

# Inspection of Silverstone UTC

Silverstone Circuit, Towcester, Northamptonshire NN12 8TL

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Inspection dates: 15–16 October 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Sixth-form provision

**Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud to be a part of the school community. Most are positive about their school experience. They get on well with each other and with their teachers. Pupils enjoy being treated as young adults. They wear their business dress with pride.

Pupils behave and attend well. Most pupils work hard and want to achieve. They respond positively to adults' high expectations of their conduct and behave well in lessons. Bullying is rare and quickly resolved when it does happen.

The school is a positive, safe environment. Pupils work safely in workshops and follow instructions closely.

Pupils understand the school's aim to get them 'work-ready'. Off-site visits help pupils to appreciate how their studies are relevant to the workplace. For instance, some pupils enjoyed a visit recently to the 'Ferrari Challenge Weekend'. Pupils receive high-quality advice about careers. They are very successful at securing appropriate placements after they leave school.

Pupils do not achieve well in all subjects. They do well in their subject specialisms. However, this is not the case in some other areas of the curriculum, for example science.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

In engineering, business studies and English, the curriculum is well designed and effective. Leaders have planned what pupils need to learn and when they should learn it. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to respond well to pupils' queries. They encourage pupils to use the correct terms in different subjects. Pupils use high-quality resources, such as the 'word banks' in business studies, to aid their learning. Teachers use information about what pupils know and can do to plan future learning. Pupils know what they need to do to improve and do so with increasing independence.

The quality of education is not good enough in some subjects. In physics and chemistry, some teachers do not have strong subject knowledge. Their planning does not build effectively on pupils' previous learning. Pupils are often not able to recall knowledge in specific detail or understand scientific concepts well. Pupils do not achieve well enough in science.

Not all pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow the same curriculum as other pupils. Teachers do not always support these pupils well enough in class. Some pupils with SEND miss lessons in English literature and/or chemistry to follow a different curriculum. This curriculum is not of a good enough quality. This limits their future choices and achievements.

Leaders make sure that pupils have lots of activities to prepare them for their next

steps. For example, sixth-form students visit a local golf and leisure complex as part of their learning in business studies. Engineering students meet leading experts. All pupils receive high-quality careers advice. Most of them move on to education, employment or training that is directly related to the subjects they have studied.

Pupils study a range of different topics as part of the personal development curriculum. For example, they have learned about Black History Month and the risks of plastic waste in the oceans. However, they are not always able to recall their learning. Some pupils do not understand well enough what it means to be British.

Pupils enjoy taking part in sports, art and drama. Some pupils participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

Students in the sixth form achieve well in most subjects. They approach their studies with maturity and focus. They enjoy taking on positions of responsibility, such as mentoring younger pupils. They ensure that the school has a good reputation in the local community. They support charities, such as the Anthony Nolan Trust. They say that their courses support their interests and aspirations well. The advice they receive prepares them well for a wide range of options, including apprenticeships. Some students would like to have more activities on offer.

Governors understand the aims of the school's specialist curriculums. However, they do not know enough about other aspects of the quality of education. Without clear plans in place, governors are not able to check that leaders are taking the right actions to bring about improvements.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders understand their responsibilities to safeguard pupils. They are well trained. Leaders get pupils the help they need as soon as they can. They ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. If they are worried about an adult's conduct, they take appropriate action quickly.

Staff know how to spot the signs that a pupil may be at risk. They are also aware of local issues that may affect pupils, such as county lines.

Pupils with whom we spoke knew how to stay safe, including students in the sixth form. However, some said they had not learned this at school.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Pupils do not achieve well in physics and chemistry. Previously, the science department was not fully staffed. While it is now fully staffed, the quality of teaching is inconsistent. Some teachers do not have the specialist subject

knowledge to teach chemistry. Teachers do not take into account pupils' previous experiences in physics and chemistry when they plan learning. Their expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high or ambitious. Leaders should ensure that the physics and chemistry curriculums are planned and sequenced to build on what pupils know and can do. They should ensure that teachers have the skills and knowledge they need to deliver the curriculum effectively so that pupils' achievement in these subjects improves.

- Leaders withdraw some Year 11 pupils from English literature or chemistry lessons if the pupils are not achieving well enough. Many of these pupils are those with SEND. Leaders do not check closely that the curriculum then followed by these pupils is of a high-enough quality and appropriately demanding. Leaders must ensure that all pupils have access to a high-quality ambitious curriculum.
- In key stage 4, not all curriculum plans are ambitious for pupils with SEND. These pupils are not always well supported by teachers. This is because some teachers do not understand the particular needs of these pupils. Leaders must ensure that all teachers have the necessary training and skills to support these pupils well. They must ensure that the curriculum allows all pupils with SEND to be successful.
- Leaders do not have a consistent approach to meeting pupils' broader development needs. The school's work to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not consistently of a high quality. Leaders should ensure that the programme to promote pupils' personal development is fully effective.
- Governors do not have a close enough oversight of the school's curriculum beyond the school's specialisms of engineering and business studies. They have not ensured that leaders have precise plans in place to bring about improvements to the quality of education in those areas identified as being weaker. Governors should ensure that they have the information, skills and training necessary to be fully effective in their roles.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139690
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10087398
<b>Type of school</b>	Technical
<b>School category</b>	University technical college
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	14 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	480
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	226
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Doug Newman
<b>Principal</b>	Neil Patterson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.utc-silverstone.co.uk/">www.utc-silverstone.co.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29–30 April 2015

## Information about this school

- The number of pupils on roll has increased since the last inspection, including the number of students on roll in the sixth form.
- Since the last inspection, there have been some changes to curriculum leadership.
- As a university technical college, the school has two key specialisms: business studies and technical events management, and high-performance engineering.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the principal and other senior leaders. We met with the coordinator for the provision for pupils with SEND and the leader with oversight of the pupil premium funding.

- I met with three trustees, including the chair of the board.
- We met with teachers and support staff.
- We met with groups of pupils, including students from the sixth form.
- We looked in detail at four subjects: engineering, business and events management, English and science, including physics and chemistry. We met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' workbooks, met with pupils and met with teachers of the lessons we visited.
- We observed the behaviour of pupils during social times and spoke with pupils informally.
- I met with the assistant principal, who is the designated safeguarding lead, to discuss safeguarding. We also spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding. I looked at documentation relating to safeguarding, the school's system for recruiting staff and the school's single central register.
- We reviewed a range of documentation, including self-evaluation of the school's performance, curriculum plans and information concerning pupils' attendance and behaviour.

## **Inspection team**

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alastair Ogle	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Shepherd	Ofsted Inspector
Rakesh Patel	Ofsted Inspector
Ralph Brompton	Ofsted Inspector

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