

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Liverpool Life Sciences UTC

41 Greenland Street, Liverpool, Merseyside L1 0BS

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 May 2025

Outcome

Liverpool Life Sciences UTC has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The principal of this school is Jill Davies. This school is part of Northern Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Nigel Ward, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Geoff Wainwright.

What is it like to attend this school?

Liverpool Life Sciences UTC is a stimulating and creative place of learning. Pupils follow a carefully considered curriculum, including in the sixth form. They make progress through the curriculum and produce work of high quality. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

Pupils are welcomed as members of the highly inclusive school community. They are happy and they feel safe at this school. Pupils appreciate the help and support that they receive from staff.

Pupils' behaviour around the school is calm and purposeful. In lessons, pupils work hard and focus well. They are encouraged to work together and to help each other with their learning. Around the school, pupils are considerate of each other, staff and visitors.

The school's provision for personal development is well considered. Pupils have access to an extensive choice of enrichment activities that align with their career aspirations. The diverse range includes robotics and first aid clubs. Pupils enjoy trips, having recently enjoyed a reading walk around the city centre, where they read books that are linked to local landmarks. Pupils are encouraged to develop their leadership skills through participating in the school council.

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

The school has considerably improved both the academic and the specialist vocational curriculums that it offers. Curriculum content is ordered well so that when pupils encounter new learning, they can build successfully on what they already know. This helps pupils to remember what they have been taught.

Teachers have strong curriculum knowledge. In most cases, they regularly check pupils' understanding and quickly correct any misunderstandings. However, in a minority of subjects in key stage 4, there is variability in the accuracy of these checks. Sometimes, teachers do not spot and address gaps in knowledge quickly enough. As a result, some pupils persist with misconceptions or do not secure new content as rapidly as they could. In the sixth form, teachers use assessment effectively and give detailed feedback that helps students to improve their work.

The school makes reading a high priority to ensure that all pupils can access the curriculum. For example, the school uses a range of suitable strategies to help any pupils who struggle with reading to gain fluency and confidence. Equally, the school accurately identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff are well informed about pupils with SEND. This enables them to adapt learning activities or provide extra support, when it is appropriate.

Expectations for behaviour are high, and pupils meet them well. Pupils often demonstrate a strong motivation to learn. The school works successfully with families to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. As a result of the school's actions, pupils' rates of attendance have improved.

The school prioritises pupils' personal development. It ensures that pupils develop confidence and resilience, alongside the strong academic achievement that they need to succeed. Pupils have many opportunities to explore different views and beliefs. They embrace cultural diversity, and they enjoy sharing information about their different cultural identities and spoken languages with other pupils. Pupils show maturity and respect when discussing different perspectives.

Pupils value the high-quality careers advice that they receive. This supports them to make informed decisions about their futures. Visits to universities and apprenticeship providers broaden pupils' understanding of post-school options. Many sixth-form students go on to competitive university courses and degree-level apprenticeships.

Alongside senior leaders, trustees have played a significant role in ensuring that the school has sustained its performance since the last inspection. Trustees and leaders at all levels are considerate of staff's workload and well-being when making policy decisions. Most staff enjoy working at this school and know that they are valued members of the community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects in key stage 4, teachers do not check whether pupils' knowledge is secure enough before introducing new learning. Some pupils develop misconceptions as a result. The school should ensure that teachers have the expertise to check that key knowledge is secure so that pupils can build successfully on what they know already.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in January 2016.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

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| Unique reference number | 139588 |
| Local authority | Liverpool |
| Inspection number | 10366751 |
| 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 | 563 |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 217 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Geoff Wainwright |
| CEO of the trust | Nigel Ward |
| Principal | Jill Davies |
| Website | www.lifesciencesutc.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 21 and 22 January 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school part of a multi-academy trust called the Northern Schools Trust. The school is co-located with another school in the Northern Schools Trust: The Studio School, Liverpool. Pupils experience much of their education, personal development and social time alongside the pupils of The Studio School Liverpool.
- Liverpool Life Sciences UTC provides academic and vocational education for pupils aged 14 to 19 years old.
- Leaders and staff at Liverpool Life Sciences UTC are drawn from the workforce of the on-site linked provision, The Studio School Liverpool.
- The school makes use of two registered alternative provisions for a very small number of pupils.

- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 10 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with the principal and other senior leaders. They also spoke with the CEO of the trust and members of the local governing body.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors gathered the views of pupils, parents and carers and staff through both discussions and responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Rebecca Sharples, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Anita Pyrkotsch-Jones

His Majesty's Inspector

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