

Advice note for pre-registration inspection of free schools

School name	The Hawthorne's Free School
DfE registration number	343/1291
Unique reference number (URN)	1291
Inspection number	404011
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Reporting inspector	David Young

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Context of the school

The Hawthorne's Free School is to be located on the site of a previous local authority secondary school, St George of England High School, in the Borough of Sefton. The school is sponsored by The Hawthorne's Free School which is a company limited by guarantee. It aims to serve the needs of the local community in an area currently experiencing school closures due to surplus secondary school places across the local authority. It will have a specialism in business and enterprise. The school has applied for registration for up to 600 male and female students in the age range 11 to 16 years. It is planned to open on 5 September 2012 with an intake of 434 students across the full age range. Students with statements of special educational needs, and those in the care of the local authority, will be admitted. The school's mission is, 'to empower each individual in our care to be safe, happy, creative, moral citizens who live motivated, fulfilled lives while enriching the lives of others'.

Compliance with the regulations

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Documentary evidence indicates that all regulations are likely to be met but implementation could not be seen. The school's policy for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development makes a commitment to 'helping students grow and develop as people'. It sets out an expectation that all staff and all curriculum areas will contribute to these important aspects of students' personal development. There is a clear intention to ensure that students understand the difference between right and wrong, develop the ability to make decisions, understanding their consequences and take on responsibility within the school and wider community. The policy includes in its objectives the development of understanding of different cultures and beliefs and enables students to appreciate the customs and values of other ethnic and faith groups. The content of the multi-faith religious education curriculum has a number of themes which support these intentions. The personal, social and health education and citizenship curriculum includes sections in both Key Stages 3 and 4 about becoming informed citizens. This involves knowing about the government and electoral system, the criminal justice system and social change locally, nationally and in Europe. There is a clear commitment in the school's documentation to ensuring that students develop their understanding of public institutions and services in England, and to the promotion of tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Documentary evidence indicates that all regulations are likely to be met but implementation could not be seen. The school has a suitable recruitment policy and the headteacher has been trained in safer recruitment. All required checks, including those on medical fitness and written references are completed for each member of staff appointed. The safeguarding policy includes appropriate definitions of staff roles

and two senior members of staff have current training as designated persons for child protection. Child protection training is planned as part of the pre-opening induction for all staff. This policy, together with policies for behaviour management, anti-bullying, and exclusions, have appropriate regard for DfE guidance and provide suitable procedures to enable all staff to work consistently to ensure students' welfare and safety. There are comprehensive arrangements for ensuring safe practice on off-site visits, using an electronic system, provided under contract by the local authority.

The school's health and safety procedures will be managed by a senior member of staff in collaboration with the site manager. Arrangements are in place to manage all aspects of fire safety appropriately. There is a fire risk assessment in place for the premises and this is being updated to serve the needs of the new school. The local fire officer has visited recently and approved existing arrangements for fire safety. Templates are in place to record the regular, routine checks on fire safety, including alarms, emergency lighting, fire extinguishers and portable electrical appliances. There are suitable arrangements for the management and recording of all aspects of first aid, and appropriately trained first aiders have been appointed. The school has installed an electronic information management system which includes the admission and attendance registers, together with the facility to record details of incidents and sanctions. The school fulfils its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

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. The majority of staff have been appointed from the existing staff of the St George of England School and a neighbouring catholic secondary school which is also due for closure. All appropriate checks are being completed, including new CRB checks for all staff. Details of all the required checks for staff, trustees, governors and supply staff are being entered on the single central register as they are received. The register is constructed on an appropriate template.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The school is likely to meet all the requirements for registration. The school is to be located in the premises currently occupied by The St George of England School, a secondary school with a capacity for up to 750 students. The premises have been maintained to a satisfactory standard by the local authority. No structural re-modelling is planned apart from new windows to the front façade of the building and the construction of an entrance canopy. An environmental improvement grant will be used to improve the external appearance of the front of the premises and to provide new signage throughout the site. Some minor refurbishment, mostly internal re-decoration, is planned for the summer break, including the refurbishment of four science laboratories. The premises provide sufficient accommodation, including classrooms, specialist teaching facilities, offices, toilets and washrooms for the planned number on roll. There is a medical room which is suitable for any student

who may be ill. The site is fully secure and entrance during the school day is through one controlled entrance into the reception area. The existing kitchens and dining room will be retained for the preparation and serving of food. There are interactive whiteboards and suitable furnishings in all classrooms and these will be transferred to the new school. There is suitable outside space, including a play and recreation area, together with suitably surfaced areas for physical education and games.

Provision of information

The provision is likely to meet all the 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.

If registration is recommended, please state:

Recommended number of day pupils: 600

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

Recommended age range: 11–16 years

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: n/a.