

Advice note for a pre-registration inspection of a free school

School name	The Deanery CofE Academy
DfE registration number	866/4007
Unique reference number (URN)	147086
Inspection number	10103234
Inspection dates	10/07/2019
Reporting inspector	Andrew Lovett HMI



Information about the inspection

This inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the Secretary of State for Education. It was carried out under section 99(1) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.¹

In carrying out this type of inspection, inspectors assess the extent to which the school is likely to meet 'The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014' when it opens.²

Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

Number of day pupils	1470
Age range	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Type of special educational needs	N/A

Context of the school

The Deanery is a proposed secondary comprehensive school with a sixth form. It will be situated on the south side of Swindon. The school forms part of an extensive investment in the area consisting of new housing and retail outlets. A primary school is also being built alongside and is due to open in 2020. Both schools are members of the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust (DBAT). Around half of the planned admissions number of The Deanery will be reserved for pupils from families who live locally. When allocating the remaining places, The Deanery will give priority to pupils from across Swindon who are practising Christians. The school will open initially with approximately 120 Year 7 pupils. It is envisaged that the school will grow one year-group at a time and will thus open its sixth form in 2024.

Advice to the Secretary of State for Education

Overall outcome	The school is likely to meet all the relevant independent school standards when it opens.
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¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/section/99.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/made. Part 1 to Schedule 1 is not reported against because it does not apply to academies, free schools, studio schools and UTCs.

Compliance with The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students

The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part. Leaders have a clear and positive vision of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum based on a Christian ethos. The planned curriculum has good opportunities to explore and reinforce fundamental British values. Respect and tolerance are at the heart of the school's values and ethos.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part. The principal has already been in post part-time for two years. She has used her time wisely to learn from other schools to write or adapt policies across a whole range of school life. This includes health and safety policies. She has also worked with companies outside of education to draw up the risk assessment methodology. As a result, procedures are robust and appropriate. All fire safety requirements have been met.

There are several staff in the first wave of appointments who are appropriately trained and experienced in safeguarding and child protection. They have a good understanding of the requirements of 'Keeping children safe in education 2018'. Proposed staffing levels are appropriate to supervise pupils. There are good behaviour and bullying policies in place.

Several sections of the school will be open for community use. Leaders have good plans in place to manage the safeguarding implications of this arrangement.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part. The single central record is maintained by DBAT and is compliant. The processes undertaken to appoint the first tranche of staff were fully in line with guidance on safer recruiting. There are appropriate arrangements in place to ensure the suitability of employees and supply staff before they work with children. Appropriate procedures are in place to check on trustees and governors.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part. A purpose-built building for 1470 pupils is complete and has been handed over to the trust and principal. The building is well designed and is appropriate for its intended use. The facilities are of a very high standard. Deliveries of equipment are ongoing and on schedule for a September start. Facilities for those with limited mobility are good. First-aid and medical provision are adequate. The grounds are well drained. At first,

some sections of the school will not be fully used. There are plans in place to ensure that this arrangement works smoothly.

Part 6. Provision of information

The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part. The school's website is not fully populated. However, it has all the necessary sections and relevant information will be uploaded in advance of the opening date. The format of the website is clear and logical. This will help parents and other stakeholders find the information they are looking for quickly.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part. The school has a complaints policy which is compliant with requirements. It is accessible and easy to follow.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part. The trust board is experienced. Local governance has been in place for some time and is supported by the trust and the principal. The principal has been in post for two years. She has been able to work with trust leaders to design a leadership structure and recruit to it. The structure is flexible so that it can be adapted should pupil numbers exceed or fall short of what is expected. The principal is a very experienced senior leader and she has had significant time and resource available to her to prepare for the school's opening. She has also now recruited two assistant principals and senior non-teaching leaders. Consequently, they are well equipped for the first year of operation.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part. Its equality and diversity policy is compliant. It includes provision for arrangements to meet the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty.

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