

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

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School name	Southampton Studio School
DfE registration number	N/A
Unique reference number (URN)	1496
Inspection number	422411
Inspection dates	7 June 2013
Reporting inspector	Mick Pye

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
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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**

This proposed Studio School is to be located in a refurbished three-storey building on the site of the City College in Southampton. The school is sponsored by the college and is due to open on 3 September 2013. The school has applied to be registered to admit up to 300 boys and girls in the age range of 14 to 19 years. Currently it has 57 applications for post-16 students and 50 for pre-16 years for entry this year. None of these students has registered special educational needs, but the school will be non-selective and is open to students with special educational needs. The school aims to produce students who are at ease in a work environment and adept at using research methods through the emphasis on project-based work.

## **Compliance with the regulations**

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

The school is likely to meet all the regulations but implementation was not seen. There are a number of proposed programmes that will contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. The 'Create' programme, for example, will give students an opportunity to discuss issues of importance to them, including building relationships and self-management. Projects will end with exhibitions of work designed to enhance students' self-esteem. The school has a commitment to developing a personal tutor model and the tutor will seek to establish an in-depth knowledge of individual students and their views. Through the personal development programme the students will be able to learn about life in modern Britain, including the working of criminal and civil law. The school's detailed behaviour and anti-bullying policies give a clear indication of the high expectations held by school leaders and reinforce the message of mutual respect and provide knowledge of right from wrong. The school places a high priority on raising students' political and economic awareness in a balanced manner. A focus on individualised and team learning aims to promote research, public speaking, current affairs and world-of-work experiences. Such approaches will contribute to the moral and cultural development of students. The religious education curriculum intends to explore a variety of spiritual and moral issues through a GCSE course which all students will access. The course promotes issues such as respect for diversity and there is a clear commitment in the planning to ensuring that discussions of political, social and religious topics show a balanced view.

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

Documentary evidence and building plans indicate that all regulations are likely to be met. Comprehensive policies have been drawn up regarding safeguarding, safe recruitment, behaviour management, anti-bullying and first aid. Some of these policies are shared with the college, but apply to the context of the school effectively. Dates have been set for the headteacher to attend safe recruitment and child protection training prior to the summer break. During August all adults will, as part of their induction, undergo safeguarding and child protection training. Dates and delivery for this training have been established, so that requirements are likely to be met. The school has satisfactory access to the college's medical team and facilities on site, but in order to further enhance this provision, first aid training has been arranged for some school staff members. Appropriate policies are in place regarding health and safety and fire risk assessments. The college health and safety department is the responsible body for such issues, including equipment checks, record-keeping and ongoing maintenance. This is effectively managed. Admission and attendance registers will be maintained electronically and meet requirements. An equality policy is in place and arrangements for access by disabled students are clearly shown in the building plans. The school shares a three-year plan to increase accessibility with the college.

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

The school has already carried out the required checks on the staff appointed. As further staff are appointed, the school undertakes the process of checking their suitability in a timely manner. The college human resources department has established a suitable single central register and has in place arrangements for the necessary checks on volunteers, contractors and supply staff. There are tight procedures in place to ensure the confidentiality of information. This, together with the necessary barring checks already carried out, for example on the designated headteacher, indicates that regulations are likely to be met.

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

Building plans and other information suggest that the school is likely to meet all the regulations. Discussions took place with school representatives, a site walk took place and plans were scrutinised. Refurbishment of the current three-story unoccupied building is shortly to commence. It has been an attachment to the college but plans are in place to ensure the security of the new school. The plans show large communal areas for displays of students' work, with open-plan and traditional classrooms on the top two floors. There are sufficient washrooms but signage does not make clear which are the adults' washrooms as opposed to the students' facilities. Very appropriate arrangements are in place for snacks and drinks. Fresh drinking water is to be provided. Hot food will be cooked on the college site and brought to the school on a daily basis. This food meets the government's healthy food recommendations. The plans indicate that lighting and heating are appropriate to requirements. Suitable new furniture for both study and relaxation purposes is on order. Nearby playing fields will provide for the physical education and (supervised) recreational needs of students. Students will have access to the sports and changing

facilities in the college. This will be in addition to a weekly visit to a local water-sports centre. The Education Funding Agency, the Department's delivery agency is managing the preparation and refurbishment process. The Department will wish to continue to monitor progress with the premises directly with the school trust. Students requiring medical help will be accompanied to the college medical centre, which is suitably equipped. Arrangements are in place for making parents aware of any health or medical occurrences.

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

- ensure that there is clear signage regarding the site of student and adult washrooms (paragraph 23A(1)(a)).

## **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 matter:**

- ensure that there is clear signage regarding the site of student and adult washrooms (paragraph 23A(1)(a)).

Recommended number of day pupils: 300

Recommended age range: 14–19

Recommended gender of pupils: mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: not applicable.