

Inspection of Mulberry UTC

64 Parnell Road, London E3 2RU

Inspection dates: 10–11 March 2020

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Sixth-form provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils in this school study work-related courses in science, health and social care, creative and digital media, business, and performing and production arts. They also study academic GCSEs and A levels. Pupils particularly enjoy their learning in the work-related courses. Pupils get many opportunities to experience the world of work in these areas. The majority progress to further education, apprenticeships or paid work in these fields.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils in the school. Leaders want all pupils to be ready for the world of work and to take advantage of the many local opportunities for employment. Leaders show full commitment to the school's motto of 'where learning works'.

Pupils in the school are happy, safe and respectful to one another and staff. Bullying happens very rarely in this school. Pupils told us that they learn about being kind to one another and they respect each other's differences. Pupils know that if bullying does occur, teachers deal with it quickly.

Pupils behave well. Pupils focus in their lessons and there is very little disruption to their learning. Pupils also behave well around the school between lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtime.

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

Leaders want to provide a high-quality education for pupils at this school. They have identified the skills needed by young people to work in London in the future. Leaders provide a range of specialist subjects that engage pupils and prepare them well for future employment. The sponsors of the school provide good support in these areas.

Leaders have thought carefully about what pupils learn and when they learn it. For example, in history, pupils learn about the history of medicine from medieval times to the present day. This prepares pupils well for GCSE, but also fills in historical-knowledge gaps that many pupils have. In specialist subjects, leaders have organised units in a way that develops pupils' skills. The units also link to practical work and work placements. The school has good resources to support teaching of the specialist areas. However, not all teachers are trained to teach these subjects. Furthermore, leaders have not provided these teachers with all the training they need.

Pupils join the school in Year 10 with different experiences of education before this. Pupils then achieve well. They do well because leaders and teachers plan learning to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils in the sixth form achieve particularly strongly in the specialist courses, for example health and social care.

Pupils are motivated and have good attitudes to their learning. They behave well in their lessons and are quick to get on with the tasks set by teachers. This means that teachers can deliver their lessons as planned. Pupils' good behaviour also means that teachers can work with groups and individuals who need further support or challenge.

Leaders have identified seven characteristics for pupils to develop in their time at the school. These include promoting equality and diversity. These characteristics are woven into the fabric of the school through personal, social and health education (PSHE) and activities such as the Model United Nations.

Leaders have developed a wide range of activities to broaden pupils' experiences. Most of these relate to the specialist subjects studied. Leaders work closely with their sponsors to provide appropriate work experience placements. Pupils also take part in many trips related to the specialist subject areas. Leaders organise several project weeks across the year. These weeks give pupils the opportunity to meet with employers from all the specialist areas. Pupils have fewer opportunities to participate in clubs and activities beyond the subject specialisms, such as sports. Leaders have recently introduced systems for recording which activities pupils do outside of lessons, but this is not fully in place.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND can choose from the same offer as other pupils in the school. Pupils who need additional help are supported in the classroom by teachers and support staff. Teachers make sure that all pupils are challenged to do the best they can. For example, in the sixth form students can combine the study of A levels with the specialist subjects. Leaders have offered A-level subjects that support the specialist areas.

Leaders have created a working environment where staff feel valued and supported. There are opportunities for staff to receive training, for example the 'women in leadership' course. Leaders are considerate of staff workload and well-being. The governing body is committed to the vision of the school, and many of the governors have been involved since the start.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff receive regular safeguarding training. Staff know how to report concerns.

Leaders ensure that staff are aware of the risks to pupils in the local area and staff know the signs to look for. Leaders work in partnership with other agencies and make timely and appropriate referrals. Leaders keep thorough records of these referrals and they check the progress of these cases regularly. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe during form time and through PSHE. Leaders employ a counsellor to support pupils with their mental well-being.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, lessons are taught by non-specialist teachers. This means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that all teachers receive appropriate subject training when teaching outside their subject specialisms.
- Leaders organise many extra activities for pupils. These are closely related to the subjects the pupils learn. But there are not many wider activities for pupils to take part in and there is an incomplete system for recording what activities pupils do. Leaders should provide a wider range of activities for pupils to take part in.

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	144756
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10121509
Type of school	Other secondary/Technical
School category	Academy sponsor-led
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	320
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	277
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jane Farrell
Principal	Katharine Vincent
Website	www.mulberryutc.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Mulberry UTC (university technical college) opened in September 2017. It is part of the Mulberry Schools Trust and is sponsored by: Goldsmiths, University of London; Barts Health NHS Trust; the National Theatre; the British Film Institute; and Bank of America Merrill Lynch.
- Pupils join the school either in Year 10 or in Year 12. At key stage 4, pupils follow a core curriculum in English, mathematics, science and humanities, and choose from options within a specialist curriculum. At key stage 5, pupils combine the study of technical and vocational courses with the study of A levels in relevant subjects.
- The school uses the following alternative provision: London East Alternative Provision (LEAP).

Information about this inspection

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

- We met with the chief executive officer of the trust, executive principal, principal, senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers. We also met with the chair of the trust, the chair of the local governing body and other governors, including sponsor governors.
- We did deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics, science, health and social care, and creative and digital media. In each of these subjects, inspectors met with the subject leader, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and looked at pupils' work.
- We scrutinised the UTC's policies relating to safeguarding, spoke with the designated safeguarding leader and considered records of the suitability checks the UTC makes on its staff. We asked many pupils for their opinions about safety, behaviour and bullying. We considered parents' responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey.

Inspection team

Mark Smith, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Steve Lambert	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lisa Strong	Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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