

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

School name	Parkfield School
DfE registration number	n/a
Unique reference number (URN)	1274
Inspection number	422363
Inspection dates	5 July 2013
Reporting inspector	Bill Stoneham

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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 proposed Parkfield Free School is to be located in the premises of a previous local authority seven-storey office block in Bournemouth. The school is parent-sponsored. It is due to open on 2 September 2013. The school has applied to be registered to admit up to 784 pupils in the age range 4 to 19. In its first year it will admit 364 boys and girls aged 4 to 9 and 11 to 14. There are 364 pupils registered for enrolment at present. One pupil is known to have a statement of special educational needs. The school will be non-selective and will admit pupils with special educational needs. The school aims 'to nurture, inspire and enable'. The aim is to blend a primary curriculum based on Montessori principles with a secondary education provided through the International Baccalaureate programme, enabling pupils to equip themselves with the skills they will need to thrive in modern society.

Compliance with the regulations

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school is likely to meet all of the regulations. Although implementation could not be seen, many policies, including those relating to behaviour and anti-bullying, were scrutinised. All policies set out a framework within which pupils, of all ages, will be encouraged to develop an understanding of right and wrong and the consequences of personal decisions. The school's policy for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils sets out a vision for them to be equipped to take their place in society as valued, economically viable and responsible citizens. The curriculum places an emphasis on international understanding and aims to develop independence, innovation, motivation and understanding.

The policy adequately defines each of the four elements of personal development and includes references to community contribution, through proposed charitable work, for example. An emphasis on Montessori principles and international awareness is designed to: encourage pupils to respect diversity; develop an ability to distinguish between right and wrong; develop respect for others; and provide an understanding of the world of work and the wider community. Planned themes in the personal, social and health education programme will provide pupils with an understanding of citizenship and the roles of individuals in the wider community. The themes include boosting international understanding, tolerance of other views and faiths, and the workings of English public institutions including the civil and criminal

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

justice system. Religious education will explore issues and questions from a multi-faith perspective. The proprietors have ensured that the planned curriculum is free from partisan political or religious views and that where any political issues are discussed, a balanced view is always presented.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Documentary evidence suggests that the majority of regulations are likely to be met. All required policy documents have been produced, including appropriate policies for safeguarding, safer recruitment, behaviour management, anti-bullying and first aid. Senior staff have been trained in safe recruitment and the principles have been properly applied to all staff recruitment to date. Arrangements are in place for the training of staff in child protection and this will take place in September before the pupils start at the school so that requirements are likely to be met. The designated person for child protection has yet to be trained to the required level, but this is planned, with provider and date in evidence. Staff have not yet been identified and trained to take responsibility for first aid. Suitable policies have been prepared for all required aspects of health and safety and for fire protection. However, premises and fire safety risk assessments, including checks on the existence of asbestos (currently believed to be present, if only as a minor risk in practical terms), have not yet been completed. Admission and attendance registers will be maintained electronically and their formats meet requirements. The school's equality planning makes a clear commitment to providing equality of access for disabled pupils. The school has a three-year access improvement plan.

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

- ensure that there is a full assessment of the risks for the premises, including risks from asbestos (paragraph 11)
- comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 by producing a fire risk assessment (paragraph 13)
- ensure that an appropriate number of staff are trained in first aid (paragraph 14).

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The school's planning for the completion of all required checks on the suitability of staff and implementation to date indicate that all regulations are likely to be met. All required checks have been completed for the governors and for staff appointed to date. These are recorded on a suitable electronic single central register. Checks are completed and records updated as new staff are appointed. The school does not intend to employ supply staff, but is aware of its responsibilities should such staff ever be engaged.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The school is likely to meet all the regulations. It is to be located in the premises of a former local authority office block close to the centre of Bournemouth. The premises are currently unoccupied. Considerable refurbishment work needs to be undertaken in order to bring the property up to the required standard. Detailed plans for the accommodation were scrutinised during the visit and a discussion was held with the site agent who expressed confidence in completing all the necessary refurbishment work in eight weeks.

Initially, pupils aged 4 to 9 and 11 to 14 will be admitted, with a planned school intake providing for pupils aged 4 to 19 being fully established by the start of the 2018–19 academic year. Plans indicate that classrooms are of an adequate size and sufficient in number for the proposed September 2013 intake. Plans further indicate that specialist facilities for science, design and technology (including resistant materials) and information and communication technology will be in place for the start of the 2013 academic year. Specialist play areas, both internal and external, are planned for the younger pupils and nearby specialist sports facilities with suitable showering and changing provision will be used for physical education. These include local sports centres and a partnership arrangement with a local independent school.

New furniture is being ordered (orders seen). There are sufficient washroom facilities located throughout the seven-storey building. Provision has been made for a medical room where first aid might be administered, or where pupils who are taken ill can retire to. Drinking water will be provided and appropriately labelled. Appropriate facilities for food preparation will be provided. A safe external area for play and recreation is planned, although the premises do not include any grassed playing areas. The buildings and access points to the grounds are fully secure.

Provision of information

The provision is likely to meet all the 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 there is a full assessment of the risks for the premises, including risks from asbestos (paragraph 11)

- comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 by producing a fire risk assessment (paragraph 13)
- ensure that an appropriate number of staff are trained in first aid (paragraph 14).

If registration is recommended, please state:

Recommended number of day pupils: 364 (784 when refurbishment is complete)

Recommended number of boarders: 0

Recommended age range: 4–19

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: Not applicable.

The recommended number of 364 pupils represents the school's starting point in September 2013.