



## Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



**School Name:** The University Collegiate School

**School Address:** The Stoller Building  
Deane Road  
Bolton  
BL3 5AG

**Head/Principal** Mr James Inman

**IQM Lead** Mr Ben Bramwell

**Assessment Date** 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**Assessor** Ms Alyson Tolley

### Evidence

- Self-Evaluation Report (SER).
- School website and Social Media pages – Facebook; Instagram.
- School Policies.
- Lesson drop-ins.
- Displays/Learning environment.
- Book looks.
- Quest Trust Strategy 2024-27.

### Meetings (including those via Teams) held with:

- Headteacher.
- Deputy Headteacher (DHT)/IQM Lead.
- Trust Education Advisor.
- Trust Chief Executive Officer (CEO) - phone call.
- Members of the Internal Advisory Board (IAB).
- Trustees.
- Senior Leaders including Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCo).
- Subject Heads of Department.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs).
- Pastoral Leaders.
- Parents/Carers.
- School Council.
- Students across Key Stages (KS) 3, 4 and 5.



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### Overall Evaluation

The University Collegiate School (UCS) is part of the Quest Trust of Schools. The recently appointed CEO's vision is to support young people from early years to employment, guaranteeing that disadvantaged children are given equal experiences to those who aren't. The Trust's vision permeates the UCS. The school is also a University Technical College (UTC) school and part of the Baker Dearing Trust.

The school has undergone a transformation over the past two years with substantial support from the Quest Trust led by the dynamic CEO and the IAB. The new Headteacher joined the school in September 2023, previously having significant experience in leading school improvement and an experienced Deputy Headteacher joined the school in 2022. The school has four Assistant Headteachers, including the SENDCo, who have recently been promoted to new leadership roles within the school.

Over the past two years, the Trustees, the IAB and the new Leadership Team have analysed the needs of the school and produced a comprehensive statement of action and action plan to address previous Ofsted areas of concern. The initial focus was to ensure that children were effectively safeguarded and to re-establish behaviour for learning and subsequently, the Deputy Headteacher prioritised systemic changes in both, to secure the necessary improvements to lay the foundations for a sequenced and well-planned journey of improvement.

Pivotal to these changes has been a commitment to establishing clear values and behaviours that would define "the way we do things around here". These have been constantly reviewed but the impact was recognised in the Ofsted monitoring visit (July 2023). The HMI stated, "You have sensibly prioritised improving pupils' behaviour, wellbeing and safety. These areas have shown real signs of improvement. There is a palpable sense that everyone is invested in them". Whilst this was cause for celebration, it also served to reinforce the commitment and determination of all Leaders to continue to drive and secure rapid improvement, with the best interests of students and staff at the heart of it.

The school's values are 'Professional; Responsible; Loyal' and were agreed upon in consultation with stakeholders. The Deputy Headteacher has worked on ensuring that the values are well-known, understood and articulated by staff and students alike. They are explicitly displayed on all classroom doors and teachers commented on how they can interweave these values into learning conversations. The Deputy Headteacher spoke about how there is a palpable sense that everyone is invested in the values, giving the example of the fact there has been very little negativity from students around the introduction of the new behaviour systems. This view was strengthened during my conversations with students who when asked about it, focused very much on the rewards but understood how the consequences had improved behaviour in and around school.

The school has a welcoming, warm atmosphere and this is apparent from the minute you enter the building. Sitting in Reception, I was acknowledged by all staff and students as they arrived and I could hear conversations that exuded respect and kindness.



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I had the opportunity to meet with a variety of stakeholders throughout the two days as well as visiting lessons. It was evident throughout my interactions with Leaders that there is a powerful sense of pride in being part of the UCS. The commitment to reflect and self-evaluate underpins everything they do. The passion for inclusion percolates through all areas of the school and every member of the team.

