

Advice note for pre-registration inspections of all types of academies and free schools/studio schools/university technical colleges (UTC)

School name	The Gateway Primary Free School
DfE registration number	999/1255
Unique reference number (URN)	1255
Inspection number	403974
Inspection dates	19 July 2012
Reporting inspector	David Rzeznik

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Context of the school

The proposed Gateway Primary Free School is located in Grays, Essex. The school is not yet open but intends to do so on 3 September 2012. It is proposed that 60 Year 6 pupils will be admitted into The Gateway Academy secondary school for two academic years, pending the building of the free school's own building on a green field site adjacent to the academy. Free school pupils will move into new purpose-built premises in January 2014, starting with Reception and Year 6 pupils only. Pupils in other year groups will be admitted in subsequent years. The Chief Education Officer of the academy will be the acting headteacher of the free school, pending the appointment of a substantive headteacher in September 2013.

The sponsor is Ormiston, a national charity which provides education in 18 secondary academies in England. Gateway Primary Free School will be its first primary school. The school plans to admit up to 630 boys and girls, aged between four and 11 years. The school will admit disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and also some looked after children from Essex local authority. The school plans to make provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language.

The school aims to provide an excellent environment for teaching and learning that is comparable with the best available in the maintained sector.

Compliance with the regulations

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Documentary evidence indicates that all regulations are likely to be met but implementation could not be seen. The school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies set out suitable frameworks within which pupils will be encouraged to develop an understanding of right and wrong. Guidance indicates the rewards and sanctions to be adopted to promote good behaviour. Provision will encourage the development of self-knowledge and self-confidence and will promote independence, cooperation and an understanding of how pupils can contribute to the school and wider community. For example, the programmes for personal, social and health education, including citizenship, will involve pupils in school council and community activities, fund raising events and junior school leadership work in local primary schools. The religious education curriculum is designed to enable pupils to develop an understanding of religious and cultural diversity in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony. Assemblies are planned to give pupils suitable opportunities for reflection. Visits, trips and visitors will assist pupils in gaining an appropriate general knowledge of public institutions and services in England.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

All except one of the regulations are likely to be met. Implementation could not be checked, as the school is not operating. A written child protection policy is in place;

however, it is not comprehensive and does not follow national or local safeguarding board guidance closely enough. For example, the procedure to be adopted in the event of a child abuse allegation made about staff, or the designated person, is unclear. Recording of incidents are not made sufficiently explicit. Child protection for all staff is planned for the pre-opening induction programme, to be updated annually. The designated person for child protection is already in post and has received training at the required level. A safer recruitment policy exists and all of the required checks are carried out on staff, volunteers and others to confirm their suitability to work with children. A satisfactory first aid policy is in place and there will be sufficient qualified first aiders on site at all times, as from September 2012. The school has prepared suitable written policies to promote good behaviour and to prevent bullying. The recording of incidents is clear and the rewards and sanctions to be adopted in the event of any misbehaviour are explicit and are appropriate.

A fire safety strategy has been devised, as part of the planning for the new primary building, to ensure that Department for Education fire safety standards are met. The local fire officer has scrutinised building plans, has visited the site and has submitted a fire engineering report that has raised no concerns regarding fire safety. A comprehensive fire risk assessment has been undertaken for the academy, and any recommendations are suitably addressed. The health and safety policy defines roles, and includes appropriate procedures for the safe implementation of fire evacuations, risk assessments for the premises, classroom activities and educational visits off-site.

An electronic attendance registration system is used by the academy and the same procedure will be adopted by free school managers. Arrangements will meet registration requirements. An appropriate admission register pro-forma is in place and will be used as from September 2012. Good attention has been paid by planners to ensuring full accessibility to the premises and accommodation for those with disabilities so the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are likely to be met.

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

- produce a comprehensive child protection policy and ensure that its contents follow national and local safeguarding board guidance and that it is implemented effectively (paragraph 7).

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

All regulations are likely to be met. All of the required recruitment and staff vetting checks have been carried out on those staff who have already been employed by the free school. Robust procedures for the vetting of supply staff, contractors and volunteers are in place. All members of the proprietorial body, including the chairperson, have been suitably vetted. The single central register contains all of the required information.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

All regulations are likely to be met. The academy premises and accommodation, into which Year 6 pupils will be admitted in September 2012, is of high quality. The building is spacious, very well maintained and has excellent facilities, both indoors and outside. The three classrooms to be used by Year 6 pupils in September 2012 are large, light and airy. Furniture and fittings, washrooms and toilets are suitable for primary pupils. There are appropriate facilities for those who are ill. The pupils will use the extensive specialist academy provision to enhance learning.

Scrutiny of the building plans for the proposed free school, and discussions with the architect and project manager, confirm that the free school premises and accommodation are also likely to be of high quality. There will be sufficient classrooms, offices, washrooms and toilets, communal and withdrawal teaching areas for the anticipated number on roll. Early Years Foundation Stage facilities will be extensive and there will be plenty of outdoor space for play, recreation and early learning activities.

Provision of information.

The provision is likely to meet all the regulations.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school must meet the regulations identified in the check sheet.

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:

- its child protection procedures: school must produce a comprehensive child protection policy and ensure that its contents follow national and local safeguarding board guidance and that it is implemented effectively (paragraph 7)
- the coverage of its complaints procedure: the procedure must contain all of the required information as outlined in the check sheet (regulations 25(f), 25(g), 25(h) 25(i) and 25(j)).

If registration is recommended, please state:

Recommended number of day pupils: 630

Recommended age range: 4-11 years

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: N/A.