

UTC Lancashire

Trafalgar Street, Burnley, Lancashire, BB11 1RA

Inspection dates

26–27 January 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Achievement in the core subjects, particularly in English and science in Key Stage 4, and in academic subjects in the sixth form, is not yet good.
- Behaviour shows significant improvement but is not yet consistently good in all year groups over time.
- Attendance, although improving, is below the national average.
- Standards of literacy across the curriculum are not promoted rigorously enough.
- Middle leaders are not fully involved in checking and improving their areas of responsibility.
- Teaching in non-practical areas does not always promote good progress sufficiently well.
- Teaching does not always challenge the most-able pupils to enable them to make strong progress.
- The feedback that pupils receive does not consistently give them clear guidance on how they could improve their work and is not always in line with the UTC's policy.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their cultural understanding or their awareness of other faiths.
- Not enough learners in the sixth form currently complete external work experience. Careers guidance over time has not been sufficiently independent or impartial.

The school has the following strengths

- The recently appointed senior leaders have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the UTC and have taken appropriate action to bring about improvements.
- Links with employers are highly effective. As a result of industry-related projects, pupils understand how their work relates to real-life contexts.
- Pupils are safe in the UTC and processes to safeguard them are robust.
- The needs of pupils who have special educational needs or disability are identified and supported effectively.
- Disadvantaged pupils make stronger progress than their peers because they are supported well.
- The tracking of pupils' achievement is regular and systematic and reporting to parents is effective.
- Pupils make good progress in vocational subjects. Teaching in practical areas is strong.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of middle leadership by ensuring that appropriate training is provided and middle leaders are able to take a full part in the quality assurance and development of their areas.
- Improve the quality of teaching in order to raise achievement, particularly in core subjects and in academic subjects in the sixth form, by:
 - sharing good practice between vocational and academic subjects
 - ensuring that teachers have opportunities to observe each other's practice and to visit other schools
 - ensuring that work set is sufficiently challenging, particularly for the most able
 - enhancing strategies to develop literacy across the curriculum
 - ensuring that feedback given to pupils is in line with the UTC's policy and gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- Enhance pupils' spiritual and cultural development by ensuring that more opportunities are provided for them to develop their cultural understanding and learn about other faiths.
- Increase participation in work experience in the sixth form and improve the timely access to impartial careers guidance to ensure that pupils throughout the UTC are fully aware of the full range of opportunities open to them.
- Improve the behaviour of pupils by ensuring that procedures to improve behaviour are consistently followed and embedded.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The UTC's leaders have not yet secured consistently good standards of teaching and, consequently, good outcomes for pupils across the curriculum. The structure and processes currently in place do not allow middle leaders to be fully involved in the quality assurance of their areas, to share practice within and beyond their areas, or to develop their leadership skills consistently well. As a result, the quality of middle leadership is too variable.
- Senior leadership has been strengthened and leaders have recently introduced new measures which are starting to bring about improvements in behaviour. They acknowledge that these practices are yet to be consistently embedded to ensure that behaviour is good in all year groups. Senior leaders now monitor the quality of learning and teaching through a more substantial programme of lesson observations, learning walks and work scrutiny. They use the information that they gather from this to provide appropriate support and challenge to teachers and bring about improvements. There is a weekly programme of professional development sessions to help teachers to develop their skills. The responses to the inspection questionnaire for staff indicate that this is valued.
- The recently appointed senior leaders have an accurate picture of the UTC's strengths and weaknesses. They are honest in their evaluation of performance and recognise that although they have secured some improvements, there is more to be done. Senior leaders now show determination to achieve the best for pupils and have high aspirations for them.
- Pupils' absence is followed up rigorously, bringing about much-needed improvement in the attendance of pupils in Key Stage 4.
- Procedures to manage teachers' performance are robust. They enable teachers to set targets, be held accountable for achieving these, and to reflect on and develop their practice.
- Leaders use pupil premium funding effectively to provide one-to-one support and tuition for disadvantaged pupils. This has a positive impact on the achievement of this group of pupils.
- The curriculum provides a balance of vocational and academic subjects which are focused on the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in engineering and construction along with a selection of traditional academic subjects. Pupils enjoy the balance of subjects provided. The programme of personal, social and health education enables pupils to develop their understanding in a range of aspects relating to life in modern Britain. Extra-curricular activities contribute positively to the experience of pupils at the UTC. They have opportunities to take part in sport and recognised award schemes including the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, and to make visits to employers' premises. These opportunities enable pupils to develop their social skills and awareness of the world of work effectively.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Recent improvements in governance have also contributed to the significant improvements that have started to impact on the quality of pupils' learning. The governing body of the UTC has recently been restructured and consists of a small number of members. They are fully committed to the UTC and bring expertise from education and industry.
 - Governors receive regular information about the performance of the pupils at the UTC. Governors use this information to offer appropriate challenge to the senior leaders in the drive for improvement. Only now have they got a clear view of the extent of further improvement that is required to make this a good school.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff have completed training in the government's 'Prevent' duty to raise their awareness of radicalisation and extremism and child protection training and updates are completed appropriately. Risk assessment is robust and recruitment processes follow the agreed protocols and latest guidance. Leaders at the UTC liaise with external agencies and with parents to access support and services as required for vulnerable pupils. As a result of the work in this area, there is a culture of safety and safe practice at the UTC.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good across the UTC.
- Inspectors saw evidence of some lack of challenge particularly for the most-able pupils. Activities intended

as extension activities too often rely on the completion of additional work but do not add sufficient stretch and challenge to accelerate learning.

