

Advice note for pre-registration inspections of free schools

School name	Al-Madinah School
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Inspection number	403945
Inspection dates	4 July 2012
Reporting inspector	Fatiha Maitland

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Context of the school

The proposed Al-Madinah School is situated in the centre of Derby and intends to open on 6 September 2012. Initially, the free school will operate from a large building which is currently known as Norman House. This building will be used temporarily to accommodate pupils in Reception and Years 1, 7 and 8 until December 2012. The second building, which is known as Midland House, is the new free school building. This will open in December 2012 once it has been handed over. It is expected that all pupils will transfer to the new free school in December 2012. The premises are owned by Al-Madinah Education Trust, which consists of three trustees.

The free school anticipates that most of the pupils are likely to be of the Muslim faith, although it welcomes followers of any religious belief. The free school plans to admit up to 1020 boys and girls, aged between four and 16 years. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs will be admitted if the free school judges that their specific learning needs can be met. The free school plans to make provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language.

One of the free school's visions is 'to engage young people, their families and communities in learning; place an onus on academic success; increase aspirations; and provide outstanding teaching, support and care, all of which will be underpinned with the principles of the Islamic faith'.

This is the free school's first registration visit. The inspector first visited the Free School Trust in their main office at 4 Leopold Street, Derby where she carried out a scrutiny of documentation and had discussions with the management team. She also visited the temporary school and the new free school building. She had discussions with the project manager of the buildings about the planned works to prepare the buildings for occupation.

Compliance with the regulations

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The free school leaders provided sufficient evidence to indicate that the planned provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) is likely to meet all the regulations, but implementation could not be checked. The provision clearly encompasses the development of self-knowledge and the acceptance of responsibility for one's behaviour and actions. Planned activities in personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), religious education, Islamic studies and *Zohr Sala* (lunch prayer), *Duaa* (supplication) and learning about *Tafseer* (meaning of Suras), *Hadeeth* (Prophet's life) and *Aqeedah* (theology/belief) will support and enhance pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Those in the Early Years

Foundation Stage will be helped to share resources fairly, take turns and play together in harmony.

Scrutiny of documentation indicates that there is a strong emphasis on promoting tolerance and developing an appreciation and respect for other faiths and cultures. Visits to places of interest and support from 'People who help us', alongside the PSHCE programme, will provide pupils with adequate opportunities to gain sufficient knowledge and understanding of public institutions and services in England.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Four regulations are not likely to be met. Implementation could not be checked, as the school was not operating. The school has produced a comprehensive safeguarding policy with clear roles and responsibilities outlined, and procedures for dealing with allegations against staff. This is well supported by the safer recruitment policy and procedures, as well as the e-safety policy. Not all members of staff have received the relevant child protection training. Staff, including four designated child protection officers, are booked to attend the relevant child protection training on 27 and 28 August 2012. The free school has also prepared written policies to promote good behaviour among pupils with clear codes of conduct and a set of rewards and sanctions, and information about the prevention of bullying. This will be supported by the free school's Islamic ethos, ensuring that pupils work collaboratively as a team and show consideration to one another. The free school has also devised detailed procedures to assess and manage safety risks related to educational visits.

The free school has prepared a health and safety policy, and has carried the risk assessment on the temporary premises, but has yet to ensure that similar risk assessments are made on the new free school building before it opens to minimise risks. Fire evacuation policy and procedures are in place. However, the free school has yet to assure itself that there is a satisfactory level of fire safety for both premises, identified by its risk assessment under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

A first aid policy exists. This provides sufficient guidance for staff on hygiene procedures in case of spillage of blood or body fluid and how medical conditions should be treated and recorded. There are currently no certified first aiders in school. However, the school has identified six members of staff who will receive first aid training including paediatric first aid on 25 and 26 August 2012. The free school has an admission register and attendance registers which meet requirements. An inclusion policy is in place and the free school has also drawn up a suitable three-year accessibility improvement plan to fulfil its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

In order to meet the requirements in full, the free school should:

- ensure that all members of staff, including the designated child protection officers, have undertaken the relevant child protection training before the school opens (paragraph 7)
- carry out risk assessments on the new free school building to ensure pupils' health and safety which have regard to the DfES guidance (paragraph 11)
- ensure that there is a satisfactory level of fire safety for both premises, identified by risk assessments, under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 13)
- ensure that the identified members of staff undertake first aid training including paediatric first aid before the school opens (paragraph 14)

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The free school is likely to meet all of the regulations related to the suitability of the proprietor and staff. Scrutiny of documentation and discussion with the management of the free school indicates that they are aware of all safeguarding requirements. The free school has made all of the required vetting checks on all members of staff to ensure their suitability to work with children. Suitable recruitment procedures are in place in the event that additional staff are employed. The required checks have also been made on members of the proprietorial body.

The free school has also established a single central register and recorded all of the required information on all members of staff and the proprietorial body.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The free school has firm plans to ensure that both buildings are likely to meet all of the regulations. The scrutiny of the school's floor plans and discussions with the management of the free school and the project manager indicate that the premises are fit for purpose. Both premises consist of several classrooms and benefit from specialist accommodation, including libraries and canteens. Both buildings have large halls, which will be used for assemblies, prayer and physical activities. There is ample outdoor space for pupils to play safely.

The proprietorial body has ensured that there is a suitable designated area in each school for pupils to go to when they are unwell. The provision of toilets and washbasins is suitable for staff and the proposed number of pupils.

The Education Funding Agency, which is the Department Delivery Agency, is managing the process of acquiring the premises on behalf of the Trust. The Department will wish to continue to monitor the progress of the premises directly with the Agency.

Provision of information

The provision is likely to meet all the regulations.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's complaints policy and procedures are likely to meet all the regulations.

Recommendation to the Department for Education

Registration

Is registration recommended?

YES. The school can be registered and allowed to open on receipt by DfE of evidence of improvement in relation to the following matters:

- ensure that all members of staff, including the designated child protection officers, have undertaken the relevant child protection training prior to the school opening (paragraph 7)
- carry out the risk assessment on the new free school premises to ensure pupils' health and safety which have regard to the DfES guidance (paragraph 11)
- ensure that there is a satisfactory level of fire safety for both premises, identified by its risk assessment under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 13)
- ensure that the identified members of staff undertake first aid training, including paediatric first aid, prior to the school opening (paragraph 14)

Recommended number of day pupils: 1020 pupils

Recommended number of boarders or residential pupils (if applicable): N/A

Recommended age range: 4–16 years

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: N/A