

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

School name	Bronte Girls Academy
DfE registration number	380/4085
Unique reference number (URN)	147067
Inspection number	10103321
Inspection dates	05/06/2019
Reporting inspector	John Young, Senior Her Majesty's Inspector



Information about the inspection

This inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the Secretary of State for Education. It was carried out under section 99(1) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.¹

In carrying out this type of inspection, inspectors assess the extent to which the school is likely to meet 'The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014' when it opens.²

Discussions were held with the principal designate, the chief executive officer of Feversham Educational Trust, the head of human resources, the head of governance and compliance, the director of operations and the business manager. The inspector also met with the chair of the local governing body and trustees. Information on the school's website was scrutinised, together with school policies and other documents. The inspector toured the school site, including the buildings and the outdoor spaces which are under construction, but nearing completion. The inspector discussed and evaluated compliance with premises regulations with the builders and architects.

Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a 11–16 free school for:

Number of day pupils	600. Initially 122 in September 2019
Age range	11–16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Type of special educational needs	N/A

Context of the school

Bronte Girls Academy will be a new provision within the Feversham Education Trust. It aims to offer a high-quality holistic education. Providing girls with the necessary qualifications, attitudes and values to progress into higher education, training and employment. There will be a strong focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), alongside a diverse wider curriculum including leadership skills, the arts, humanities, sport, modern foreign languages, and enrichment opportunities.

The school plans to open in September 2019 with 120 Year 7 pupils. 120 pupils will enrol into Year 7 in the following four years, reaching a capacity of 600 in 2023.

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

² www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/made. Part 1 to Schedule 1 is not reported against because it does not apply to academies, free schools, studio schools and UTCs.

Advice to the Secretary of State for Education

Overall outcome	The school is likely to meet all the relevant independent school standards when it opens.
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Compliance with The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students

The school's curriculum provides sharply focused opportunities to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Central to the philosophy is the development of outstanding citizens who are ambitious, savvy and equipped with the skills, attitudes and dispositions that enable them to act with integrity, be responsible, tolerant, respectful, and to play a meaningful role in society.

There are clear plans for the active promotion of fundamental British values through the personal, social, health and citizenship curriculum. In addition, the school has thoughtfully considered how it will address sex and relationships education and raise pupils' awareness of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

The formal curriculum is supplemented by wide-ranging themed assemblies, off-site visits and residential experiences that the school hope will broaden pupils' horizons. Plans are in place to vet any visitors who may come to the school to speak with pupils. Arrangements exist to help to ensure that pupils get a balanced view of different topics.

If implemented successfully, these standards are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The safeguarding policy has due regard to the latest government requirements and is available on the school's website so that parents and carers can access it readily. The procedures outlined are thorough with a crystal-clear onus on safeguarding children at their core. The guidance to staff about 'warning signs' and the actions to follow, should they have any concerns about a pupil, are especially helpful. Current staff have received a range of relevant safeguarding training appropriate to their roles with suitable training planned for new staff joining in September 2019. The principal designate is the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and has completed appropriate training for this role. Deputy DSLs will do the same training prior to the school opening. The site is secured through controlled access. Internal and external CCTV will be deployed to keep pupils and staff safe. Several staff have completed safer recruitment training. Risk assessments exist to mitigate welfare, health and safety issues within the school and when pupils are off-site. Detailed supervision and 'critical incident' plans are in place. Staff are knowledgeable about keeping pupils safe and recognise the additional vulnerabilities pupils at the school 'may' face.

Staff induction includes bespoke child protection, health and safety, anti-bullying and behaviour management training. Similar induction activities are planned to support pupils. The school has ensured that admissions and attendance registers are in place that comply with legal requirements. Arrangements to safely administer medicines,

first aid, and to record incidents and accidents are practicable. Procedures to ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 are in place.

If implemented successfully, these standards are likely to be met.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has ensured that all appropriate checks, including confirming the adults' identity, medical fitness and, where applicable, their qualifications and right to work in the UK have been made to assess their suitability to work with children. Where relevant, checks have been made prior to confirmation of the appointment. All appointments are subject to an enhanced disclosure and barring service (DBS) check and all teaching appointments are subject to a prohibition from teaching check.

