

# Hackney University Technical College

Shoreditch Campus, Falkirk Street, London, N1 6HQ

**Inspection dates** 15–16 January 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	<b>Not previously inspected</b>	
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching does not enable all students to make good progress from their individual starting points. The work set by some teachers does not always engage students' interest or provide enough challenge.
- Achievement in some subjects, for example mathematics and history, is not as high as it should be.
- Girls make less progress than boys.
- A minority of students do not show positive attitudes in lessons and misbehave. Some teachers do not deal with poor behaviour in a consistent way. A high number of students have been excluded in the past.
- The Principal and senior leaders have not tackled weaknesses in teaching quickly enough across subjects.
- Some subject leaders do not have the skills to lead rapid improvements in teaching.
- Students' work is not always marked in enough detail by every teacher. As a result, students do not always know how to improve.
- Students are not given enough opportunities to develop their literacy skills across subjects.

### The school has the following strengths

- Recent actions taken to improve behaviour and increase attendance have been successful.
- Students are generally making good progress in technology subjects.
- The gap between the achievement of students eligible for additional funding and others is narrow and is closing.
- Governors have ensured financial stability and challenged college leaders to improve standards.
- Where teaching is best, teachers' high expectations lead to students making sustained progress.
- Students are safe at the college. Leaders place high priority on ensuring that systems to help the more vulnerable students are robust.
- The college's focus on digital technology and partnerships is preparing students well for their next stage of education, employment or training.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 11 lessons and 11 teachers.
- Meetings were held with the Principal, senior and middle leaders, the Chair and five members of the Governing Body, and a group of students.
- There were too few responses on the Parent View online questionnaire to evaluate. The lead inspector took account of the 11 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of school documents, including: the college's self-evaluation, college development plans, parental responses to college questionnaires, behaviour logs, safeguarding records, governing body records and documents relating to the management of teachers' performance.

## Inspection team

Russell Bennett, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The college was established in September 2012, with lead sponsorship from Hackney Community College. Additional founding partners are the Homerton University Hospital Trust, the University of East London and British Telecom. Students are admitted in Year 10. There are more students in Year 11 than in Year 10. Plans are in place to open a sixth form in September 2014.
- Students are admitted to the college from a range of schools and pupil referral units across London. A significant minority of students have had disrupted educational experiences in previous schools. As a result, they have gaps in their knowledge and skills.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well-above average. This is additional funding allocated for groups of pupils, including those looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals. There are no children from service families at the college.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of students supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average. Almost all have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties as their identified need.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is above average.
- Nearly 60% of the school's population are girls.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is average.
- Students must study vocational digital technology or health courses, alongside other subjects.
- There have not been any public examinations in Key Stage 4 yet and there is no available data to compare with government floor standards.
- There are no students attending alternative providers.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so that more is consistently good or better by:
  - setting work at the right level of difficulty so that it challenges all students, particularly the most able
  - marking consistently across subjects, clearly showing students how to improve their work and checking that students act upon the comments made
  - ensuring that all teachers have the same high expectations of what students can achieve.
- Accelerate progress across all subjects, narrowing any gaps between groups of students, including between boys and girls.
- Further reduce incidences of exclusion by:
  - ensuring that all teachers have the necessary skills to tackle low-level disruption in their own classrooms
  - applying the college's behaviour policy consistently and collectively.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership by:
  - developing the skills and roles of subject leaders through high-quality training and rigorous line management
  - swiftly implementing plans to develop literacy across all subjects, closely monitoring the

