

Health Futures UTC

High Street, West Bromwich, West Midlands B70 8DJ

Inspection dates

22–23 May 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors have been ineffective since the school opened in September 2015. They have failed to secure an acceptable standard of education for students over that time.
- The school claims to have a curriculum focus on healthcare and health science. In practice it does not. Leaders have failed to provide students with the health-focused curriculum they were promised. Links with employers are weak.
- Students in key stage 4 underachieve in most subjects. Disadvantaged students make especially slow progress and consequently, their outcomes are very poor.
- Much teaching is weak. Teachers do not take into account students' prior knowledge or particular needs when planning lessons. They do not ask questions that deepen students' understanding of their work.
- Many teachers have low expectations of students' conduct and the quality and quantity of work they produce in class. Students' books and folders are often poorly organised with missing or incomplete work. Teachers are too tolerant of low-level disruption in lessons.
- Leaders have struggled to recruit and retain teachers. Staff absence has also been high, but this is improving. Students are regularly not taught by subject-specialist teachers, or not taught at all.
- Attendance has declined each year since the school opened. It is now well below the national average for secondary schools. Many students do not attend school regularly.
- Leadership of the sixth form has been weak since the school opened. Students have been recruited to inappropriate courses. Teaching has been ineffective in many subjects. Students taking A-level courses underachieve.

The school has the following strengths

- In the short time she has been at the school, the interim principal has secured the confidence of staff and improvements in behaviour. She has a clear understanding of what needs to improve.
- There is some effective teaching, for example in English and religious education.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Adults provide good pastoral care for students.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that the progress of students in key stage 4 and the sixth form accelerates rapidly, by ensuring that teachers:
 - use information about students' abilities, prior knowledge and individual needs when planning lessons
 - ask questions that deepen students' understanding of their work
 - check on students' understanding in lessons and take action when they do not understand what they are doing
 - have high expectations of the amount, organisation and quality of work that students do in class
 - use consistently the school's behaviour systems and do not tolerate low-level disruption in lessons.
- Improve attendance by:
 - analysing attendance information to spot issues and trends
 - using this analysis to inform improvement strategies
 - impressing upon students and parents the importance of regular school attendance.
- Improve the sixth form by:
 - securing high-quality leadership of the sixth form
 - ensuring that students are recruited onto appropriate courses
 - increasing the 16 to 19 vocational focus and particularly links with employers in the health sector.
- Strengthen the unique educational character of the school, in line with its University Technical College (UTC) principles.
- Improve leadership by:
 - securing permanent, high-quality teachers
 - ensuring that the needs of students who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are met
 - providing effective careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) to students joining and already attending the school
 - ensuring that the pupil premium is used effectively to support disadvantaged

students

- ensuring that teachers' assessments of students' attainment are reliable
- ensuring that governors are able to hold leaders to account for the school's performance
- giving students a better understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

It is recommended that reviews of governance and the school's use of the pupil premium should be carried out in order to determine how these aspects of leadership might be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The standard of education provided by the school, since it opened in September 2015, has been poor. Teaching has been weak and consequently, students have made very poor progress. Leaders and governors were unaware of these significant weaknesses until examination results were released in August 2017. Their checks on teaching and progress have not been fit for purpose and their evaluation of the school's effectiveness has, until very recently, been overgenerous.
- Over the last two years, improvement plans have not been well focused on those aspects of the school that needed to improve. This is because leaders and governors did not have a clear understanding of the school's many weaknesses. Neither did they appreciate the need for urgent action to improve teaching and students' progress. Plans to address the school's weaknesses have improved since the arrival of the interim principal. However, there is currently little or no evidence of improvement in the key areas of teaching, attendance, outcomes and the sixth form.
- Teachers' assessments of students' attainment have been wildly over-optimistic over the last two years. Leaders' checks on assessments have failed to identify this fact, as have monitoring visits from the Department for Education (DfE). Governors have therefore been too trusting of inaccurate, unreliable, internal assessment information. Consequently, the very poor GCSE and A-level outcomes for 2017 came as a major surprise to all concerned. Some actions have recently taken place, with the aim of improving the reliability of assessment information. It is too early to judge whether they have been successful.
- Until very recently, leaders have held an overgenerous view of the quality of teaching in the school. They have not had an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Consequently, leaders have not targeted training on those aspects of teaching most urgently in need of improvement. Teaching has failed to improve as a result. Since the arrival of the interim principal, a much clearer view of teaching and better targeting of training are apparent. However, it is too soon to see impact from these changes.
- The school was set up with the aim of having a 'focus on healthcare and health science' and to prepare students for careers in this sector. To date, it has failed in this aim. The school's curriculum is not distinctive. Its health focus is not embedded across the curriculum and is only evident in occasional activities for a limited number of students. Links with employers in the sector are weak. Achievement in health and social care, the school's sector-specific qualification, was very poor in 2017. Many students told inspectors how disappointed they are that promises made about the curriculum before they joined the school have not been realised. One student told inspectors, 'We were sold a vision of a care college, but what we got was a school with long days.'
- Other than assessment information, leaders do not analyse data effectively to identify issues and trends. They therefore do not target strategies to where improvement is needed most. For example, leaders do not analyse attendance data by groups of students. Until inspectors asked for the information, leaders were unaware that almost

