

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

School name	Lakelands Primary School
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	258/1844
Unique reference number (URN)	147844
Inspection number	10148495
Inspection dates	23/06/2020 to 26/06/2020
Reporting inspector	Nathan Kemp HMI



Information about the inspection

This inspection was carried out 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

The inspection was carried out during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. As a result, we could not visit the school site or meet with the proposer in person. The inspector held telephone discussions with the headteacher, the executive headteacher, the chief executive officer (CEO) and the chair of trustees. The inspector viewed a virtual tour of the permanent school site, reviewed the architects' plans for the permanent site, scrutinised information available on the school's website and reviewed a range of policies and procedures. Using the available information, the inspector is able to give sufficient assurance that the school is likely to meet the independent school standards.

Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

Number of day pupils	420
Age range	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Type of special educational needs	Not applicable

Context of the school

Lakelands Primary School intends to open in September 2020. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed the proposed date that the site and premises will be handed over to the multi-academy trust. The school is situated within a new housing development and commercial development in Stanway, Colchester. It is expected that most pupils who attend the school will reside there.

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 is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

At the centre of leaders' work to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is the school's motto: 'Be the change'. These are underpinned by the school values of: compassion, honesty, aspiration, nature, generosity and equality. The school's equality policy makes clear reference to the protected characteristics and outlines the school's approach to meeting the requirements as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Leaders aim to develop pupils' SMSC development in all areas of the school's curriculum. They have chosen the relationships education, relationships and sex education and health education curriculums for September 2020 and are investing in a diverse range of reading books to support this. Leaders have a clear understanding about the knowledge pupils should have by the end of key stage 2.

The school will adopt a religious education curriculum in line with the local authority agreed syllabus.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

The school's safeguarding policy, which considers guidance from the Secretary of State, makes clear the school's commitment to safeguarding pupils. Designated safeguarding leaders have completed the training they need to have a firm understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. Leaders have a strong awareness of safeguarding risks, both locally and nationally. They intend to share this knowledge with staff by way of training and an in-depth induction process. Leaders intend to closely monitor pupils' attendance to ensure that they attend frequently and are safe.

Leaders have training and induction plans in place that will enable staff to identify, record and pass on concerns about pupils' welfare. Staff will record concerns on the school's electronic logging system. There are plans to carry out detailed audits of the school's safeguarding processes and culture.

The school's 'culture for learning' behaviour policy focuses on the climate leaders wish to promote the following qualities in pupils: compassion, honesty, aspiration, nature, generosity and equality. There are plans in place to acknowledge pupils' positive behaviour, which range from verbal feedback, a certificate from the headteacher and an invite to 'hot chocolate Friday'. Leaders also have steps to manage behaviour when they fall short of expectations. These steps are: redirection,

reminder, warning, time out in class, time outside of class and repair. Leaders will monitor incidents of poor behaviour, which staff will record on the school's electronic logging system, so that they can identify where further support or intervention may be needed. They aim to support pupils' awareness of bullying through a rich, diverse curriculum, which will go hand in hand with the school's values, particularly the value of equality.

Leaders have a secure understanding of their health and safety responsibilities, which are made clear in the trust-wide health and safety policy. The trust's estates manager will oversee the work of school-based staff and external companies that carry out routine maintenance and checks on the school site. Leaders have ensured that staff who require specific first-aid knowledge will receive the training that they need. Leaders are aware of pupil supervision requirements and have a suitable supervision risk assessment in place.

The school is awaiting a fire plan, which will take place in August 2020. Leaders are aware of the regular checks and assurances that they must carry out to make sure they comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The school's caretaker will be trained to carry out regular checks, overseen by the trust's estates manager. Classrooms for the youngest pupils in the school have external doors that lead straight to the fire assembly point, aiding a swift and safe evacuation.

The school has a risk assessment policy in place. As well as having a range of risk assessments for on-site and off-site activities, leaders have also produced detailed plans for children's attendance at school during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Leaders have robust recruitment processes in place. The interview panel consists of leaders who know how to carry out safer recruitment. Although only few staff have been appointed, leaders have made sure vetting and recruitment checks are complete and stored on the school's single central register.