- Pupils' cross-curricular literacy skills are not systematically supported and developed and opportunities to reinforce the correct use of spelling and grammar are missed.
- Pupils' work is promptly marked but the feedback given does not consistently follow the UTC's policy and does not always support improvements in pupils' progress.
- Questioning does not always check learning and understanding or encourage the full participation of pupils. When pupils work in groups, stronger members of the group sometimes dominate and approaches are not always tailored to ensure that all are able to take a full part.
- A former policy of the UTC has meant that there are no displays of pupils' work. As a result, exemplary work is not fully celebrated or used as a further stimulus for learning.
- Teachers in all subjects have good subject knowledge.
- Teaching in the practical subjects is a strength of the UTC. Pupils show positive engagement and enjoy their work in these areas.
- There are high levels of employer involvement in teaching and assessment in both Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. Pupils complete projects based on real-life problems in industry and make presentations to employers. As a result, pupils develop a realistic view of industrial practices.
- The UTC is well-resourced with appropriate materials to support learning.
- Teachers make effective use of praise and there are generally positive relationships between teachers and pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are supported well in their work.
- The tracking of achievement is regular and enables school leaders to have a picture of where progress is being made and where improvements are needed. Assessment information is captured on a four-weekly cycle and progress information is shared with pupils and their parents. This ensures that all are kept up to date.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- There are too few opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to develop their understanding of faiths other than their own; similarly, the development of pupils' wider understanding of culture is not well-promoted.
- Careers education information and guidance provided to pupils was previously not sufficiently impartial and leaders have taken recent steps to rectify this. They recognise, however, that there is more to be done to ensure that all pupils have access to timely careers guidance which provides them with independent information about the full range of opportunities open to them.
- Highly effective links with employers enable pupils to develop a good awareness of the demands of the world of work and an understanding of the importance of working to tight deadlines, team working and communication.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and this is echoed by all of the staff who completed the inspection questionnaire and the vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. They are taught to follow appropriate health and safety practices and adhere to these. Recent input from the police, which considered radicalisation and extremism, has enhanced pupils' awareness of these issues.
- Pupils are encouraged to take an active role in the life of the UTC. Their views are regularly sought on a range of aspects and actions are taken by school leaders to follow up on their feedback.
- Pupils' understanding of their role as citizens is enhanced through regular charity fundraising. In addition, they are given regular opportunities for reflection through a programme of 'thoughts for the week' and daily activities connected to a weekly theme. Inspectors observed pupils considering the statement 'manners maketh man' and how this is important in employment.
- Pupils follow a programme of personal, social and health education which enables them to learn about risks to health, as well as how to develop good study habits and approaches to revision.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement as it is not yet consistently good in all year groups.
- Senior leaders have revised the processes for managing behaviour and the UTC's records indicate that the number of behavioural incidents has declined significantly. There are, however, more instances of poor behaviour in some year groups than in others.
- During the course of the inspection, inspectors noted a small amount of low-level disruption but this was dealt with effectively by members of staff.
- The proportion of permanent exclusions for the number of pupils on roll was previously high when compared with national figures. However, this figure shows an encouraging decline and there had been no fixed-term or permanent exclusions by the time of the inspection in the current academic year.
- Pupils spoken to by an inspector said that they feel that behaviour in the UTC is improving.
- Pupils were polite to the inspectors and to visitors in school.
- The rates of attendance are not yet in line with the national average overall but show sharp improvement. The rate of attendance for pupils in their first year at the UTC is above the national figure.
- School leaders carefully check on the attendance of pupils attending alternative provision.
- Incidents of bullying are rare and pupils report that should this occur, it is dealt with effectively by staff.
- Pupils state that the use of derogatory language is not tolerated.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils join the UTC with levels of prior attainment at Key Stage 2 well below national levels. A significant number join the UTC having not made sufficient progress at Key Stage 3.
- The progress that pupils make from these starting points, however, is not consistently good.
- In 2015, the progress made by pupils at GCSE from their starting points was significantly below national averages in English and in science.
- Progress in mathematics was stronger and when compared with pupils with similar starting points, the performance of pupils at the UTC was broadly in line with the national average.
- The most-able pupils do not make enough progress as teaching does not always provide sufficient challenge for them.
- Disadvantaged pupils made stronger progress than their peers at GCSE in 2015. Their overall progress was broadly in line with national figures and they made particularly pleasing progress in mathematics.
- The progress of pupils currently in the school shows improvement. Progress in English when compared with progress made in the last academic year is stronger and the UTC's records of reading tests indicate an acceleration in reading ages for a number of pupils. Evidence was seen of improvements made in pupils' confidence as they recognise the gains that they have made in their learning.
- The progress made by pupils in the practical vocational subjects is a strength of the UTC. They achieve well in engineering and construction, attain good results and become confident in their use of tools and equipment.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress. Their needs are carefully identified and supported. Inspectors saw evidence of the diagnosis of barriers to learning and appropriately targeted support which is having positive impacts on pupils' progress and confidence.
- Information provided by the UTC indicates that rates of progression on to further education, apprenticeships or training at the end of Year 11 in 2015 were strong.

