

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

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| School name | Malcolm Arnold Preparatory School |
| DfE registration number | 999/1734 |
| Unique reference number (URN) | 1734 |
| Inspection number | 446983 |
| Inspection dates | 8 July 2014 |
| 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, David Ross Education Trust, seeks to establish a free school for up to 420 boys and girls aged four to 11 years. The school will occupy temporary demountable accommodation on the site of Malcolm Arnold Academy in Northampton. It is intended that the construction of the permanent accommodation on the site will begin in January 2015 and that the school will move to these new premises in September 2015. The first 60 children starting their Reception Year will arrive on 8 September 2014 and successive intakes of Reception children will grow the school over seven years. The school is operated under the tenets of the Church of England.

The school aims to 'provide a world class academic education in conjunction with unique co-curricular opportunities for all'.

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 planned provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well matched to the age range of the pupils and is in line with the school's aims. Enrichment to further promote pupils' personal development is planned through a series of termly topics and themes, extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors.

The school's proposed programme focuses on promoting pupils' development as self-managers, effective participators, resourceful thinkers, reflective learners, independent enquirers and team workers. A core element of these plans is a focus on developing pupils' self-respect, understanding and tolerance of others and their differences, beliefs and cultures. The school's policies and procedures are likely to promote high expectations of pupils' good behaviour and participation in learning. Pupils will be encouraged to value themselves as individuals; to understand how their feelings can affect others; to make the right decisions when faced with difficult dilemmas and to have the confidence to deal with the consequences of their actions, including when they make mistakes. Pupils' appreciation of their own culture and those of others will be promoted through art, drama and music, together with visits

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

and visitors. The school's plans include helping pupils to understand their rights and responsibilities within a democratic, multicultural society, leading healthy and safe lives, and developing a healthy set of values and attitudes within a clear moral framework. Pupils will learn to respect the criminal and civil law. They will develop a broad knowledge of public institutions and services in England.

The school provides guidance for staff about ensuring that pupils are presented with balanced viewpoints and sets out a clear agenda to ensure that partisan political views are not promoted. The guidance is provided in the staff handbook and 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; it includes references to and details of the local safeguarding children board, together with sample 'cause for concern forms' to assist staff in recording their concerns. The policy provides unequivocal guidance to staff, governors and others about recognising and reporting abuse. There are sufficient staff trained at the higher level in child protection to take on the role of designated lead for safeguarding, when the school opens. All staff will be provided with appropriate training in safeguarding matters as part of their induction programme, prior to the first pupils being admitted, so that requirements are likely to be met. The school has a suitable policy and procedures for recruiting staff and those involved in appointing staff have completed recognised training courses in safe recruitment procedures. All the required checks are being made on staff and the 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 and preventing bullying meet requirements. In both policies, the Trust provides clear commitment to supporting the school's work and minimising risk. The school has produced a 'child speak' version of the bullying policy which will help young children and their parents understand different types of bullying and how to deal with them. Suitable and secure electronic records will be maintained of the sanctions imposed on pupils for serious misbehaviour. The policies and procedures for ensuring their health and safety, both in school and when on visits meet requirements. The additional policy for outdoor learning for the Early Years Foundation Stage, provides detailed and appropriate guidance for staff in supervising young children, when moving around the campus or in the locality. The school has developed an e-safety policy which reflects the host academy's procedures. The first aid policy provides appropriate guidance. The school will have access to over 20 trained first aiders, including those additionally trained in paediatric first aid, on the campus. The school will use a computerised database to provide admission and attendance registers that reflects requirements.

The Trust has arranged for a fire risk assessment to be made as soon as the temporary accommodation is handed over by the contractors. The Principal designate has made firm arrangements to provide the Department for Education with copies of the contractor's handover certificate, building regulations certificate and fire risk assessment when the temporary accommodation is ready. These actions are likely to meet requirements. The school has due regard to the Equality Act 2010, with a three-year action plan in place to improve 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 of the required checks are being undertaken systematically on staff and the members of the proprietorial body as they are appointed. These checks are being suitably recorded on the school's single central register. The school's records of the checks made on the identity and qualifications of staff, together with their medical fitness and any other checks, have been seen completed for those already in post, and are in the process of being completed for others as they are appointed. The school takes care to obtain and check 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. The site of the new school was seen but the ground works for the temporary accommodation have yet to start. Initially, the school will be temporarily accommodated in demountable units. These will provide two classrooms, offices and other facilities, including a suitable number of washrooms and a suitably-equipped medical room, for the initial intake of children. There will be an outside grassed and an area of hard standing for pupils' play and recreation. There is provision for a suitable area for outside learning for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

All teaching rooms will have access to computer facilities. There will be a separate entrance for pupils and the school will be securely fenced. Occasionally, there will be access to the neighbouring senior school, for example, to use the sports hall for physical education. The school has ordered furnishings and equipment and these are awaiting delivery for when the first intake to the Reception classes arrive in September. Operational mains utility services are available on the site and await connection to the temporary buildings. The maintenance of the premises, and the arrangements for keeping them clean and tidy, have been arranged by the Trust. Appropriate standards of decoration, internal and external lighting, ventilation, heating and flooring are specified in the contractor's specification. Plans indicate that all the requirements regarding hot and cold water supplies are likely to be met. There will be suitable washroom facilities for disabled people and staff. The school will provide pupils with lunches and there will be a labelled supply of drinking water available to pupils on demand. The local fire officer has been consulted over the

school's design and temporary accommodation, has approved it, and is due to visit before the first Reception class children arrive.

Provision of information

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

Recommended number of day pupils: 420

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.