

UTC@MediacityUK

100–102 Broadway, Salford M50 2UW

Inspection dates

10–11 July 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The college has experienced turbulence in staffing and leadership which has led to inconsistency in teaching. As a result, pupils' progress is not good.
- Some teachers do not plan well for the different abilities of pupils in their classes. Pupils, including the most able, are not sufficiently challenged to enable them to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve, and do not manage pupils' behaviour consistently well. As a result, some pupils disrupt the learning of others.
- Teachers have not developed pupils' basic literacy skills sufficiently well. This hinders pupils' progress in other subjects.
- Leaders do not set high enough targets for some pupils in GCSE subjects.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make variable progress across the college.
- Pupils' attendance is improving but is still too low.
- In the sixth form, leaders do not monitor students' progress with enough rigour to show how well students are doing, or to identify those in need of additional support.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is too variable. Students' progress in academic subjects in the sixth form does not match the better progress seen on vocational programmes.

The school has the following strengths

- The new principal, well supported by her senior leaders, has set the college firmly on a road to recovery. Leaders have an accurate view of the college's strengths and weaknesses. Staff morale is high.
- The curriculum has been redesigned to ensure that it meets the needs and interests of pupils so that they can make better progress.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Teaching, learning and assessment in media and film are a strength of the sixth form.
- The vast majority of pupils go on to appropriate education, employment or training.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or who have SEN and/or disabilities, make good progress by:
 - making sure that targets set are challenging enough to enable pupils to fulfil their potential in GCSE subjects
 - having high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - using assessment information to plan activities which provide pupils, including the most able, with sufficient challenge
 - raising standards of literacy across the curriculum.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - building on the successes already made, to improve attendance rates for all pupils
 - ensuring that teachers apply behaviour management strategies consistently to eliminate the low-level disruption from a small minority of pupils.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - reviewing the use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils so that the strategies in place make a positive difference to outcomes for these pupils
 - embedding current initiatives for those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities so that the provision for these pupils improves.
- Improve the quality of the 16 to 19 study programmes so that all students make good progress, by:
 - improving the quality of teaching and learning in the sixth form
 - ensuring that leaders and teachers check students' progress carefully and take appropriate action to ensure that it is consistently good.

An external review of the effectiveness of the use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The college has experienced a significant number of staffing and leadership changes since it opened in 2015. In addition, there have been difficulties in recruiting teachers in some specialist subjects. This has had a detrimental impact on teaching, learning and pupils' progress.
- The principal has a clear vision for the college. Since taking up her post in October 2017, she has succeeded in bringing much-needed stability to the college. Together with the support of senior leaders and governors, she has led rapid and effective change and improved staff morale. The large majority of staff who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire said that they are proud to work at the college. Staff appreciate her open and honest approach.
- The principal and her senior team have an honest and accurate understanding of the college's strengths and areas for improvement. The improvements in the curriculum, teaching and attendance all point to the ability of leaders and governors to improve the college.
- Leaders have improved the systems to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the college. They regularly check the impact of teaching on the progress pupils make and identify where training could help teachers to improve this. Staff value the wide range of professional training and support that they receive.
- Leaders ensure that assessments are accurate by using external markers for mock examinations, internal moderation and consultation with schools within the Aldridge Education Trust.
- Senior leaders successfully support pupils who join the college in Year 10 from over 90 secondary schools and as a result they settle in well. However, leaders do not ensure that the targets set for pupils in their GCSE subjects are sufficiently demanding.
- Several new middle leaders have been appointed recently. Through regular reviews, they are increasingly held to account for pupils' progress. Middle leaders have benefited from recent training from leaders at a local school. They are in the process of developing their skills in their leadership roles.
- Pupil premium funding is being used more effectively than in the past. Leaders know the barriers faced by disadvantaged pupils. As a result, in some areas, these pupils are making strong progress. However, this is not the case in all year groups. This is because the needs of these pupils have not been considered closely enough.
- The funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is not used sufficiently well. In the past, instability in the leadership of the provision for these pupils has had a detrimental impact on pupils' progress. Leaders commissioned an external review of the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and are acting on the findings. Recent staff appointments are enabling leaders to deliver training to teachers. However, leaders are fully aware that further improvements are needed.
- Leaders recognised that the curriculum was not fit for purpose. The new principal has dealt with this promptly: she has realigned the curriculum to meet the needs and

interests of pupils and support them in making better progress in their courses. For example, more time has been given to English and mathematics in key stage 4. In addition, GCSE photography has been introduced for pupils currently in Year 10.

- Vocational learning in media and film underpins the college's curriculum. Pupils say that the specialist curriculum was 'the key reason for choosing the college'. The specialist facilities and strong links with companies involved in media, marketing and technology enable pupils to thrive in media-related subjects.
- Leaders are developing a wider range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, including live media streaming, photography and visits to theatres. Pupils are also involved in the Young Enterprise Scheme and charity work.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is strong. Through a well-planned curriculum, as well as in assemblies, pupils are encouraged to consider relevant issues such as equality and diversity. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Representatives from the Aldridge Education Trust have supported the principal well in her efforts to improve the quality of education in the college.
- The majority of parents who spoke to inspectors and those who made use of the free-text service were positive about the college. One parent commented, 'My child has grown in confidence and has wonderful opportunities.' Another parent said, 'My child has had a positive life-changing experience.'

