

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

School name	Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA) Primary School
DfE registration number	999/1733
Unique reference number (URN)	1733
Inspection number	446981
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Reporting inspector	Michael Best

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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 proprietor, The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA), seeks to establish a free school for up to 364 boys and girls aged 4 to 11 years in the centre of Liverpool. The school will occupy converted lecture and tutorial rooms in premises originally built as offices about fifteen years ago. These are situated next to the Anglian Cathedral and opposite the main LIPA campus. Conversion of the accommodation required for the intake of the 52 Reception children starting on 3 September 2014 is due to begin shortly and will be completed during August. The remainder of the conversion work will be completed during the autumn. The school plans to admit two Reception classes each year and reach its capacity in September 2020 when the first intake will be in Year 6.

The school will provide a mainstream primary education for pupils with a particular emphasis on the creative and performing arts. Pupils will have access to specialist facilities on the LIPA campus. The majority of children joining the school in September 2014 live within a two mile radius.

The school aims include: 'By learning about and through the creative and performing arts, we will immerse children in attractive and enjoyable learning experiences.'

Compliance with the regulations

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school is likely to meet all the requirements for registration. Implementation could not be seen as the school is not yet operating. The proposed provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is appropriate for their age and reflects the school's aims. The school has based its plans to promote pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship on good practice drawn from commercial schemes and other schools. This scheme will be delivered through the taught curriculum, extra-curricular activities and individual support for pupils and their families.

The school's proposed programme focuses on developing pupils' confidence and self-esteem to enable them to be effective, independent learners and to work collaboratively with others. It provides a secure basis for their next stage of

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

education. Developing pupils' self-respect, understanding and tolerance of others is a key feature of the provision. The planned curriculum aims to help pupils to understand and respect differences, to enjoy healthy relationships and get on well with others, regardless of colour or creed. The school's policies and procedures promote high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. Pupils will be supported in learning about relationships, drugs, substance and alcohol abuse at an appropriate level for their age. They will develop the skills to succeed in sport and performance. They will learn about making the right decisions when faced with challenging situations and to have the confidence to learn from experience. Pupils' cultural development will be promoted through specialist provision in the creative and performing arts, visits and visitors. The school's plans include helping pupils to understand civil and criminal law, and to value their rights and responsibilities within a democratic society. Pupils will develop a broad knowledge of public institutions and services in England. They will learn about leading healthy and safe lives, and developing the values and attitudes that promote a clear moral code. The school has taken suitable steps to ensure that it will offer a balanced presentation of different views at all times. Guidance is provided in the staff handbook and in the school's curriculum policy.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school is likely to meet all of the requirements for registration. Implementation could not be seen as the school is not yet operating. The school's safeguarding policy reflects the latest guidance provided by the Secretary of State and includes specific information about the local safeguarding board. The policy provides clear guidance about recognising and reporting abuse. The Principal designate has already undertaken higher level child protection training and another member of the leadership team is due to undertake the higher level training before the school opens. All staff will be provided with appropriate training in basic safeguarding and first aid as part of their induction programme prior to the first pupils being admitted so that requirements are likely to be met. Those involved in appointing staff have already completed recognised training courses in safe recruitment procedures. The school has a suitable policy and procedures for recruiting staff and these are implemented by a specialist team within the proprietor's administration. All the required checks are being made on staff and members of the proprietorial body as they are appointed, and the single central register is being populated as these checks are completed.

The school's policies for promoting pupils' good behaviour, preventing bullying and ensuring their health and safety, both in school and when on visits, meet requirements. The school has suitable plans to maintain secure records of the sanctions imposed on pupils for serious misbehaviour. The first aid policy provides appropriate guidance and it is planned to train named staff as higher level first aiders and paediatric first aiders following their appointment and before the school opens so as to meet requirements. The school's admission and attendance registers are likely to meet requirements.

The local fire officer has been consulted about the conversion of the premises. Provision has been made for a fire risk assessment to be made as soon as the accommodation is ready and before staff and pupils occupy the premises. There are plans to deal with any required actions or recommendations before the school opens. The Principal designate intends to provide the Department for Education with copies of the relevant documentation when each stage of the conversion work is completed. These actions are likely to meet requirements. The school has due regard to the Equality Act 2010, with a three-year action plan drawn up to ensure access to the premises, the curriculum and to information.

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The school is likely to meet all of the requirements for registration. All the required checks are being made on staff and the members of the proprietorial body, including their suitability for working with children, as they are appointed. These are being suitably recorded on the school's single central register. The school's records of the checks made on the identity and qualifications (where required) of staff, together with their medical fitness and any other checks, are complete for those already in post and are in the process of being completed for others as they are appointed. The school obtains and checks written references on all applicants in line with safe recruitment guidelines. The school does not intend to employ staff through an agency but is aware of the procedures to be followed should this be necessary.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The school is likely to meet all of the requirements for registration. There is a relatively limited amount of construction work required to realise the school's plans. The specifications were discussed with the Principal designate during the site visit. The ground floor classrooms open on to a secure rear courtyard, from which there is access to an enclosed grassed area. The basement car park is being resurfaced to provide a further covered play area and access will be provided to the outdoor grassed area. Further sports facilities are available nearby. These will provide suitable facilities for pupils' play and outdoor games; the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage will also be met. There will be two halls and a kitchen where pre-cooked meals will be heated and served. All teaching rooms will have access to computer facilities. There will be a secure reception area through which staff, pupils and visitors will access the school. Offices for senior staff and administrators are sited at different points within the school. The school has inherited some suitable furniture and equipment from the previous occupants; new furnishings and equipment are ordered and are due for delivery for before the first pupils arrive in September. Mains services are connected to the premises and in working order. Arrangements have been made for the maintenance of the premises, and for keeping them clean and tidy. Appropriate standards of decoration, internal and external lighting, ventilation, heating and flooring are specified. Arrangements are in hand for a fire risk assessment to be completed prior to opening. The premises are wheelchair-friendly and there is a passenger lift to each floor.

All the requirements regarding hot and cold water supplies are likely to be met. The washroom facilities for pupils are sufficient for the number sought. There will be suitable washroom facilities for disabled people, staff and visitors, and appropriately equipped medical facilities for pupils. Pupils will have access to drinking water throughout the school day and it is specified that all sources will be appropriately labelled.

Provision of information

The provision meets all regulations.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The provision meets all 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: 364

Recommended number of boarders: N/a

Recommended age range: 4–11 years

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: N/a.