

Advice note for a pre-registration inspection of a free school

School name	Sir Isaac Newton Sixth Form
DfE registration number	999/1450
Unique reference number (URN)	1450
Inspection number	422349
Inspection dates	31 July 2013
Reporting inspector	David Young

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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 2008.¹

Context of the school

The proposed Sir Isaac Newton Sixth Form is to be located in a former fire station in the centre of Norwich. The refurbishment of these premises is underway and due for completion and handover in March 2014. The school will open in temporary premises, a converted office block, in September 2013. The provision is sponsored by the Inspiration Trust. The sixth form will be registered to admit up to 440 male and female students in the age range 16 to 19 years, and will admit up to 220 students into Year 12 in the first year. The aim of the school is to 'create a talent 'hotbed' for the scientists, mathematicians and computer scientists of tomorrow'.

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. The sixth form will provide a research-led pastoral programme 'aimed at the development of non-cognitive capacity in students'. This programme will develop and assess progress with traits such as self-control, motivation and other personality factors. The main aim of the programme is to ensure that students are prepared for life after school. The pastoral policy demonstrates a commitment to character development at a level appropriate to the preparation of students for entry to employment or to higher education. The behaviour, disciplinary and anti-bullying policies provide strategies and a structure for the implementation of the school's expectations.

The tutorial programme, compulsory for all students, includes themes related to the functions of public institutions, civil and criminal law, civic duty and moral character. All students will have involvement with the local community through work placements and the contribution of local employers to the curriculum. In addition, the local central library, The Forum, has requested that students assist with the preparation and implementation of a number of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics network) activities to serve the community across the county, based at The Forum. Lessons on equality and diversity, together with democratic values, will contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. The policy includes a reference to induction training for staff on teaching political content in a manner that is free from bias and delivered in

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/section/99

a balanced way. A student council is to be created which will enable all students to experience representation and leadership. Specific lessons within the programme also include, for example, consideration of substance abuse, volunteer/work experience, 'green week', equality and diversity, and preparing individual presentations. These illustrate a breadth of learning across the moral, social and cultural aspects of personal development. The school's ethos is infused throughout on the development of the 'spiritual' dimension through, for example, developing strategies for self-reflection, consideration of mindset, and the development of optimism, self-discipline and resilience.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Documentary evidence indicates that most of the regulations are likely to be met. All the required policy documents have been produced to an appropriate standard, including policies for safeguarding, behaviour management and discipline, prevention of bullying, and first aid. A senior member of staff has been trained to the required level as designated person for child protection and arrangements are in place for the training of all staff in child protection as part of their induction before the school opens so that requirements are likely to be met. Three members of staff have been trained to suitable levels in first aid. The safe recruitment policy sets out suitable arrangements for the recruitment of staff which have been implemented consistently in all appointments to date.

An appropriate health and safety policy has been prepared and is supported by an additional policy on educational visits, including the requirement for risk assessments. The health and safety policy sets out appropriate requirements for premises and fire safety risk assessments, arrangements for the periodic testing of all safety equipment, and for the evacuation of the premises in the event of fire. Risk assessments for the premises and for fire safety have not yet been completed and a report from the fire authority has not yet been obtained. Plans have been prepared to increase accessibility to the temporary premises during the proposed eight months of occupation. On this account a three-year plan is not practical at present. Admission and attendance registers are being created on an electronic management system, which also has the facility to record details of any incidents of serious misbehaviour.

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

- comply with health and safety law by producing a risk assessment for the premises (paragraph 11)
- comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 by producing a satisfactory fire risk assessment and a report from the fire authority (paragraph 13).

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. All required checks have been completed for the proprietors and staff and details entered onto a suitable single central register. Details of checks are added to the register as they are received. The school has the facility for the checking and recording of the suitability of any supply staff should they be appointed in the future.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The school is to be located temporarily in a refurbished office block in the centre of Norwich. Refurbishment work is due to commence during this week and will be completed to an agreed timescale ready to open in September 2013. It was not possible to visit the site but detailed plans were scrutinised and discussed with the headteacher. There is little detail available of the proposed permanent premises. The Education Funding Agency is managing the preparation and refurbishment process on behalf of the trust. The Department will wish to continue to monitor progress with the premises directly with the Agency.

Initially students will be admitted into Year 12 only. Plans indicate that the accommodation includes sufficient teaching spaces, including specialist science laboratories for the number of students to be admitted in the first year. There are sufficient, separate washrooms for male and female students, and for staff. Hot water supplies will be regulated and labelled drinking water facilities will be available to students. Sufficient furniture is on order for installation during the refurbishment process. There are suitable arrangements for a medical room to be available, including a bed and washbasin, and near to student toilets. There is sufficient space for recreation for students in this age range who will only be expected to be on site during taught sessions. Sports facilities off-site, with appropriate changing rooms and showers, will be available for physical education.

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 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:**

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

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- comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 by producing a satisfactory fire risk assessment and a report from the fire authority (paragraph 13).

Recommended number of day pupils: 220*

Recommended number of boarders: 0

Recommended age range: 16–19

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: Not applicable.

*The school has applied to be registered for up to 440 students. The premises due to open in September 2013 are suitable to accommodate up to 220 students, which is the maximum planned intake in the first year.

Once the accommodation is completed on the proposed permanent site a material change inspection may be required to assess the suitability of the premises and accommodation to admit up to 440 students.