

Advice note for a pre-registration inspection of an academy/free school

School name	Chapelton Academy
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Reporting inspector	Sarah Drake

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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 Chapeltown Academy, on the northern outskirts of Sheffield, is a non-denominational free school for day students aged between 16 and 19 years old. It intends to accept on to its roll both boys and girls including, but not solely, those who have special educational needs. The academy intends to admit up to 150 students from 1 September 2014 and, eventually, to have up to 300 students on roll.

Initially, it is intended that the academy will be housed temporarily in a building on Hydra Business Park, which has yet to be adapted for the academy's use. A second, larger building is undergoing a complete refit and is likely to be ready for students' permanent use by September 2015. The academy's proprietor is Chapeltown Academy Limited.

The academy's motto is, 'Inspiring Excellence and Success'. Its vision has four key pillars, the first of which is to, 'Increase aspirations to attend the world's best universities, and boost attainment at A-Level through the provision of high-quality academic courses taught by passionate and enthusiastic teachers.'

Compliance with the regulations

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The academy is likely to meet all of the regulations but implementation could not be seen as it has yet to open. All the planned schemes of work open with an indication of how the subject will provide students with a range of opportunities in keeping with the academy's ethos. These include embedding and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion, and broadening students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities in and out of school, as students, citizens and consumers, and their understanding of the principles of sustainable development. The planned curriculum includes topics such as: in geography, the cultural diversity of Sheffield and the reasons for it; in philosophy, the philosophy of religion; and, in politics, pressure groups, civil rights and liberties, political obligation and protest. The planned tutorial programme covers a broad range of topics designed to promote students' ability to think about and discuss ethical and moral issues such as different types of prejudice including racism, religious discrimination, sexism, homophobia and ableism. It is planned that it will

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

also develop students' awareness and understanding of criminal and civil law and the workings of local and national public institutions. None of the planned topics include any hint of political bias and a balanced view of political issues will be presented. The academy's planned curriculum 'bonus time' will offer students a wide variety of opportunities to extend their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, ranging from Italian conversation to drama and dance, involvement in charities and outreach into the community. It is proposed that students of Spanish will develop relationships with the charity 'Supporting Kids in Peru.'

As part of the academy's intention to deepen students' understanding of the democratic system it has already sought the views of potential students in local schools about, for example, whether or not the proposed academy should have a house system and a student uniform. Once the academy is open, it intends to develop a student executive council to help guide its development and represent the academy at public events.

The academy's policies related to behaviour, discipline, rewards and anti-bullying set out unequivocally that their intent is to ensure that students, 'understand and take responsibility for behaviour and to treat all staff and fellow students with respect and courtesy.' They recognise that everyone 'should give of their best, is capable of significant achievement, and that everyone's achievements should be recognised and celebrated.' The academy intends to provide a room in which students 'of all-faiths-and-none' can find quietness in which to reflect.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The proposed academy is likely to meet almost all the regulations, although their implementation could not be seen. Comprehensive policies related to, for example, health and safety both on and off site and on residential visits, underpin the academy's intended practice to ensure the welfare and safety of all. The first item planned for discussion in students' first tutorial session is to ensure their familiarity with fire safety procedures. Teaching about e-safety features in students' induction sessions. There are specific policies related to science, accident reporting and fire. All the documentation points to the academy's intention to take every precaution to avoid fire hazards but, because the accommodation is not yet ready, it has yet to undertake a fire risk assessment and obtain a report from the fire authority.

The detailed child protection policy and procedures clearly outline staff's responsibilities in this area and identify the need for regular training. The headteacher, as the designated lead person with responsibility for child protection, has very recently completed two days training led by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. All staff will be trained in safeguarding before the academy opens, so that requirements will be met. Robust procedures are in place to ensure the safe recruitment of staff, including checks on their previous employment history and extra checks if their recent employment has been outside the United Kingdom.

The academy has suitable arrangements in place for admitting students and registering their attendance. They will be registered during tutorial sessions and during every subject lesson. The academy also has in place a three-year accessibility plan to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010. The need to promote equality of opportunity runs as a thread throughout much of the academy's documentation.

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

- prepare a suitable fire risk assessment and ensure that a building standards compliance certificate is obtained on completion of the refurbishment work (paragraph 13).

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The academy is likely to meet all the regulations. Checks to ensure the suitability to work with children of staff, directors and members of the governing body have either been completed for those already in post, or are being processed for new appointees. The single central register includes all the required fields and is very well completed. The proposed academy's safer recruitment policy and procedures clearly outline the arrangements for ensuring that, for example, any contractors on site do not pose a risk to students. The academy does not intend to employ supply staff, but is aware of the necessary checks should it do so in future.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

Taking into account scrutiny of building plans and discussion with the proposed academy's senior leaders, it is likely that the academy will meet all the requirements. Initially, it is intended that the academy will be housed on two floors of a building formerly used as offices and for training. It is intended that the refit will be completed by the end of July 2014 and that all fixtures and fittings will be installed by mid-August 2014. The plans for the temporary building, to be used from September 2014, indicate that there is likely to be sufficient classroom space and space for students to use for leisure, both inside and outside. The plans include two science laboratories, each with a separate preparation room, and flexible classroom space to accommodate large and small teaching groups. They also identify an appropriate medical room and space for separate showers for male and female students. Physical education does not feature on the proposed academy's formal curriculum but leaders have reached an arrangement with the controllers of outdoor playing fields close to the academy for students' use during curriculum 'bonus time'. The Department for Education and the Education Funding Agency will wish to continue to monitor progress with the premises.

During the visit, plans were available for the proposed building to be used from September 2015. It was brought to the attention of the academy's leaders that, when the new accommodation is ready for use, the academy will need to make a request for a material change to the Department.

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. The school can be registered and allowed to open on receipt by DfE of evidence of improvement in relation to the following matters:**

The academy must prepare a suitable fire risk assessment and ensure that the building standards compliance certificate is obtained on completion of the refurbishment work (paragraph 13).

If registration is recommended, please state:

Recommended number of day pupils: 150 [rising to 300 in September 2015]

Recommended number of boarders: not applicable

Recommended age range: 16–19 years

Recommended gender of pupils: mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: not applicable.