

# 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	Devon Studio School
DfE registration number	N/A
Unique reference number (URN)	1498
Inspection number	422413
Inspection dates	10 June 2013
Reporting inspector	Mick Pye

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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**

The proposed Studio School is to be located in a brand new building (The Annexe) on a site traditionally associated with the children's area in Torbay Hospital Trust grounds. Building is about to begin. The school is due to open 5 September 2013 and during the building phase it will make use of two, nearby, newly refurbished buildings (The Studio). The school has applied to be registered to admit 300 boys and girls in the age range of 14 to 19 years. Currently it has 90 applications for entry this year. One pupil is registered for special educational needs. The school aims to develop pupils who have a broad academic grounding but with the additional experience of having studied a Diploma in Health and Social Care and experience of life and work in the hospital and other care centres.

## **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. A range of strategies is in place to deliver all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. An emphasis is placed on the development of empathy and compassion through pupils having contact with patients, young children and colleagues during work experience. The religious education programme examines various faiths and the need for balanced discussions. Through the school's 'personal coach' approach and the personal, social and citizenship programme, pupils will explore aspects such as relationships and reflect on issues of interest to them. A start has already been made in building pupils' self-esteem through exploring self-evaluation and relationships during a one-day course (All About You). The commitment to ensuring a non-partisan political education is not made clear enough in promotional material. The detailed behaviour and anti-bullying policies reinforce the message of positive relationships and mutual respect. Other aspects of study will give the opportunity to explore the multicultural aspects of modern life. One project will start with the theme of personal choice, and then pupils will receive visits from police and solicitors and finally talk to prisoners. Hence their awareness will be heightened of the working of civil and criminal law and public institutions as well as the consequences that accompany decision making. Underpinning such personal development work are the schools' values which promote high achievement, confidence and the development of communication skills with a focus on listening to and respecting alternative viewpoints.

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

- ensure that the school's commitment not to promote partisan political views in the teaching of subjects is made clear (paragraph 5(b)).

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

Policies, documentary evidence and building plans indicate that most of the regulations are likely to be met. Detailed policies regarding child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and medical aspects have been developed. The hospital's human resources department has been commissioned to oversee safe recruitment and to ensure the suitability of adults to work with children. The two appointed senior staff have both undergone child protection training. As part of their induction other staff to be appointed will undergo child protection training in August. Similarly, first-aid training will be provided for all the school staff; one senior member is already trained and the school will have access to medical resources within the hospital. Appropriate policies for health and safety are in place although the school has yet to develop a fire risk assessment. The school has commissioned the services of the hospital's health and safety department, with responders who will visit when required and oversee aspects of equipment and make building checks. The plans clearly show that in all buildings there are arrangements for access by disabled pupils. The school has yet to develop a three-year accessibility plan. In order to meet the requirements in full, the school should:

- develop a fire risk assessment (paragraph 13)
- produce a three year accessibility plan in order to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

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

Regulations are likely to be met. A single central record has been set up for the two senior staff already appointed, and for governors. As new staff are appointed there is a secure procedure for ensuring the collection of references and the checking of suitability prior to taking up employment. There is a well-established procedure for ensuring the suitability of contractors, volunteers and supply staff, including checking their identity and relevant documentation on their first day of arrival. Confidentiality of information is ensured through encryption of data and secure, lockable filing cabinets.

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

Building plans, together with a site walk and other information suggest that the school is likely to meet most of the regulations. Refurbishment on the Studio is about to begin and some electrical work has begun on the Annexe site. For both buildings the plans show security for pupils has been well considered. On both sites the plans show a mix of traditional classrooms and provision for science laboratories, large communal areas and smaller learning hubs. The school will also make use of some hospital facilities, for example, the state-of-the-art 'Innovation, Education and

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Research' (Horizon) building for practical experience of hospital equipment and methodologies. There are sufficient washrooms with appropriate attention paid to each hot tap having thermostatic controls. Both sites have plans for access to snacks and drinks. Pupils will be accompanied and supervised at lunchtimes when they visit the hospital dining area. Fresh drinking water is to be provided. The plans indicate that lighting and heating and acoustics are appropriate. Suitable furniture is on order. Both site plans show secure recreational areas for pupils' use during breaks. The hospital has agreed to the use of a part of their grounds for games. Insufficient attention has been paid in the plans to changing facilities and sufficient showers for pupils. For physical education the school also has plans to use a local hotel's sports facilities and a local water sports centre. The Department for Education will wish to continue to monitor progress with the premises directly with the school Trust. On both sites suitable arrangements are in place for pupils requiring medical attention through first-aid equipment and a medical room.

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

- ensure that suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 or over at the start of the school year who receive on-site physical education (paragraph 23A(1)(c)).

### **Provision of information**

The provision is likely to meet almost all the regulations. The safeguarding policy requires uploading onto the website and/or to be distributed to parents and carers in hard copy.

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

- publish the safeguarding policy on the school website (paragraph 24(1)(c)).

### **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 the school's commitment not to promote partisan political views in the teaching of subjects is made clear (paragraph 5(b)).
- Develop a fire risk assessment (paragraph 13).

- Produce a three year accessibility plan in order to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensure that suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive on-site physical education (paragraph 23A(1)(c)).
- Publish the safeguarding policy on the school website (paragraph 24(1)(c)).

Recommended number of day pupils: 300

Recommended number of boarders: 0

Recommended age range: 14–19

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: Not applicable.