

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

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School name	Marine Academy Plymouth
DfE registration number	879/2021
Unique reference number (URN)	139604
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Reporting inspector	Michael Burghart

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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.<sup>1</sup>

## Context of the school

The proposed primary academy is yet to be built but is scheduled to be ready for May 2014. It will form an integral partnership with the secondary Marine Academy which is currently being rebuilt on the same campus in the St Budeaux district of Plymouth. Both schools are sponsored by the University of Plymouth, with a central focus to celebrate and extend Plymouth's marine heritage.

Whilst the new primary school is being built, the first 90 pupils to be admitted will be housed in part of the secondary building, considerably altered to be fit for purpose. Initially the school will admit one mixed-age class made up of 29 children: 25 Reception and four Year 1 pupils. None of these has a statement of special educational needs. Nearly a half of all children are likely to be eligible for free school meals and so be entitled to extra support under a government initiative known as the pupil premium. The new school will provide accommodation for 420 pupils from four to 11. The school is prepared to admit pupils of all abilities, including those who may be disabled or have special educational needs. The school aims to prepare pupils for future study and for life in general, confident in their own capacity to contribute to 21st century society, as well as helping individuals to achieve high standards.

## Compliance with the regulations

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

The school is likely to meet all of the regulations, but implementation could not be seen. Policies make it clear how pupils will be encouraged to develop an understanding of right and wrong and learn to show consideration for each other and staff. Anti-bullying and behaviour policies identify how pupils are expected to behave, with a strong focus on raising self-esteem and appreciating how their actions affect other people.

Whilst the school does not have an affinity with any particular faith, pupils' spiritual development is planned for effectively, taking into account how pupils will be given opportunities to experience awe and wonder, for example in nature, science and relationships. Planning for religious education explores a suitable range of faiths and religions designed to enhance pupils' awareness of diversity.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/section/99](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/section/99)

The policy for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development defines how pupils will be given opportunities to learn about, and come to respect, the different beliefs and customs present in UK society. It clearly identifies how pupils will be led to an appreciation of the dangers of any form of extremism, while the school's planning will be monitored to ensure a balance of political views. Detailed guidance, which senior leaders maintain will be constantly revisited, is in the school's handbook for staff. There is clear guidance for staff and pupils to show how personal, social and health education will be fostered to ensure that pupils know how to look after themselves, stay safe, fit and well.

Senior leaders have prepared a curriculum, initially designed to meet the personal, social and emotional needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage ready for September 2013. They have outlined how this will be extended in Years 1 to 6 to ensure equality of opportunity and encourage, through topic work and a variety of visits and visitors, pupils' understanding of the world. The schemes of work will provide pupils with a good insight into the workings of the civil law and will provide practical opportunities to become involved in the local community.

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

Evidence in the school's documentation indicates that the regulations are likely to be met. All required documents concerning safe recruitment of staff, safeguarding, anti-bullying (including safe use of the internet), behaviour and first aid are in place. Staff have followed the appropriate training for first aid and governors and senior leaders are trained in how to recruit staff safely, as well as being trained appropriately in child protection. There are firm plans in place to train additional staff in child protection as they are appointed, and before the school opens. Fire safety has a high priority. Arrangements for the new building cannot yet be evaluated, but the required checks have been completed for the temporary accommodation. These will be revisited when alterations have been completed. A fire service report is firmly planned for the temporary accommodation.

Good consideration of provision for those pupils who may be physically disabled is securely accounted for in school documentation. This is aimed at providing equality of opportunity, and the requisite three-year plan concerning accessibility for disabled pupils is in place. Policies for child protection and to ensure pupils' health and safety meet requirements. The proposed format for admission and attendance registers meets requirements and is fit for purpose. Such records are to be managed electronically.

There is a good level of consideration for safety and welfare in the temporary accommodation.

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

The school's planning and the way this has been translated into practice to date indicate that all regulations are likely to be met. The academy has robust systems to recruit suitable staff. The new school benefits considerably from the advice and

support of senior leaders and administrative staff from the secondary Marine Academy. The highly experienced governors, in their role of proprietors, make a significant contribution to the appointment and performance management of staff. All required checks on staff appointed so far have been diligently carried out and efficiently recorded, taking into account qualifications as well as the history of any convictions. All adults are to be formally checked before they are allowed to work with pupils. The school does not anticipate using supply staff but is aware of its responsibilities should the need arise.

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

Plans for the new building indicate that it will fully meet requirements for accommodation for Early Years Foundation Stage children and primary age pupils. Temporary accommodation is to be created in part of the secondary school and this is likely to meet almost all the regulations in terms of the initial maximum of 90 pupils. Outdoor space and internal classrooms will be suitably secured so that the area is physically separated from the main building. Rooms are being modified to provide a suitable, safe and stimulating working environment for young children. Two secure outdoor spaces will be available, one as a high-profile learning base aimed particularly at supporting physical and creative development as well as prompting children's knowledge and understanding of the world. The other area will constitute a play space. There is to be direct access for children to allow free flow of activities from inside to outdoors.

Children will be able to eat in a designated lunch room which makes up part of the temporary primary unit and this room will be available at other times as a space to meet parents, as well as for withdrawal and small group work. Hot food will be available to all children, provided by the secondary academy catering facilities.

Currently, toilet facilities are not fully appropriate for the youngest children, but plans for their improvement, work so far and the accompanying work schedules indicate that all regulations are likely to be met in time for the start of the autumn term 2013.

Although bottled water is to be made available for children, the absence of drinking water on tap in rooms other than the lunch room is a restriction and the improvement of this situation has not been planned.

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

- ensure that drinking water is freely available and clearly labelled in the temporary accommodation (paragraphs 23F(1)(a) and 23F(1)(c)).

## **Provision of information**

The provision is likely to meet all the regulations. All the required information regarding policies and procedures is included in the school prospectus and the website. Information showing how pupil premium funding is to be used to support those who are eligible for it will be included on the school website after children have

been admitted and the extent of such support has been assessed.

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

The school meets all the regulations, and makes available on request, and on its website, information detailing the complaints procedure. Senior leaders appreciate that adding a copy of the complaints procedure to documentation physically given to parents, for example with the prospectus, would further improve communication.

## **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 matter:**

- ensure that drinking water is freely available and clearly labelled in the temporary accommodation (paragraphs 23F(1)(a) and 23F(1)(c)).

Recommended number of day pupils: 420 (initially places available for up to 90)

Recommended age range: 4–11

Recommended gender of pupils: mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: not applicable.