

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

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School name	Outwood Academy Riverside
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	806/4003
Unique reference number (URN)	147848
Inspection number	10148507
Inspection dates	22/06/2020 to 25/06/2020
Reporting inspector	Michele Costello 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

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. During the inspection, video meetings were held with the chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust, the executive principal, the principal, the special educational needs director and executive director, the chief operating officer (COO), the chair of trustees, the chair of the academy council, the director of capital projects and the director of business services. A video meeting was also held with two of the project leads from the DfE. The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including policies and procedures, information available on the school's website and the plans that were available for the interim school sites. Using the information provided, the inspector can give enough assurance that the school is likely to meet the independent school standards. However, the degree of assurance is very limited for the premises standards in part 5 and paragraphs 11, 12 and 16 in part 3. This is because the renovations to the interim school buildings had not started at the time of the inspection. It was also not possible to view a virtual tour of the interim buildings. The standards for which assurance is limited are indicated in the relevant section for that part.

## Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

<b>Number of day pupils</b>	1,050 (150 initially in Year 7)
<b>Age range</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Type of special educational needs</b>	Not applicable

<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/section/99](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/section/99).

<sup>2</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/schedule/made](http://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.

## Context of the school

The proposed school, Outwood Academy Riverside, will be part of Outwood Grange Academies Trust. The school will be an 11–16 school. In September 2020, the school will open for 150 pupils in Year 7. The intention is for the school to grow to 1,050 pupils in Years 7 to 11.

Pupils will be based in two temporary buildings for the duration of the next academic year. Initially, pupils will be located in a building that is part of Middlesbrough College. Based on the information that leaders currently have, this building will be used solely by the school and the office space in the floors above will not be occupied. In January 2021, the school will locate to a former government Home Office building in Middlesbrough until the new school building is completed in 2023. Some building and renovation works will be needed in both of the interim buildings. At the time of the inspection, the building work had not started. The details that the trust was able to provide about the changes to be made to the Middlesbrough College building was limited because the lease agreement had only just been signed. No building plans were available at the time of the inspection for the substantive new school building.

The majority of staff have been appointed for the proposed new school. All senior leaders come from within the trust's schools. This is also the case for many of the teaching staff.

## Advice to the Secretary of State for Education

<p><b>Overall outcome</b></p>	<p>The school is likely to meet all the relevant independent school standards when it opens provided it addresses the regulations noted in the tables as set out in parts 3 and 5.</p>
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## **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 all the regulations in relation to this part. Leaders could articulate how they will actively promote British values. Leaders have plans for pupils to participate in the local community through links with businesses and the local football club. Plans for the induction arrangements of pupils showed how leaders will promote the school values of courage and respect. Family tutor groups and family dining is planned to encourage discussion and debate. There will be opportunities for pupils to learn about different faiths and cultures. The school will use the trust's policy for vetting visitors and guest speakers.

### **Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The proposed school is likely to meet the regulations in relation to this part. However, the inspector can only provide very limited assurance in relation to paragraphs 11, 12 and 16 as it was not possible to visit the site or view a virtual tour of the interim buildings during the inspection. The DfE were informed of this before the inspection commenced.

There is a comprehensive safeguarding policy in place. This is in line with statutory guidance. The designated safeguarding leader (DSL) and deputy DSL are aware of the safeguarding risks within the local community. Leaders will have systems in place to identify vulnerable pupils.

There are ongoing discussions between leaders and the DfE project leads regarding the changes needed to both interim buildings. Final decisions are yet to be made. For instance, a document noted that there will be temporary bars fitted to the first floor windows in one of the interim buildings, yet leaders were not aware of the plans to fit temporary bars. Leaders were only able to provide limited information relating to paragraph 12, as they did not have access to the interim buildings before the inspection commenced. There is no fire risk assessment for either building. A fire safety strategy could only be provided for one of the interim buildings. However, leaders were able to clearly articulate what needs to be done in terms of fire safety when they get access to the buildings. Leaders also understand that a risk assessment will need to be completed for the use of Middlesbrough College sports facilities for physical education (PE). However, this risk assessment was not in place at the time of the inspection because leaders have not had access to the building. As a result, the inspector was not able to assess the suitability of the risk assessment.

The school will follow the trust's already established behaviour policy. This includes details of the school's sanctions and rewards. The policy includes reference to reasonable adjustments for pupils with protected characteristics. Systems that the trust already has in place will be used for recording bullying and behaviour incidents.