a half of disadvantaged students do not attend school regularly. Similarly, leaders have not analysed data about exclusions and behaviour incidents. They are therefore unaware if there are particular behaviour issues or groups of students whose behaviour needs to be addressed. During the inspection, leaders were unable to provide inspectors with any record of bullying incidents in the school. Leaders analyse assessment information more effectively, but the information itself is of questionable accuracy.

- Leaders have been incorrectly recording the attendance of students on study leave, coding it as 'off-site educational activity', rather than as 'study leave'. This has had the effect of inflating the school's attendance figures. Leaders ceased this practice during the inspection.
- CEIAG is not effective in the school. Although careers activities and visits take place, there is no overall strategy or planned programme for CEIAG. Leaders have failed to use the Gatsby Benchmarks to improve careers provision, a requirement set out in statutory guidance from the DfE. As a result, students are not sufficiently aware of apprenticeships. Many students in Year 13 are taking inappropriate A-level courses. They underachieve as a result. Perhaps most disappointingly, students of all ages are ignorant of the range of available careers in the health sector.
- Provision for students who have SEN and/or disabilities is not effective. At the time of inspection, leaders had not accessed special educational needs information from files for some students in Year 10, some eight months after they joined the school. Many teachers are unaware of students' special educational needs and lack the expertise to plan activities that support them. There is little support for these students at other times. Some students who have SEN and/or disabilities told inspectors about the extra support they had been given in their previous school, while saying they had none now.
- Support for students for whom English is an additional language shares many of the weaknesses of that for students who have SEN and/or disabilities. Little support is provided for these students and their progress is slower than it might be as a result.
- Leaders do not use the pupil premium effectively and governors have not held leaders to account for this. The school does not have a current pupil-premium strategy as required by the DfE. Leaders make some good use of this funding, for example by providing revision classes during the Easter holiday in some subjects where disadvantaged students are underachieving. However, pupil-premium use is not carefully planned to support disadvantaged students. Consequently, these students continue to attend poorly and underachieve considerably.
- The school has a formal arrangement whereby it is supported by Wood Green Academy. The focus of this support is currently on improving the accuracy of teachers' assessments. Some initial meetings have taken place, but it is too early to have seen any impact from this support.
- The interim principal joined the school five weeks ago. In that short time, she has gained the confidence of staff. Most staff who completed their inspection questionnaire said they believe that the school is now well led and managed. Several members of staff told inspectors that they appreciated the interim principal's clarity of vision for the future of the school. Most said that they are optimistic about the future and that morale is good. The interim principal has an increasingly accurate view of the school's performance. She is aware of the considerable amount of work to be done for it to

improve. Although it is too soon to see demonstrable impact from most of her planned improvement strategies, there has already been a marked improvement in punctuality and behaviour around the school. Many students and all staff who spoke to inspectors confirmed this.