impact on improving students' skills

- ensuring that regular assessment checkpoints are used to check the impact of teaching on achievement, so that support to improve the quality of teaching and accelerate progress can be precisely targeted.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Students are not making enough progress across all subjects in order to meet the college's challenging targets. In mathematics, standards are lower for girls than boys, and progress is less rapid than it should be. Students' current levels of attainment in history and modern languages are also below the college's targets. This is because students do not always complete work and teachers do not have high enough expectations of what different groups of students can achieve.
- Students' achievement in English is improving and work in exercise books shows increasing levels of progress over time. In both English and mathematics, college tracking information indicates that students will attain at least in line with the 2013 national averages for GCSE passes at grades A\* to C. Although data indicate that attainment in science is below expectations, this is being tackled through targeted interventions. As a result, students are now making better progress.
- Actions taken by the college to provide support for students known to be eligible for the pupil premium have proved effective. Many of these students start from a low base and they make sustained progress because of the additional help they receive from extra tuition. The gap between these students and others at the college is closing in both English and mathematics and they attain at a similar level.
- Although the college has successfully closed the gap for some groups, girls' progress is still slightly behind that of boys. In some lessons, students who have recently joined the college and who speak English as an additional language struggle to make the same progress as others because they are not always given effective support. As a result, the college is not fully promoting equality of opportunity.
- The more able students are making progress in line with others, though this is not consistent across all subjects. The most able are not always sufficiently challenged in lessons and this slows the rate of progress of which they are capable.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are making slightly less progress than others. This has been due in part to absence and behaviour which has impeded their learning. The college's work with students who have behavioural, social and emotional needs has enabled them to make better progress over time. For example in Year 11, the gap in achievement between these students and others is closing because of the effective support provided.
- An important strength in the college are the digital and health specialisms. The college's tracking information indicates that students make good progress in media, and health and social care vocational courses. Students have gained a good understanding of the importance of technology in the workplace through regular visits to a local hospital and a telecommunications company. They value the chance to develop their skills through a variety of additional projects, which have recently included making a film commissioned by Buckingham Palace.
- The college does not enter students early for GCSE examinations.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is too variable across subjects and expectations are not always high enough. Teachers do not always take into account the different abilities of students in their classes sufficiently and provide work which is too easy or too hard. Occasionally, students quickly lose interest and become frustrated when they are given the same task to complete. Sometimes, students who struggle with work are not given enough help to complete tasks they find difficult.
- Teachers' marking does not always give precise enough guidance to students about how to

improve their work. In addition, students do not always respond and make improvements, because teachers' expectations are unclear. Some students' books have gaps and incomplete work. This is not systematically followed up so that students make the progress of which they are capable.

- The best teaching engages students' attention from the very start of the lesson. Clear instructions given by the teacher and work that provides good levels of challenge, particularly for the most able, result in students making decisive gains in knowledge and understanding. As one Year 10 student said, 'I like it better when there are good levels of challenge and I have to think outside the box.'
- In an English lesson focused on characters from Steinbeck's 'Of Mice and Men', students made good progress because the teacher had carefully planned the lesson, so that different levels of difficulty were skilfully built into tasks. Students were able to consolidate the gains in their knowledge because they were given sufficient time to develop their ideas in writing.
- In a science lesson, students thoroughly enjoyed developing their discussion skills and scientific understanding within a 'real-life' scenario. They debated whether fermentation or hydration offered the best solution to a sustainable fuel supply, in a pitch to an energy company. The teacher did not simply accept limited answers from students, but encouraged them to think more deeply and develop their arguments convincingly. This provided effective challenge, and enabled all students, including the most able, to make rapid progress.
- Although some teachers focus on developing students' literacy skills in lessons, the college does not have a consistent approach to developing students' speaking or extended writing skills across the curriculum. The recently developed policy has not been fully adopted and therefore its impact is limited.
- Support provided by the small number of additional adults makes a good contribution to students' learning, particularly when, with careful prompting, students are encouraged to work out the answers for themselves.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

## requires improvement

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. While most students are keen to learn and settle quickly to work in lessons, some do not have positive attitudes to learning. A small minority misbehave and call out in lessons, disrupting the learning of others. This is particularly evident when teachers do not apply the college's behaviour policy consistently.
- Occasionally, students display rowdy behaviour in the corridors.
- For many of the students, below-average attendance, persistent absence and high levels of fixed-term exclusions were characteristics of their earlier school experiences. Since joining the college, nearly all of the most vulnerable students have improved their behaviour and are attending well. This is as a result of the high-quality work of the college's pastoral team. Students say they enjoy coming to college and appreciate the efforts of staff to support them.
- The college's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Senior leaders are acutely aware of the challenges of sharing a site with a further education college. High levels of staff supervision and clear boundaries ensure that students have designated areas, in which they can mix with their peers. Staff receive regular training on how to keep students safe from harm. Students say that they know staff will help if they go to them with a concern.
- As a result of the school's technology specialisms, students have a clear understanding of the importance of safety when using the internet. They say that bullying is extremely rare. They demonstrate mature attitudes towards one another and show respect for different groups. They are absolutely clear that homophobic or racist language is unacceptable. Most students demonstrate sensitivity when considering the effects of prejudice and discrimination in personal, social and health education lessons.
- In its first year, the level of fixed-term and permanent exclusions was high. The pastoral team has worked closely with students at risk of exclusion and their parents. As a result, the proportion of students who have received fixed-term exclusions has fallen sharply. There have

been no permanent exclusions in the current academic year.

