

Crewe Engineering and Design UTC

West Street, Crewe, Cheshire CW1 2PZ

Inspection dates

4–5 June 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principal, well supported by senior leaders, staff and governors, has created a nurturing culture. Many pupils with previous poor experiences of secondary education thrive and develop a strong understanding of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).
- Governors know the college well. They have considerable expertise in the college's specialisms of engineering, design and manufacturing.
- Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make good progress from low starting points across a range of subjects.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are respectful. Pupils behave well. Rates of exclusions are well below the national average.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. However, some of the most able pupils are not provided with work that is sufficiently challenging. Consequently, these pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Attainment and progress in mathematics are not as strong as in other subjects. Leaders are taking action to improve pupils' progress in mathematics. Teaching is improving. Nevertheless, there is still more to do to improve pupils' progress in this subject.
- Pupils feel safe and are cared for well. They are confident and articulate.
- The curriculum has a strong focus on courses relating to the college's specialisms. It is well matched to the needs and interests of pupils and the regional area.
- All Year 11 pupils and Year 13 students go on to appropriate education, employment or training. They have many opportunities to develop employability skills through project work and work experience with employers.
- Pupils enjoy coming to the university technical college (UTC). Attendance is higher than the national average for secondary schools.
- Parents and carers are delighted with the education that their children receive.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively.
- Middle leaders form a committed team. Some have still to fully develop their skills in improving their subject areas.
- Sixth formers value the wide array of opportunities available to them. They make strong progress in vocational courses. The small number of students who follow academic subjects now make better progress than those who left in 2018.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management, by further developing the skills of subject leaders so they continue to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and raise standards in their areas of responsibility.
- Build upon the recent improvements in mathematics teaching so that it leads to better progress for pupils in this subject.
- Further improve the quality of teaching, by ensuring that teachers plan tasks and provide activities with greater challenge for the most able pupils so that they make the progress of which they are capable.
- Further improve the rates of progress made by students on academic courses in the sixth form.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal has a crystal-clear vision for providing an education which develops pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of the UTC's specialisms of engineering, manufacturing and design. In a short space of time, along with senior leaders, staff and governors, the principal has created an inclusive and supportive culture where pupils make good progress in STEM-related subjects.
- The college is transforming pupils' lives. Many come to the college with poor experiences of schooling. Leaders and staff help pupils to settle quickly into Year 10 and Year 12. Pupils spoke highly of the support that they receive. A typical comment was, 'There is mutual respect with staff.' The specialist facilities and excellent links with the engineering, manufacturing and design sectors enable pupils to thrive in these subjects.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, or who responded using free-text, have very positive views of the UTC. Typically, they commented, 'My child has come on in leaps and bounds since he attended this school. The teaching staff have inspired him to move forward with his studies.' Another comment was, 'In this school, I have watched my child's confidence blossom, I am very glad she moved to the UTC.'
- The leadership of teaching and learning is strong. Leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning closely, through lesson observations, work scrutiny and analysis of data.
- Staff morale is high. Staff are proud to work at the college and feel well supported.
- The curriculum is broad. Pupils follow courses on business studies, computing and art and design. Leaders review the curriculum regularly to ensure that it meets the needs of pupils and local employers. Pupils learn German in key stage 4. This provides them with an opportunity to develop an understanding of the language and culture of many of the local companies which have headquarters in Germany.
- A great strength of the college is the broad range of employer-led group projects to which pupils have access. Employers work in close partnership with the UTC to ensure that timetabled project work matches the requirements of examination boards and develops pupils' knowledge and skills related to employment. This is successfully helping pupils to be 'work ready' and address the region's economic priorities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is developed well. Pupils learn about other religions through the personal, health, social and economic education programme (PHSEE) and timetabled lessons on religion and ethics. The values of tolerance and respect are promoted well through assemblies. This equips pupils with the knowledge required for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' learning is enhanced by a wide array of trips and visits. Staff encourage pupils to keep themselves fit and healthy. Pupils attend a local leisure centre and have opportunities to participate in athletics, football and other sports.

- Subject leaders are an enthusiastic and committed team. Some have wider responsibilities across the college. Subject leaders spoke positively about the professional development provided by the local teaching alliance. They feel this is helping them to develop their leadership skills. However, some have yet to ensure that they have fully developed their skills in monitoring more effectively teaching and learning in their subjects.
- Leaders know the barriers to learning that disadvantaged pupils face. They use the pupil premium funding effectively, for example to improve the attendance of these pupils. Leaders track the progress of disadvantaged pupils carefully and provide a range of support to help them catch up.
- The funding to support pupils with SEND is used effectively to support these pupils. The coordinator of the provision for pupils with SEND works closely with parents and external agencies. She provides regular updates for staff. As a result, pupils with SEND make strong progress.
- Leaders have brokered effective support from a local teaching alliance, for example in checking teachers' assessments in English and mathematics.
- The principal receives valuable advice and support from the Baker Dearing Trust.

