

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

School name	Bader Academy
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	371/7001
Unique reference number (URN)	147864
Inspection number	10148400
Inspection dates	29/06/2020 to 02/07/2020
Reporting inspector	Stephanie Innes-Taylor HMI



Information about the inspection

This inspection was carried out 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

The inspection was carried out during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. As a result, we could not visit the school site or meet with the proposer in person. The inspector held telephone discussions with the executive headteacher, chief executive officer of the trust and the chair of the academy project board. The inspector viewed a virtual tour of the permanent school site, reviewed the architects' plans for the permanent site, scrutinised information available on the school's website and reviewed a range of policies and procedures. Using the available information, the inspector is able to give sufficient assurance that the school is likely to meet the independent school standards.

Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

Number of day pupils	100 (initially 50 in September 2020)
Age range	5 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Type of special educational needs	Autistic spectrum disorder; speech, language and communication needs; social, emotional and mental health

Context of the school

The new provision is a special school within the Nexus Multi Academy Trust. The school intends to work closely with other schools within the trust to share expertise, resources and good practice.

The school is proposed to open in September 2020. Initially, this will be with 50 Year 7 and primary-aged pupils.

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.

Building of the school is incomplete. However, work is progressing well, and leaders are hoping that the site will be ready to admit pupils from October 2020 instead of January 2021, as originally planned. Appropriate plans are in place for pupils to use a vacant school premises on a temporary basis until the new school is completed. The temporary school premises are situated within a short distance from the new building.

Leaders have designed the new provision to be inclusive. Plans show careful consideration has been given to the needs of the pupils who will attend the school. The school will offer good-quality appropriate provision, such as sensory integration rooms and calm rooms. The school will benefit from thoughtfully designed external sports, play and learning facilities.

The school plans to offer sixth-form provision approximately two to three years after opening.

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, provided that it addresses the regulations noted in the tables set out in parts 3 and 5.
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Explanation of inspector’s recommendations where they differ from the school’s application:

- The school would like to admit children with social, emotional and mental health needs. This was in the school’s original education brief to the DfE but was not included on the proposal form. The school has the necessary expertise and resources to admit pupils with this primary or secondary need.

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 all the regulations in relation to this part. Policies and procedures illustrate leaders' ambition for the provision to be an inclusive school where pupils and staff are 'Learning together to be the best we can be'. The policy for equal opportunities identifies all the protected characteristics and explains how pupils with these characteristics will be supported. The school has in place a comprehensive programme to help pupils to become proactive 'change makers'. The programme will provide rich opportunities for pupils to build their knowledge and understanding of British values, diversity and the wider world. This area is likely to be strong if policies are implemented as planned.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The proposed school is likely to meet all the relevant regulations in this part. Essential policies are in place. They provide suitable evidence that the school is likely to comply with guidance. The detail within these documents indicates that health, safety, first aid, assessments of risk and management of behaviour are well prepared for and a high priority for leaders of the school. Procedures are explained clearly. The school has an appropriate safeguarding policy, which is up to date with the latest statutory guidance. The school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies detail appropriate strategies for addressing any issues. However, the inspector is only able to provide limited assurance about the implementation of health and safety policies because the site is unfinished.

Leaders understand that there is significant work to do to ensure that the school is ready to admit pupils. For example, leaders were not able to demonstrate full compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Additionally, the building does not yet have lighting, toilets or washing facilities installed.

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

comply with relevant health and safety laws by implementing the health and safety policy effectively	paragraph 11
ensure that, when building work is complete, the school is compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.	paragraph 12

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The proposed school is likely to meet all the regulations. A single central record is in place. This details the required checks which that have been made, by whom and when. Checks are recorded on the system for all relevant staff and trustees.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

The proposed school is likely to meet all the relevant regulations in this part. Leaders' plans and procedures are detailed and consider the specific needs of pupils who will attend. However, the inspector is only able to provide limited assurance about some aspects of the premises. The virtual tour showed that there is no toilet, washing or drinking water facilities installed currently. Internal and external lighting have yet to be fitted. The architect's plans demonstrate that requirements for this part are likely to be met if leaders implement them as intended. For example, there is provision for drinking water fountains, ample outside space, appropriate lighting, and toilet and hygiene facilities. Evidence relating to the premises shows good-quality provision is planned, which is fully accessible for all pupils who will attend the school.

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

ensure that the building is maintained to a standard so that the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured	paragraph 25
ensure that the lighting in each room or other internal space is suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities that normally take place there	paragraph 27(a)
provide external lighting in order to ensure that people can safely enter and leave the school premises.	paragraph 27(b)
provide suitable drinking water facilities	paragraph 28(1)(a)
provide toilets and urinals with an adequate supply of cold water	paragraph 28(1)(b)
provide washing facilities with an adequate supply of hot and cold water	paragraph 28(1)(b)
ensure that water suitable for drinking is clearly labelled as such	paragraph 28(1)(c)
ensure that the temperature of hot water at the point of use does not pose a scalding risk to users.	paragraph 28(1)(d)

Part 6. Provision of information

The proposed school is likely to meet all the regulations for this part. A website for the school is in place with relevant links to the trust's website. It is up to date and compliant with guidance for what academies should publish on their website. All statutory policies are in place and are available to parents, including the safeguarding policy.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The proposed school is likely to meet all the regulations in this part. The complaints policy is suitable to the context of the school. It contains information that clearly sets out the procedure to be followed and the timescales involved. The policy is published on the school's website.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

The proposed school is likely to meet all the regulations. The executive headteacher is highly experienced and has significant expertise in the field of special educational needs provision. Leaders of the trust bring a wealth of relevant skills and knowledge to the school. The executive headteacher and trustees demonstrate ambition and enthusiasm for the inclusive provision they want this school to provide for pupils and the local community. They have a good understanding of the regulatory requirements and their roles and responsibilities. Leaders have provided policies that give appropriate guidance for the welfare, health and safety of pupils.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

The proposed school is likely to meet the regulations. The school is designed to be inclusive. Features such as adjustable work surfaces and screens, textured carpets for the visually impaired and a lift make facilities accessible for disabled pupils and staff. Well-thought-out features, such as calm rooms and sensory rooms, and careful choice of colour scheme and furnishings, are designed to meet pupils' needs well.

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