Governance of the school

- Governors are passionate and highly committed to the ethos of the college. They recognised that outcomes at the college were not good enough in 2017. Consequently, they established an 'education improvement board' (EIB). The chair of the EIB regularly visits the college, meets with leaders and visits lessons. These activities help him to identify where further improvements are necessary. The EIB reports to the main governing body on a regular basis.
- Governors have an improved understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the college. Minutes of meetings show that governors are now asking leaders more rigorous and challenging questions.
- Governors are aware that funding for disadvantaged pupils and for those who have SEN and/or disabilities has not been used as effectively as it should have been in the past. Governors have taken action and put effective plans in place to improve the provision for these pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the college. Safeguarding records are detailed. The single central record is up to date and there are appropriate checks in place to ensure that pupils at the college are protected.
- Designated safeguarding leads have received an appropriate level of training and development to allow them to execute their roles and provide advice and guidance to

pupils and staff at the college.

- All staff and governors have completed training in safeguarding. Staff are aware of the signs of abuse and risks associated with extremism. They know what to do if they have any concern about a pupil's welfare or safety.
- Leaders have ensured that there are very effective links with a range of external agencies, such as local social services and the police, to support and protect pupils. Leaders share information with these organisations to protect their pupils and youngsters in communities across the region. Leaders have been particularly effective in supporting pupils and their families with safeguarding concerns related to 'county lines', child sexual exploitation and child protection concerns.
- Pupils said that they are safe in the college and parents and carers agreed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent across and within subjects and year groups.
- Since the beginning of the current college year, there has been more stability in staffing. As a result, the quality of teaching is beginning to rise, evident in the improvements in the progress of pupils.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what their pupils can achieve. They do not use assessment well enough to plan teaching which builds on what pupils can already do. Teachers do not move pupils, including the most able, onto more challenging tasks soon enough.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to provide clear explanations. Some teachers use questioning well to draw out what pupils know.
- Teachers do not ensure that pupils' literacy skills are sufficiently well developed. This hampers pupils' progress across the curriculum.
- Pupils enjoy positive relationships with each other and their teachers.
- The quality of support that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive in lessons varies too much.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The college's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- The college's pastoral support programmes are helping pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning. However, some do not show the motivation required to become effective learners.
- Pupils feel well cared for and valued. Pupils typically commented: 'We are treated like adults here. The opportunities and support from teachers are much better than in our previous school.'

- Leaders have ensured that a comprehensive programme of personal, social, health and economic education is in place. Leaders encourage pupils to respect the views of people with different faiths. Pupils recently took part in Holocaust Memorial Day activities. They understand how to be safe from potential dangers, including from those that can arise when using the internet, from gangs and drugs. Leaders place a strong emphasis on the mental health and well-being of pupils.
- Pupils report that bullying incidents are rare and that when they occur, staff deal with them effectively. College documentation confirms this.
- The college provides high-quality careers education and guidance. Pupils told inspectors that they receive unique work experience opportunities such as placements at prestigious employers in Media City. Many pupils are keen to go into careers in media and film production. Parents who spoke with inspectors say that the college prepares their children well for the world of work, for instance through supporting them to gain apprenticeships in digital marketing.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Leaders, together with the attendance officer, monitor pupils' attendance rigorously and work closely with families when absence is too high. Many pupils join the college having had a period of instability and poor attendance in their previous schools. Leaders' actions to raise overall attendance have led to improvements for some pupils. However, the rates of absence for pupils are still too high.
- A small minority of pupils disrupt the learning of others because staff do not always apply the college's behaviour policy consistently well.
- Pupils and staff say that behaviour has improved since the appointment of the new principal. Records show that fixed term exclusions have declined and are below the national average.
- Pupils are polite and friendly. They wear their uniform well, showing pride in their college. In the main, pupils' movement around the college is calm and well supervised by staff. Pupils socialise well at break and lunchtimes.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Using published information to measure progress from Year 7 to Year 11 would be misleading since pupils start at the college in Year 10. Baseline tests administered in Year 10 suggest that many pupils arrive at the college with significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils' progress is not good because it varies too much between subjects and year groups.
- In 2017, the first cohort of Year 11 pupils did not do well in their GCSE examinations. Only low-ability pupils in mathematics matched the attainment of similar pupils nationally. This reflects a curriculum which did not meet the needs of pupils as well as a legacy of weak teaching and changes in staffing. The school's analysis of progress for

current Year 11 pupils shows signs of modest improvement across English, mathematics and a range of other subjects as a consequence of some improvements in teaching.

