

Inspection of South Bank UTC

56 Brixton Hill, London SW2 1QS

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are ambitious to develop pupils' employability skills in preparation for their future. They have designed a curriculum within specific career pathways. Pupils participate in workshops and complete work placements with a range of the school's business and education partners. This supports pupils' learning in class. Leaders organise educational visits where pupils learn about the wide range of careers available to them. Provision for careers education, advice and guidance is excellent.

Pupils are happy and safe here. They behave well in lessons and have positive attitudes to their studies. Leaders have high expectations for the behaviour of pupils. Pupils listen to their teachers and show respect for different cultures and beliefs. Bullying is rare. When any bullying does occur, leaders take action to address it.

Pupils in Year 11 receive age-appropriate relationships and sex education and health education. However, leaders provide fewer opportunities for pupils' broader development and for pupils to explore their interests more widely.

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

Leaders have built strong partnerships with London-based businesses and further education and skills providers. Through these partnerships, pupils participate in a range of school-based projects and enrichment outings and visits. For example, students in the sixth form who study engineering work with a construction company to complete employer-led projects. Through these activities, pupils gain strong employability skills and develop their confidence and independence.

Students in the sixth form undertake extended work placements with the school's business partners. Students on the health course build their knowledge and experience through learning in the school's simulated health facilities. In addition, leaders organise work experience placements at a local hospital for students on the health course. Sixth-form students successfully progress to destinations that meet their career interests and aspirations.

In most subject areas in Year 11 and the sixth form, leaders have identified the key knowledge and skills they want pupils to learn. They have sequenced the curriculum to build on pupils' prior knowledge. Pupils build a strong understanding of key subject knowledge over time. Leaders have not ensured that sequencing is as well thought through in all subjects. Students studying health vocational courses build less secure subject knowledge over time than students on other courses.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. Typically, they introduce new learning with clear explanations. They place emphasis on learning new subject vocabulary. Teachers use assessment well. In class, teachers routinely check pupils' understanding. They identify when pupils have not understood and give them the support they need.

Pupils' behaviour is calm and orderly in lessons and at breaktimes. Leaders have introduced new behaviour approaches this year. Sixth-form students have positive attitudes toward their learning. However, when they are in personal development tutorial sessions, they do not behave as maturely and show less interest in these sessions than in their academic-subject classes. Leaders emphasise the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in the sixth form.

Leaders have provided training for teachers to help them to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in class. Leaders ensure that pupils who are not confident readers receive additional support to increase their reading fluency and build confidence. They provide opportunities for whole-class reading for pupils in Year 11.

Leaders encourage pupils' wider development, including through assemblies and workshops. However, opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are not as well thought through as the academic and vocational subject curriculum. Students in the sixth form do not receive relationships and sex education that is as appropriately planned as it is for pupils in Year 11.

Pupils are encouraged to develop some understanding of fundamental British values, including democracy and the rule of law. However, leaders do not ensure that pupils have sufficient breadth of opportunities that prepare them for life in modern Britain and to reflect on and discuss issues and ideas in a considered way. The school's range of extra-curricular opportunities is limited to those related to careers.

The governing body has a strong understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. It supports the school with important partnerships that enhance the curriculum. Leaders support staff with appropriate professional development. Staff feel well supported to manage their workload. They trust leaders to consider their well-being when making decisions about the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a clear understanding of local safeguarding issues that may affect pupils at the school. Leaders' policies and procedures for reporting concerns are robust and well understood by staff. Leaders have ensured that staff have received appropriate, up-to-date training to recognise the possible signs that may suggest that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They work effectively with a range of agencies to provide vulnerable pupils with the support they need.

Pupils have been taught to keep themselves safe, including online. They are encouraged to look after their mental health and to seek support if they need it.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The range of opportunities for wider personal development, including in the sixth form, beyond the academic, vocational and work experience is limited. Pupils are not fully equipped to engage in wide, considered debate about issues and ideas or encouraged to deepen their wider interests. Leaders should ensure that the school's work to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of high quality for all pupils and provide opportunities for pupils to discuss and debate issues and ideas in a considered way. This includes students in the sixth form. They should ensure that all pupils are encouraged to develop strength of character more widely than is currently the case and have opportunities to explore and develop their talents and interests broadly. Leaders should ensure that sixth-form students receive age-appropriate relationships and sex education in a timely way.
- The curriculum in one vocational subject is not sequenced as routinely well as in other academic courses to build learners' knowledge and skills. Students in the sixth form who study a single health vocational course do not gain as strong an understanding of key subject skills and knowledge as students on other vocational and academic courses. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in the sixth form is consistently well sequenced across all subject pathways to develop students' knowledge and skills equally securely over time.

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.

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	142905
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	10241133
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
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	198
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	176
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Hitesh Tailor
Headteacher	David Bell
Website	www.southbank-utc.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school appointed a new headteacher who took up the post in September 2022.
- Leaders have built the curriculum around three employment-related pathways. Pupils in Year 11 study a core curriculum of mathematics, science and English. They choose options within subjects related to health, engineering or business and finance. In the sixth form, students choose from A-level and vocational subjects within these three pathways.
- From September 2023, the school will no longer be catering for pupils below the age of 16.
- Leaders use one registered alternative provision.

- 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.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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, the executive headteacher and other school leaders. They also met with school trustees and members of the teaching staff and spoke with one of the school's improvement partners.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in the following subjects: mathematics, science, business and health and social care. Inspectors met with curriculum leaders, classroom teachers and pupils. They visited lessons and reviewed the work of pupils. They also visited a wider sample of subject lessons across the curriculum.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documentation. This included school policies, records of attendance and behaviour and school improvement reports.
- Inspectors spoke to staff working at the alternative provision.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders, pupils and staff about the arrangements for safeguarding and reviewed safeguarding documentation, including pre-employment checks on staff.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils and staff members and reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online pupil and staff surveys. They also considered the views of parents who made responses to the online parent survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

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