I had the privilege to talk to students who spoke openly and confidently about their experiences and what their hopes were for their futures, demonstrating the school's commitment to aspiration. They were welcoming and able to articulate their school journey, with older students describing how the school has changed for the better over the past two years. They talked about the recent Careers Fair at the University and Year 7 students were very excited that they had been involved. They told me about the range of after-school activities and how they enjoyed a recent Culture Day where they were able to showcase their own cultures and experience others, through wearing their own clothes with the Bistro (their new school canteen) offering different food choices.

The staff talk passionately about their work at the UCS and how they feel supported and listened to by Leaders. Heads of Department talked about how Leaders get the right balance between support and challenge, with one colleague speaking about the support he received whilst completing his National Professional Qualification (NPQ). They also spoke about how all staff feel that they have a voice and this was reinforced in my discussions with other colleagues throughout the two days.

The staff 'culture club' has reflected on the school's values and promoted a set of behaviours that govern how staff should model their behaviour and I met with members during my visit. The club is a recent initiative made up of staff volunteers who talked about the 'massive culture change' that has taken place since September. An Early Career Teacher (ECT) spoke fervently about how they have a shared goal to drive school improvement and it is apparent that they see this group as a real opportunity to make a difference.

Relationships are exceptional and walking through the school I could see the positive ways in which staff and students interact with each other. There is mutual respect alongside genuine warmth in and out of classrooms. Leaders know and understand the students and this is reflected in the school's vision.

The school is a recent new build and learning spaces are bright and inviting as well as spacious. There are fantastic resources such as the new dental lab which will be used by students studying the new T-level course from September. There is also a 'pharmacy' on-site and Health and Social Care students have access to a bedridden patient to work with!

The Headteacher is described by staff as 'an incredible leader' who cares about staff and students and under his passionate and expert leadership, the Leadership Team has established a system of support for all staff which includes a strong focus on their wellbeing as well as driving school improvement. Subsequently, Leaders know their school, they run an open-door policy for staff and this was evident throughout the day as staff talked about how they can access support at any time.



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A Head of Department talked about how she can speak to Leaders when she feels overwhelmed and through coaching, she can problem solve and re-prioritise her workload. Staff also talked about how Leaders are responsive to staff surveys, again demonstrating how they feel listened to.

I am of the firm opinion that the UCS fully meets the standards required by the Inclusion Quality Mark's Inclusive School Award. The school knows and understands what work needs to be done and has robust plans in place.

As a result of the strong inclusive ethos that permeates every element of the school, I also recommend that the school should consider applying for Centre of Excellence status subject to the inclusion within its plans of the appropriate areas for development and the completion of the Centre of Excellence documentation. If the school chooses to pursue this status and it were to be awarded the school would be subject to annual review from this point forwards.

**Assessor: Ms Alyson Tolley**

**Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:**

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Joe McCann MBA NPQH  
Director of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd



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### Element 1 - The Inclusion Values of the School

Leaders model the inclusion agenda through their interactions with all stakeholders. They acknowledge the school is on a journey and are aware of the challenges they face, but they are persistent and steadfast in their determination to provide the very best for both staff and students to ensure they maximise their potential.

The Headteacher articulated how the children can see 'people who care' and it was clear to see this through the nurturing relationships between staff and students. The CEO talked about how 'the children are the why' and the chair of the IAB spoke about how the school has worked hard to develop the resilience of the students and how they will now speak to adults whereas previously they struggled to express themselves with assurance. He stated how there is now only a 'recalcitrant minority' of students who are not fully engaging but there is significant work being done to support and creatively engage this minority. Leaders and staff spoke with pride about the proactive work that is being done with these students, many of whom are at risk of exclusion from society. There has been a significant shift away from suspensions to a more restorative culture as staff importantly understand the impact on children who experience time out of school.