The single central register provides an up-to-date and accurate record of all the checks that have been carried out on the staff employed and those appointed and who will join the school in September 2019. Three staff recruitment files were scrutinised during the inspection which exemplified effectively the vigilant approach adopted by the school to compliance with the relevant regulations and requirements. The proposed arrangements for the engagement of supply staff are thorough.

If implemented successfully, these standards are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

The building has a handover date of 1 August 2019. It is apparent from a tour of the facilities, discussions with the contractors and scrutiny of plans, that the project is on schedule. The school will be brand new and purpose built to a high specification. It is designed to provide an exceptional learning environment for pupils that is safe. Classrooms are fit for purpose, bright and airy and with optimal lighting, insulation and acoustics. There will be external lighting so that pupils can safely enter and leave the school when it is dark. There are a number of outside spaces available for pupils to use including a substantial multi-use games area and grassy areas that are suitable for the provision of physical education. There will be canopied spaces with seating and large courtyard and grassy areas, suitable for pupils to use to socialise and play during breaktimes and lunchtimes. Inside, pupils will benefit from internal break out spaces, a large on-site sports hall, drama studio, music practise rooms and a recording studio, alongside purpose-built STEM labs and workshops, and a large multi-use hall. The school will not have any pupils with complex medical needs, but it has future-proofed its provision by incorporating a therapy room, hoists and associated infrastructure in case they are ever required. There is a dedicated 'sick bay' for the short-term medical treatment of ill or injured pupils. It will have an appropriate bed, first-aid kit, access to a sink and an integrated toilet.

Drinking water will be clearly labelled and readily available for pupils throughout the day. There are appropriate toilet and washing facilities for the sole use of pupils. The toilets have an adequate supply of hot and cold water and the temperature is automatically regulated so that it does not pose a scalding risk to pupils. There is suitable changing accommodation and several showers available for pupils.

If implemented successfully, these standards are likely to be met before the proposed opening of the school.

Part 6. Provision of information

The school has ensured that all required policies are available to parents on the school's website. This includes policies on admissions, behaviour, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who may speak English as an additional language, curriculum, anti-bullying, health and safety, first aid, child protection and complaints. The policies are listed in the parental handbook with information about how they can be obtained.

The format for the annual written report to parents will follow that of other schools within the same trust. The report contains information about pupils' academic progress as well as their behaviour and attitudes to learning.

If implemented successfully, these standards are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The complaints policy is compliant with the applicable requirements. It is systematic and clearly outlines the process complainants must follow. There are set timescales for logging, scoping and investigating any complaints received. There are three stages to the school's grievance procedure. Stage 1 tries to resolve the concern informally. Stage 2 is a formal investigation, followed by Stage 3, which is a hearing if the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome at stage 2. At least one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school.

If implemented successfully, these standards are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Leaders, managers and governors have a collective vision to provide an outstanding quality of education for every pupil who attends the school within a safe, happy and inspiring environment. Several ambitious, experienced and well-qualified specialists are the architects in strategically influencing the bringing to life of the school's vision. Their careful marketing and the reputation of the well-regarded parent school, Feversham Academy, which is rated outstanding by Ofsted, have captured parents and carers imaginations and Bronte Girls Academy is oversubscribed.

Leaders and managers are knowledgeable about the independent school standards (ISS) and about education. They have ensured that all the ISS are likely to be met by the time the school opens. Leaders articulate a strong moral imperative with the active promotion of pupils' well-being seen as paramount.

The plans for monitoring and evaluating the successful implementation of the school's plans for delivering a high-quality education are detailed, including routine external validation, clearly defined lines of accountability and measurable success criteria.

If implemented successfully, these standards are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

The school has a carefully considered equality and diversity policy. The policy pays due regard to all the protected characteristics, including gender reassignment, sex, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation, age and pregnancy and maternity. The plan encompasses all the school's operations such as admissions, provision of education and personal development and pastoral care. Governors are responsible for ensuring the school's compliance with the general and specific duties and they are obliged to monitor and quality assure implementation. The school will report on the actions taken to meet their agreed equalities objectives and an annual equalities statement will detail the school's compliance with the duty.

There is an agreed accessibility strategy for the school. It provides for full disability access to this four-storey building with an accessible lift, refuge points on all floors and a number of accessible toilet facilities.

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