



Equality Information 2016-2020

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Registered in England: Company Number: 08024396

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Introduction

“Education plays a key role in determining how you spend your adult life – a higher level of education means higher earnings, better health, and a longer life. By the same token, the long-term social and financial costs of educational failure are high. Those without the skills to participate socially and economically generate higher costs for health, income support, child welfare and social security systems.”ⁱ

The Mead Academy Trust recognises the importance of education in creating life opportunities and recognises that the influence of school on a child’s life is made more significant if they currently have, or have had in the past, a disadvantaged home life.

This document looks at the most recent attainment data and highlights the groups that are vulnerable to underachievement in Wiltshire schools. The Mead Academy Trust is using this data to support its work to maximise the attainment of every pupil and, in particular, pupils at risk of educational underachievement.

ATTAINMENT: NATIONAL AND WILTSHIRE DATA

For most of the groups attainment is broadly in line with national results. In this document results are being highlighted where there is a county attainment gap compared with national results or where there is national and local concern about poor attainment for particular groups.ⁱⁱ

Pupils Eligible for Free School Meals

There is concern nationally and in Wiltshire about the underachievement of boys and girls who are eligible for free school meals as well as the poor attainment of children who are looked-after by the Local Authority. The attainment gaps for pupils eligible for FSM (compared with average attainment for All Pupils) are substantial although the gaps are beginning to narrow. In 2015 the gap in attainment of Reading, Writing and maths at KS2 Level 4+ in Wiltshire was 20 per cent and nationally was 15 per cent.ⁱⁱⁱ

In 2016-17 the allocation for pupils eligible and registered for FSM is set at £1320 for each primary-aged pupil. This funding is allocated to the school. In the case of Looked After Children (LAC), children adopted from care, and children with guardians, the Pupil Premium Plus is currently £1,900 per pupil. For LAC this funding is allocated directly to the LA's Virtual Head Teacher. In the case of children adopted from care, and children with guardians, the PPP is allocated to the school. Information about how The Mead Academy Trust spends its Pupil Premium can be found in the Pupil Premium section of the school website.

Pupils whose ethnic background is recorded as Gypsy/Traveller

Wiltshire and national ethnic monitoring data shows that Gypsy Traveller pupils, as a group, have the lowest educational outcomes with attainment gaps of 50 per cent.^{iv} This group is also of concern as they are likely to choose home education rather than opting to attend secondary school and are more likely to receive fixed term exclusions from school.^v Small numbers means [name of school] is not able to detail the steps it takes to raise attainment and support transfer to secondary school in but recognises that Gypsy/Traveller pupils are particularly vulnerable within the education system. Individual support and transition plans will be prepared on a needs-basis to assist these pupils.

Black Caribbean Pupils, Pupils ethnicity recorded as Any Other Black Background

The numbers of Wiltshire pupils in many of the ethnic groups (with the exception of the White British category) are too small for the annual data to be reliable.^{vi} However, year on year, the data on the attainment of Black Caribbean pupils and pupils in the Any Other Black Background groups show a pattern of significant underachievement when compared with the attainment for All Pupils.^{vii} The Mead Academy Trust is aware that pupils in these groups continue to be vulnerable to underachievement. This mirrors the national picture as the 'Any Other Black Background' broad ethnic category (which includes Black Caribbean, Black African, Any Other Black Background sub-categories), has had the lowest attainment of the five broad ethnic categories.^{viii}

Mixed White/Asian Pupils and Asian Indian Pupils

The ethnic categories where the attainment of Wiltshire pupils is significantly above that of All Pupils are: Mixed White/Asian pupils and Asian Indian pupils. This differs from the national picture as across England it is Chinese pupils who have the highest attainment.^{ix}

Boys/Girls

Nationally, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics combined has slightly improved for both boys and girls. However, girls continue to outperform boys. The gender gap at Level 4+ has remained at 6 percentage points.^x In Wiltshire the attainment gap between boys and girls has also remained at 6 percentage points.^{xi} The largest gap between the girls and boys (in both the national and Wiltshire results) continues to be in the Writing Teacher Assessment where there is a gap of 8 percentage points.^{xii}

The most significant gap in attainment continues to be between pupils (both girls and boys) eligible for free school meals and pupils not eligible for free school meals. Compared to the results for pupils' *not* claiming free school meals, the gap at KS2 level 4+ for Wiltshire boys eligible for Free School Meals is 23 percentage points and for girls it is 18 percentage points (nationally the gap is 16 percentage points for girls and 19 percentage points for boys).^{xiii}

The Mead Academy Trust recognises that groups of pupils may be vulnerable to underachievement for a number of complex reasons, and is able to put the following measures in place to raise attainment:

