

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

School name	St George's Academy (The Titan Partnership Trust School)
DfE registration number	999/1439
Unique reference number (URN)	1439
Inspection number	422336
Inspection dates	3 June 2013
Reporting inspector	Michael Best

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Information about the inspection

This inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.¹

Context of the school

The Titan Partnership Trust seeks to establish an alternative provision free school for up to 110 male and female students aged 13 to 16 years from Years 9, 10 and 11 at the St George's Community Hub, a short distance from Birmingham city centre. The Hub is used by a variety of community organisations, including a nursery, and for out-of-hours use by the community.

Following consultation with the Department for Education, the school will be known as St George's Academy. The proposed opening date is 1 September 2013. Most students will be dually registered with their mainstream school and the free school, with the intention that they ultimately return to their mainstream school. A small proportion of students will be placed solely on the free school's roll by the Birmingham local authority and are likely to complete their compulsory school education at the free school. Some students may have statements of their special educational needs but most will be attending the provision because they have been excluded, or are at risk of exclusion, from their mainstream schools. A small proportion of particularly vulnerable students will also attend a specialist provision within the free school. They will occupy a separate suite but have direct and private access to the school's specialist facilities when these are not being used by other students.

St George's Academy aims to establish a partnership between school, young person and home which will 'ensure that each young person will have the individualised support needed to help them overcome any barriers to learning'.

Compliance with the regulations

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school is likely to meet all the requirements for registration. Implementation could not be seen as the school is not yet operating. Building on a comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education and citizenship, the school's proposed provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is appropriate and in accord with its aims. The school proposes to offer students a wide range of social and cultural activities, including visits and visitors, to promote their development and understanding of the arts, technology, and public services and institutions in England. The school's policies and procedures promote high

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/section/99

expectations of students' behaviour, positive attitudes to learning and respect for others. Students will have many opportunities to develop their confidence and self-esteem through academic and enrichment curricular provision, and as active members of the school community. Respect for the law and for the differing views and opinions of others, including those of different faiths and cultures, is at the heart of the school's provision and purpose. The school has taken steps to ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject and, where political issues are brought to the attention of the students, that reasonable steps will be taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views at all times.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school is likely to meet all of the requirements for registration. Implementation could not be seen as the school is not yet operating. The school's safeguarding policy reflects the guidance provided by the Secretary of State and makes suitable reference to the local safeguarding board. The designated person for child protection has attended and completed training at the required higher level. Two senior managers are also to be trained at the higher level, and all staff provided with appropriate awareness training as part of their induction programme, prior to the school opening. The Principal Designate and others involved in appointing staff have completed recognised training courses in safe recruitment. The school has a suitable policy and procedures for recruiting staff. All the required checks are being made on staff and the members of the proprietorial body as they are appointed.

The school's policies for promoting students' good behaviour, preventing bullying and ensuring their health and safety, both in the school and when on visits, meet requirements. A secure, confidential computer-based record will be maintained of the sanctions imposed on students for serious misbehaviour. The refurbished part of the building the school will occupy has been designed to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. A comprehensive risk assessment brief was scrutinised on this inspection visit, together with the landlord's existing comprehensive fire risk assessment. Compliance will be confirmed in the documentation provided when the refurbished areas are handed over to the school and a visit from the fire officer is planned prior to opening. The school has had due regard to the Equality Act 2010, and the architect has incorporated the latest requirements for ensuring access to the premises and the school is ensuring a high level of access to the curriculum and to information. The first aid policy is comprehensive and provides explicit guidance on dealing with body fluid spillages and when to call for expert assistance; it is planned to train staff in first aid procedures as part of their induction process. The school has commissioned an electronic database to provide admission and attendance registers that reflect requirements.

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The school is likely to meet all of the requirements for registration. All the required checks are made on staff and the members of the proprietorial body, including the

required criminal records checks. These are clearly recorded on the school's single central register. The school's records of the checks made on the identity and qualifications (where required) of staff, together with their medical fitness and any other checks, are complete for those already in post and in the process of being completed for others as they are appointed. The school obtains and checks written references on all applicants in line with safe recruitment guidelines.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The school is likely to meet all of the requirements for registration. The premises are part-way through conversion. Discussions with the construction team leader, together with scrutiny of planning schedules, indicate that work is proceeding at a good pace. It is currently a week ahead of schedule and is likely to be completed within the expected timescales. The timetable for the installation of furnishings and equipment has been agreed with suppliers and contractors. Plans and the architect's computer-generated sketches indicate a high standard of finish and fitness for purpose. All mains services are already connected to the school and there are no concerns about their functionality. Agreements have been made for the maintenance of the premises and to ensure that they are kept clean and tidy. The standards of decoration, inside and outside lighting, ventilation, heating and flooring specified are likely to meet requirements. There will be suitable access, including a lift for people with physical disabilities. Sufficient exit routes in the case of emergency are established.

Classrooms are suitably sized, and the specification indicates that the provision of furnishings and fittings is likely to meet requirements. There will be specialist accommodation, including designated rooms for science, food technology, music and drama. Some of the teaching rooms will be available for hire out-of-hours, for example the music studio with its professional recording facilities. There are sufficient washroom facilities planned for staff and visitors, and for the number of students sought. All the requirements regarding hot and cold water supplies are likely to be met. There is to be a medical room for students, for which the appropriate fittings and furnishings are specified. A suitable and secure area of hard standing will be available for students' recreation and for court sports. On-site facilities will be used for physical education and recreation, and there are suitable changing room facilities, with showers, for male and female students. The security of the building and grounds is likely to meet requirements. As part of the refurbishment work, the school and other users of the premises are being provided with their own separate secure entrances. This means that other provisions are not likely to impact adversely on the school's arrangements for students' health, safety and welfare.

Provision of information

The provision meets all regulations.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The provision meets all regulations.

Recommendation to the Department for Education

Registration

Is registration recommended?

- **YES. This school is likely to meet all regulations when it opens and is recommended for registration.**

Recommended number of day pupils: 110

Recommended number of boarders or residential pupils (if applicable): n/a

Recommended age range: 13 to 16 years

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: Alternative provision.

Note to the Department

The age range shown on the school's independent school registration form shows the proposed age range as 14 to 16 years. During this pre-registration visit, the proprietor and Principal Designate advised that the school would be admitting students from Year 9 and that some of these students may be as young as 13 years old. The evidence from this inspection visit indicates that the school's provision is suitable for students in Years 9, 10 and 11 and that registration should be granted for the age range 13 to 16.