

Greater Peterborough UTC

Park Crescent Campus, Park Crescent, Peterborough PE1 4DZ

Inspection dates

12–13 February 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
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

- In the first year of the university technical college (UTC) accepting pupils, too much emphasis was placed on maximising pupil numbers and too little attention was given to matching pupils' interests and aspirations to the UTC's curriculum. This contributed to the first set of results last summer being very poor.
- In its first year of operation, too many staff lacked the appropriate knowledge, skill and experience to deliver the UTC's distinctive curriculum. As a result, current pupils experienced weak teaching at the beginning of their courses.
- Over the first two years of operation, leaders and managers were not able to create the structures and routines necessary to run a well-organised school or sixth form. As a result, current pupils had a poor start, but are catching up.
- Many pupils arrive at the UTC having had an unsuccessful key stage 3 experience in other schools. This is particularly evident in their reading ability and literacy skills. Leaders are seeking to address this through regular practice in reading examination questions. However, they have taken insufficient steps to improve pupils' reading and literacy ability so that they can better access the content of subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- There has been transformational change since September 2018 under the acting principal and new senior leadership team.
- Leaders have clear expectations of the quality of teaching and learning across the UTC, including in the sixth form. They have introduced a common approach for lessons. Leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development of teachers and use this to provide support and training.
- Leaders now have a very secure understanding of pupils' progress because of the valid and reliable information they hold. This information shows that pupils are now making progress at least in line with that of other pupils nationally. Middle leaders and teachers are now held accountable for pupils' progress.
- Personal development is a strength. Employer engagement is now being developed strongly.
- Behaviour is now very good, because there are clear expectations and strong relationships.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes to ensure that pupils in key stage 4 and students in the sixth form achieve the outcomes they should, by ensuring that the best practice in teaching and learning is found more consistently across year groups and subjects.
- Ensure that teachers use the new assessment information they have more consistently to update expectations of what pupils can do, and plan learning tasks that meet these expectations.
- Improve the curriculum and check its impact, through:
 - seeking even better opportunities to engage and excite pupils by further adapting the curriculum and classroom teaching to reflect the ethos of the UTC
 - providing more time to enable pupils to consider aspects of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, religious education and life in modern Britain
 - ensuring that the teaching of reading and literacy is improved to better support pupils who are entering with low literacy skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since September 2018, the acting principal and new senior leadership team have swiftly brought about dramatic and transformational improvement. There is a collective drive and vision to establish the UTC as a 14–19 education provider of choice in the region. The passion of the senior team shines brightly.
- Despite the legacy of poor provision, eight out of 10 parents and carers responding to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the UTC. A representative comment was: ‘My son really enjoys going to GPUUTC and has tried new things, including the Navy junior gun run, which gave him a good insight into the Navy and he now wants a career with the Navy when he leaves college. I would recommend this college to anyone who asks me.’
- Leaders are realistic about the UTC’s strengths and weaknesses. They know their school well. The acting principal has been robust in taking decisive action to root out inadequate teaching and to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment overall.
- Leaders support newly qualified teachers effectively and indeed teachers at all stages of their career.
- Current leaders have introduced performance management reviews which focus sharply on school improvement around teaching, learning and assessment and pupils’ outcomes. Teachers say that both this and the targeted professional development (training) have helped them improve their teaching.
- The new senior team has given clarity and direction to the organisation. Leaders have clear expectations of staff, who in turn now understand their role and how they play a part in ensuring pupils’ success. Middle leaders take charge of progress information and the impact their planning has on outcomes.
- Student leaders contribute towards the decision-making process and are an important and valued part of the organisation.
- Through the rapid improvements that have taken place in just half a year, leaders have demonstrated that they have the capability and determination to continue to drive improvement. There has already been a strong impact on improving teaching and learning. Leaders champion STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). There are few girls in this UTC, but through female physics teachers, stereotypes are challenged and women in STEM are promoted strongly.
- The acting principal was formerly the vice-principal, and a range of stakeholders told inspectors how everything he was tasked to do was done effectively. For example, he has had longer to demonstrate improvement in behaviour and attendance, and his work has had an even greater impact in this area than in teaching.
- The UTC has a small number of pupils entitled to the pupil premium. It tailors this additional funding to the individual needs of these pupils. The UTC keeps track of the impact of how the money is spent.

- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Additional funding is used effectively to ensure that they make progress that is in line with that of pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- Nearly all staff responding to Ofsted's questionnaire said that they are proud to work at the UTC. Morale is high. Staff feel very well supported by leaders, both in the management of behaviour and in improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- The UTC benefits from a range of local employers acting as sponsors. Some of these have been generous in providing resources. For example, one is funding a business manager for a year. This resulted from the chair of governors recognising the need to relieve the acting principal of day-to-day administration to focus on educational priorities. However, after the initial establishment, previous leaders were not clear about how sponsors could be used and so this became a much under-utilised resource. The new leadership has focused on creating a stable school and eradicating poor teaching as its first priority. Having achieved this, leaders are now moving ahead with engaging local employers more fully.
- The curriculum is still developing. For example, religious education exists, but is insufficiently structured. Timetabled lessons are planned for next year. Additionally, while there are opportunities in most subjects to link with employers, making the involvement of employers a natural part of subject teaching and thus meeting the UTC's distinctiveness, is a work in progress.

