils was recognised in the accreditation of the 'Career Mark' quality award in 2018.
- All pupils benefit from annual, purposeful work experience. Together with the careers guidance programme, pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their next steps.
- Leaders have implemented a comprehensive and carefully considered programme for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE). A wide range of topics is covered, appropriate to pupils' age range, including for students in the sixth form. Known as life guidance, pupils learn about healthy relationships, child sexual exploitation, consent, substance abuse, radicalisation and extremism.
- The pastoral care provided in the college is exceptionally strong. All pupils know who they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns. Leaders continually review their provision in the best interests of young people. Pupils and parents say that they appreciate and value the care and support provided.
- A strong emphasis is placed on pupils' mental health and well-being. The college invests in counselling services to support those pupils who may be experiencing difficulty. Targeted pupils have also benefited from their involvement in initiatives, such as the Amy Winehouse resilience programme, to help them deal with stress and anxiety.
- Pupils willingly accept opportunities to lead and take on additional responsibilities. For example, the college's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) group, is a pupil-led initiative in support of the college's inclusive ethos. The maturity and commitment of this group is a credit to the college. Representatives from the group reported that their

greatest achievement is that pupils in the college have 'learned how to accept themselves and accept each other'. This demonstrates a highly mature college environment.

- Pupils reported that the incidence of bullying and the use of derogatory language are very rare. They have complete confidence that any occurrence would be dealt with swiftly and effectively. Inspectors' scrutiny of college records confirms pupils' views.
- Leaders promote very effectively pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The life-guidance programme includes developing pupils' understanding of different faiths. Additionally, the 'project' initiative is an integral part of the college's curriculum, which is successfully enhancing this aspect of pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Year 10 have designed and constructed innovative approaches towards environmental sustainability. Their ideas include a bespoke beehive, a composting machine and a multi-material recycling bin. Together these projects are developing pupils' social responsibility.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes towards their learning. This is in response to the close support, care and guidance afforded to them by staff. They work diligently and with enthusiasm.
- Pupils are proud to be at the college. This is reflected in their polite conduct around the college site and the respect pupils show towards the dress code. They wear their business attire smartly. This demonstrates the value pupils place on belonging to the college community. All pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they were very happy to attend the college and, for many, it was one of the best decisions they had made. Some commute considerable distances to attend the college and they report that they would not have it any other way.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the college campus is impeccable. They self-manage very well. The mutual trust which exists between staff and pupils is remarkable, such that pupils are permitted to use college facilities during social time, sometimes without direct supervision. Pupils respect this and inspectors observed that all areas of the college were immaculately kept.
- A very high proportion of parents, who responded to Ofsted's online survey, agree that standards of behaviour are high and well managed by staff. A similarly very high proportion of staff also believe that the behaviour of pupils is excellent, and they feel well supported when any issues arise.
- Pupils rarely miss a day at the college. The college's attendance officer monitors attendance very closely and acts immediately where any concerns arise. Consequently, overall attendance for all groups of pupils is very high and the proportion of pupils regularly absent from college is very low.
- Exclusions due to poor behaviour are rare, which has not been the case in the past. The use of internal sanctions, such as isolation and detention, have fallen sharply. College leaders report that there is no need for an isolation facility. Inspectors' scrutiny of the college's behaviour records confirmed this.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils are well prepared for the future. Leaders have ensured that all pupils in Year 11 secure appropriate placements for their next steps in education, employment or training, which fulfil their needs and aspirations. This has been the case for the past two years and reflects the high-quality advice and guidance pupils receive.
- The overall attainment of pupils across a range of subjects in 2017 and 2018 was slightly below the national average. While the proportion of pupils who gained a standard pass in English and mathematics is above the national average, the proportion who gained a strong pass or better is below the national average. Inspectors' observations of learning and scrutiny of pupils' work indicates, however, that standards are rising rapidly.
- Typically, pupils join the college at the start of key stage 4. As such, the progress made by pupils, given their starting point in Year 10, is stronger than published information suggests. Leaders have taken determined action to bring about improvements in pupils' progress, most notably among current pupils. This is reflected in the consistently good-quality teaching and learning, together with high expectations from staff.
- The progress made by pupils in mathematics and science is particularly strong. The performance of current pupils in English is also much stronger than has been the case in the past.
- The progress of pupils with SEND is improving and these pupils achieve well, given their starting point in Year 10. This is due to the very close support these pupils receive, including from additional adults.
- Disadvantaged pupils perform well and in line with their peers. While the progress these pupils make is below that of all pupils nationally, they make good progress in the time they have spent at the college. Inspectors found that the progress of these pupils is continuing to improve rapidly.
- The progress made by the most able pupils is improving, although not yet at the levels of which this group of pupils are capable. Too few have achieved the higher grades at GCSE in the past.
- The progress made by pupils in engineering and computer science at key stage 4 is not as strong when compared to other subjects, such as mathematics and science.