- The Baker Dearing Educational Trust has recently provided two members of staff to increase capacity at senior leader level. This increased capacity has contributed positively to improving behaviour and better systems for analysing assessment information.
- The school's middle managers form a dedicated and passionate team. They are beginning to be more involved in improving teaching and progress in their areas. They understand their responsibility to provide leadership in their areas. Middle leaders told inspectors that they appreciate the recent improvement in support and trust from senior managers. They are committed to seeing the school improve and are very keen to play a full part in that process.
- Inspectors recommend that newly qualified teachers may be appointed before the next inspection.

Governance of the school

- Since the school opened, governors have lacked the knowledge and expertise to hold leaders to account effectively for the school's performance. They were unaware of the serious issues within teaching and students' progress until examination results were published in 2017. This is because they relied too heavily on information provided to them by leaders, without sufficient checks on its accuracy. External evaluations made by representatives of the DfE during this time also failed to highlight these issues and contributed to governors' false sense of security.
- Some governors have been unable to visit the school regularly because of their other commitments. They therefore lack first-hand information about the school's performance. This has contributed to their over-reliance on information from leaders and has contributed to their previous overgenerous evaluation of the quality of education being provided.
- Governors' expertise has improved during this year. They now ask searching and appropriate questions of leaders in meetings. Governors now have a good understanding of the school's many weaknesses. However, they still lack the expertise to challenge leaders' answers to the questions that governors ask. Similarly, they have been unaware when they have been presented with inaccurate information, for example relating to students' progress or attendance.
- Most governors are committed to the school. They care deeply about it and are determined to play their part in securing improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- This area is well led. Staff have been appropriately trained and they understand and use the school's procedures for reporting any concerns they have about students.

Leaders deal with concerns swiftly and correctly. They involve outside agencies appropriately when necessary. Leaders are tenacious in their pursuit of agencies when they are unhappy with the response they have received. Child-protection records are well organised and stored securely. Procedures to recruit staff are understood and used well. Safeguarding is a key element within the induction process for all new staff.

- Most students told inspectors that they feel safe when in school. Almost all staff who completed their inspection questionnaire said that students are safe in school. A very small number of parents expressed concerns about students' safety in their responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors found no evidence to support these concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Difficulties in recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers have had a detrimental effect on the quality of teaching that students have received since the school opened. Despite some improvement this year, temporary teachers still regularly teach students. On occasions, when the class teacher is absent, students are not taught at all. Instead, they have been, until recently, expected to complete work independently. Students in key stage 4 and the sixth form told inspectors that they are very unhappy with this situation. Several parents reiterated this view in their comments through Parent View.
- Teachers do not use information about what students already understand, know and can do when planning lessons. This means that activities are often too easy or too hard for some students. Teachers then do not regularly check on students' understanding in lessons and so are unaware that they have completed activities or are struggling. Consequently, many students make much less progress than they ought.
- Teachers do not support students who have SEN and/or disabilities consistently well. They rarely consider students' individual needs when planning activities. Consequently, these students are sometimes unable to begin tasks or find tasks too difficult. Leaders do not provide sufficient extra help for these students at other times and their progress is slow. A similar picture exists for students for whom English is an additional language. Teachers do not plan for their needs and they receive little extra support at other times.
- Too many teachers have low expectations of their students. Consequently, they are too ready to accept incomplete work, or work of poor quality. When this is the case, students' books and folders are poorly organised and contain incomplete work. However, there are classes where teachers' expectations are high. When this is the case, students are diligent and work hard.
- Teachers' questioning often does not help to develop students' deep understanding of their work. Teachers are too ready to accept brief, often one-word, answers and then do not use questions to draw out fuller responses. As a result, students' understanding of the material being studied is too often superficial. However, inspectors also observed several examples of highly skilled questioning from teachers and students answering eloquently and at length.
- Effective teaching is evident in pockets around the school. Here, high expectations, careful planning and skilled questioning contribute well to students' learning.

