



## QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

### REVIEW REPORT FOR RUSHEY MEAD ACADEMY

<b>Name of School:</b>	Rushey Mead Academy
<b>Principal:</b>	Gulbanu Kader
<b>Hub:</b>	East Midland South
<b>School type:</b>	Academy Converter
<b>MAT:</b>	Rushey Mead Education Trust

<b>Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:</b>	Leading
<b>Date of this Review:</b>	31/01/2020
<b>Overall Estimate at last QA Review:</b>	Outstanding
<b>Date of last QA Review:</b>	06/02/2019
<b>Grade at last Ofsted inspection:</b>	Outstanding
<b>Date of last Ofsted inspection:</b>	29/11/2007



## 1. Context and character of the school

Rushey Mead is a converter academy on the outskirts of Leicester. It is part of The Mead Educational Trust (TMET), a growing partnership of primary and secondary academies situated in the East Midlands. The Academy is also a National Teaching School, providing high quality professional development for their own staff and those of all Leicester schools. It hosts a school-centred initial teacher training provider serving both city and council. The academy is a larger than average secondary school and has recently expanded to meet growing demand in the city. The principal was appointed in 2018 and is supported by an extended leadership team.

The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is higher than average. A large majority of students are from an Indian heritage. This is also the case for students for whom English is an additional language (EAL). The school includes a smaller than average proportion of students who are white British. The proportion of boys is slightly larger than girls. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) support is in line with national. A below average proportion of students have an education, health and care plan. On entry, students have prior attainment which is below the national average. Partnerships are varied and highly effective.

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

- The principal is inspirational. With her leaders, she shares a powerful commitment to securing an ambitious vision for all students' lives. Their vision, determination and strong leadership have created a culture of high expectations and a drive for continual improvement, firmly grounded in robust educational research.
- Governors are equally ambitious. They visit the school regularly to measure the progress made against each key priority in the school improvement plan. This enables them to hold leaders to account.
- The school is a community in which there is strong and effective teamwork. Training and research are central to the aim of improving the outcomes for every student. As a result, the school's effectiveness has grown from strength to strength.
- Systematic analysis of examination results and scrutiny of assessment information enable leaders to identify students who need additional help. Consequently, students who are at risk of falling behind catch up quickly with their peers.
- Leaders' investment in their staff is paying dividends. Frequent professional dialogue promotes collaboration, communication and challenge. Leaders provide teaching staff with honest feedback following lesson observations, which staff find invaluable in helping them to improve their practice. Moreover, high-quality

training and support ensure that all teaching staff make a significant impact on improving students' performance across the curriculum. Newly qualified teachers are very well supported and feel that they can grow within the school.

- The curriculum is broad, balanced and adapted to meet individuals' needs. It is evaluated regularly by leaders to ensure that it meets the needs of all students. There is a varied range of appropriate courses available for students with different starting points. The leadership team has shown integrity in not narrowing the curriculum or compromising on ambition simply to improve the school's headline results.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities, events and opportunities (RM passport) enable students to develop as individuals. Students are excited to sign up for activities, such as art, football and dance. Participation in all events is increasing.
- Opportunities for encouraging students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their understanding of British values are very well planned. Assemblies and "stop the clock" sessions include a range of topics such as democracy, LGBT issues, sex education and respect for others. For example, an inspirational Year 9 assembly on the holocaust drew upon the importance of tolerance and kindness.
- Rushey Mead is a warm, welcoming school where visitors, staff, students and families are treated with respect, regardless of religion, sexuality or ethnicity. As a result, students benefit from a positive learning environment.

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

...leaders continued to secure exceptional outcomes for all students, including securing the best next steps beyond Rushey Mead.