During my interactions with students and from observing the student council, students demonstrate their awareness and understanding of the inclusive ethos of UCS. Key Stage 4 students talked about feeling that they are "a part of everything". They explained that their teachers recognise their abilities and "push them" to achieve. A sixth former spoke about her support plan and how she had input into this before it was distributed to staff. A Year 9 student talked about the support he receives from staff concerning his dyslexia and how his teachers know what adjustments he needs to be able to access learning.

Leaders have moved away from the link between pay and appraisal performance management. The focus has shifted to a Performance Development Programme (PDR) with regular reviews and feedback from staff indicates this has been appreciated as they understand its value and it has led to a shift in improving pedagogy and learning.

The school calendar has recently been remodelled to allow more time for planning but also to give staff more independence in planning workload. Colleagues are allowed to manage their own workloads and leave the school building when they feel it is appropriate. The Leadership Team has listened to the comments of teachers and middle leaders and remodelled the meeting and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) calendar to allow more time for collaborative planning in departments.

Staff wellbeing is a priority and has been improved because of greater communication between staff and Leaders. Teachers talked about how they are individually thanked by Leaders as recognition of something done well and this is appreciated. The staff is encouraged to give feedback regularly, staff have also been given the professional respect to manage their individual workloads and finish times appropriately and they support each other through "fun" activities such as Secret Elf, Doughnut Day and recently a teacher appreciation day led by students.



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The Trust leadership has also negotiated a much-improved Employer Assistance Programme which gives staff access to a range of different support and provision. The IAB chair talked about how “we all look after each other” and emphasised how they ensure that the Headteacher and other Senior Leaders are supported to manage their own wellbeing. There is a Trust Wellbeing CPD day in September and this reflects the commitment and understanding to looking after staff.

### Next Steps:

- Continue to prioritise staff wellbeing at all levels of the organisation.
- Consider the use of school staff to provide alternative vocational experiences e.g. site manager, admin, art and PE, etc.
- Continue to drive uniform expectations.



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### Element 2 - Leadership and Management and Accountability

The Headteacher talks about distributed leadership and there has been significant work in developing middle leadership to strengthen accountability. This has led to a focus on improving the curriculum and teaching and learning in subject areas. All Leaders I spoke with demonstrated their commitment to the journey that lies ahead of them.

Leaders actively engage with a range of external partners as well as the Local Authority (LA) and the Bolton Learning Alliance (BLA). Inclusion Leads, Attendance Leads and Safeguarding Leads have been to the school regularly and have conducted reviews of practice. The school has also developed links with local schools to collaborate and share good practice and to work together to avoid suspension and exclusion. Staff commented on a trip to a school the previous day where they had seen some excellent practice that they are considering developing at the UCS.

Leaders consistently seek external verification from a range of sources. They have had 3 separate safeguarding audits to ensure that safeguarding is effective. They have also engaged in extensive work to tackle bullying and the school has been awarded the Anti-Bullying Alliance Bronze award. This has been successful in significantly reducing bullying and this was commented on by students I met with.

The Trust talks with pride about how the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher have engaged and involved staff in change management. Staff surveys and feedback demonstrate that staff are 'on board' and this was palpable during my visit. As a result, teachers have responded with enthusiasm to numerous changes including the substantially increased scrutiny of practice. Indeed, Heads of Department (HODs) have worked closely with several external partners to review and improve their curriculums, medium-term planning and teaching and learning.

Leaders have implemented a programme of CPD with HODs focusing on improving the quality of education, learner engagement and achievement. The Trust Education Adviser shared an example from earlier this year when he delivered training with them, they then delivered this to the whole staff. This empowered them and raised their status within the school. The Headteacher describes the HODs as 'brilliant' and those I met are unreservedly committed and dedicated to the changes that are taking place.

Leaders have established an agreed set of principles called the "UCS Quality Assurance (QA) Pledge" which details what teachers can expect following learning walks and lesson observations. This has been very welcomed by staff who value the feedback to improve their practice.