Inspectors observed this to be the case particularly in English, but also in part in other subjects including religious education and health and social care. The teaching of health and social care in particular has improved considerably this year.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote students' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- The school's provision for CEIAG is not effective. Students have been recruited onto inappropriate courses in the sixth form and students' knowledge of different options post-16 and post-18, including apprenticeships, is underdeveloped. In particular, students are unaware of many of the career options within the health sector, the school's intended focus area.
- The great majority of students are well motivated and eager to succeed. When taught well, they demonstrate good attitudes to learning. However, their capacity to study independently, including in the sixth form, is not strong. Many students do not make effective use of timetabled sessions where they are expected to study by themselves.
- Students have only a basic understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. While the school is a generally respectful and tolerant community, students' knowledge of other fundamental British values has not been developed well.
- The great majority of students told inspectors that they feel safe in school. They said that bullying is rare and generally dealt with appropriately. A minority of students said that they do not have faith in the school's adults to deal with bullying. Some students told inspectors that they do not at times feel safe when leaving the school at the end of the day because of incidents that have occurred, involving young people not from the school, on the town's high street.
- Students have an adequate understanding about how to keep themselves safe from potential dangers, including from those that can arise when using the internet, from gangs, drugs and knife-crime. Well-being days with visiting speakers, including police officers, have contributed well to many students' understanding of these issues.
- The school's pastoral team provides effective care and support for many vulnerable students. Staff know students well and relationships are positive. Regular team meetings with a safeguarding focus help to ensure that these students receive effective support. Several students told inspectors that they value the help that the pastoral team provides for them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is inadequate.
- Attendance is very low, having declined each year since the school opened. During this academic year, approximately 30% of students have not attended regularly and this is

the case for almost half of disadvantaged students. Leaders have only recently put in place systems to impress upon students and parents the importance of regular school attendance. These include telephoning parents when students are absent and rewarding good attendance. No impact from these changes is yet evident.

- Low-level disruption is evident in many, but by no means all, lessons in key stage 4. Invariably, a small minority of students in the class misbehave. This tends to be the case when teaching is weak or when teachers fail to use the school's behaviour policy and systems. Inspectors observed several example of students chatting while the teacher talked, shouting out, listening to music with headphones or completely disengaging from the lesson.
- Most students behave well in lessons. Inspectors found most students to be polite, courteous and keen to do well in school. Inspectors observed several lessons where students' behaviour was exemplary. They also observed an assembly where this was the case. Low-level disruption is rare in sixth-form lessons.
- At breaktime, lunchtime and between lessons, the school is calm and orderly. Most students are sensible, mature and well behaved. They conform to the school's dress code and look smart. Students and staff told inspectors that behaviour at social times has improved considerably in recent weeks.
- Lateness at the start of the school day, which had been an issue earlier in the year, has improved since the arrival of the interim principal. A concerted effort from staff has seen punctuality improve considerably.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Students in key stage 4 underachieve in almost all subjects. Published GCSE results for 2017 showed students making very weak progress in English, mathematics, science, humanities and health and social care. Consequently, attainment is well below national averages and many students do not achieve the qualifications of which they are capable.
- The school's assessment information suggests that GCSE outcomes may improve a little in 2018. However, teachers' assessments have proved wildly inaccurate and overgenerous in the past and so this information is unreliable. Inspection evidence confirms that current students are continuing to underachieve in many subjects.
- Disadvantaged students make particularly weak progress. Many do not attend school regularly. Leaders do not use the pupil premium well to improve these students' academic progress.
- Students who have SEN and/or disabilities make weak progress and underachieve. Teaching does not support their individual needs well and they receive little additional help outside of lessons.
- Sixth-form students who take A levels underachieve considerably. In 2017, outcomes were very weak in most subjects including biology, psychology, chemistry and mathematics. Leaders anticipate similar outcomes in 2018. Inspection evidence confirms that students in Year 13 continue to underactive on A-level courses. However, there are some early signs of improvement for students in Year 12.

- Almost all students who leave the school at the end of Year 11 and Year 13 move to further or higher education. However, their choice of course is hampered by their underachievement and many are unable to move on to their first-choice course or institution. In 2017, less than 50% of students in Year 11 chose to join the school's sixth form.
- There are some areas where students make reasonable progress. The small number of students who studied a foreign language in 2017 achieved well. A number of boys achieved GCSE results appropriate to their ability. Better progress is now evident in some subjects where teaching is improving. This is particularly the case in English and health and social care.