The single central register contains the employment checks for staff, supply staff, governors, trustees and other centrally employed staff. Although leaders do not think they will need to regularly recruit agency staff, they have clear processes in place to ensure that their methods of recruitment are in line with the independent school standards. They intend to request the pre-employment checks direct from the supply agency before commencing their term of employment.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

The school's construction was paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has resulted in a delay to the completion date.

A new housing development surrounds the site. A perimeter boundary will help ensure that only those with permission access the site. There is lots of space outside for pupils to engage in physical activity, such as a playing field. External lights have been positioned to allow safe passage to those who travel to/from the school site.

Inside, the building is well lit throughout. Acoustic conditions in each room are suitable. Separate toilet facilities are available for all pupils and washing facilities are readily available. For younger children, supervised facilities are in place. Due to effective water-mixing measures, water will not pose a risk of scalding. The school has a medical room and hygiene room. There are accessible toilets for those that require it. Drinking water will be labelled.

Leaders have considered the additional measures that they need to take in order to make the school site as safe as possible for both adults and children during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Leaders have a fixed period to raise any issues with the site or premises with the construction company. After this, they have organised for external companies to make sure that the site and premises continue to comply with health and safety standards.

Part 6. Provision of information

The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Leaders will make information available to parents on the school's website. The website is already operational and provides visitors with key information about the school's curriculum, with further detail about how the school will support pupils' early reading and phonics development. Leaders have also made the following policies available: behaviour policy, anti-bullying policy, exclusions policy, health and safety policy, first-aid policy and the admissions policy. The website has a specific page for the school ethos, values and aims. The school's core values are compassion, honesty, aspiration, nature, generosity and equality.

The school's website contains contact information, including the name of the headteacher, the school's address and telephone number. There is also a page dedicated to providing information about the school's local governing body. Information about the trust, including the board of trustees and members, can be found on the multi-academy trust website.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

The school will adopt the multi-academy trust's complaints policy and procedure. The policy is readily available on the school website. There are clear steps to inform parents how they can initially make a complaint on an informal basis. Should they

wish, the policy makes clear how parents can escalate their concerns to more formal procedures. Each stage of the complaints procedure has information about what parents should expect to happen and how long it will take. When complaints require a panel hearing, the policy makes clear that the panel will consist of two members of the board of trustees and an independent, impartial representative. The complainant is also able to attend, alongside a witness. The policy makes clear that complaints, and their outcome, will be recorded.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Leaders have a shared vision for the school and the school motto, 'Be the change', underpins this. Leaders have established systems in place for monitoring school effectiveness and providing support, when needed. They have adapted this model for the inclusion of Lakelands Primary School. There are proposed systems in place for sharing information with stakeholders. Several trustees, with a wealth of experience, will initially be members of the local governing body to help the school to get off to a strong start. Over time, there is a long-term succession plan to reduce trustee involvement within the local governing body.

Leaders have a secure understanding of the independent school standards and are well placed to ensure that these are met. Leaders intend for the school to have a high level of autonomy, including when setting priorities for improvement. Where trust-wide priorities are in place, the school will be given support to help them achieve these.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

The school has an appropriate accessibility plan in place. This plan meets the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage

The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Leaders know the learning and developmental requirements for the early years. They have clear plans in place to fulfil these. They acknowledge that children may start the Reception year less prepared than historical cohorts, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and have plans to help children settle in successfully. Leaders intend to use assessment information to help them design a curriculum that closely matches children's needs. They intend to keep parents up to date with their child's progress through regular meetings.

Leaders have a strong understanding of safeguarding and welfare requirements. The leaders know the correct adult-to-child ratio and have over-staffed on purpose to provide additional cover and supervision at all parts of the school day. They are

becoming aware of the intimate care needs of children and have training in place to provide this. Both teachers are paediatric first-aid trained to give adequate cover.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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