

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

School name	Stoke Studio College
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Reporting inspector	Terry McKenzie

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Context of the school

The Studio College at Stoke-on-Trent is designed to provide vocational and academic education and training in respect of building and construction. It is sponsored by Stoke-on-Trent College and located at the Centre of Refurbishment Excellence (CoRE) in the heart of the potteries district of the city where it will make exclusive use of an entire new building. The studio will also occupy a small area of the Discovery Academy School about a mile away. The Discovery site will be used by students of statutory school age and will provide two classrooms, a study area and access to facilities for science and physical education. It is planned that the studio will have an age range of 14 to 19 years and will ultimately accommodate 300 students of mixed gender and all abilities including any with special educational needs or learning difficulties and disabilities.

The intake will be staged over three years but the studio is due to open in early September 2012. It is planned that new workshops will become available at the CoRE site in January 2013 and the studio will move with the Discovery Academy to new premises in September 2013 where it will occupy a self-contained wing of the new building. Through being a small school with small classes the studio aims to offer a personalised and supportive learning environment encouraging students to develop the skills of life and work that will lead to purposeful jobs, apprenticeships or higher education. It plans to deliver opportunities for students to gain academic and vocational qualifications. The studio hopes to take an innovative approach to learning involving enterprise themes so that students will spend a significant portion of their weekly time in real work. There is no specific religious affiliation but the studio plans to encourage students to attend from the different cultural heritages of the Stoke-on-Trent area.

Compliance with the regulations

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The regulations are likely to be met by the planning although implementation cannot be checked until the studio opens. The planned curriculum aims to enable students to reach their full potential in their chosen areas of study, thus enhancing their self-confidence and self-worth. An important theme of the curriculum will be the enhancement of communication skills and the development of emotional intelligence. There is a strong emphasis on practical activity and the use and integration of information and communication technology (ICT). It is planned that this will enhance students' self-confidence and self-esteem. Communications between all students, their families and staff should be simplified through the use of ICT and much high quality interactive technology has been installed to facilitate teaching and learning. Schemes and plans for citizenship, personal and social education are designed to highlight the development of self-knowledge, the acceptance of responsibility for personal behaviour and the development of initiative. Furthermore, it is planned that personal coaches will always be at hand to counsel and guide students. The studio holds no religious affiliation but intends to welcome students from any or no religious

background and plans to encourage all to explore work places associated with the diverse nature of the city. Students will be expected to contribute to the community of the studio, for example through their construction and community enterprise projects that will take place in the communities of the city in partnership with local organisations and charities. Strong links with potential local and national employers are established with planned opportunities to contribute to the wider community through paid work and vocational placements. These are designed to promote students' resilience and confidence. Events such as displays and promotions to encourage the development of vocational and building skills are being considered. The planned citizenship curriculum indicates how students will develop a broad general knowledge of English public institutions and services. The planning emphasises the undertaking of trips and visits to a range of cultural centres and places of worship, and visitors coming into the studio will supplement these activities.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The regulations are likely to be met by planning although implementation cannot be checked until the studio opens. The systems for recording the admission of students and their attendance have been established and are appropriate. Suitable policies for welfare, behaviour, health and safety both on- and off-site, fire safety, safeguarding and child protection, first aid and anti-bullying are in place. All have regard for the latest guidance and include dates for review. A designated officer for safeguarding and child protection has been identified and trained appropriately. Plans are advanced for all staff to receive safeguarding training by the time the studio opens so that the regulations are likely to be met. Training records have already been established and they are designed to monitor staff training events and highlight dates for renewal. All will receive training in first aid. A suitable safe recruitment policy is in place and there is evidence that it is being followed through undertaking all of the required checks. An appropriate fire risk assessment and audit had already taken place by the building contractor for the CoRE site and requirements are likely to be met because a fire officer from the local authority has recently undertaken a visit to this building; the fire officer's report was submitted to the Department for Education. The new building at the CoRE site has been constructed to be fully compliant with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 whilst the area utilised in the Discovery Academy is covered by an access improvement policy and three-year plan. The studio has agreed that a new three-year plan will be devised following the opening of the building on the CoRE site if any accessibility difficulties arise.

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

All requirements are likely to be met. The majority of studio staff are in the process of being recruited from other educational provisions of the proprietorial body and the local authority. All are being checked as required and the checks recorded on the single central register. Arrangements for the recruitment of further new staff are appropriate and meet the requirements, including those for any future staff recruited from overseas or any who might be employed through agencies. All other adults coming into regular contact with students will have the full range of safeguarding checks carried out on them and the checks recorded on the register. The studio

school and the Discovery Academy are owned by the same trust; therefore all staff at the Discovery Academy who might come into contact with students have been checked by the common employer of both organisations and their recruitment details will appear on the single central record of the studio school. The members of the body of trustees have all undergone the required checks and these are recorded on the register.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

All requirements are likely to be met. The fixtures, fittings and décor are entirely new at the CoRE site and of a high standard throughout. The site is suitable for the needs of the student group including any with special educational needs or mobility difficulties. The Discovery site provides accommodation and resources of a suitable quality to provide for any students of statutory school age. The premises and accommodation at both sites are safe inside and out, welcoming and appropriate for specific needs of the studio. Specialist areas have been constructed for learning about building construction and renovation that include large open-plan study areas, smaller personal study spaces and suitable facilities for food to be prepared and served at both sites. Plenty of outside space is provided at the Discovery site for physical education, games and recreation whilst a more modest but appropriate area is available adjoining the CoRE building. The CoRE classrooms include the latest technology for researching, planning and designing aspects of building technology. Plans are in place for workshops to be made available later in the academic year. The classrooms and areas to be used by students working with personal coaches have been made flexible so that staff and students can work together as is most appropriate. Toilet facilities meet the requirements for the number of students and there is an appropriate medical room close to the toilets on each site for students who may become ill.

Provision of information

The provision is likely to meet all the regulations.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The provision is likely to meet all the regulations.

Recommendation to the Department for Education

Registration

Is registration recommended?

- **YES. This school is likely to meet all regulations when it opens and is recommended for registration.**

Recommended number of day pupils: 300

Recommended age range: 14 – 19 years

Recommended gender of pupils: mixed.