- Pupils' outcomes in vocational courses at key stage 4 are stronger than in academic subjects. In 2017, pupils' attainment was in line with the national average for vocational subjects.
- Current assessment information, lesson observations and work scrutiny show that pupils in Year 10, including the most able, are making better progress than in previous years in English, mathematics, science and a range of other subjects.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils in 2017 was weaker than for other pupils nationally and other pupils within the college. Staff are providing more focused support to help address gaps in these pupils' learning. This is beginning to help current disadvantaged pupils make better progress. However, in some subjects the difference in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and that of others nationally is not diminishing quickly enough.
- The progress made by pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is inconsistent. The progress of some of these pupils is improving but, for others, progress is weak.
- A very high proportion of pupils secure appropriate places in education, training or employment when they leave college as a result of the work-based experiences and the good advice that they receive.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is too variable across a range of subjects and does not ensure that students make good progress.
- In 2017, all students completed a Level 3 vocational award in media and filming. Completion and attainment rates for vocational subjects were in line with the national average. Progress on academic courses followed by a smaller number of students was below average.
- Inspection evidence shows that this year outcomes in academic and vocational subjects should improve on those in 2017. Students who study vocational courses continue to make better progress than the small number studying academic courses. In media and film, teachers' effective planning ensures that students are well taught and make strong progress.
- Leaders do not have a sufficiently sharp oversight of the progress that students make. This prevents them identifying students making slow progress and implementing appropriate intervention strategies to help students to catch up and achieve their potential. The newly appointed leader for sixth form understands the need for improvements and is beginning to take effective action to bring about change.
- Leaders have ensured that the principles and requirements of the study programme are met. They have recently implemented significant changes to the curriculum for the 16 to 19 study programme. They have succeeded in their aim of ensuring that there is an appropriate and effective mix of subjects within the programme.
- Leaders have nurtured extensive relationships with prestigious media-related

employers at Media City. These employers provide ample opportunities for work experience and live briefs which students value greatly. These include students in creative media developing a cross-platform media campaign for a gaming apparel distributor or developing a marketing campaign for a pay-per-minute sitting room to encourage students from the Salford area to take up a 25% discount.

- Leaders have ensured that students receive structured information, advice and guidance throughout their study programme to help them prepare for their next steps. Students are well supported in their subject choices. Retention on sixth-form courses is strong.
- Students who resit their GCSE mathematics and English qualifications in the sixth form are supported to make good progress towards achieving a pass grade.
- Students in the sixth form behave very well and are excellent role models for younger pupils.
- Students feel safe and are safe. They receive regular updates on how they can keep themselves safe in college and in their personal lives. These updates include training on how to keep safe online, risks in relation to radicalisation and extremism, and the importance of healthy working practices in the media industry.

School details

Unique reference number	142010
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	10042425

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	368
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	154
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Cowley
Principal	Ruth Bradbury
Telephone number	0161 661 3947
Website	www.utcmmediacityuk.org.uk/
Email address	principal@utcmmediacityuk.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- UTC@MediacityUK is a 14 to 19 university technical college with a focus on digital and media skills. It opened in September 2015.
- The college is owned by Creative Industries UTC which is a stand-alone academy trust.
- The college is sponsored by three partners: Aldridge Education, The Lowry and the University of Salford.
- The governing body comprises representative trustees of each of the sponsors.
- The college is in the process of incorporating into the Aldridge Education Multi-

Academy Trust.

- The college is smaller than average and provides education for pupils in key stages 4 and 5. Pupils join the college in Year 10 or in Year 12 for the sixth form.
- There has been considerable change in staffing and senior leadership since the college opened. The current principal was appointed as interim principal in October 2017 and made substantive principal in May 2018.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much lower than the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- In 2017, the college did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment by the end of key stage 4.
- In 2017, the college did not meet the government's minimum standard value for post-16 academic courses, which sets the minimum expectation for students' progress on A-level courses.
- The college has used alternative provision with Make a Pathway, but no pupils were accessing alternative provision at the time of the inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning across Year 10 and Year 12 in a wide range of subjects. Some of these were joint observations with college leaders. Inspectors observed pupils' conduct at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of pupils' work in different subjects throughout the inspection to evaluate pupils' learning over time.
- Inspectors met with pupils in Year 10 and Year 12 formally and spoke with many more pupils informally.
- Meetings were held with the principal and senior leaders, groups of middle leaders, teachers, a member of the governing body and the executive principal designate. The lead inspector held telephone conversations with the education director of Aldridge Education Trust and a representative of the Baker Dearing Educational Trust.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including: records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance, safeguarding information, minutes of governing body meetings, information on the progress made by pupils, training arrangements for teachers and other staff, checks on the quality of teaching, the college's self-evaluation and the improvement plan.
- Inspectors considered the 29 responses to the staff questionnaire. Inspectors also considered the views of parents, taking into account 28 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 21 comments by text.

Inspection team

Ahmed Marikar, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Cocker	Her Majesty's Inspector
Philip Wood	Ofsted 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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