



## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

### REVIEW REPORT FOR ORCHARD MEAD ACADEMY

<b>Name of School:</b>	Orchard Mead Academy
<b>Principal:</b>	Rita Hindocha
<b>Hub:</b>	Rushey Mead
<b>School type:</b>	Secondary
<b>MAT:</b>	Rushey Mead Education Trust

<b>Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:</b>	Effective
<b>Date of this Review:</b>	29/01/2020
<b>Overall Estimate at last QA Review:</b>	Requires Improvement
<b>Date of last QA Review:</b>	08/02/2019
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Not previously inspected as an academy. Inadequate as predecessor school.
<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	11/10/2016

## Quality Assurance Review

The review team, comprising host school leaders and visiting reviewers agree that evidence indicates these areas are evaluated as follows:

**Leadership at all levels**                      Effective

**Quality of provision and outcomes**    Effective

**AND**

**Quality of provision and  
outcomes for disadvantaged  
pupils and pupils with additional  
needs**

**Area of Excellence (if applicable)**    Not applicable

**Previously accredited valid Areas  
of Excellence (if applicable)**        Not applicable

**Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate**      Effective

*Please note that a Challenge Partners Quality Assurance Review is not equivalent to an Ofsted inspection, and agreed peer evaluation estimates from the review are not equivalent to Ofsted judgements.*

## 1. Context and character of the school

Orchard Mead Academy was formed when Hamilton College converted to a sponsor-led academy on 1 September 2017. It is larger than the average secondary school. Rushey Mead Educational Trust was asked by the Department for Education to support the school from February 2017. It took responsibility for the school from the local authority upon conversion. The executive principal replaced the previous principal at the end of January 2020. The associate principal has been involved with the school since February 2017.

Students come from a wide range of different ethnic backgrounds. The largest groups represented are those of White British, Asian or Asian British Indian heritage.

The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language (EAL) is well above average.

The proportion of disadvantaged students is above average. The proportion of students who have education, health and care plans (EHCPs) is well below average.

The school benefits from a number of highly successful partnerships, primarily with Leicester Teaching School, The Mead Education Trust and Rushey Mead Academy.

### 2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- Leaders have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They work with governors to develop plans for school improvement that focus on identified weaknesses. Staff have a shared ownership of these plans for improvement. Consequently, all staff work towards making improvements where they are needed.
- The principal has the support of a strong and skilful senior team. They share their analysis and plans openly with staff. They have put improving the quality of teaching (6 key principles) at the centre of their plans and they address weaknesses with determination and persistence. As a result of their approach, improvements, which were initially slow to take hold, are now beginning to have an impact across the school.
- The principal is managing the performance of teachers effectively. She has set clear expectations of staff and has tackled weak teaching and leadership robustly. Good systems for monitoring the quality of teaching are in place. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving. Leaders have recruited well to build capacity where it is most needed.
- Teachers use increasingly effective strategies to enthuse students. Senior leaders and subject leaders play an active part in curriculum implementation meetings. Strategies to improve students' quality of education are evaluated and promoted to staff.
- Leaders provide useful training for staff. They deliver good-quality training that addresses the main areas of the plans for school improvement. If more bespoke

training is required, leaders capitalise on the expertise of the Mead Educational Trust or external support to provide this. Staff value training and believe that it helps them improve in their roles.

- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is appropriate for all students. They have insisted that the curriculum is designed to ensure that there is academic challenge for all students and provide them access to the best which has been “thought, said, written and created in every field of human endeavour”. All students, including those who are disadvantaged, take history and geography at Key stage 4. The curriculum also includes a range of opportunities for students to develop their personal and social skills. Teachers make sure that opportunities for moral, spiritual and cultural education are taken wherever they occur across the curriculum. Students are keen to take part in discussions about values and moral dilemmas. Consequently, they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Literacy across the curriculum is well developed. The focus on vocabulary and oracy is allowing more students to express their reasoning during lessons.
- Leaders’ actions to improve attendance over the past three years are having some impact on key groups. They recognise a gap in attendance between disadvantaged students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and their peers persists. Most students arrive on time for lessons and bring the correct equipment.
- Students speak positively about their school. Older students recognise the great improvements in behaviour and teaching over time. They believe leaders have high expectations for all students as “they want the best for them”.

