

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

School name	Kimberley 16-19 STEM College
DfE registration number	822/4002
Unique reference number (URN)	1442
Inspection number	422340
Inspection dates	12 July 2013
Reporting inspector	Declan McCarthy

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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

Kimberley 16-19 STEM College is located in the village of Stewartby, four miles south west of Bedford, with good access to local transport and the one shop in the village. It is adjacent to the Marstons Vale country park, which offers good recreational opportunities for students. As a new free school it wishes to provide full-time education for up to 700 students aged 16 to 19 years. The free school is directly funded by the Department for Education and the proprietorial body is Wooton Academy Trust, which is a private company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. It will open in September 2013 with its first intake of 210 Year 12 students. Some students will come from other schools in Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes but the majority will be the current Year 11 from Wooton Academy, who wish to follow a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) programme. Some will be 'guest students', enrolled at Wooton Academy who are following mainly arts subjects but who also wish to follow elements of science, technology, engineering or mathematics at the free school. The free school will be staffed by teachers (who will work part-time in both establishments) and leaders from Wooton Academy. It will be accommodated in a large three-storey award-winning building, which was constructed in 2009 as the planned UK headquarters of 'Hanson UK', a major conglomerate.

The building has been unoccupied since its construction in 2009. The keys are due to be handed over to the proprietorial body at the end of July. The free school's vision is to work with industries and universities to develop a regional centre of excellence in the delivery of STEM education and thereby transform students' lives to enable them to move into higher education or employment. The free school aims to challenge and support all students to develop lively enquiring minds, in order to gain both the self-confidence and the determination to be successful in their future lives. It seeks to accomplish this by being innovative and using the latest technology to maximise each student's progress.

Compliance with the regulations

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The free school is likely to meet all regulations, although implementation could not be seen as it is not yet operating. The free school provides a range of well-thought-out policies and procedures to promote students' personal development, including

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

their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The clear reward systems together with planned opportunities to work with the country park for the benefit of the community will build confidence and self-esteem. Students will develop a sense of right and wrong through the citizenship and ethics programmes, the clear code of conduct and discipline policy with a well-conceived hierarchy of sanctions. They will be given a wide range of opportunities to show initiative, by for example, making choices in their extended projects, working with the local village community and through joint initiatives with other schools. The free school intends to promote an awareness and appreciation of diversity through the celebration of world festivals and looking at the work of inventors from across the world. Students will learn about British values, public institutions, democracy and the rule of civil law in citizenship topics and through a range of visitors to the free school, such as the local Member of Parliament, the mayor and local councillors. The free school provides clear guidance to staff in the handbook and job descriptions that partisan political views will not be promoted in the teaching of any subject.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

All regulations are likely to be met, although implementation was not seen. There are well-written policies and robust procedures in place to promote students' safety and well-being. The child protection and safeguarding policy lists the designated persons and contact details of all relevant agencies including the local safeguarding board. It provides clear guidance to staff on how to recognise various types of abuse and the procedures to follow should any allegation be made. The well-written anti-bullying policy provides clear guidance on dealing with any type of bullying. The behaviour policy and code of conduct provide clear rules, together with a system of appropriate rewards and sanctions to manage students' behaviour. All staff of the free school have received appropriate training in safeguarding and firm links with the local safeguarding board have already been established. Safe recruitment training has been undertaken by the managers. Health and safety policies including procedures for assessing risk are in place together with an appropriate first aid policy. The Bedfordshire fire service has already conducted its first visit to the premises and a further visit is scheduled for 28 August to complete the report. An independent provider has also completed a fire strategy report for the new building. The free school has a clear policy and procedures in place to fulfil its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Disabled toilets, lifts, ramps and wide corridors are already in place and are considered in the three-year plan to improve access.

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The free school is likely to meet all regulations. The single central record shows all the required checks carried out on all members of staff, the trustees, governing body and regular visitors to school. These include checks on qualifications, medical fitness and the right to work in the United Kingdom, all of which entries are duly dated and signed. All staff, trustees and governors have been duly vetted and the free school does not intend to use supply staff from an employment business but will deploy staff from Wooton Academy to cover any shortfall in staffing.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

All regulations are likely to be met. The new three-story building, which consists of a central atrium, a north and south wing, is spacious, light and airy. There are good, high-quality separate toilet facilities for boys and girls as well as separate ones for staff. There are adequate shower and changing facilities together with a medical and rest room for students who may be unwell. The ground floor accommodation includes plans for well-equipped heavy engineering practical areas, a lecture theatre, and coffee bar, refectory, kitchen and computer room. The first floor has a number of light engineering workshops, a design technology and graphics area, a health and social care area, a food technology room, various offices and study areas, four science laboratories, a preparation room, ten classrooms, a computing room and an interview room. The second floor accommodation has further general classrooms, four business classrooms, further office and study areas and two music practice areas. The plans show that clearly labelled drinking water fountain stations will be available on each floor. Outdoor play facilities are safe and suitable.

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. This school is likely to meet all regulations when it opens and is recommended for registration.**

Recommended number of day pupils: 700

Recommended number of boarders: 0

Recommended age range: 16 -19

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: N/A.