

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

School name	The Harbour School
DfE registration number	838/7001
Unique reference number (URN)	147087
Inspection number	10103239
Inspection dates	26/06/2019
Reporting inspector	Andrew Lovett HMI



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

Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

Number of day pupils	160
Age range	5–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Type of special educational needs	SEMH and ASD

Context of the school

The Harbour School is a proposed special school with a sixth form. It will serve Poole, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Dorset. It has been planned in cooperation with the local authorities and will be on a site currently owned by Dorset County Council. The school will be run by the Delta Education Trust. This trust already provides special school and alternative education places for pupils in the area. The school will initially open in temporary accommodation on the permanent site. A new purpose-built school will be built and is planned to open by September 2021.

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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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.

Compliance with The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

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

The proposed school is likely to meet the standards in this part. Leaders have a strong vision based on a firmly held set of principles about improving the life chances of SEMH and ASD children. The SMSC curriculum that is already in place in other schools in the trust is very good. The plans include well thought-out opportunities to teach fundamental British values, including respect and tolerance for all members of our society. One school in the trust was inspected very recently and maintained its 'outstanding' judgement.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school is likely to meet the standards in this part. The Delta Education Trust has robust procedures in place for health and safety and risk assessments in its other schools and these are already being drawn across into the Harbour School, modified where necessary because of the additional needs of the pupils. Trust officers and school leaders are experienced and capable. They have a good understanding of the requirements of safeguarding (as laid out in 'Keeping children safe in education (2018)') and how to create and maintain a culture that keeps pupils safe. Proposed staffing levels are appropriate to supervise pupils. Appropriate behaviour and bullying policies are in place.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school is likely to meet the standards in this part. The trust already operates a single central record that is compliant. There are well-established practices in place for the appointment of staff to make sure that they are suitable to work with children. School and trust leaders have used these to appoint the first tranche of staff. There are appropriate arrangements in place for the use of supply staff and for adults from other organisations who will work with pupils. Appropriate checks have been made on trustees and governors.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

The school is likely to meet the relevant standards in this part. The plans for the temporary building are well advanced and on schedule. The building will meet the needs of pupils and staff for the first two years of the school's life. Pupils with limited mobility will not be able to access the first floor. However, the accommodation on the ground floor will meet their needs.

The permanent building is designed specifically for SEMH and ASD pupils. It is likely to meet their needs. It is due to open in time for the September 2021 intake. This is essential, since the temporary building will no longer be big enough, given the projected rate of expansion.

Part 6. Provision of information

The school is likely to meet the relevant standards in this part. The school's website does not yet contain all the necessary information. However, all the necessary documents are ready to be uploaded. The websites of other schools in the trust are models of good practice and the format will be carried across on to the website for the new school. This format is accessible to parents and the community.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The trust has a well-established policy for handling complaints. It is compliant with guidance. This policy will be used by The Harbour School.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

The school is likely to meet the standards in this part. Trust board members are experienced. There is a well-established scheme of delegation. Trust leaders are experienced and skilled. The headteacher designate has worked within the trust for some time and is experienced in leading a special school. The senior staff have been appointed. They are suitably qualified and experienced.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

The trust's equality and diversity policy is compliant. It includes a clear provision for arrangements to meet the requirements of the schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

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