Governance of the school

- Governors are passionately committed to the ethos of the UTC. They bring a wide range of expertise, including in the engineering and design sectors and higher education. This level of knowledge and skills has been a driving force in developing the curriculum and ensuring that pupils receive high-quality careers guidance.
- Minutes of the governing body meetings show that governors ask leaders probing questions. Governors challenge and support leaders well. They have a clear understanding of the strengths of the college and areas for further improvement.
- Governors work closely with leaders in ensuring that the college's safeguarding practices are secure.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding running through the college. Safeguarding records are detailed. The single central record of pre-employment checks is up to date. Staff have received a range of safeguarding training. They know what to do if they have any concern about a pupil's welfare or safety. Leaders work effectively with outside agencies and families to provide pupils with timely support. Leaders are particularly effective in supporting pupils and their families with safeguarding concerns related to 'county lines'.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe, including when online and using social media. All staff and parents who responded to the Ofsted online surveys said pupils at the UTC were safe and looked after well.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers foster positive relationships with pupils. Most teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use this effectively to check on pupils' understanding and to clarify any misconceptions.
- Good teaching in engineering and design prepares pupils well for employment. For example, the teaching of mechatronics effectively develops pupils' technical vocabulary.
- Employer-led projects, such as technical design challenges on railway level crossings and stowage design, enable pupils to develop well their communication and teamwork skills. In product design, pupils were encouraged to innovate when designing and making a table out of a Bentley wheel.
- Most teachers set tasks which are matched well to pupils' learning needs. However, some tasks set for the most able pupils do not sufficiently challenge their thinking.
- Pupils who enter the college with low attainment in reading and writing have additional lessons in literacy, to help them catch up with their peers. All pupils are encouraged to read in lessons.
- Teaching in mathematics is helping pupils to develop their basic mathematical skills. Although the quality of teaching in mathematics is improving, it is not yet consistently strong.
- Pupils develop their numeracy skills in science and engineering subjects. For example, pupils apply their mathematical skills to calculations and graphs.
- Leaders ensure that parents receive detailed information about how their children are progressing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders create a culture of inclusiveness. They, together with the staff team, know pupils very well. Many pupils arrive at the college having had long periods of disrupted education. Through their time in the college, they develop into confident young people. All pupils who spoke with inspectors said they much prefer the college to their previous school.
- Pupils are respectful to each other and their teachers. Pupils say bullying is rare and are confident staff would quickly sort out any concerns that they have.
- Most pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They take pride in their work, which is mostly neat and well presented.
- Leaders have ensured that a comprehensive programme of PHSEE is in place. This helps pupils to understand how to be safe from potential risks, including sexting, knife crime and drug misuse. Leaders place a strong emphasis on pupils' mental health and well-being.

- Pupils receive a well-planned programme of impartial careers advice and guidance. They are prepared very well for their next steps. Pupils benefit from work experience and mentoring from local employers in the college's specialisms. These activities develop pupils' employability skills well and help to ensure that they are ready for the world of work.
- Leaders have forged effective links with local universities. These help to raise pupils' aspirations. Many go on to study courses in engineering and design at colleges and universities.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders set high expectations of behaviour. They have developed an effective behaviour and rewards policy, which encourages pupils to behave well. Staff develop strong relationships with pupils and this helps pupils, including those who have had a history of exclusions from their previous schools, to engage positively with their education.
- The UTC is a calm environment. The majority of pupils move between lessons in an orderly manner. They are well supervised by staff at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Pupils are punctual to lessons and the majority are well prepared for learning. Most pupils behave well during lessons. They listen well to each other and teachers and respond positively to instructions. When teaching is not engaging, some pupils, especially boys, lose interest in their learning.
- Records show the rate of fixed-term exclusions is very low and there have been no permanent exclusions since the college opened in 2016. No inappropriate language was heard during the inspection.
- The college's engineering and business partners spoke highly of pupils' maturity and their positive attitudes to learning in the adult work environment.
- Leaders have been very successful in improving the attendance of pupils with a track record of not attending school regularly or who were previously educated at home. Rates of attendance are above the national average. This is because leaders monitor attendance rigorously and establish strong communications with families.
- Pupils respect the college environment. There is no litter or graffiti.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Published information for 2018 does not accurately represent the progress Year 11 pupils made in the college because they measure the progress pupils make from Year 7 to Year 11. Pupils start at the college in Year 10. College information indicates that many pupils arrive with attainment well below the national average. This is due to many pupils having experienced disrupted education in their previous schooling. Consequently, they often have significant gaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding.

