

# Advice note for a pre-registration inspection of an academy/free school/studio school/university technical college (UTC)

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School name	Rutherford House School
DfE registration number	N/A
Unique reference number (URN)	1501
Inspection number	422416
Inspection dates	23 July 2013
Reporting inspector	Mick Pye

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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.

## Context of the school

The school is scheduled to open on 4 September 2013 on the second floor of a four-floor building in Balham. Initially it will take two Reception classes. The school promotes the message of 'Learn, Enjoy, Succeed'. It commits itself to ensuring that pupils receive high quality teaching focused particularly on the development of high levels of achievement in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Work is on course for the other three floors to be completed by February 2014. This will allow the school to add to its number of pupils. There are two sets of proprietors cooperating over the school's development. They are Bellevue Education and the Place Group. The school has applied to be registered for 420 boys and girls aged 4 to 11 years of age. There are 53 applications for entry into the Reception classes in September. There is one child with a statement of special educational need.

## Compliance with the regulations

### Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school's policies, especially the one for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, indicate that most requirements are likely to be met. Implementation was not seen. The involvement of the pupils in a 'forest school' approach provides good opportunities for their spiritual development. Through collective worship, circle time, and the personal, health, and social education programme, it is intended to develop pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Other subjects within the curriculum will also encourage pupils to use their initiative and learn about how they can become active citizens. Pupils will learn about the workings of English public institutions through the citizenship programme. Plans are in place for pupils to support local charities. Through such strategies as visits by the police community officers, the school will promote respect for the civil and criminal law. The United Nations 'Rights and Responsibility' agenda will be introduced to support messages of mutual respect, taking responsibility and the importance of living within agreed rules. It will also support the pupils' growing awareness of living in a modern democracy. Comprehensive behaviour management and anti-bullying policies emphasise self-control and positive relationships, whilst the detailed equality policy manifestly commits the school to promoting an appreciation of, and respect for, diversity. Religious education will be taught through the formal curriculum and will give opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths and cultures. A link with a South African school is already being developed. The commitment to ensuring a balanced view when discussing political issues is not made clear enough in policies and promotional documentation.

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

- ensure that in school, there is an awareness of the requirement to present a balanced view when discussing political issues (paragraph 5(c)(i))
- ensure that in extra-curricular activities provided or organised by or on behalf of the school, the requirement to present a balanced view when discussing political issues is made clear (paragraph 5(c)(ii))
- ensure that in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere, the requirement to present a balanced view when discussing political issues is made clear (paragraph 5(c)(iii)).

## **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

Detailed written policies provide very clear guidance as to how the school will ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. These, together with other documentation and building plans, indicate that most of the requirements are likely to be met. The building contractors have drawn up detailed plans to ensure the health and safety of the children between September and the completion date in February. Very appropriate attention has been paid to developing child protection, safeguarding and safe recruitment policies. A designated child protection officer and a deputy have been named and are booked for appropriate training in August. Other staff will receive safeguarding training as part of their induction programme before the school opens. The deputy headteacher has been identified as the fire safety officer and has clear roles and responsibilities. The development of a fire risk assessment and the production of a report from the fire authority are awaiting the completion of the second floor works. This is scheduled to be carried out by experts in their field. A risk assessment for the building is in place. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy, and clear roles and responsibilities, including those for governors, have been identified. There is a first aid policy and seven members of staff have paediatric first-aid training. The first aid policy does not show whose responsibility it is to check the first-aid boxes and the frequency of doing so. A three-year accessibility improvement plan has been developed.

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

- develop a fire risk assessment and produce a report from the fire authority (paragraph 13)
- ensure that the first aid policy clearly shows whose responsibility it is to check the first-aid boxes and how often this individual should carry this out (paragraph 14).

## **Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors**

All requirements are likely to be met. The single central register has been completed as far as possible. Barring and criminal record checks at the enhanced level are currently being sought for the staff starting this September. The headteacher, trustees and the appointed governors have been checked for their suitability to work alongside children. From the initial advertisement, it is made clear that such checks, along with references, will be sought for any candidates prior to formal appointment. The school may employ supply staff, and the necessary system for making and recording checks on such staff is in place.

## **Premises of and accommodation at the school**

The building plans, along with a site visit, suggest that most requirements are likely to be met. By the time the school opens in September, safe access to the school and the second floor for the children and their parents or carers will be in place. There is a ramp and lift to allow disabled children access to the school. The second floor has two classrooms, a hall area and an area that will temporarily allow for the free flow of children into an indoor play area. Children will be escorted to the outdoor area for play. The completed building will have a large specialist room for art, cooking and science, together with a design and technology area. On completion of the building, the Early Years Foundation Stage will be relocated to the ground floor, with easy access to the external play area. Appropriate attention has been paid to the provision of sufficient numbers of toilets for pupils, and, separately, for adults and visitors. The temperature of hot water is controlled by thermostats at the boiler. Drinking water will be provided. Signage for the toilets (ie whether for adults' or children's use) and drinking water was not in place. In the new building, there will be a kitchen area but prior to this children will bring packed lunches, and snacks will be provided during the day. Appropriate arrangements have been made for the provision of medical facilities on the second floor whilst a purpose-built room is planned for the completed building. The provision of appropriate lighting, both inside and outdoors, is planned. A safe play area and a games area are situated on the site, and there is an intention additionally to access local parks and common land for recreation, and to use the local swimming centre for additional physical education activities. The school is aware of the need to develop risk assessments for these activities. The Department of Education will wish to continue to monitor progress of the premises directly with the proprietors.

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

- ensure that appropriate signage is in place with regard to the toilets for the use of adults and children (paragraph 23A(1)(a))
  
- ensure that cold water supplies that are suitable for drinking are clearly marked as such (paragraph 23F(1)(c)).

## **Provision of information**

The provision is likely to meet all regulations.

## Manner in which complaints are to be handled.

The provision is likely to meet all the regulations.

## Recommendation to the Department for Education

### Registration

- **YES. The school can be registered and allowed to open on receipt by DfE of evidence of improvement in relation to the following matters:**
  - ensure that in school there is an awareness of the requirement to present a balanced view when discussing political issues (paragraph 5(c)(i))
  - ensure that in extra-curricular activities provided or organised by or on behalf of the school, the requirement to present a balanced view when discussing political issues is made clear (paragraph 5(c)(ii))
  - ensure that in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere, the requirement to present a balanced view when discussing political issues is made clear (paragraph 5(c)(iii))
  - develop a fire risk assessment and produce a fire authority report (paragraph 13)
  - the first aid policy should clearly indicate whose responsibility it is to check the first-aid boxes and how often this individual should carry this out (paragraph 14)
  - ensure that appropriate signage is in place with regard to the toilets for the use of adults and children (paragraph 23A(1)(a)).
  - ensure that cold water supplies that are suitable for drinking are clearly marked as such (paragraph 23F(1)(c)).

Recommended number of day pupils: 420

Recommended number of boarders: 0

Recommended age range: 4–11 years

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: N/A.

Note: The Department should obtain confirmation from the school before it opens and then expands that the planned building works have been completed.