Governance of the school

- Governors are well informed about the UTC. They have a good understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement.
- Governors have worked with leaders to identify past weaknesses and challenges and, where necessary, they have brokered additional support to strengthen the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors have been instrumental in making changes to leadership, enabling current improvements to take place.
- Governors are reflective about their contribution to the UTC. The strengths of different governors complement each other well.
- Governors have high-level experience of relevant industry or vocational education.
- There is currently no governor with safer recruitment training, although governors are acting on this.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All statutory requirements are met and regularly checked.
- Pupils, staff and the vast majority of parents say that pupils are safe. This is because the school is a small, friendly community where everyone looks out for one another. Professional relationships between staff and pupils are clear and helpful.
- All staff and governors are trained regularly on safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty.

- The UTC uses an online system to log concerns regarding pupil welfare. These concerns are promptly followed up and the logs are checked regularly. All staff know about the system.
- Pupils are aware of the risks associated with internet use and how to stay safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Staff know in principle what to do to implement the UTC's policies in the classroom, but these are not applied consistently enough in practice.
- In lessons, strategies to support pupils with SEND are not used consistently enough.
- Not all teachers use assessment information effectively to plan learning.
- Additional support and interventions are in place to support identified pupils with literacy and numeracy. However, not all teachers yet plan effectively to support pupils with additional needs, in particular those with very low literacy levels.
- Occasionally, during the inspection, teachers missed pupils who were left behind or misunderstood, or the teacher did not correct inaccuracies.
- Since the UTC opened, there have been many changes in staff. Especially since September, staff changes and effective training have combined to create a transformed approach to teaching, learning and assessment compared with that which led to the summer 2018 outcomes.
- Teachers are developing more effective use of questioning to ensure that all pupils can deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils know their targets and find next steps useful. They say that the feedback through 'PIN' (praise, improvement, next steps), enables them to improve their work. This was particularly strong in key stage 4 art, design and technology, and business studies. As a pupil commented about her English teacher, 'She's very good at giving us feedback.'
- Teachers have strategies on paper to support pupils with SEND. All staff have had training to support literacy, but it is quite recent. The emphasis is on helping pupils to recognise and understand 'command' words in examination questions. There has been less emphasis on helping pupils to develop reading skills to understand the subject better.
- Since September, new systems and processes have been introduced without overloading teachers. For example, a teacher commented: 'The marking policy is realistic in terms of work-life balance, yet frequent enough to ensure that students can act on this and progress.'
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and are, overall, adept at enabling pupils to understand how their learning fits into the 'big picture' and connects with future life applications.
- Teachers are beginning to use assessment information effectively to plan learning, plug gaps and build on prior learning.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Displays around the school support diversity, online safety, aspiration and challenge, future destinations (apprenticeships or university), healthy and safe lifestyles and encouraging women into STEM-based subjects and careers.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and know where to seek help or support. Pupils operate safely in workshop areas.
- Pupil leaders have a respected role in the school to promote the 'GPUTC values', supporting the UTC with events, open days, assemblies, employer engagement and fund-raising.
- Pupils say that they feel equipped for the world of work and moving on from the UTC. Leaders have analysed the UTC's progress towards meeting the Gatsby Benchmarks (the government's expectations for secondary schools' delivery of careers education and guidance), and it is well on track to meet them fully. For example, by the time they leave school, the overwhelming majority of pupils have received 'meaningfully experienced career learning' as part of English, science and PSHE education lessons, although this is not yet the case in mathematics. There is a member of staff with responsibility for ensuring that the benchmarks are fully met.
- Pupils say that the enrichment activities give them a chance to understand people from different cultures and backgrounds. There are regular opportunities for pupils to learn about key PSHE education matters, including mental health, positive relationships and safe computer usage. The UTC has a PSHE education tracking tool that checks which pupils have received which support and guidance. The sessions are regularly led by external specialists, with follow-up sessions in mentoring time. For example, visitors from the police and other agencies promote an understanding of the rule of law.
- Leaders are still developing 'mentoring matters' (tutor time) to enrich personal development. The PSHE education programme is being developed further, as pupils have limited time to understand their role as citizens or to extend their spiritual, moral social and cultural awareness.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and considerate with each other, staff and visitors.
- Professional relationships between staff and pupils are productive and have a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and attitudes around the UTC.
- The UTC is calm at break- and lunchtimes. This can be seen in the range of spaces set aside for pupils to mingle.
- At key stage 4, attendance is now above average and has improved year on year since opening. Pupils are challenged, supported and rewarded appropriately regarding

attendance or behaviour. The staff know their pupils well and address potential issues early. Staff involve families and other agencies effectively.