16 to 19 study programmes

require improvement

- Levels of achievement and attainment in the sixth form are not consistently good across all areas of the provision.
- In 2015, learners' attainment in academic subjects at A and AS level was poor. Entry requirements for learners to progress on to these courses historically were not always robust enough and this meant that some learners did not have the appropriate levels of prior attainment to succeed. Leaders have recognised this issue and amended the entry requirements accordingly.
- Teaching in theory lessons does not always engage and challenge all learners, in particular the most able.

- The curriculum involves on-site work experience and learners apply for their placements in appropriate establishments. Although showing improvement, not enough learners currently complete work experience.
- Leaders recognised that more needed to be done to ensure that impartial careers advice and guidance was provided for learners. Steps have been taken to improve this aspect of the UTC's work, but further work is needed to continue developing this area. Despite this, however, data seen on inspection indicate that learners in 2015 progressed to positive and appropriate destinations when they left the UTC.
- The curriculum provides a balance of vocational and academic subjects. Learners are able to continue their studies in English and mathematics to help them to secure appropriate qualifications in these areas.
- Learners make strong progress in the vocational subjects. In 2015, their levels of achievement in these subjects were significantly above the national average.
- Practical aspects of learning are taught well and learners make good progress in these areas.
- Employers are highly involved in the delivery of the curriculum through employment-related projects and industrial visits for all learners related to their assignment work. As a result, learners develop a strong awareness of the real-life application of their work.
- Learners in the sixth form demonstrate maturity and a commitment to succeed. They show strong levels of engagement in practical sessions.

School details

Unique reference number	139792
Local authority	Lancashire County Council
Inspection number	10008160

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	University technical college
Age range of pupils	14–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	113
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	34
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gareth Smith
Headteacher	Jacque Petriaho
Telephone number	01282 446240
Website	www.utclancashire.co.uk
Email address	utc@utclancashire.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The University Technical College (UTC) Lancashire opened in September 2013 and was originally called Visions Learning Trust. It was renamed in 2015.
- The specialisms of the UTC are engineering and construction. The UTC aims to provide technical education, linking to the skills and knowledge required for employment.
- The UTC is a smaller than average-sized secondary school for pupils aged 14 to 19. It is located in a former mill building and offers education to pupils in Burnley and the surrounding areas.
- The majority of pupils currently on roll are male.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is broadly in line with the national average. The vast majority of pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education health and care plan is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average. (The pupil premium provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children in the care of the local authority).
- The UTC's main sponsor has recently changed and is now the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN).
- The acting Principal and acting vice-principal took up their posts in January 2016. Prior to taking up their roles, they had previously provided support for developments in leadership and management and teaching and learning at the UTC.
- The Chair of the Governing Body is new in post and was appointed in October 2015.

- The UTC did not meet the government's floor standards in 2015. The floor standards are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress at the end of Key Stage 4.
- The UTC uses two providers of alternative education for a very small number of pupils. These are The Heights Free School and Coal Clough High School, a local authority pupil referral unit.
- The UTC receives support from the Baker Dearing Trust.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across the UTC, including two observations conducted jointly with a member of the senior leadership team.
- They looked closely at pupils' work in lessons and conducted a separate work scrutiny of a sample of work from pupils in Years 10 and 11. The work scrutiny was completed jointly with the Principal.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, a group of pupils from Years 10 and 11, a group of learners from the sixth form, two governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, two employers and a representative of the Baker Dearing Trust. A telephone call was made to a provider of alternative education at The Heights Free School.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised which included: the UTC's improvement plan and documents relating to senior leaders' evaluation of the UTC's performance; achievement and attendance data; information relating to the behaviour of pupils; records of the monitoring of teaching, learning and professional development; anonymised appraisal information of staff and the records of governing body meetings; documents in relation to careers education, information advice and guidance and work experience.
- Inspectors examined the UTC's single central record of pre-employment checks.
- Inspectors analysed the 19 responses from parents to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire Parent View.
- Inspectors looked carefully at the responses submitted by staff to the inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Julie Yarwood, Lead inspector

Bob Busby

Her Majesty's Inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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