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

- In all lessons visited during the review, students demonstrated exemplary attitudes to learning.
- The quality of teaching and learning is a significant strength of the school. Teachers know their students well and plan their learning activities highly effectively. This is underpinned by a deep understanding of curriculum intent by all teachers within each faculty. Teachers are well supported and benefit from excellent professional development. They flourish under the school's close care and attention. As a result, they routinely support and challenge students to make rapid gains in their learning.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is excellent. They set high expectations for students. They ensure that activities are planned skilfully, with a focus on increasing the depth of students' knowledge and understanding through a well sequenced curriculum, including for the most able. This is the main reason why

students make strong progress.

- Teachers are adept at using questioning techniques to maximise students' engagement and to deepen their knowledge and understanding. Questions are used very effectively to clarify misconceptions, challenge students' thinking, demonstrate the use of specialist terminology and to probe and check students' understanding. Questions are crafted carefully and pitched at the right level so that students of all abilities are able to respond and contribute their ideas during lessons.
- Teachers' assessment of students' learning is extremely accurate. This is because leaders have embedded highly effective systems of assessment across the school. Teachers use sharp assessment information to plan learning that consolidates students' prior learning, strengthens their understanding and extends their thinking.
- Teachers draw on a wide range of resources and varied tasks to ensure that students of all abilities are fully engaged. Lesson materials are meticulously planned so that the most able students have the opportunity to extend their learning through further research and enquiry.
- Teaching assistants have a clear understanding of their students' targets and what they need to do to improve. As a consequence, individual students supported by teaching assistants make rapid progress.
- The quality of work seen in students' workbooks was exemplary. Homework is given regularly and the work set provides plenty of opportunity for extended and purposeful writing. The school's marking and assessment policy is applied consistently across all subjects. Students are highly motivated by the meaningful and specific feedback they receive from their teachers. This feedback galvanises them to reflect on their achievements and consider how they can improve with the next piece of work.
- Students' outcomes remain a key strength of the school. The strong quality of education the academy provides, leads to all students achieving exceptionally well. The rate of progress they make in a wide range of subjects is rapid. All groups, including the most vulnerable, exceed national averages in most subjects.
- Careers guidance in the school is having a positive impact on students' future aspirations. Leaders are outward-facing and regularly facilitate employers and higher education institutions work with students. Students themselves identify careers education as a particular strength of the school's work. The vast majority of students transfer successfully to the local sixth form and a minority access vocational courses, apprenticeships or work placements. In 2019, there were no students not in education, training or employment.

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

...leaders and teachers continued to enhance their vocabulary programme, with a particular focus on cross-curricular links.

...leaders and teachers continued to explore strategies to enhance the learning of

boys so that they reach their full potential.

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

- The provision for students with SEND is very well led. Additional funding for these students is spent wisely. Students benefit from additional enrichment and personalised support. For example, Year 7 catch-up funding has been used well to provide additional support in literacy and numeracy for students, enabling them to accelerate their progress. Adults who support students with SEND work collaboratively with teachers to ensure that this group of students maximises every opportunity for learning. Teaching assistants and learning support assistants play an active role in planning teaching and learning with class teachers.
- Disadvantaged students are very well catered for. Leaders relentlessly monitor the progress of all students and are quick to intervene if a student's progress begins to dip. Students' outcomes in their examinations show that gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged students and others closes rapidly across most subjects. In all subjects, disadvantaged students outperform their peers nationally.
- Disadvantaged students and students with SEND demonstrate highly positive attitudes towards learning. They settle quickly to learning and are keen to engage in the activities teachers plan for them. They have a thirst for knowledge and routinely question their teachers and classmates to enrich their understanding. They believe "stop the clock sessions help them go through the stages of life" and that "their teachers work hard so that they can learn as much as possible".
- Students with EAL who are new to English make exceptional progress in school. They are rapidly exposed to the full range of subjects, which accelerates their language acquisition.

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

- ...leaders and teachers continued to diminish differences between disadvantaged students and their peers.
- ...leaders and teachers continued to identify strategies to enable students with SEND to reach their full potential.



**5. What additional support would the school like from the Challenge Partners network, either locally or nationally?**

The school will disseminate its best practice, and 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.**