

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

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School name	Whitelands Academy
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	931/4017
Unique reference number (URN)	147872
Inspection number	10148531
Inspection dates	09/06/2020 to 15/06/2020
Reporting inspector	Cindy Impey



## 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

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 reviewed photographs and carried out a virtual tour of the new site. The building work has not been completed. The inspector reviewed a range of policies and procedures provided by the proposer and scrutinised information available on the school's website. The inspector held telephone discussions with the headteacher, estates manager, the designated senior leader for child protection and the special educational needs coordinator. Video conference calls were held with the headteacher and the chief executive of the multi-academy trust. Using the available information, the inspector can give sufficient assurance that the school is likely to meet the independent school standards. However, the degree of assurance is limited for some of the standards. The standards for which assurance is limited are indicated in the relevant section for that part.

## Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

<b>Number of day pupils</b>	120 (107 on opening)
<b>Age range</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Type of special educational needs</b>	Not applicable

## Context of the school

Whiteland's Academy is a new school within the White Horse Federation Trust.

The school will open in September 2020 for 120 pupils with 107 Year 7 pupils starting on opening. There will be full-time specialist resourced provision reserved for

<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/section/99](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/section/99).

<sup>2</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/made](http://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.

eight vulnerable young people with social, emotional and mental health needs. Only one of these places will be taken up in the first year of opening.

The school building is not yet complete. Therefore, the school will be temporarily located on the Gagle Brook Primary School site. The new school is expected to be completed in October 2020. The new school will be located within the Kingsmere housing development, in southwest Bicester, lying within Cherwell District Council. The new secondary school will have access to a range of high-quality facilities.

## **Advice to the Secretary of State for Education**

<b>Overall outcome</b>	The school is likely to meet all the relevant independent school standards when it opens.
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## **Compliance with The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014**

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

The school is likely to meet all the regulations in relation to this part. Evidence from school policies and discussions with leaders show that they have very clear plans in place to develop pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding. Leaders can demonstrate how core values, including fundamental British values, are at the heart of their curriculum. They have taken the time to learn about the new community that this new school will serve to determine the needs of their pupils. Provision in this aspect is likely to be strong if policies are implemented as planned.

### **Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The school is likely to meet all the relevant regulations assessed for this part. Policies in place indicate that safeguarding, supervision, risk assessment and first aid are likely to be secure and comply with relevant guidance. The school's policies to promote good behaviour are closely linked to the staff code of conduct and the school's core values. Policies such as the anti-bullying and behaviour policy include detailed guidance and relevant strategies for addressing a range of issues.

### **Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

The school is likely to meet all the regulations for this part. Leaders' policies and procedures for checking the suitability of all adults at the school are fit for purpose and meet latest guidance. Trustees ensure that all the expected background checks are carried out and recorded effectively.

### **Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools**

Building plans, the virtual tour and discussions with leaders demonstrate that the building is being built to high specifications. However, the inspector is only able to provide limited assurances about some aspects of the premises, such as the temperature of the water, acoustics and lighting, as it was not possible to visit the site. The building meets all current requirements, including, for example, provision of medical rooms, specialised equipment, toilet and showering facilities, and PE and sport facilities. Evidence relating to the premises shows provision that is accessible for all pupils who will attend the school. The available evidence indicates that the proposed school is likely to meet all relevant regulations.

### **Part 6. Provision of information**

The school is likely to meet all the requirements for this part. All the required policies are in place and available to parents, including an up-to-date safeguarding policy. The website contains many of the policies with updated information. Copies of these policies can be made available on request.

## **Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled**

The school is likely to meet all of the relevant regulations in this part. The complaints policy is clear and contains all the required steps and the timelines for the efficient handling of any complaints and appears on the school's website. Leaders have ensured that copies are available for those without access to the internet if requested.

## **Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

The school is likely to meet all the requirements for this part. Discussions with leaders and the supporting documents provided demonstrate that leaders have the necessary experience, knowledge and expertise to lead and manage the proposed school effectively. The trust is well established and well experienced in opening and running schools. Leaders have a good understanding of the regulatory requirements. They have established policies that provide strongly for the welfare and health and safety of pupils in their existing schools. Leaders are also clear about how they will continue to monitor provision so that the independent school standards are met consistently and they have the necessary skills and knowledge to do this.

## **Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010**

The school is likely to meet all of the regulations. The school is designed to be inclusive. The policy sets expectations for staff and pupils and references the school's aims of fairness and respect. Features such as lifts, hoists and shelves at wheelchair-accessible height make facilities accessible for disabled pupils.

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