16 to 19 study programmes

Inadequate

- The sixth form has been poorly led since the school opened and it currently does not have a leader. Leaders have recruited students onto A-level courses when they do not have appropriate GCSE qualifications. They have not acted quickly to address weaknesses in teaching and assessment. Consequently, students on most A-level courses underachieved considerably in 2017. Students currently taking these courses continue to underachieve. Leaders have not done enough to promote the intended unique educational character of the school as a UTC. The focus on healthcare and health science is superficial.
- Teaching in the sixth form shares many of the weakness of teaching in key stage 4, although it is generally of a slightly higher quality. Too many lessons are affected by teacher absence, sometimes because teachers leave sixth-form classes to teach key stage 4 classes which do not have a teacher. For example, inspectors attempted to observe timetabled A-level biology classes on three occasions. None of the lessons took place.
- Expectations are not high enough and some students disengage in lessons because teachers do not expect them to think deeply or work hard. Many students have poorly developed personal study habits. Their work folders are too often disorganised and incomplete. They do not make good use of the time or facilities provided for them to study independently.
- Sixth-form attendance is too low and leaders' attempts to improve it have not been successful. Behaviour in sixth-form lessons is better than in key stage 4. Disruption of lessons is extremely rare and inspectors observed none. However, when teaching fails to challenge or engage students, some do disengage and do little work.
- Some sixth-form teaching is effective. For example, inspectors observed well-planned and appropriate revision sessions for Year 13 students in a number of subjects. However, several students failed to attend these lessons.
- CEIAG is poorly planned in the sixth form. Links with health professionals are limited and employers play only a superficial role in delivering enrichment activities or in raising students' awareness of the opportunities within the health sector. Most students are ignorant of the wide range of training and employment opportunities available in health. Support for students as they apply for university places is poor. It does not link well to other careers events and staff do not encourage students to start the

application process early enough.

- Most students complete their courses, but many are unsuccessful. For example, students failed approximately one third of A levels that they took in 2017. Almost all students move on to employment, education or training when they leave the sixth form. However, their underachievement limits the range of options open to them.
- All required elements of the 16 to 19 study programmes are in place, although some are not strong. For example, although students have access to work experience and work-related activities, the range of these is narrow. Similarly, there is only a narrow range of other non-qualification activity, designed to promote students' personal development.
- The comparatively small number of students studying vocational subjects make reasonable progress and much stronger than those studying academic subjects. Leaders are currently developing more vocational options for students.
- Students who join the sixth form without having already secured standard GCSE passes in English and mathematics study these subjects and retake the qualifications. Many achieve passes and success rates are higher than those seen nationally.

School details

Unique reference number	141813
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10042850

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

Type of school	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	419
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	158
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Linda Lang
Interim principal	Ruth Umerah
Telephone number	01217 942 888
Website	www.healthfuturesutc.co.uk
Email address	admin@healthfuturesutc.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Health Futures UTC is a 14 to 19 University Technical College with a focus on healthcare and health science. It opened in September 2015.
- There has been considerable change to senior leadership this year. The principal and two vice-principals left the school in January 2018. The current interim principal joined the school in April 2018.
- The school has an above-average proportion of disadvantaged students.
- The proportion of students who have SEN and/or disabilities is well below average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the

minimum expectations for students' progress at the end of key stage 4.

- The school does not meet the government's minimum standard value for post-16 academic courses, which sets the minimum expectation for students' progress on A-level courses.
- The school does not currently make any use of alternative provision.
- The school receives support from Wood Green Academy.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching, learning and behaviour in lessons, and some of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with two groups of students and talked to many others about their learning and their attitudes to, and opinions about, school. They observed students at breaktime and lunchtime and as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors visited an assembly.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised including information relating to governance, attendance, behaviour, safeguarding, students' progress and the checks made on the quality of teaching.
- Meetings were held with the interim principal, senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers and two governors including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors took account of parents' views by considering 13 responses to Parent View, including seven 'free-text' comments and two emails from parents. An inspector spoke to a parent over the telephone.
- Inspectors took account of 27 responses received on Ofsted's staff inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Alun Williams, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Peter Nelson

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Godden

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018