HODs are now responsible for evaluating their work more robustly and this is supported by regular reviews from Synergy Education. Whilst the self-evaluation calendar is embryonic, their work in leading self-evaluation is improving at a rapid rate. Weekly line management meetings are supported by behaviour and achievement data and analysis compiled by the Deputy Headteacher and shared with every member of staff. They collectively run their own RAG meetings now focusing on the performance of students within the school.



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Staff are invited to attend strategic SLT meetings if there is an area of development they are interested in. Leaders are also developing secondment opportunities for staff at all levels of the organisation, so that they can gain experience in leadership.

The importance of time has been recognised by Leaders and they realise that respecting staff professionalism is the single biggest way of improving wellbeing. Leaders have adapted the way meetings are held. Rather than a long agenda of 'business' both SLT and HOD meetings now are one-item meetings that directly impact school improvement and teachers spoke about how this is a far more productive use of time. Regular line management means teachers feel supported as well as being held to account. CPD is planned to ensure its relevance and the UCS has negotiated a University offer for all staff to complete any of their courses free of charge.

The leadership of SEND is exemplary and this is recognised by parents who described the SENDCo as 'amazing'. They spoke highly of her commitment to supporting their children and that the support the students receive is 'immense'. The SENDCo states that her 'voice is heard' and she is working collaboratively with staff through a structured CPD programme to raise awareness of individual student needs. She has established positive relationships with a range of external agencies and this means that students receive early help and support.

A daily triage has been introduced to quality assure every safeguarding and behaviour log that is recorded during the day, alongside a weekly SYNERGY meeting which provides updates and action plans for all children known to children's services and with an open Early Help. This meeting also considers children who are not at that formal stage but who staff feel may need extra support. A weekly SAPHO meeting takes place to risk assess every child in a particular year group. These meetings are chaired by the DSL and the Pastoral Team, with the SENDCo and attendance officer also in attendance.

The Trust and IAB proactively participate in the life of the school. They visit the school regularly and take part in the QA processes along with Senior Leaders. Both the Trust and the IAB are committed to learning for all and are fully supportive of the school's inclusive ethos.

### Next Steps:

- Senior Leaders continue to ensure the QA of the new assessment processes so that they become routine.
- To continue the aspirational work through links with the college and university.





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### Element 3 - Curriculum – Structure, Pupil Engagement and Adaption

The curriculum at the UCS is developing to ensure all students actively engage in their educational journey. As the confidence of HODs continues to build, staff expertise in devising, monitoring and sequencing a high-quality curriculum offer is growing.

I visited several classrooms during the two days and all lessons were calm and purposeful with students engaged in a range of activities. In a Year 9 lesson, collaborative learning was supporting retrieval of 'medical ethics' with students working well together and sharply focussed. In another lesson, Year 10 Health and Social Care students were planning an assessment task, working in groups focusing on different areas of health.

The curriculum at KS3 now meets the definition of "broad and balanced" as the school has employed and resourced both an Art teacher and a Music teacher. This is the first time that students at KS3 have had access to these subjects other than in cross-curricular projects. Students talked animatedly about the extra-curricular activities on offer in Music every day and the opportunities they have, to 'have a go' with different instruments.

Middle leaders have developed road maps that outline the key learning at each point during KS3 and KS4. These are very effective in providing the 'big picture' for students and provide information on intervention sessions that are available for them. Each subject area has also designed book wraps with the key subject knowledge and tips on the front such as 'Write like a Historian', along with aide memoires for connectives and command words. These are useful in providing immediate essential information to students and are much more user-friendly than displaying them on walls.

Students typically enter the UCS with low reading ages. This impacts on their ability to access the curriculum. Leaders have appointed a Literacy Co-ordinator and designed a literacy strategy that focuses on a range of catch-up interventions. There are also whole school reading programmes with the introduction of form readers at KS3.

Teachers are provided with specific information on students with SEND and the SENDCo has worked diligently to improve staff understanding of the needs of individual learners.

