

# Advice note for pre-registration inspections of all types of academies and free schools/studio schools/university technical colleges (UTC)

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School name	Alban City School
DfE registration number	999/1227
Unique reference number (URN)	1227
Inspection number	403946
Inspection dates	18 June 2012
Reporting inspector	Fatiha Maitland

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## Context of the school

The proposed Alban City School is situated in St Albans, in Hertfordshire. The school is not open but intends to do so in September 2012. The school will start with two Reception Years and will grow over the coming years. The school will operate from a large building, which was owned by the University of Hertfordshire and known as The Law School. This was vacated in August 2011.

The school plans to admit up to 420 boys and girls, aged between four and 11 years. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs will be admitted if the school judges that their specific learning needs can be met. The school plans to make provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language.

One of the school's aims is 'to provide high educational standards which offer a real alternative to the existing provision in the city ... to meet the needs of local parents by offering high quality wrap-around care and holiday clubs which provide exciting and healthy activities for children'.

The school has no specific religious affiliation. This is the school's first registration visit.

The inspector visited the school's temporary office in Fountain Court, 2 Victoria Square, Victoria Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 3TF where she carried out a scrutiny of documentation and had discussions with the management of the school. She also visited the school's building at 7 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 3RR. She had discussions with E C Harris Company that is currently managing the building project on behalf of the Department for Education and the manager of Mace Construction Ltd that gave reassurance that the ground floor of the building will be ready to receive pupils in September 2012. The first floor of the building will be ready in December 2012.

## Compliance with the regulations

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

The school provided sufficient evidence to indicate that the planned provision is likely to meet all the regulations, but implementation could not be checked. Through personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), religious education and assemblies, pupils including those in the Reception Years will be encouraged to talk about their feelings and express their own personal viewpoints in a thoughtful reasoned and considerate way. Pupils will be expected to show appropriate attitudes in treating everyone equally and with respect. They will also be encouraged to talk about their own behaviour and its consequences and know that some behaviour is unacceptable.

Learning about religious practices and lifestyles, taking part in festivals and cultural events and exploring various artefacts will help pupils to learn about the wider world around them. Visits to places of interest and support from 'People who help us', alongside the PSHCE programme, will provide pupils with adequate opportunities to gain sufficient knowledge and understanding of public institutions and services in England.

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

A small number of regulations are not likely to be met. Implementation could not be checked, as the school was not operating. The school has devised detailed procedures to assess and manage safety risks related to educational visits. The school has prepared written policies to promote good behaviour amongst pupils with clear codes of conduct, a set of suitable rewards and sanctions, information about the prevention of bullying and guidance about physical intervention. The school has a written policy to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, with clear roles, responsibilities and procedures for dealing with allegations against staff. This is well supported by the school's safer recruitment policy and procedures. The headteacher of the school is the designated child protection officer. This individual received the advanced child protection training on 17-18 May 2012 by Hertfordshire City Council and knows what to do should a concern arise.

The health and safety policy and fire evacuation procedures are in place. However, the school has yet to carry out the risk assessments with regard to the Department guidance for the premises and resources. The school has yet to assure itself that there is a satisfactory level of fire safety, identified by its risk assessment under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. However, there are clear plans to carry out the necessary risk assessments before the opening of the school, including those relating to the premises and resources.

A suitable first aid policy is in place. There are currently no first aiders in school. The school is in the process of short-listing candidates and will ensure that there are a sufficient number of first aiders including paediatric training. The school has an admission register and attendance registers ready for use. The school has drawn up a suitable three-year accessibility improvement plan to fulfil its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

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

- carry out risk assessments on the premises and resources to ensure pupils' health and safety which have regard to the DfES guidance (paragraph 11)
- ensure that there is a satisfactory level of fire safety, identified by its risk assessment under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 13)

- ensure that there are certified first aiders including at least one with paediatric training in school (paragraph 14).

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

The school is likely to meet all of the regulations related to the suitability of the proprietor and staff. Scrutiny of documentation and discussion with the management of the school indicates that the school is aware of all safeguarding requirements. The school has made all of the required vetting checks on the headteacher of the school to ensure her suitability to work with children. Suitable recruitment procedures are in place for future recruitment.

The school has also established a single central register and recorded all of the required information on all members of staff and the proprietorial body.

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

The school has firm plans to ensure that the building is likely to meet all of the regulations. The scrutiny of the school's floor plan, a learning walk in the premises and discussions with the senior management of the school, the Department for Education project manager and the construction management indicate that the premises will be fit for purpose with suitable facilities for wheelchair users and ample space for parking. There will be 14 classrooms. The premises also benefit from a library, a large hall and a canteen. The school ensures that there is a suitable designated area for pupils who might become unwell. The current provision of toilets and washbasins is suitable for staff and the proposed number of pupils including those with disabilities. Pupils will have access to a suitable outdoor area to play safely.

The Education Funding Agency, which is the Department Delivery Agency, is managing the process of the building at present. The Department will wish to continue to monitor the progress of the premises directly with the Agency.

## **Provision of information**

The provision is likely to meet all the regulations.

## **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The school's complaints policy and procedures are likely to meet all the regulations.

## Recommendation to the Department for Education

### Registration

Is registration recommended?

**YES.** The school can be registered and allowed to open on receipt by DfE of evidence of improvement in relation to the following matters:

- carry out the risk assessments on the premises and resources to ensure pupils' health and safety which have regard to the DfES guidance (paragraph 11)
- ensure that there is a satisfactory level of fire safety, identified by its risk assessment under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 13)
- ensure that there are certified first aiders including at least one with paediatric training in school (paragraph 14).

Recommended number of day pupils: 420 pupils (including 60 in the Reception Years)

Recommended number of boarders or residential pupils (if applicable): N/A

Recommended age range: 4-11 years

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: N/A.