16 to 19 study programmes

Outstanding

- Students receive exceptionally high-quality advice and guidance towards their next steps in education, employment or training. The majority who apply for courses in higher education secure their first-choice placements. Students are also very successful in securing prestigious apprenticeships, for example with the Royal Navy, RBM agricultural machinery and Prysmian fibre optics.
- The college's strength in helping to secure students' next steps is further supported by a comprehensive, annual work-experience programme, which extends across Years 12 and 13. All students are expected to participate and are strongly supported in finding appropriate placements which meet their needs and aspirations. Students report that they are very appreciative of these opportunities, particularly their engagement with local

companies.

- Attendance in the sixth form is strong and students rarely miss a day. The retention of students on their programmes of study is also very positive. Students receive strong pastoral support and also learn how to prepare for life in the modern world beyond the sixth form.
- Achievement in the sixth form is outstanding. In 2017, the progress made by students was well above that made by other students nationally. While there was a dip in 2018, the progress made by current students is equally as strong as 2017. This is because students receive high-quality teaching and benefit from the expert support provided by staff. Expectations are consistently very high, and students respond to this with enthusiasm and commitment.
- Student attitudes towards their learning and the college as a whole are exceptionally positive. As with pupils in key stage 4, students are proud to be part of the college and they value the industrial knowledge of staff. They are particularly positive about the care and support extended to them by staff. Students are also mutually respectful. Inspectors observed students providing each other with constructive advice in, for example, science and engineering classes.
- Students engage well in enrichment activity as part of a very well-designed curriculum. The college's 'project' initiative extends into the sixth form and provides students with opportunities to challenge their thinking, work creatively, and solve problems independently or by working with others. This strongly enhances their employability skills and helps them to develop confidence in activities, such as presentations, public speaking and developing positive relationships.
- Almost all students who did not secure a standard pass or better in English or mathematics GCSE by the end of key stage 4, are successful in doing so during their time in the sixth form.
- The leadership of the sixth form is effective and ambitious. Leaders know the strengths of the sixth form and are acutely aware of the areas for further improvement, such as the pace of progress made by students in product design. There is a very positive and respectful ethos in the sixth form, which is regarded by students as a harmonious community.

School details

Unique reference number	140950
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10087385

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 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	183
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	67
Appropriate authority	The UTC Trust
Chair	Paul Birt
Principal	John Morrison
Telephone number	01522 775 990
Website	http://lincolnutc.co.uk/
Email address	enquiries@lincolnutc.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21-22 February 2017

Information about this school

- Lincoln UTC is a technical college with a core focus on developing pupils' understanding of science, mathematics, technology and engineering as part of their curriculum. A strong emphasis is placed on preparing pupils for their future careers.
- The college is much smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is much smaller than the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.

- The proportion of pupils with SEND is slightly below the national average.
- The school used no alternative provision at the time of the inspection. Some pupils attend weekly placements in various businesses.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons across a range of different subjects, including the recently implemented 'Project' programme.
- Inspectors spoke with four groups of pupils in key stage 4 and some students in the sixth form. They also spoke with pupils and students informally during the college day and in lessons.
- Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' and students' work across a range of different subjects in Year 10 and Year 12.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the college's self-evaluation, the college's improvement planning, curriculum information, pupils' and students' performance information, including career destinations, attendance records and behaviour logs. The minutes of the governing UTC trust meetings and a range of school policies were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors met with college leaders, including the principal, vice-principal and senior leaders responsible for the quality of teaching and learning, behaviour and personal development and the sixth form. Inspectors also spoke with the designated leader for safeguarding, who is also the college's coordinator of the provision for pupils with SEND. Inspectors met with subject leaders and a selection of staff. A discussion was also held with the leader responsible for careers education and guidance and the leader with oversight of the use of the pupil premium funding. The lead inspector met with four members of the UTC trust, which included the chair. He also spoke with the director for education for the Baker Dearing Trust and an adviser for the Department for Education.
- The lead inspector also evaluated the 53 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. The 30 responses to Ofsted's staff survey were also considered.

Inspection team

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