

Inspection of Offa's Mead Academy

Beachley Road, Sedbury, Chepstow, Gloucestershire NP16 7DT

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 October 2022

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

Offa's Mead Academy is a welcoming and inclusive school. The school's mission, 'to enable our pupils to lead remarkable lives,' is at the core of leaders' work. Leaders have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils appreciate the opportunities provided for them both inside and outside the classroom.

Pupils say that they feel safe and value their friendships. They form secure relationships with adults. Staff know their pupils and families well, including the most vulnerable. Most parents and carers are positive about the school's work and the nurturing pastoral support it provides.

Pupils show respect for staff and each other. They behave well in lessons. Low-level disruption is rare. Pupils understand what is expected of them. They know what bullying is and say that it does not happen. Pupils are confident that, if it happened, staff would deal with it quickly.

Pupils develop a positive understanding of tolerance and respect. Leaders' careful curriculum planning enables pupils to learn about individuality and acceptance. They see everyone as equal. Pupils talk confidently about what they are learning. They understand that it is good to be different and say that they are 'all unique'.

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

Leaders are ambitious for pupils. Staff, including those new to the profession, agree that leaders value and support them when carrying out their roles in school. They appreciated the smooth transition in the recent change of leadership.

Leaders place reading at the core of the curriculum. Children begin to learn phonics from the moment they start school. Staff benefit from regular phonics training. Teachers check pupils' understanding well to support their development of phonics. They provide effective guidance where pupils have gaps, so that pupils catch up quickly. Leaders have invested in high-quality texts across the curriculum. This helps to secure pupils' vocabulary across a range of subjects. Staff introduce children in early years to stories and rhymes that help them gain a love of reading. However, the curriculum does not provide sufficient opportunities for children to practise what they know and can do. Over time, this limits children's learning.

Older pupils enjoy reading. They get regular opportunities to read across the curriculum. Pupils talk confidently about a range of different authors and texts they have experienced. One said that, 'reading transports you to different worlds.'

Leaders have developed a clearly sequenced mathematics curriculum to ensure that pupils build on previous knowledge. Pupils engage well in their learning. Teachers use regular assessments to identify and address any gaps pupils may have. However, in early years, staff do not routinely revisit or build on prior learning. As a result, many children are not ready for the demands of Year 1.

Leaders have developed a knowledge-rich curriculum across subjects. In history, the curriculum is ambitious. Key knowledge is systematically woven through the areas of learning. However, in key stage 2, not all pupils can talk confidently about the key historical concepts they should know and remember. Teaching does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to review and secure their understanding of these concepts well enough.

Leaders support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. Careful identification of pupils' needs enables staff to provide tailored support. Staff care well for pupils with complex needs. Staff adapt the curriculum so that pupils with SEND learn as well as their peers do. This helps pupils with SEND to succeed.

Pupils display positive attitudes to their learning. They are polite and well mannered. As a result, the school is a calm and orderly place to learn. Pupils enjoy their social times out on the playground. They engage in purposeful play and have positive interactions with others.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development well. Pupils know that it is important to respect others and learn about difference. They have a good understanding of British values and how to be a responsible citizen. Pupils enjoy taking on aspects of responsibility, including being lunchtime buddies to younger children.

Leaders have acted on the support from the trust. They have used the trust's guidance to develop the school's curriculum. Trustees ensure that staff check the impact of this work on pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. They ensure that staff receive relevant and up-to-date training to be vigilant. Staff see safeguarding as everyone's responsibility. The trust works with leaders to check the effectiveness of recruitment processes to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children.

Pupils know how to stay safe. They understand that adults will help them if they have a worry or concern. The curriculum supports pupils' understanding of risk in their own communities.

The school has suitable policies in place to raise awareness among staff and parents about the dangers of sexual harassment and online risks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects in the wider curriculum, teaching does not help pupils to build on what they already know and can do. As a result, some pupils do not retain key concepts. Leaders should ensure that teaching provides pupils with suitable opportunities to deepen and embed their learning over time.
- In early years, children do not have sufficient practice to help them build on what they know and can do. As a result, children are not as well prepared for Year 1 as they should be. Leaders need to ensure that children have opportunities to apply what they have learned across a range of experiences so they are ready for the next stage in their education.

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.

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	138786
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10227508
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	141
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Hall
Principal	David Wayland
Website	www.offasmeadacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	11 December 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Offa's Mead Academy is smaller than the average-sized primary school. It serves the communities of Sedbury, Beachley and Chepstow. Around 30% of its pupils are drawn from the local Armed Forces barracks.
- The school is part of the Academies Enterprise Trust, a multi-academy trust.
- The principal took up his post in September 2022. Another member of staff took up the role as special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) in September 2022.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

- Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, the assistant principal, the SENCo, the designated safeguarding lead, groups of staff and representatives from the multi-academy trust, including the chief education officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects, including science and computing.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including the single central record. They considered how well leaders act on concerns about pupils' welfare and safety. Inspectors talked to pupils, staff and trustees about how the school keeps everyone safe.
- Inspectors considered the 14 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including nine free-text comments, and 15 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Heather Barraclough, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Neil Lankester

Ofsted Inspector

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