- The college has a removal system for students who do not comply with the behaviour policy. Information provided by the college shows that these 'internal exclusions' are higher in some subject areas than others. However, the proportion of students being removed from lessons is decreasing, as behaviour management becomes more consistent across the school.
- In a recent college questionnaire, all parents who responded agreed that their child felt safe and was well looked after at the college.

## **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because actions taken by leaders have not had sufficient impact on improving teaching quickly enough, so that students can make good progress across all subjects. The high level of staff turnover has presented challenges to sustaining the pace of improvement, but stronger systems to support and monitor the quality of teaching are too recent to demonstrate full impact.
- The Principal and vice-principal are committed to raising standards. They are clear and realistic about what needs to improve further. Actions are focused clearly on the areas where more rapid improvement is needed, including developing teachers' skills. However, some aspects of the college's self-evaluation are overly generous.
- Effective systems are in place to communicate with parents. In the most recent college questionnaire, parents expressed very positive views about the quality of education provided and the extent to which college staff responded to any concerns they raised.
- Although the college has recently made its systems for checking information about students' achievement more secure, there is sometimes a difference between what is seen in students' books and teachers' assessment of their progress. The Principal and vice-principal are tackling this vigorously; they have commissioned external consultants to review the impact of teaching on progress and the accuracy of assessment. As a result, more robust information about students' progress is being collected at regular intervals.
- Some leaders do not have the skills to ensure that they confidently diagnose and address the areas for improvement within their subject areas. Actions taken by the English subject leader have improved the quality of teaching. However, this is not the case in all subjects. For example, improvements in history, mathematics and modern languages have been too slow.
- The specialist technological focus of the college reflects the college's ethos of innovation and preparation for the workplace and further study. Trips, visits and visiting speakers provide students with opportunities which broaden their understanding of the skills needed to be successful in careers in health and industry. As one student said, 'this college makes you realise you have a future.' Although the college was unsuccessful in its plan to open the 16 to 18 provision in September 2013 because of the low number of applications, there are significantly higher numbers of applications for the planned opening in September 2014.
- The Principal models high expectations for the school community. She has taken some decisive action to eliminate weak teaching, but there is still more work to do in this respect. A comprehensive appraisal policy is in place and there is a close link between the impact of teaching on achievement and performance management.
- Although achievement, teaching and behaviour are not good overall, they are improving. Actions to improve behaviour have had notable impact. Students in Year 11 describe the college as being 'much calmer' than the year before. They also say that behaviour in lessons is much better, enabling learning to take place with fewer interruptions.
- The curriculum offers sufficient breadth and balance at Key Stage 4. Students follow a range of academic and vocational courses suited to their needs.
- The college assembly and personal, social and health education programme enriches the experience of students. There are good opportunities for students to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Students are actively encouraged to take on positions of

responsibility and they relish this recognition of their leadership skills. Students in Year 10 say that there are good role models to learn from among their Year 11 peers.

- Arrangements for child protection and safeguarding are extensive. All statutory requirements are met.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors bring an impressive range of skills and expertise from the business, health and education sectors. In a relatively short space of time, they have developed a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development at the college. Increasingly, they are challenging the Principal and leaders to secure more rapid improvements, particularly in relation to the quality of teaching and its impact on the achievement of different groups of students. They carefully scrutinise all evidence about the college's performance that they are provided with, but further seek to test out the accuracy and reliability of information. This is achieved through the use of external consultants and a rigorous approach to analysing data, which includes a focus on national benchmarks. They have reviewed the use and impact of the pupil premium on the progress of students who are eligible for additional funding. They recognise that the progress of these students is improving rapidly, but that there is much more to be done to ensure that gaps are narrowed across all groups and subjects. They closely monitor teachers' pay and have made sure that finances are carefully managed during a period which has seen lower student numbers than predicted. They regularly review college policies, including those relating to safeguarding.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138265
<b>Local authority</b>	Hackney
<b>Inspection number</b>	425468
<b>Type of school</b>	Academy UTC
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	14–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	118
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Anthony Painter
<b>Principal</b>	Annie Blackmore
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7613 9212
<b>Fax number</b>	Not applicable
<b>Email address</b>	info@hackneyutc.co.uk

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