

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

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School name	Sir Bobby Robson School
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	258/1849
Unique reference number (URN)	147849
Inspection number	10148515
Inspection dates	30/06/2020 to 03/07/2020
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.<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. The inspector held telephone discussions with the headteacher, the chief executive officer (CEO), a representative of the trust board, the director of operations, the trust's lead for safeguarding and data protection, the senior governance adviser and the director of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The inspector viewed a virtual tour of the temporary and 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:

<b>Number of day pupils</b>	60
<b>Age range</b>	8 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Type of special educational needs</b>	Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH)

## Context of the school

Sir Bobby Robson School intends to open in September 2020 in temporary premises. The impact of COVID-19 has stalled the construction of the permanent site and premises. It is anticipated the permanent site will be completed by November 2020.

The school will provide education for pupils with SEND. All pupils will have SEMH needs and an education, health and care plan.

<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.

## Advice to the Secretary of State for Education

<b>Overall outcome</b>	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 proposed school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

School leaders aim to put pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development at the heart of their work. The school will cater for pupils with SEMH needs and leaders aim to put greater emphasis on SMSC because of this. Leaders want to be flexible with their plans and respond to pupils' needs to ensure that pupils develop well in all areas, particularly morally. Leaders have a strong understanding of some of the challenges in the local community and they will use this to equip pupils with the tools they need to lead healthy, safe lives.

Leaders aim to support pupils' SMSC development in all areas of the school's curriculum. They have chosen their preferred personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum and have mapped out key content for the academic year. Leaders intend to help develop pupils' knowledge across the school day and not limit this to PSHE lessons. A mixture of topic-based work and discrete lessons will develop pupils' knowledge of different cultures, religions and beliefs.

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

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

Leaders have a sharp focus on safeguarding pupils. They have taken the time to get to know the local safeguarding context so that they can take a proactive approach to make sure pupils are protected from harm. The school's safeguarding policy, which considers guidance from the Secretary of State, makes clear the school's responsibilities, and the process they will follow if concerns emerge. The school will have three trained leaders responsible for safeguarding to increase the likelihood that at least one of them is on site at any one time. Leaders have plans to provide new staff with an in-depth induction, so that they can spot potential signs of concerns and know how to pass these concerns on.

The school's behaviour policy makes clear how the school will reward positive behaviour as well as clear steps they will take if pupils' behaviour falls short of expectations. Leaders have additional incentives for pupils who demonstrate consistently good or improving behaviour. While leaders intend to train staff to use restraint, they are clear that it should only be used as a last resort. They want staff to be effective in deploying de-escalation strategies. Leaders will use online reporting software to log, and subsequently monitor, behaviour incidents. There is an anti-bullying policy in place, which includes a useful guide to help staff and pupils to correctly identify instances of bullying.

Leaders have a strong understanding of their health and safety responsibilities, which are made clear in the trust-wide health and safety policy. The trust's director of operations 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 they need. Leaders are aware of pupil supervision requirements and have a suitable supervision risk assessment in place.

The permanent site is awaiting a fire risk assessment, which will take place when it is ready. Leaders are aware of the regular checks and assurances they must carry out to make sure that they comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The school's caretaker, who already works at another school in the trust, will carry out regular checks, overseen by the director of operations.

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

Leaders' recruitment processes are robust, which are supported by clear recruitment and selection guidance. This guidance supports the following: the interview process, pre-employment checks and induction. The interview panel consists of leaders who know how to carry out safer recruitment. Leaders have only appointed a small number of staff so far, but they have made sure vetting and recruitment checks are completed and stored correctly on the school's single central register.

The single central register contains the employment checks for school-based staff, supply staff, governors, trustees and trust staff who form part of the trust's central team. Leaders do not anticipate that they will appoint a high number of supply staff, opting instead to provide a higher day-to-day staff-to-pupil ratio. However, should they need to do so, they aim to recruit supply staff with the specific expertise to meet the wide-ranging needs of pupils. Over time, they hope to limit the use of supply staff to those who know the school and pupils with increasing familiarity.

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

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

The school's construction was paused due to COVID-19. This has resulted in a delay to the completion date by approximately eight weeks. As a result, the school will use a temporary site until the new site and premises are ready. The temporary site and premises are likely to meet the independent school standards in this part.

The new site is large, with plenty of large learning spaces available. Some of these rooms are for specific use, including science and design technology. The site also benefits from large outdoor space, including a multi-use games area. A range of

external lights have been positioned to allow safe passage to those who travel to/from the school site. The site is on one level and entirely accessible for those that have mobility difficulties. The school's medical room will have washing facilities and will be near toilet facilities. There is changing accommodation on site.

The building is well lit throughout, with most rooms benefiting from natural light. Acoustic conditions in each room are suitable. Separate toilet facilities are available for all pupils and washing facilities are readily available. Drinking water will be labelled as such. Water used for washing will not pose a risk of scalding.

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

## **Part 6. Provision of information**

The proposed 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 under construction. Leaders know what information they are required to publish on the website.

Leaders made the following policies available: behaviour policy, anti-bullying policy, exclusions policy, health and safety policy, first-aid policy and the admissions policy. They also provided information regarding how they intend to report pupils' progress and attainment to parents.

The school's website will contain contact information, including the name of the headteacher, the school's address and telephone number. There will also be 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's website.

## **Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled**

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

The school will adopt the multi-academy trust's complaints policy, which is available on their website. The policy makes clear how parents can initially make a complaint on an informal basis. Should parents wish to escalate their concern, the policy makes clear how parents can escalate their concerns to more formal stages. Each stage of the complaints procedure has information about what parents should expect to happen.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may request the complaint to be considered by the complaints panel. The policy makes clear 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 another representative.

At every stage of the complaints process, the policy includes timescales for both the complainant and those responsible for handling the complaint.

The policy makes clear that complaints, and their outcome, will be recorded.

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

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

Leaders have a strong understanding of the independent school standards. They have experience of opening a new school. Together, they form a cohesive leadership team with a clear vision for the school. Leaders are passionate about providing high-quality opportunities for pupils with SEND from the local area and are raring to get started. High levels of preparation and knowledge will enable them to achieve this. They have expertise across the centrally-appointed team to meet the individual needs of pupils and promote their well-being.

Leaders have clear structures in place to ensure that the school receives the support it needs. There are interim arrangements in place for the local governing body, which will be chaired by the CEO until a suitable successor is appointed. Leaders have made this decision to ensure that the school gets off to a flying start. They are yet to appoint staff and parent governors, but, once appointed, they will benefit from support from the governors' adviser.

There are clear mechanisms in place for information to be shared between the local governing body and the trustees.

## **Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010**

The school has an accessibility policy in place. Leaders will complete an accessibility plan once the permanent school premises are suitable for this to take place. Leaders are aware of the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

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