

# Inspection of The Adeyfield Academy

Longlands, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP2 4DE

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Inspection dates: 10 and 11 January 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Sixth-form provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils and students at Adeyfield enjoy being part of a close-knit school community. They are well known and well cared for by staff. Expectations for behaviour, courtesy and personal presentation are high. These are both modelled and applied consistently by staff. Typically, pupils behave sensibly around the school, showing respect to each other and adults. Pupils say that when disagreements happen or when any bullying is made known, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively. This view is supported by the school's records. All pupils have a named trusted adult who they can turn to for help, guidance and support. This helps pupils feel and stay safe.

In lessons, pupils benefit from consistent routines and knowledgeable teaching. Standards of work are improving, including in the sixth form where students benefit immensely from being taught in very small groups. Trust and school leaders are ambitious and have raised expectations for what pupils can achieve. Successes are celebrated frequently.

Pupils' character and resilience are developed very well. Assemblies and form tutor time are used effectively to promote understanding of important issues around personal development. Pupils and students learn to believe in themselves and respect other people's views, beliefs and lifestyles.

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

Across all subjects, curriculum plans match national expectations for what pupils should learn. These are constructed in a logical order, setting out exactly what should be taught and when. Throughout Years 7 to 9, pupils follow a broad and balanced programme which includes all national curriculum subjects. Numbers choosing to study languages in Years 10 and 11 have increased significantly, as they have in subjects such as history and geography. This is, in turn, leading to more pupils considering academic options in the sixth form.

In practice, the work given to pupils faithfully matches what is planned. Work is adapted to ensure that those with special educational needs and/or disabilities can access and participate in learning activities. Individual needs are clearly identified, and detailed information is shared with teachers. Staff promote the importance of reading. Effective support is given to those who struggle to read fluently. This is also helping to improve access to learning.

Common lesson and assessment routines are followed throughout the school. These have helped establish clear expectations for staff and pupils. Pupils' conceptual understanding and vocabulary knowledge are checked regularly. In some instances, more emphasis and praise are given to pupils' completion of activities than to the quality of their responses. This means that pupils do not always realise when and how their work could be improved. Overall, though, significant changes to the curriculum and work seen across pupils' books mean that they are making improved progress. This includes in English and mathematics, and in the sixth form. School

improvement plans rightly target the small number of areas where changes are slower, most notably in science.

Working relationships in classrooms are strong, characterised by mutual respect between teachers and pupils. Very few lessons are interrupted by misbehaviour so the focus remains on learning. Any misbehaviour is dealt with appropriately. Attendance has improved over the past year, as has persistent absence. Leaders and governors are, correctly, seeking further improvements, particularly with the remaining pupils and students who miss more than one in every ten days of school.

An increasing range of extra-curricular activities is on offer. These include sport, the arts and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Much work has been done on character development, rightly earning the school external recognition. The fruits of this work can be seen not only in pupils' behaviour but also in their increasing confidence and articulation when speaking. Teachers and leaders are mindful of mental health issues and are supportive of pupils and families who require help. Equity, diversity and inclusion are also woven securely into the school's ethos. Pupils understand important personal issues including consent. Sixth-form students learn about important personal, social and health issues in an age-related context. They also thrive on the additional autonomy and responsibility offered.

Pupils, staff and parents rightly recognise the enthusiasm and determination of school leaders. The strategic direction provided by knowledgeable and experienced local governors and trustees has also played a significant part in the school's development. Staff are equally committed and, while working hard, appreciate leaders' consideration of their workload and well-being.

Numbers of pupils applying to join Adeyfield have risen dramatically. Over four years, important deep-rooted routines and expectations have been firmly established. Nevertheless, leaders are very clear that the journey has not ended and that even more is to be done.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All necessary checks are made on adults working at the school. Appropriate action is taken and records are kept about any concerns, including where referrals are made to outside agencies or safeguarding partners. Governors and trustees actively monitor through their meetings and through visiting the school.

Safeguarding information, including the names of responsible officers, is effectively communicated to pupils, staff, parents and visitors. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe online and in real life. Staff demonstrate accurate understanding of how and when to make referrals when they have concerns. They undertake regular training to keep their knowledge up to date.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, pupils are praised for completing an activity rather than for the quality of their work. While this encourages pupils' participation, this does not help them improve their standards. Leaders should ensure that any feedback on all pupils' work clearly identifies what they have done well but also what needs to be improved.
- Some pupils are still absent more often than they should be. Leaders, governors and trustees should continue their sharp focus on improving attendance. This includes emphasising with parents and pupils the links between attendance and academic achievement, particularly for those remaining pupils who are persistently absent.
- A few curriculum areas have been slower to improve than most. This means that some pupils do not learn as well as they might. Leaders, governors and trustees should continue their work to improve the few curriculum areas where progress is not as rapid, particularly in science. This includes ensuring that the planned curriculum is taught consistently well.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	145430
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10254975
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	710
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	47
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Rachael Kenningham
<b>Principal</b>	Dawn Mason
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.adeyfieldschool.org">www.adeyfieldschool.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Adeyfield Academy converted to become an academy school in September 2018. When its predecessor school, Adeyfield School, was last inspected it was judged to be inadequate.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision at two registered external providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, geography, Spanish and physical education. In these subjects, inspectors met with subject leaders, scrutinised curriculum planning, visited lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils and students about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' and students' work. Additionally, inspectors visited lessons and looked at work in other subjects including music, art and science.
- Inspectors held meetings with the trust's chief executive officer, the principal and other senior leaders throughout the inspection.
- The lead inspector met with a large group of governors and trustees, including the chair of the local governing body.
- The lead inspector spoke with the school's improvement partner.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's records of safeguarding checks and referrals. Inspectors spoke with staff about how they keep pupils safe. Inspectors also asked pupils about their learning, life at school and what they do if they have any concerns.
- Inspectors considered the views of the 107 parents and carers who responded to Ofsted Parent View. The lead inspector met in person with a group of parents. Inspectors also analysed 43 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and 45 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

## Inspection team

Mark Phillips, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Victoria Colgate	Ofsted Inspector
Jim McAtear	Ofsted Inspector
David Piercy	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
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