

Inspection of Orchard Mead Academy

Keyham Lane West, Leicester, Leicestershire LE5 1RT

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a good school that serves its community well. Teachers have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve. They want them to aspire for excellence, to work hard, be kind and be responsible. Pupils said that they are grateful to their teachers. They appreciate the opportunities they receive.

Pupils conduct themselves well. Their behaviour is good in lessons. They act sensibly at break and lunchtime. There is a positive and respectful culture. Pupils know that staff care about their welfare. They trust the systems in place to protect them from bullying and harassment.

Pupils particularly value the activities available to them, including those led by the sports coach. The school is open early to allow pupils to play sport. After school, they can continue to study, to pursue interests or develop talents in music, dance, drama and even foam-bullet shooter games!

Pupils appreciate the rewards they receive for their positive conduct and their contribution to the school community. They are proud to attend the school.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The curriculum is ambitious. It is built carefully. It ensures that pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), gain the knowledge and skills that they need. It is designed so that pupils remember more. More pupils are choosing to study academic subjects at key stage 4 than was the case previously.

Many teachers are enthusiastic about the subjects that they teach. They communicate this enthusiasm to their pupils. They have good subject knowledge. They present information clearly. They skilfully check that what is being taught is being learned and then remembered. Pupils enjoy their learning.

Ensuring that all pupils can read is a priority. Pupils who have fallen behind in reading are identified quickly. They receive a well-structured programme of support. They are helped to become more confident and fluent readers. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with SEND do not learn as well as they should.

Pupils enjoy a well-planned and sequenced curriculum. This helps them to learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe, value difference and build healthy relationships. Pupils appreciate these lessons. They said that they now feel knowledgeable about different faiths and beliefs. They have a strong understanding of different protected characteristics. One pupil spoke for many when they said, 'Difference is normal and is just accepted.'

Careers advice and guidance is effective. A high number of pupils move successfully on to employment, education or training when they leave the school.

Pupils with SEND receive expert help, including from external agencies. The number of pupils with SEND who are excluded from school has reduced.

The trust has provided effective support. Teachers benefit from high-quality training, subject networks and coaching. Teachers said that they appreciate learning together, and that they 'are never alone'. Many staff now share their good practice with others.

Leaders successfully engage with the local community. They work with partners to address the barriers to education that some pupils face. They have improved the reputation of the school. More parents are making Orchard Mead Academy the first-choice school for their children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding and welfare. Staff have a strong moral purpose to do the best that they can to keep pupils safe and ready to learn. Issues are identified quickly. Pupils and their families receive the help that they need, including support from external services. Leaders are tenacious and will escalate concerns to protect pupils' welfare.

Staff receive appropriate training. They know how to support pupils should any pupil disclose a concern or worry. The curriculum is adapted well in order to respond to any local safeguarding risks that may emerge. The single central record is well kept and rigorously overseen.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils who speak English as an additional language or pupils with SEND do not develop the literacy skills they need quickly enough. This means that they do not always learn as well as they could. Leaders should continue their work to improve the literacy provision for pupils with SEND and pupils who speak English as an additional language.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	144629
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10212021
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,158
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Cathy Brown
Principal	Mark Oldman (Executive Principal)
Website	www.orchard-tmet.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- A small number of pupils receive some of their education in the following alternative provision: Pedestrian Business Box, Triple Skillz Sports, Leicester Tigers Dynamite, E2Catering, Waterfront Carwrx Motor Vehicle Programme, Trans4m, Anstey Alpacas, Brolay Farm. These are unregistered providers.
- The school, in conjunction with the local authority, provides a specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities on the school site.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This means that pupils in Years 8 to 11 receive information about the full range of education and training options open to them. This includes opportunities for a range of education and training providers to speak to pupils about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, the academy council, representatives of the trust, subject leaders and groups of staff.
- Inspectors undertook deep dives in English, mathematics, modern foreign languages and science. As part of the deep dives, inspectors spoke with curriculum leaders, reviewed curriculum plans, visited lessons, considered pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers.
- Inspectors held a series of meetings with leaders and pupils to discuss the school's safeguarding arrangements. They scrutinised a range of records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives from alternative providers used by the school. They visited the specially resourced provision, the Grove.
- Inspectors visited tutor periods. They observed pupils at different times of the school day including the start and end of day and at lunch and breaktime.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff, parents and pupils through discussions during the inspection and Ofsted surveys.

Inspection team

Jayne Ashman, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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