- College records indicate that pupils who left Year 11 in 2018 made better progress from their Year 10 starting points than published data suggests. In 2018, pupils' outcomes in vocational courses at key stage 4 were stronger than in academic subjects.
- Leaders use baseline assessments when pupils enter Year 10. This helps them to benchmark pupils' starting points and to check carefully how well pupils are doing through their time in key stage 4. Leaders ensure that teachers' assessments of pupils' work are accurate. Leaders work closely with a local teaching alliance and examination boards to cross-check teachers' judgements.
- Inspection evidence shows that current pupils make strong progress in the college's specialist subjects in engineering, manufacturing and design.
- College data shows that current Year 11 pupils are making stronger progress in academic subjects than those who left in 2018.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work, lesson observations and current assessment data shows that Year 10 pupils make good progress and catch up on missed education. The progress pupils make in English has improved. This is because pupils are benefiting from stronger teaching.
- Pupils' attainment and progress are weaker in mathematics than in other subjects. Leaders have identified this and have detailed plans to address this issue. They have revised schemes of work to match the GCSE curriculum. Pupils' progress in mathematics is now beginning to improve.
- Inspection evidence shows that some work does not consistently challenge the most able pupils. As a result, they do not make as much progress as they should.
- Current assessment information and pupils' work show that disadvantaged pupils are making good progress.
- Pupils with SEND benefit from a range of specialist support and small group work. Consequently, their progress from their different starting points is improving.
- All pupils secure places in education, training or employment with training, including apprenticeships, when they leave college. This is because of carefully planned work-based experiences and the good information, advice and guidance that pupils receive. Representatives from engineering-based companies, who spoke with inspectors, say pupils develop strong sector-specific knowledge and skills which lead to pupils being capable of a higher level of responsibility and greater productivity when they start employment with them.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Effective teaching enables students to make good progress in the sixth form. Students benefit from industry-standard classrooms and workshops. This enables them to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to support their next steps.
- Students enjoy coming to the sixth form and attend regularly. Their behaviour is exemplary. Students are polite and welcoming to visitors. They act as excellent role models for younger pupils.

- In 2018, students' completion and attainment in vocational courses were broadly average. Most current students follow a mixture of vocational and a small number of academic qualifications. Current students make good progress on vocational courses.
- Students' progress in academic courses was below the national average in 2018. This was partly because during the start-up arrangements in 2016, many students were not following suitable courses. Leaders have tightened up entry requirements for A-level courses and reviewed and revised option choices to better meet the abilities of students. Teaching in A-level mathematics has been strengthened. Leaders have taken action to ensure that the curriculum better meets the needs of students. For example, all students studying engineering take additional mathematics as part of their study programme.
- Scrutiny of students' work and a review of the college's own records indicate that the small number of current students who are on academic courses are making better progress than in the past.
- All students move on to appropriate further education, employment or training when they leave the sixth form. Students value the careers advice and guidance that they receive, particularly the Bentley mentoring programme. They receive a high level of support with their university applications. Leaders ensure that students have opportunities to support their future career aspirations. For example, students have access to a range of local and national employers and take part in activities such as women into STEM and building a green car.
- Year 13 students who spoke with inspectors were very positive about their time at the college and, in particular, the constant exposure to employers, both in the college and through work placements.
- Students who start the sixth form without a standard pass in GCSE English or mathematics receive specialist teaching and make good progress when they retake these subjects.
- The college has student representatives on the safeguarding team. This helps leaders to identify and deal quickly with any concerns.
- Students benefit from an extensive range of activities, including sports and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. These contribute well to their personal development.

School details

Unique reference number	142890
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10057907

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	216
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	68
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Professor Neil Fowler
Principal	David Terry
Telephone number	01270 218 150
Website	www.utccrewe.co.uk/
Email address	enquiries@creweutc.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Crewe Engineering and Design UTC is a 14 to 19 university technical college with a focus on engineering, design and manufacturing specialisms.
- The college is owned by Crewe UTC, which is a stand-alone academy trust. It opened in September 2016.
- The college is sponsored by Bentley Motors, OSL Global and Manchester Metropolitan University.
- The governing body comprises representative trustees of each of the sponsors.

- The college is smaller than the average and provides education for pupils in key stages 4 and 5. Pupils join the college in Year 10 or in Year 12 for the sixth form.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The college does not make use of any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors held discussions with the principal, other senior leaders, middle leaders, a group of staff, four governors, including the chair of the governing body, the college's improvement adviser, a representative of the Baker Dearing Trust and representatives of employers. Inspectors also spoke by telephone with a representative from the Department for Education.
- Inspectors observed pupils' learning across Year 10 and Year 12. Some of these were joint observations with college leaders.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in lessons and looked at a sample of pupils' books to evaluate their learning over time in different subjects.
- Inspectors met with pupils in Year 10 and students in Year 12, both formally and informally, to gather their views on a variety of issues, including safeguarding, bullying, behaviour, teaching and the careers advice.
- Inspectors observed pupils at break, at lunchtimes, in registration periods and in lessons.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance, safeguarding information, minutes of the governing body meetings, information on the progress made by pupils, training arrangements for teachers, checks on the quality of teaching and the college's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- Inspectors considered the 19 responses to the staff questionnaire. Inspectors also considered the views of parents, taking into account 33 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 16 comments by text.

Inspection team

Ahmed Marikar, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kevin Williams

Ofsted Inspector

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