

Inspection of Ron Dearing UTC

Kingston Square, Hull HU2 8BQ

Inspection dates: 11–12 March 2020

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Sixth-form provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Ron Dearing UTC has the hallmarks of a school that could be viewed as a guiding light in the educational sector. Pupils attending the school are fortunate to receive an exceptional quality of education. Many parents and carers say that, since starting at the school, their children have changed for the better. Indeed, pupils are mature and act professionally at all times. They achieve particularly well from their different starting points.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Staff and pupils report very high levels of satisfaction. Pupils say that staff really care about them and that they feel safe. Relationships between pupils and staff are extremely positive. Everyone is on first name terms. When walking around the superb facilities and observing the interactions between staff and pupils, one could be excused for forgetting that you are in a school at all. Leaders have worked hard to create an environment which is business-like and heavily focused on the world of work.

The school has considerable links to industry and business in the local area and beyond. Pupils and staff work very closely with professionals, both in the school and the workplace. Pupils develop a wide range of employability skills so they are ready to enter the world of work.

So far, when leaving the school, all pupils have secured apprenticeships with the school's partner employers, attended university or found alternative employment.

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

The school has been open to pupils for less than three years. In that time, leaders have successfully developed a unique curriculum that includes a lot of input from the school's partners. In school, pupils regularly participate in work-related projects to solve real problems. They do this alongside industry professionals. This brings learning to life for pupils. It also allows pupils to use and apply their learning, helping them remember much more over time.

The curriculum is superbly designed to ensure that pupils develop a readiness to learn new content and skills. This is because leaders have thought very carefully about what basic knowledge pupils must know before they attempt to learn something that is far more complex. Teachers often encourage pupils to reflect on and improve their work across all subjects. Teachers' insightful assessment and sharp questioning ensure that they know the strengths and weaknesses of every pupil they teach. As a result, leaders and teachers adapt lessons and the curriculum quickly to help pupils understand more in the future.

Teachers know their subjects remarkably well. They demonstrate passion for their subjects. They support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities

(SEND) effectively. Pupils' outcomes at the end of key stages 4 and 5 are very strong, particularly in engineering and mathematics.

The principal, vice-principals and other senior and curriculum leaders are astute, enthusiastic and entirely committed to the school, staff and pupils. Staff morale and well-being are superb. Staff say that achieving a satisfactory work-life balance is a priority for leaders. As such, leaders look for every opportunity to ease the burden on staff. For example, leaders commissioned an organisation to mark recent mock examination papers. This freed up valuable time for staff to plan lessons and support pupils on a one-to-one basis.

Governance is outstanding. Without exception, all trustees and governors know the school inside out. They hold leaders to account very well. Governors and trustees ensure that the curriculum is ambitious and leads to pupils achieving their own career goals.

Rates of attendance are much higher than the national average. Very few pupils are persistently absent from the school. The attendance rates of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are higher than the rates for other pupils nationally. Pupils with previously low rates of attendance who join the school come on leaps and bounds. There have been no pupils permanently excluded from the school since opening in September 2017. Very few pupils have been excluded for a fixed period. Leaders set high expectations. They expect pupils to behave in a professional and mature manner. Pupils do not disappoint.

Leaders, governors and trustees place an emphasis on academic rigour. They place an equal importance on developing pupils personally. The personal development curriculum is worthy of being shared with others. It is carefully planned so that pupils can successfully develop their employability skills. The extended school day allows staff to support pupils during a wide range of enrichment activities. Attendance at clubs and groups, such as the army combined cadet force and engineering design club, is high.

Students in the sixth form account for nearly 50% of the school's cohort. The school's many strengths experienced by pupils in key stage 4 also apply to students in key stage 5. Sixth-form students study a highly specialised curriculum, including digital media and engineering technologies. Students' A-level outcomes in 2019 placed the school in the top 1% of schools nationally. All students attend work experience over the summer months. Students are asked to apply for highly sought-after positions so that they gain experience of the application process.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safeguarding curriculum and procedures to keep pupils safe are very well led. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum ensure that pupils learn about the risks they

might face in work and outside the school. The school's close ties with industry enable pupils to complete a three-day first aid at work qualification.

Scrutiny of the school's record-keeping highlights that staff are vigilant and refer any concerns to leaders swiftly. Leaders' close links with a wide range of external agencies and healthcare professionals ensure that pupils receive specialist support if needed.

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 are the school and you are 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

Unique reference number	144766
Local authority	Kingston upon Hull City Council
Inspection number	10121668
Type of school	Technical
School category	University technical college
Age range of pupils	14 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	506
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	214
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Charlie Spencer
Principal	Sarah Pashley
Website	www.rondearingutc.com
Date of previous inspection	2 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school opened to pupils in September 2017.
- Governance is via the Ron Dearing UTC board of trustees. Some powers are delegated to the governing body and various committees.
- The school is funded by the Department for Education (DfE). It has industry partners, including: The University of Hull, KCOM, RB, Siemens Gamesa, Smith+Nephew, Spencer Group, Arco, APD, Bonus, BP, C4DI, Fujitsu, Greenport Hull, Ideal Boilers, Orsted, Sewell Group, Sonoco Trident, Air Products, AJ Building, Baumer, Emmerson Kitney, Horncastle and Wykeland.

Information about this inspection

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

- Ofsted is aware of the challenges that Covid-19 is currently posing to those we inspect. During this visit, the inspectors took into consideration the impact of any measures being taken to slow the spread of Coronavirus by the school. This has included the effect these measures have had on the current attendance of the pupils and staffing arrangements.
- We undertook deep dives into mathematics, English, engineering and creative digital. To do this, we met with subject leaders and visited a sample of lessons in these subjects. We also scrutinised pupils' books and other kinds of work produced by pupils who were part of the classes we visited. In addition, we had discussions with teachers and a group of pupils from the lessons visited.
- We met senior and subject leaders, teachers, including those new to the profession, trustees, governors, including the chair of the trust, industry and sponsor partners, in addition to administrative and support staff.
- An inspector spoke on the telephone with staff from one industry partner and the lead inspector spoke on the telephone with the school improvement partner.
- We scrutinised pupils' work during lessons and with subject leaders.
- At the request of school leaders, the lead inspector met with four ex-students who are in their first year of apprenticeships with one of the sponsor partners.
- We held informal and formal discussions with many pupils and observed interactions during social times.
- We observed the work of the school and scrutinised a wide range of evidence, including the school's planning documents, behaviour and attendance records, safeguarding files and recruitment checks.
- We took into account the 59 responses from parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. There were 108 responses from pupils to the pupil survey and 37 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lee Elliott, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ralph Brompton	Ofsted Inspector
Marc Doyle	Ofsted Inspector

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