

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

School name	Wymondham College Prep School
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	926/2221
Unique reference number (URN)	147857
Inspection number	10148534
Inspection dates	08/06/2020 to 12/06/2020
Reporting inspector	Mark Quinn



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. For this reason, the inspector assessed the premises and accommodation set out in part 5 of the independent school standards by means of a virtual tour. The inspector held telephone discussions with the trust's chief executive officer (CEO), project lead, human resources director and chief operating officer, along with the headteacher designate. Using the available information, the inspector is able to give sufficient assurance that the school is likely to meet the independent school standards and, where necessary, what further action is required.

Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

Number of day pupils	452 (60 in September 2020)
Age range	4 to 11 (4 to 5 in September 2020)
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Type of special educational needs	Not applicable

Context of the school

This new provision will be a primary free school within Sapientia Education Trust (SET). Wymondham College Prep School will initially be located in a refurbished existing educational building on the grounds of Wymondham College. The proposer plans to move to a new, purpose-built facility in September 2021.

The intention is that the school will open in September 2020. It will initially admit 60 Reception-aged children to the refurbished building. The final capacity of the school will be 452, once it has moved to new premises.

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.

SET is liaising with the DfE to provide extra school places in the local area. At a later date, the trust also intends to provide boarding accommodation.

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, 5 and 8.
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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 standards in this part. The policy and the scheme of work for personal, social and health education, which the proposer provided, are likely to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum for sex and relationships education intends to '... tackle all types of prejudice – including homophobia – and promote understanding and respect'. The proposer has provided a document that describes in detail how the school intends to encourage respect for each of the protected characteristics contained in the Equality Act 2010.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part, provided that it addresses the regulations set out in the table below.

There is a comprehensive safeguarding policy, which is consistent with the most recent government guidance. The policies for behaviour, anti-bullying and exclusion are detailed and appropriate. For example, the anti-bullying policy clearly explains the school's intended approach to managing a wide variety of types of bullying, which include homophobic and racist bullying.

There are suitable policies and procedures in place to ensure pupil's safety and welfare. However, it will only be when the planned renovation work is complete that it will be possible to demonstrate the effective implementation of the health and safety policy.

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

ensure that the renovation work to the building is completed by 21 August 2020 as planned, so that the implementation of the health and safety policy can be assured.	paragraph 11
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Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The proposed school is likely to meet the required standards in this part. The single central register that the school intends to use has provision for all the expected information. Leaders, including the trust's human resources director, oversee and check procedures. They have a thorough knowledge of recruitment matters, such as what information is required when making checks on supply teachers or agency staff. There is provision to make checks on prospective staff's medical fitness. There are enough appropriate staff trained to ensure safe recruitment.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

The school is likely to meet all the requirements assessed in this part, provided that it addresses the regulations set out in the table below.

Leaders have provided sufficient evidence that the acoustic and lighting provision are likely to be suitable, including exterior lighting. There is also enough space outside for the intended Reception-aged children to play and to take part in physical education. There are existing toilet and washing facilities which are adequate, although the school intends to upgrade these for its new Reception pupils. Drinking water is currently available, but this will also be upgraded and labelled under the school's plans.

The current building has no accommodation for the short-term care of sick pupils. The proposed school will need to ensure that its plan for this is completed. This will result in a room that has washing facilities, a bed with bedding and a nearby toilet.

The school is likely to ensure that pupils' health, safety and welfare are catered for once the planned renovations are complete and effective maintenance of the property can be secured.

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

ensure that existing toilet and washing facilities are renovated as planned and made suitable for Reception-aged children by 21 August 2020	paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a) and 23(1)(b)
ensure that the intended accommodation for medical needs is renovated as planned and made suitable for pupils by 21 August 2020	paragraphs 24(1), 24(1)(a) and 24(1)(b)
ensure that all planned renovations are carried out by 21 August 2020 to enable the proposer to secure pupils' health, safety and welfare through effective maintenance of the premises	paragraph 25
ensure that existing drinking water facilities are renovated as planned and drinking water labels are put in place by 21 August 2020.	paragraph 28(1) and 28(1)(c)

Part 6. Provision of information

The standards in this part are likely to be met. The proposed school has already set up a website and is beginning to upload relevant information. For example, the safeguarding policy is available on the website. Leaders will provide relevant information for the local authority for the purposes of reviewing pupils' education, health and care plans, as appropriate. The school's assessment policy makes it clear how the school will report on pupils' progress, with reports three times a year in Years 1 to 6.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The standard in this part is likely to be met. The evidence provided makes it clear that the school intends to have its complaints policy available on the school’s website and in the school office on request.

The proposed policy is thorough. It allows for an informal stage, a formal stage and a panel hearing. Appropriate confidentiality is assured.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

The school is likely to meet all the requirements assessed in this part, provided that it addresses the regulations set out in the table below.

SET has a positive track record in education. There are 14 schools in the trust, including four secondary schools. The proposed primary school is to be co-located with an existing outstanding secondary school. The trust board has a range of expertise, including school governance, law, financial auditing and education. The proposer has systems planned to keep a check on whether the independent school standards will be consistently met.

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

ensure that standards in the preceding parts are likely to be met consistently.	paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)
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Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

The proposed school is likely to meet this requirement. The intended accessibility plan is appropriate. Intended actions include: the curriculum will be continually adapted in response to changing needs; leaders will ensure total compliance with building and equality regulations; and leaders will meet with parents and pupils to ensure that needs are clear, so that required communication strategies and methods are in place.

Statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage

All the statutory requirements for the early years are likely to be met. The proposed school has a detailed policy that describes the learning areas that children will experience. Assessment processes and how the school intends to work with parents are included. Safeguarding procedures will follow those in the main school. The policy states that the provision will follow the requirements of the statutory guidance. There is also detail on how the school intends to meet the welfare requirements of the early years foundation stage. The school’s intimate care policy is

likely to support the school's work in this area effectively. The curriculum overview that was submitted contains broad themes for each area of learning across the whole of the academic year. There are more detailed documents provided that have examples of appropriate learning activities for Reception-aged children in mathematics and phonics.

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