As a UTC, one of the core elements of the Baker Dearing license is to develop the student experience of the world of work and provide meaningful employer engagements. The destination data shows that students typically go onto either Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) degree courses or apprenticeships. With the appointment of the Employer Engagement Lead, the contact between businesses, employers and students in all years has improved dramatically.

Subject areas have been encouraged to focus on the development of tier 2 and 3 vocabularies. This means that subjects are explicitly teaching key vocabulary so that students can understand the key concepts of each subject. For example, in a Year 8 History lesson on the Industrial Revolution, new words are introduced at the start of each lesson.



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From September the school is going to offer T-Levels in Health Sciences with the introduction of dental and adult nursing. This will be in conjunction with the University and Synergy Dental.

### Next steps

- Continue to develop the use of form time and build in QA of literacy.
- Consider developing a culture of reading/literacy across all areas of school.
- Consider cross-curricular collaboration looking at disciplinary literacy e.g. Science/Geography/Maths to look at 'common' vocabulary.



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### Element 4 - Teaching and Learning – Learning Environment, Planning Resources, Pedagogy

Leaders have worked hard to improve the quality of teaching by focusing on improving the curriculum as well as scrutinising the structure of lessons. The introduction of the new UCS lesson structure, entitled DEAR, has been embraced by teachers. It is flexible enough to allow individual subjects to plan lessons in the way they need to, but it provides consistency for students so that they know what to expect when they arrive at lessons.

During visits to lessons, I was able to see DEAR in practice with teachers standing at the door of classrooms and handing out the 'Do Now' task as students entered. This ensures a prompt and calm start to learning and is undoubtedly starting to become embedded. Speaking with students, they were able to articulate how the task enables them to recall previous learning. The next steps for Leaders are to ensure consistency in using the 'Do Now' task to provide stretch for students.

The CPD calendar for this academic year was completely re-structured to ensure that the focus of professional development is based on curriculum teaching and learning and this is paying off. The recently appointed Trust Education Advisor and the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for teaching and learning are leading on CPD. These sessions have focused on 'What makes effective teaching?' and have included work on different types of questioning, modelling and reading. After each session, time is allocated to departments for planning time to develop and embed these techniques into the subject area and their curriculum.

Leaders have also introduced new and refined existing QA mechanisms. New internal QA has been introduced where all the staff has been observed teaching and there has been the standardisation of judgements from either the Headteacher or the Trust Education Advisor. This means that Leaders can determine which staff may need support and this is done very subtly so that staff feel supported and not judged.

The UCS is growing and this year the school has been oversubscribed. This has resulted in the need for more space and the school is having two new buildings constructed. A Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and classroom will be ready for use from September and a new build will be ready for the following September. This will provide much-needed space as well as more specialist areas such as Food Technology. There are currently break-out spaces on all floors which are used effectively by staff and students.

The school has invested in GCSE Pod and the uptake of this has been extremely positive with Year 11 students responding well to the competitive element. To support its usage, students were introduced to the programme in school to ensure they were all able to access it independently. The school has also invested in Sparx Maths and Sparx Reader to improve the learning available to students.

Working in collaboration with the University, the school has successfully supported several PGCE students this year. The Professor of Education at the University talked about how at the end of the placement, students have spoken passionately about "the



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UCS way” and he referred to them as having found their vocation. Several of these PGCE students will return to the school in September as ECTs and the Trust EA spoke excitedly about planning a comprehensive package of CPD previously unsurpassed in the school.

### Next Steps:

- Continue to drive the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that lessons are paced with high challenge.
- Plan and deliver CPD with a focus on questioning /scaffolding/modelling with different foci - SEND/English as an Additional Language (EAL)/Health Policy and Administration (HPA).
- Consider effective deployment of TAs using Educational Endowment Fund (EEF) research.