- The school ensures that all teaching staff are aware of the groups that have experienced historic underachievement
- The school ensures that all teachers have high expectations of all pupils, and individual pupils' progress and attainment is tracked, with a special focus on pupils who may be vulnerable to underachievement
- All teachers are aware that different factors can combine to exacerbate educational disadvantage, e.g. gender, being summer born, being eligible for free school meals, having special educational needs, being a young carer, etc.
- The school works closely with parents/carers to address any underachievement at an early stage, and is able to implement a wide variety of interventions.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Improved performance in Writing helped Wiltshire EAL learners narrow the gap with English first language pupils to 2 percentage points in Reading, Writing and Mathematics. This matches the national figure.^{xiv}

The local authority's Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) continues to work with local schools to secure the achievement of EAL learners, and other learners.

The Mead Academy Trust accesses the EMAS Service for advice and professional development opportunities. In addition Collaborative Schools Limited (CSL) offers a range of services including local interpreters to enable better engagement with families.

The Mead Academy Trust routinely uses Wiltshire Local Authority's Language in Common forms in order to clarify individual children's understanding of the English language and identify 'next steps' for development.

Disability/SEN (Special Educational Needs)

Every school is required to identify and address the SEN needs of the pupils that they support. Information about the support provided by The Mead Academy Trust for pupils with special education needs and for disabled pupils is detailed in the Inclusion section of the school website.

Disabled Pupils and SEN Pupils – Attainment Data

45 per cent of Wiltshire pupils who receive SEN support (the old SEN categories of School Action and School Action Plus combined) achieved level 4+ in Reading, Writing & Mathematics. For Wiltshire pupils with a statement of SEN or an EHC Plan; 15 per cent of pupils achieved level 4 or above in Reading, Writing & Mathematics.^{xv}

There is an increasing understanding of the negative impact of social, emotional, and mental health difficulties (SEMH) on the educational attainment of pupils. The incorporation of mental health into the Equality Act 2010 has helped to highlight this important issue.

Faith and Belief

Data is not collected for monitoring purposes on Religion and Belief, so there is no information available to compare the attainment of pupils who have/or do not have a religion or a belief.

The Mead Academy Trust recognises how important faith and belief can be as part of a young person's developing identity, whether this relates to a particular faith or belief, or whether this relates to wider belief systems, and moral ethics. The Trust is committed to supporting all our young people as they develop a personal relationship with their particular set of values and beliefs, and to supporting, in the context of the Human Rights agenda, the role this plays in the moral and ethical choices they make in life.

Our schools take incidents of prejudice-related bullying seriously and are committed to working closely with parents/carers to create a school environment which is nurturing,

friendly and supportive for all our children. Our Trust has established a procedure for recording all incidents of prejudice-based bullying and this includes bullying relating to religion and belief.

Wiltshire LA Anti-bullying Guidance specifically states that Religious Bullying can be identified as '*a negative or unfriendly focusing on religious difference or how somebody expresses their faith*'. Our schools are vigilant in maintaining an awareness of, and appropriate responses to, this possibility. The Mead Academy Trust is aware that negative faith-based media attention can have an impact on all children, and recognises the importance of ensuring that pupils are provided with accurate and appropriate information.

The Mead Academy Trust ensures all pupils gain knowledge of and respect for the different faiths in Britain as part of our role to prepare pupils for modern life in a diverse Britain. As part of a whole school activity, pupils have the opportunity to celebrate a number of different religious festivals and learn from religious representatives from various communities.

The Mead Academy Trust recognises that discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief is a global concern, and our school actively promotes tolerance and respect.

Sexual Orientation/Different Families

This is one of the fastest changing areas of society, and one that is being addressed by The Mead Academy Trust. Different families may include:

- families with adopted children (including those headed by same-sex couples)
- families with foster children (including those headed by same-sex couples)
- families headed by grandparents/uncles and aunts
- single-parent families
- children with more than one home
- step or blended families
- Families with two mums/dads.

Celebrating different families is one of the ways The Mead Academy Trust has been recognising the differences and similarities between pupils. Same-sex couples are legally able to adopt children, and that this puts additional responsibility on schools to make sure that *all* families providing love and care for children feel welcome as part of the school community. Same-sex couples are being welcomed as foster carers and adopters for Wiltshire Looked-After children and the numbers of families headed by same-sex couples will continue to rise.

The Mead Academy Trust works with pupils to address any use of discriminatory and bullying language that would create an unequal school environment. The Mead Academy Trust confidently tackles homophobic language (and other discriminatory language) and supports pupils to create a school environment that values diversity, creating a positive and inclusive environment for all its pupils.