## **2.2 Leadership at all levels - Even better if...**

- ...leaders continued to review their curriculum to secure the best outcomes for both middle and high prior attainers.
- ...leaders promptly and precisely identified approaches that will have the most positive and rapid impact on students’ outcomes.
- ...leaders continued to review their strategies to improve attendance, particularly with persistent absentees and hard to reach families.

## **3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well**

- Students are keen to achieve and want to extend their knowledge and skills. They listen carefully in class. In subjects, such as English, history, geography and MFL, interesting and detailed explanations mean that students acquire deep knowledge and understanding.
- In most lessons, teachers’ well thought through planning means that challenging tasks interest and enthuse students. Teachers use insightful questioning to

stimulate thought-provoking discussions and debates. Because of this, students deepen their understanding of complicated issues. For example, Year 7 students enjoyed deepening their learning around existential ideas when discussing a poem in their English lesson.

- In most lessons, students benefit from teachers' good subject knowledge. Teachers address students' misconceptions in lessons. This ensures that students develop a thorough understanding of topics before they move on to the next area of study.
- Expectations of behaviour and conduct are consistently high throughout the school. Pupils behave well. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect. This positive learning environment allows students to benefit from collaborative learning (such as talk partners or group work) when teachers' planning is ambitious. In the best lessons, effective questioning allows teachers to deepen the learning of the more able.
- In most subjects, there is a helpful emphasis on the subject-specific vocabulary students need to demonstrate and deepen their knowledge. This is beginning to have an impact on the quality of students' explanations and evaluations. Examples of this were seen in sentence openers on power points and vocabulary white boards used across curriculum areas.
- Students who require additional support are identified at an early stage. A team of staff work alongside them to improve their skills. A specialist team supports those students who speak EAL. This team is skilled and effective in boosting the skills of this group of students. As a result of their intervention, this group of students makes sustained progress across a range of curriculum areas.
- Students' books show increasingly high standards of work across subjects and year groups. The "PRIDE" expectations at the front of exercise-books are paying dividends. Students work hard and think carefully about the topics and subjects they study. This is because, in the strong subjects, they are provided with detailed advice and feedback on their learning, which helps them develop.
- Last year, Key Stage 4 students' attainment and progress were below average in English, mathematics and the suite of GCSE subjects for the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). Progress 8 has improved year on year but remains below national averages. The progress of low prior attainers is stronger than their peers.
- Most students move on to education, training or employment when they leave the school. The information and guidance they receive means they are well prepared for their next steps.

### **3.2 Quality of provision and outcomes - Even better if...**

...the very strong practice seen in some subjects and classes was found more consistently across the school, particularly in terms of stretch and challenge for the

more able.

...teachers systematically provided formative feedback to (i) enable students to improve their work and (ii) enable both middle and high prior attainers to reach their full potential.

#### **4.1 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - What went well**

- The leadership of disadvantaged students is a priority for the school. The focus for the school's work is rightly shifting, with greater emphasis being placed on ensuring that disadvantaged students fulfil their academic potential. This approach is more embedded in some subjects, and in some aspects of the school, than it is in others.
- Additional funding for students eligible for the pupil premium or for Year 7 catch-up is used to improve students' literacy and numeracy skills. Leaders have sensibly drawn on strong partnerships with primary schools to select the most effective strategies to help students make sustained progress.
- Leaders and teachers are now focusing closely on key groups (middle, high prior attainers) so that their progress improves. There is some improvement, but they recognise further work is required if these students are to achieve as well as their peers. As a result of a well-organised and delivered package of support, students who speak EAL are making sustained progress from their starting points.
- Students with SEND are well supported through a range of additional programmes, such as the assistance they receive in class from teaching assistants. They make particularly sustained progress in the bespoke programmes they take, such as nurture programmes to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.

#### **4.2 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - Even better if...**

...leaders enhanced their PHSE programme by providing opportunities to develop the aspiration and resilience of the most vulnerable students.

...leaders implemented effective strategies to ensure disadvantaged students caught up more rapidly, and the most able fulfilled their potential across all subjects.

### **5. What additional support would the school like from the Challenge**



## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

### REVIEW REPORT FOR ORCHARD MEAD ACADEMY

#### **Partners network, either locally or nationally?**

The Academy will access support through the hub.

**This review will support the school's continuing improvement. The main findings will be shared within the school's hub in order that it can inform future activities.**