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### Element 5 - Assessment

An Assistant Headteacher is leading consultation on a new streamlined assessment policy at KS3 that will be simpler for staff, students and parents to understand and will provide Leaders with more robust information about the progress of students. Leaders have introduced regular data collection with clear guidance for staff to use to complete these effectively. HODs now must ensure that data is standardised and moderated.

At KS4 and KS5, Leaders have introduced RAG meetings so that they can track learners' progress against agreed criteria. This is used to identify students who may need additional support and intervention.

During this academic year, Leaders have improved the availability and use of standardised data for staff. They have data on past performance including KS2 scores, Cognitive Abilities Tests (CAT) test scores and reading ages. This is starting to be used effectively and provides essential information to identify gaps in knowledge as well as any potential additional needs. Leaders are fully aware that the next steps must be to focus on how to close these gaps.

The school is re-modelling the way they report to parents. Reports will contain much clearer data on progress and attitudes to learning with colour-coded boxes to support parents with limited access to English.

The new assessment policy has introduced progress and transition books/folders for every subject which follow the students as they transition to the next academic year and this helps students and teachers to keep track of progress and improvement as well as supporting teachers to see what students are capable of rather than having to reestablish baseline information. This means that teachers can utilise this intelligence to inform more robust planning to meet individual needs and stretch and challenge students.

Teaching is improving and the focused CPD on questioning and modelling has empowered teachers to improve their understanding of individual needs. Leading up to assessment points, teachers provide a series of revision lessons where students are provided with tools to support their retrieval of prior learning. In one lesson I visited students were working in pairs, using mind maps to revise key information and they said how much this helps them to prepare for the assessment itself. There is an expectation that "therapy" sessions take place after learning checkpoints to encourage learning discussions between teacher and learner.

Teachers spoke about how they had been provided with opportunities to mark for exam boards this summer and many staff have opted to use this to develop their knowledge and understanding of KS4 and 5 external assessments. To support this process, Leaders provided three days off timetable to provide capacity for teachers to do this and HODs valued this investment. The Head of Maths explained how she has gained a better understanding of exam marking and she is already planning how she will use this to improve teaching and learning in her subject.



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### Next Steps:

- Improve teachers' use of historic data to plan lessons that will plug gaps in knowledge.
- Improve teachers' use of both formative and summative assessments in lessons so that they can “close the loop” for students.
- Improve departmental tracking of performance at KS3, 4 and 5 so that Leaders can hold teachers and students to account for performance.



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### Element 6 - Behaviour, Attitudes to Learning and Personal Development

All stakeholders are in no doubt that Leaders have prioritised the behaviour and safety of students. The new behaviour policy is 'owned' by all stakeholders because of the excellent consultative process led by the Deputy Headteacher. The policy strongly focuses on positive behaviour encouraging and rewarding students for getting it right.

Following the introduction of the behaviour policy, a group of staff used their initiative and formed a 'reward squad'. They have worked to promote the positive achievement points allocated to students through tangible rewards and recognition. Students spoke enthusiastically about the 100 Club and the 10% Club and were able to articulate many of the rewards they had received.

The SAPHO meeting discusses every individual child on a year group rotation. The team uses a risk assessment scale of 1-4 based on safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and academic progress. As a result, they know their students well and this empowers them to put in place timely interventions including parental meetings, student contracts and Early Help assessments. Parents spoke optimistically about these processes and the impact they have had in supporting their children, as well as in some cases, the positive changes to home life.

Improving attendance remains a priority. Historically, attendance at the UCS was low and below national and local averages. Leaders have appointed a dedicated attendance officer and have bought a virtual attendance package (Virtual Attendance Officer) to ensure that it is systematically monitored with an increased focus on building relationships with parents. The school now holds attendance panels and carries out home visits, as well as introducing a competition element and this has had a marked impact. Where there is a genuine need, parents are supported through Early Help processes to ensure students and families get the help they need. The result is that attendance is now above the national and local average and they have been awarded a Fischer Family Trust (FFT) award for being in the top 25% of similar schools nationally. This is an incredible achievement and reflects the dedication and commitment of staff to getting students into school.