- The number of incidents and days lost to exclusion is reducing sharply. The school manages behaviour well through consistent policy, practice and strategies.
- Pupils collaborate well in lessons, and remain focused and persevere.
- Pupils, parents and staff agree that behaviour is good.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2018, the first year for which there were published results, attainment and progress at key stage 4 and in the sixth form were poor. Leaders and governors explained that this was the result of poor teaching, poor management and organisation and the recruitment of pupils who had received poor guidance and support, joining a school that did not meet their needs and interests.
- Current leaders and teachers are working hard to address the legacy of poor teaching and previous lack of checking on pupils' progress. They are helping pupils to catch up and close gaps in learning.
- The low levels of literacy of many pupils slows their learning.
- Much improved teaching and learning, together with effective systems to check on pupils' progress, are leading to much improved progress, especially at key stage 4.
- Despite the weak outcomes in 2018, the vast majority of pupils did well in moving to their desired destinations after leaving the school. Indeed, in several cases, unconditional offers from their intended destinations led to students not working hard enough through Year 13 and contributed to the poor attainment and progress.
- The outcomes of current pupils with SEND are improving. Three quarters are at least meeting their targets in English. A similar proportion, but not the same pupils, are meeting or exceeding their targets in mathematics.
- From their different starting points, disadvantaged pupils are currently making progress overall that is in line with that of other pupils nationally. This is because they are known well by teachers and leaders and their needs are planned for effectively.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- The legacy of weaker teaching and disorganisation from last year resulted in some gaps in the knowledge and understanding of current Year 13 students.
- Unhelpful advice and guidance when the sixth form first opened led to students with inappropriately low attainment on entry attempting A-level courses in which they were unsuccessful. Much more stringent entry requirements are now in place and advice and guidance have been transformed.
- The curriculum for the sixth form is still being developed. For example, further changes from next September are planned to allow more flexibility in the courses students can follow.

- Sixth formers are good ambassadors for the UTC. They are welcoming and polite.
- Relationships between staff and students are highly productive. Current students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary.
- Teachers display strong subject knowledge, giving confidence to their teaching and in turn to students that they can succeed. Year 13 students were keen to point out how much teaching has improved during the last year.
- Year 13 students who have taken externally assessed unit tests show a marked improvement in outcomes on last year.
- Students' well-being is promoted through a mentoring system and through weekly assemblies covering topics such as sex education, drugs education and keeping safe.
- Students are aware of, and are helped to apply for, apprenticeships and a range of university courses. Students explained how, for some of them, their work for their extended project qualification had greatly enhanced their ability to hold confident discussion at their university or apprenticeship interviews.
- All students undertake work experience. Some students spoke enthusiastically about the UTC's sponsors and the opportunities offered to explore their career interests. However, until recently, the work-related opportunities provided by industrial sponsors have not been used well enough. Opportunities to engage sponsors more fully in bringing the curriculum alive are only beginning to be exploited.
- Year 13 students are envious of the better experience enjoyed by Year 12 pupils. Asked if they would recommend the UTC to somebody interested in engineering, a typical response was, 'Now, unreservedly yes, but a year ago I would have told them not to touch it with a bargepole.'
- In 2018, there was a small number of students without grade 4 or above in GCSE English or mathematics in the sixth form. Those re-taking GCSE mathematics did very well and significantly better than similar students nationally. In English, for a very small group, the situation was reversed.
- The leadership of the sixth form is new since September and has brought about the recent improvements.

School details

Unique reference number	142902
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	10057809

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

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 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	260
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	90
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Phil Brown
Interim Principal	David Bisley
Telephone number	01733 715952
Website	www.gputc.com
Email address	Info@GPUTC.COM
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The UTC opened in September 2016. It has pupils in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13.
- This UTC's mission is to recruit pupils who will become Peterborough's engineers, designers, architects, construction and product design specialists of the future.
- The UTC is sponsored by Anglia Ruskin University, Anglian Water, Kier, Larkfleet Group, Perkins Engines Company Ltd, Peterborough Regional College and Z-Tech.
- The UTC is much smaller than other secondary schools. It has many more boys than girls.

- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average, while the proportion who have an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors gathered a range of evidence from: lesson observations, mostly carried out with the acting principal or another senior leader; short visits to lessons, again mostly carried out with senior leaders; discussions with pupils and staff; meetings with senior leaders, the chair of the governing body and two other governors, a consultant supporting the leadership team and a telephone conversation with an adviser from the Department for Education; reviews of pupils' work in books and folders; reviews of the UTC's website, documents and assessment information; and general observations of the daily operations of the UTC, including social areas.
- Inspectors analysed the 53 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, alongside the nine free-text responses to the same questionnaire. They also considered the 34 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Adrian Lyons, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Shân Oswald	Ofsted Inspector
Sally Garrett	Ofsted Inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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