Gender Identity

Gender identity is the personal sense of one's own gender which can be the same as, or differ from, the sex assigned at birth. Some children need additional support as they grow and begin to develop their own sense of who they are. If you have any concerns or need help and advice we suggest you contact your GP.

The Mead Academy Trust is able, with the help of the Local Authority if required, to appropriately support pupils and their parents/carers should the need arise.

The Trust is aware of the changes which can be made to avoid unnecessary gender distinctions. Such changes introduced by the school not only ensure a more equal environment should there be pupils who are uncertain about their gender identity, but can also contribute to providing a clearer perspective with regard to reviewing our data on attainment gaps between girls and boys. The Mead Academy Trust has flexibility within the school uniform, does not make any distinction between the sports that girls and boys can play, and endeavours not to divide pupils into groups solely based on their sex.

EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Schools are required to update their published Equality Information each year, and in addition, must have **at least one Equality Objective** that the school can focus and work on for a period of up to four years. The Mead Academy Trust has agreed the following key areas for development over the next four years.

The actions and monitoring for Objective 1 is the responsibility of the Heads of School

The actions and monitoring for Objectives 2 and 3 will be the responsibility of the SENCOs and the Inclusion team within each school. As such these objectives will be included in their action plans. The leads in each school are:

The Mead: Jo Birkett-Wendes/Georgina Bennett

Castle Mead: Polly Marsh

River Mead: Leala Purdie

Objective 1: Improving access to high quality pre-school education

The Mead Academy Trust knows that “attendance at any pre-school is equivalent to achieving an additional 7 grades at GCSE (i.e. the difference between getting 7 GCSE at ‘B’ grades versus 7 GCSE at ‘C’ grades, or 7 ‘C’ grades versus 7 ‘D’ grades etc.). Attending pre-school for 2 years or more, or attending high quality pre-school, compared to none, is equivalent to an additional 8 grades.”^{xvi}

The Mead Academy Trust will:

- open a new Nursery provision at The Mead Primary School in September 2017
- further develop its Nursery provision at Castle Mead and
- incorporate the current YMCA Nursery provision at River Mead in September 2017.

This will encourage our current schools’ parents to give pre-school, younger siblings the opportunity to benefit from a nursery education as this is known to make a particular difference to pupils who might be vulnerable to underachievement. In addition our schools will continue to work with local pre-school organisations to ensure effective transition processes

Objective 2: pupil mental health and wellbeing

Academic attainment is important, but pupils also need to move on from this primary school stage of their education feeling happy and self-confident. The Mead Academy Trust has decided that one of our new Equality Objectives will address pupil mental health and wellbeing as part of our commitment to preventing mental health difficulties that may start in childhood but have a greater impact in adult life. The Trust is committed to providing a nurturing environment to help develop the resilience of our pupils to cope with the ups and downs and stresses of everyday life.

- Each school is training key members of staff in the use of ‘Thrive’ assessments and resources, which have a focus on Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH).
- The Mead Academy Trust continues to be committed to enabling access to the appropriate provision for children either within the school or from external resources. The current focus is on ensuring that a child’s needs are assessed appropriately in order to be directed to the most appropriate provision.
- The Trust is promoting a better understanding of SEMH with in the school community through specific CPD e.g. sessions on the ‘Thrive’ approach and more informally e.g. through staff surgeries and also through policies and processes e.g. Behaviour and SEND policies.

Objective 3: To create a school community which enables all children with gender identity issues to feel included.

This will be achieved by:

- Developing staff awareness of gender identity issues.
- Minimising the use of gender stereotypical learning environments e.g. non gender specific toilets.
- Minimising the use of gender stereotypical language such as lining up in boy/girl lines.

Kirsty Jamieson

Head of Inclusion

March 2017

Shared with TMAP Governor for Inclusion Stephanie Davis

Data Sources:

ⁱ "Ten Steps to Equity in Education" (PDF) Oecd.org.

ⁱⁱ SFR 47/2015, 10 December 2015

ⁱⁱⁱ SFR47/2015 KS2_LA_Table 25

^{iv}SFR47/2015_National_Table_9a

^v School Census

^{vi} School Census

^{vii}School Census

^{viii} SFR47/2015_National_Table_9a

^{ix}School Census

^xSFR47/2015_National_Table_9a

^{xi} SFR47/2015_LA_Table_23

^{xii} SFR47/2015_LA_Table_23

^{xiii} SFR47/2015_LA_Table_25

^{xiv} SFR47/2015_LA_Table_24

^{xv} SFR47/2015_LA_Table_27

^{xvi} https://www.ioe.ac.uk/images/Research_Briefings_231x211/RB352_-_Influences_on_Students_GCSE_Attainment_and_Progress_at_Age_16_Brief.pdf