Leaders have focused on improving the culture of the school and as a result, the school is calm. When walking around the building, the only students I saw out of lessons were those accessing the photocopier and behaviour was good in all lessons. To address the more challenging transition times, staff have key duty points and Pastoral staff are constantly monitoring corridors to ensure that students are in lessons and learning.

The school runs its own 'Internal Alternative Provision' which is a 12-week programme for identified students. An Assistant Headteacher described this as a strength of the school and it has been extremely effective in supporting students who were previously at risk of permanent exclusion. Students have been successfully reintegrated back into mainstream lessons following a period of intensive work which includes curriculum-based learning alongside therapeutic work that addresses individual behaviours.

The introduction of the 5 o'clock Club has had a colossal impact on improving behaviour and reducing exclusions. With the support of parents, students who do not comply with



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expectations remain in school until 5 pm. This is part of a structured series of consequences but is one of the most significant factors in reducing non-engagement. Staff described the 'club' as relentless and challenging in tackling unacceptable behaviour.

Healthy lifestyles are promoted through the Personal Development curriculum and some subject areas such as Science and Geography. All children have their entitlement to PE on a broad and balanced curriculum. The school has recently employed a new catering company and healthy eating is promoted through the food offer at lunchtime.

Vulnerable learners have access to full participation in school life. The SEND department runs a specialist break and lunchtime provision in BLISS where students can access a quiet space. Parents and students are overwhelmingly positive about this facility. Vulnerable learners also have both early lunch and quiet corridor passes. Those that need additional resources such as different coloured paper are provided with these and I saw evidence of this throughout the two days.

Students made it clear to Leaders that they wanted more opportunities for extracurricular clubs in the UTC. Subject areas have been encouraged to offer enrichment after school and during lunch time. The response has been phenomenal, from 5 enrichment opportunities on offer at the start of the year, there are now 32 enrichment opportunities on offer including Sparx maths support, Criminology club, 3D-design and Formula 1, in addition to the traditional PE, Music and Art offers.

Testament to all the hard work being carried out, the Professor of Education (the University) stated that he feels that behaviour and attitudes are now the strongest part of the school.

### Next Steps:

- Try innovative ideas to continue to encourage staff to consistently award achievement points.
- Consider 'on the hoof' rewards for students spotted demonstrating the values.
- Develop a rewards journey visual for the academic year so students can see short/medium/long-term opportunities.
- Use student consultation to inform end-of-term/year reward trips.





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### Element 7 - Parents, Carers and Guardians

The UCS serves a deprived community and it has sometimes been difficult to engage parents, carers and guardians in supporting their child's learning, however, the school has worked tirelessly to develop relationships and give them a voice. The introduction of a parental app has significantly improved communication, providing live data about various aspects of school at the press of a button. The school has also offered sessions to support parents and this has resulted in a higher number of parents using this to access communication from school.

Leaders ensure that they communicate with parents via a range of means. Parents' Evening letters are sent in English, Gujarati and Urdu (the majority of non-English languages). When necessary, parents, carers and guardians are supported in individual meetings by staff who they know well. If language is a potential barrier, the school uses interpreters and, in some cases, there are a few staff who support as they speak Urdu and Arabic. The school has also provided a signing service for a parent who is hearing impaired. Options Evenings have recently been introduced, alongside the Year 6 Open Evening. There are regular opportunities for parents of children with SEND to visit the school for review meetings and the SENDCo holds regular SEND coffee mornings to further develop relationships as well as providing a network of support for parents.

Feedback from parents is welcomed and they are invited to complete regular surveys. The school has also had over 50 Ofsted Parent view surveys completed in this year alone – this is a testament to the increased involvement of parents and communication between staff and parents. This feedback demonstrates how much progress the school has made. A recent survey indicated that over 80% of parents would recommend the school to other parents, this was further supported by comments from the Professor of Education at Bolton University (a Trustee) who stated that he would send his own children to the school.

