

Inspection of London Design and Engineering UTC

15 University Way, Royal Docks, London E16 2RD

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 March 2022

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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe in school. Parents and carers typically commented that the school goes the 'extra mile'. They appreciate the helpful communication they receive from leaders.

Motivating quotations around the school encourage pupils to aspire to ambitious destinations and not to look back on missed opportunities. Leaders expect a lot from pupils. They want pupils to make the most of all the school has to offer.

Pupils appreciate being taught about the wider world of work, employability qualities and practical life skills, particularly through the technical subjects that are taught at school. Tutor groups are named after the sponsors of the school, and pupils are keen to take up and engage in the employer-led opportunities that they receive through the curriculum.

In the reception area, a large map shows the different destinations that the school's former pupils have progressed to, including apprenticeships, employment and higher education. Through this visual aid, leaders encourage pupils to be ambitious for their own future careers.

Working relationships between teachers and pupils are positive. Pupils behave well. They are attentive in lessons and want to succeed. Pupils work respectfully with each other. Bullying is rare, if it does happen, leaders will deal with it swiftly.

The equalities, inclusion and diversity group aims to promote opportunities to celebrate differences across the school and ensure that all voices are listened to. Through the Citizens UK society, pupils have the chance to campaign for contemporary issues such as the living wage for local people.

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

Leaders make sure that all pupils have access to a curriculum that prepares them for their individual next steps into employment, higher education or apprenticeships. When pupils join the school in Year 9, they try out new subjects, such as technical design and engineering, before choosing their GCSE options. In the sixth form, students can choose from a wide range of subjects. All sixth-form students may opt to study engineering regardless of their prior knowledge or starting points.

The curriculum is well planned and sequenced. Subject leaders have thought about their curriculum so that it helps all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to learn and remember key content over time. For example, in English, pupils learn about the main elements of the Gothic style of writing when they join the school in Year 9. Later, when pupils study 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and My Hyde' in Year 11, they draw on their prior knowledge to support them with new learning.

Across the curriculum, employer-led projects support and enhance pupils' professional experiences and learning. This helps pupils to make connections to the wider world of work and provides a valuable external audience for their project work. For example, in a Year 12 digital-media lesson, an employer presented to students a set of instructions for the project that they were working on. In English, listening to a speech from a sports journalist helped pupils in Year 10 to recognise different types of non-fiction writing.

Remote education is well integrated into the curriculum. Whether pupils are in school or at home, they access the same curriculum and have the opportunity to discuss new learning with their teachers.

Pupils behave well. They understand behaviour expectations and respect staff and their peers. This means learning in class generally proceeds smoothly.

Leaders identify pupils with SEND quickly and make sure that appropriate support is in place for them. Teachers are knowledgeable and employ strategies to support pupils with SEND. Leaders encourage pupils to read widely and often. Pupils could describe with enthusiasm the variety of books that they were currently reading for pleasure. Pupils who need support with reading receive tailored help. However, time for extra reading is limited for pupils who need regular practice to build their reading fluency. Leaders are in the early stages of addressing this.

Planned assessment tasks, at the end of each unit of work, help subject leaders to understand what pupils have learned and remembered from the curriculum. However, class teachers do not check pupils' understanding as routinely in the lessons. Or if they do, they do not act routinely to address any pupils' misconceptions. Pupils receive helpful careers education, information, advice and guidance. This provision is a real strength. The majority of students go on employment, higher education or apprenticeships involving science, technology, engineering or mathematics. Pupils democratically elect pupil leaders who help to arrange community events for the school. There are a number of extra-curricular clubs and societies for pupils to sign up for, including rowing or table tennis. Pupils in the 'Lego society' also organise construction activities for pupils from local primary schools.

Staff feel well supported. Leaders have put initiatives in place to help them to manage their workload. They know that leaders care about their well-being and typically described the school as a 'family.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff receive up-to-date safeguarding training. Staff identify pupils who may need early help and refer pupils accordingly. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to make sure that referrals are timely and followed

up. They make sure that information about pupils is transferred when they join from other schools.

Leaders are knowledgeable about the local area and the potential safeguarding risks that pupils may face, including the risks of knife crime. Through the curriculum, they teach pupils how to manage and mitigate contextual risks. Leaders engage pupils with important safeguarding messages, including about consent and staying safe online, through the 'Learning for Life' curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, teachers do not use strategies to check pupils' understanding of key content. At other times, when teachers check pupils' understanding, they do not systematically address their misconceptions. As a result, teachers do not have an accurate picture of what pupils know and remember from the curriculum, and pupils' misunderstandings are not addressed. Leaders must ensure that all staff use a range of assessments to check the key knowledge that pupils remember and diagnose and address any gaps.
- Support for pupils who are weaker readers does not include meaningful time for targeted practice in reading. This hinders the development of their reading fluency. Leaders should strengthen current systems to ensure that weaker readers have additional time to practise and develop their reading fluency.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	142903
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	10212292
Type of school	Secondary 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	648
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	375
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jeremy Galpin
Headteacher	Geoffrey Fowler
Website	www.ldeutc.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 October 2018

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school's specialist (technical) subjects are engineering, art and design and construction and the built environment. Its main sponsors are the University of East London, Thames Water, Costain, Skanska and Chelmsford Diocese Educational Trust.
- Pupil numbers at the school have increased considerably since the last inspection in 2018.

Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the special education needs coordinator, the leader with responsibility for safeguarding and the chair of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors completed deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, computing, art and design and engineering. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' priorities for school improvement.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors looked at the effectiveness of the school's work on safeguarding by reviewing the record of pre-employment checks for staff, speaking to staff, governors and pupils and meeting with the safeguarding team.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including the free-text comments, as well as responses to the online staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

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