

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

School name	Spa School Camberwell
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	210/7000
Unique reference number (URN)	143745
Inspection number	10148517
Inspection dates	21/05/2020 to 02/06/2020
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 headteacher, the executive headteacher and the chair of the board of trustees. The inspector viewed a virtual tour of the school 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	120
Age range	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Type of special educational needs	Autistic spectrum disorder (ASD)

Context of the school

The new provision is a special school within the Spa Education Trust. The school is one of two schools within the trust. Both schools are special schools. The schools intend to work closely together to share expertise and good practice.

The school will open in September 2020. Initially, this will be for 42 pupils: four classes of primary-aged pupils and two classes of Year 7 pupils. Leaders have decided not to admit four-year-olds as originally proposed. There is insufficient demand for early years places at the school. The school does not provide adequate space and facilities for early years children, currently.

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.

The building of the school is complete. It has been designed with careful consideration to the needs of the pupils who will attend the school.

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 as follows.

- The school has decided not to admit children into the early years. This is because there is no perceived need currently within the community for places in the early years. Leaders would like to amend their proposal to admit pupils from 5 to 16.
- The school does not have sufficient space or resources to meet the welfare requirements for children in the early years foundation stage. I, therefore, recommend that the age range is amended to 5 to 16.

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 of the regulations in relation to this part. The school's inclusive ethos is demonstrated in its policies. The values and aims exemplify the school's ambition for pupils to be 'happy; safe and healthy; develop communication skills; develop independence while learning and achieving and be ready for the future'. The school's plans make provision for building pupils' knowledge and understanding of British values and the wider world. Suitable plans are in place to provide pupils with opportunities to learn about aspects of life such as diversity, appropriate relationships, respect and tolerance for others.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The proposed school is likely to meet all of the relevant regulations. However, the inspector is only able to provide limited assurance about the implementation of health and safety policies because it was not possible to visit the school site. Appropriate policies are in place. They provide sufficient evidence that the school is likely to comply with relevant guidance. Detail within these documents indicates that health, safety (including fire safety), first aid, assessments of risk, supervision and behaviour, are high priority for leaders of the school. Protocols and procedures are plainly stated. The school has an appropriate child protection and safeguarding policy, which is up to date with the latest statutory guidance. The school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies includes relevant strategies for addressing any issues.

At the time of the inspection, leaders had taken possession of the finished building the previous day. They were not able to demonstrate full compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The fire risk assessment had been completed but leaders did not yet have access to the final report. Fire extinguishers have been purchased and are due to be installed shortly. Some fire exits have not been labelled as such.

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

ensure that actions specified in the fire risk assessment, including installation of fire extinguishers and labelling of all fire exits, are promptly implemented to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.	paragraphs 11, 12
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Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The proposed school is likely to meet all of the relevant regulations. The single central register is in place. This details the required checks 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 of the relevant regulations. The inspector is only able to provide limited assurance about some aspects of the premises, such as the temperature of the water, because it was not possible to visit the site. In addition, the virtual tour showed that water suitable for drinking has not been clearly labelled. The inspector can, therefore, only give very limited assurance for this paragraph. Leaders are aware that this needs to be completed before the school opens. The building layout meets all of the current requirements including, for example, provision of medical rooms, outside space, and toilet and showering facilities. Evidence relating to the premises shows good-quality provision, which is accessible for all pupils who will attend the school.

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

ensure that cold water supplies suitable for drinking are clearly marked as such.	paragraph 28(1)(c)
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Part 6. Provision of information

The proposed school is likely to meet all of the relevant regulations. The school has a website in place. The website is up to date and compliant with guidance for what academies should publish on their website. All mandatory 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 of the relevant regulations. The complaints policy is appropriate 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 of the relevant regulations. Senior leaders have a good understanding of the inclusive nature of what they want this school to provide for pupils with ASD. The executive headteacher is an experienced leader of the other special school in the trust that also provides for pupils with ASD. The headteacher possesses extensive knowledge and expertise in the field of special education and particularly in ASD. Trust leaders have ensured that senior leaders and members of the board of trustees have relevant knowledge and skills to provide strong leadership and management to the school. They have a good understanding of the regulatory requirements. Leaders have ensured that school policies provide strong guidance for the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Appropriate plans are in

place to monitor all aspects of the school to ensure that the independent school standards are met consistently.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

The school is likely to meet the regulations. The school is designed to be inclusive. Features such as a chair lift, acoustic panels, calm rooms, use of colours in decoration and appropriate lighting facilities ensure that the building is comfortable and welcoming for pupils with ASD, as well as accessible for disabled pupils and staff. The policy for equalities identifies protected characteristics. It outlines expectations for staff and pupils and makes clear how pupils can be supported.

Statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage

The school no longer proposes to admit children into the early years foundation stage, so this aspect was not inspected.

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