Leaders are clear about how these incidents will be logged, monitored and analysed for any trends and patterns.

Templates were provided for the attendance and admissions registers. Both meet requirements. Procedures are in place should a child go missing from education.

There are systems in place for recording accidents, the administration of medicines and first aid. The school currently has four trained first aiders.

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

ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 for all premises to be used.	paragraph 12
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#### **Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

The proposed school is likely to meet the regulations in relation to this part. There is a single central register (SCR) in place. Some incorrect dates had been included on the SCR. This was addressed during the inspection. The school will follow the trust's recruitment policies and procedures. These are in line with the latest statutory guidance. The necessary checks have been carried out on the majority of staff and governors. Checks are currently underway for two governors and two support members of staff.

It was found during the inspection that the trust had not carried out an enhanced disclosure and barring check (DBS) on one of its members. This had been done by another trust. Leaders have addressed this and an enhanced DBS check has now been carried out by the trust. The original DBS certificate is still to be seen by the trust.

#### **Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools**

The proposed school is likely to meet the regulations in relation to this part, provided that it addresses the regulations set out below. The level of assurance that the inspector is able to provide for part 5 is very limited compared to other parts of the independent school standards. This is because the inspector was not able to visit the interim buildings and a virtual tour was not able to be viewed during the inspection. The DfE were made aware of this in advance of the inspection.

Information about acoustics and lighting was only available for one of the interim buildings. As a result, the inspector could not assess if the lighting or acoustics will be suitable or if there will be external lighting at the Middlesbrough College building. The DfE project leads told the inspector that they do not expect there to be any issues with the acoustics or lighting at the Middlesbrough College building. However, they said that they will not address any issues for such short-term use. The DfE are awaiting confirmation of all statutory compliance certificates regarding gas, electricity and water from Middlesbrough College as part of the lease agreement.

Pupils will use the sports facilities and changing rooms at Middlesbrough College. This will be for sole use of Outwood Academy Riverside pupils. The facilities will not be used by Middlesbrough College at the same time. The inspector was not able to assess the suitability of the PE and changing room facilities as neither the trust nor the DfE had access to the plans. Leaders will create a risk assessment for use of these facilities once they can visit the site.

Leaders are aware of the need to clearly label drinking water. However, they do not yet have the details from the DfE about the supply of hot and cold water in one of the interim buildings. As a result, the inspector could not assess if there will be an adequate supply of hot and cold water. The inspector was not provided with any details of the hot water temperature for either building. As a result, the inspector could not assess if the hot water presents a scalding risk to users. There are separate toilet facilities for boys and girls in both interim buildings. There will be clearly identified staff toilets.

The DfE project leads confirmed that there will be no sink in the medical room in the Middlesbrough College building. This does not meet the requirements of the independent school standards.

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

ensure that accommodation for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils includes a washing facility.	paragraph 24(1)(b)
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## Part 6. Provision of information

The proposed school has a website. The school has a detailed plan of what needs to be included on the website before the school opens. Some updates were made to this plan during the inspection. The school is likely to meet all the requirements in part 6.

## Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The proposed school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. The school will use the trust's complaints policy. The policy is comprehensive and meets all the requirements in part 7 of the independent school standards.

## Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

The proposed school is likely to meet all the requirements for this part provided that it addresses the regulations set out in the table below.

The trust already has experience of leading a number of secondary schools. There are 32 schools, including 21 secondary schools, in the trust.

The senior leadership team includes an executive principal, principal, director of provision for special educational needs and/or disabilities and a chief executive principal. They all have leadership experience within the trust’s schools.

The trust has not opened a free school before. However, the trust has experience of managing building projects and new school builds. Leaders understand the need for the independent school standards to be consistently met.

The trust’s policies and procedures show that there are systematic monitoring and evaluation systems in place. This would indicate that the school’s polices are likely to be implemented effectively. The trust has comprehensive health and safety and pupil welfare procedures in place with clear accountability and oversight for safeguarding pupils.

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

ensure that the standards in the preceding parts are likely to be met consistently.	paragraphs 12 24(1)(b)
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## Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

The proposed school is likely to meet the regulations in the schedule. The trust has an appropriate accessibility plan in place. However, at the time of the inspection, the trust was not able to provide details of how the accessibility plan will relate to the interim buildings as they have not yet had access to the buildings.

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