Parents who I met with spoke very highly of the school and their child's experiences at the UCS. They feel the school fosters "good relationships with each child", and listens to what parents say. Parents spoke at length about the relationships staff have with students and how they respect the children. This was also reinforced by several students who said the same. Parents commented that communication is good, they find the parent app informative and acknowledged that staff take time to respond to emails.

Parents talked about the adaptations the school has made to support children with SEND. Parents said, "the support is immense" and explained how the support from the SENDCo started prior to transition in Year 6 which resulted in an effective transition for their child who may otherwise had a different experience. A parent of a Year 10 student who has recently started at UCS talked about how her daughter has come a long way in a short space of time, receiving support that is impacting positively on her health and wellbeing. Another said she cannot "sing its praises enough", explaining how her daughter has consistently been nurtured in her time at the school and is now being supported to consider university.

### Next steps

- Continue to improve the attendance of parents at all Parents' Evenings.



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- Improve the uptake of parents, carers and guardians using the My Child at School (MCAS) app.
- Continue to promote and develop SEND coffee mornings – consider alternative venues to encourage more parents to attend.



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### Element 8 - Links with Local, Wider and Global Community

Leaders know that education has the power to change the lives of students which is why they continue to build links to support them with their future aspirations. As a UTC school, they have three specialisms of Health Sciences, Engineering and Digital and are currently developing pathways for students so that there is a route for students across all key stages and beyond into the world of work. Leaders recognise that they have a duty to provide students with meaningful employer engagement and are constantly exploring different ways of seeking new partnerships.

Leaders are collaborating effectively with the University to use its facilities for PE, Engineering and Health as well as to support CPD. Leaders also make use of the University's Outward Bounds Centre and take Year 7 students there to promote team building. Every member of staff now has access to a free degree, Master's or PhD programme and this is an incredible opportunity for staff.

The Trust leadership has employed an Employer Engagement Lead who has sourced some excellent opportunities for students. The school is actively working with a range of companies who have either visited the school or students have visited. These have included the Royal Navy Medical, Mercedes Benz, Synergy Dental, Elysium Healthcare, Galliford Try and Amazon amongst others. Students are now beginning to recognise the difference that a UTC education brings in exposing them to the real-world application of their classroom-based learning.

All students across the school recently visited the university where they had opportunities to learn about different careers and companies, with representation from a range of companies including Sellafield. Students spoke avidly about the visit and the impact was evident in my discussion with them about future aspirations. They also shared their experiences in participating in other events and how these have provided them with knowledge and understanding of different jobs, many of which they previously weren't aware of. The Health Sciences Leader spoke about a recent visit to meet with Operating Department Practitioners (ODP) and how this raised awareness and interest in the profession for students who want to work in the health profession and she explained how this had opened new career ideas for some.

The school is mindful of its responsibilities to the different faith groups and is currently liaising with a local Imam to come and lead Friday prayers for their community.

Leaders have extended the opportunities on offer to students. This has included some events such as the 'Culture Day'. This was a morning where the whole school participated in a variety of activities run by staff to promote mindfulness and a sense of belonging. Some staff and students completed activities off-site, such as a treasure hunt around the local area whilst other staff and students participated in activities in school such as Karate and model making. The sixth form invited local Bhangra dancers into the school who put on a very popular performance. The experiences clearly had a huge impact on both staff and students who all spoke enthusiastically about the day, clearly enjoying new learning as well as initiating new relationships and embedding others.



## Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



### Next Steps:

- Develop a programme to reach out and engage with the immediate local community.
- Consider working in partnership with local providers to explore potential apprenticeship opportunities.
- Long-term, consider in-house vocational alternative provision opportunities with the support of local employers, e.g. construction.