

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

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School name	Thames Park Secondary School
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	883/4005
Unique reference number (URN)	147853
Inspection number	10148522
Inspection dates	21/05/2020 and 01/06/2020
Reporting inspector	Niall Gallagher (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 executive headteacher, headteacher and a range of school leaders. The inspector also held a telephone discussion with the chief executive officer (CEO), governors and trustees. The inspector reviewed plans for the temporary school site and viewed a virtual tour of the school. The inspector 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>	600
<b>Age range</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Type of special educational needs</b>	Not applicable

## Context of the school

The new school will be part of Osborne Cooperative Academy Trust. The trust run nine primary and secondary schools in south east England. As part of the trust, the new school will have access to a wealth of school leadership and management expertise. The school will open in September 2020 to 120 Year 7 pupils in temporary accommodation. The temporary building was formerly used as a college. The school has been established to meet an increase in demand for secondary school places in Thurrock.

<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. The provision leaders have planned is likely to prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. Leaders intend to ensure that all pupils are 'prepared to pursue their own personal excellence and lead productive lives as contributing members of the global community'.

Leaders have plans to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education through the curriculum. This will be supported by a detailed assembly programme. The school will celebrate different religious festivals and organise visits to places of worship. Leaders have produced a detailed personal, social, health and economic education policy. The policy is built on the principles of equality, equity, democracy, self-help, self-responsibility and solidarity. Leaders have clear plans to put this into action. For example, leaders plan to establish a student forum. One of the first tasks for this elected group will be to produce an anti-bullying charter.

Leaders have thought carefully about how they will support pupils in school and how they will prepare pupils for adult life. This aspect of the school's provision is likely to be strong.

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

The proposed school is likely to meet all the standards in this part. The school will adopt many of the policies and procedures that are working effectively in the other schools within the trust. Leaders have considered how the policies should be adapted to fit the new school on the temporary school site.

Leaders have developed a detailed behaviour and anti-bullying policy, which promotes good behaviour and positive relationships. The policy sets out leaders' expectations along with their plans for managing behaviour. Leaders plan to introduce a 'rewards tree' to encourage and motivate pupils. They also plan to introduce a range of sanctions, which will include verbal reprimands, detentions and appropriate use of a room in which pupils can reflect on their actions.

Leaders have developed comprehensive policies and plans to keep pupils safe. They have considered carefully how they will administer first aid, and how pupils will be supervised during the school day. They have also considered how they will ensure that pupils, staff and visitors are kept safe in case of a fire. The safeguarding policy is in line with the latest guidance from the Secretary of State. Staff will be trained on how to use this policy so that they can keep pupils safe.

Leaders have considered how the policies they plan to introduce will meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

#### **Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

The proposed school is likely to meet all the standards in this part. Leaders have had safer recruitment training and are able to demonstrate that safer recruitment practices are being used when recruiting staff. Leaders carry out all the necessary checks on staff appointed to work in the school. These checks are carried out before an offer of employment is made. This information is then recorded on a single central register. The single central register includes details of the checks made on trustees and governors.

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

The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part. The school will open in a temporary building in September 2020. The building has had multiple uses previously. It has been used as a college and for office accommodation. The building is undergoing significant work to ensure that it is ready for pupils in September 2020. The redevelopment works were stalled temporarily in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has delayed the completion date. The redevelopment works have now recommenced and leaders are confident that the building will be completed by the end of July 2020. Architects' plans indicate that the premises and accommodation will be suitable by the time the school opens in September 2020.

The school building is spacious and it is likely that acoustic and lighting requirements will be suitable. Pupils will have access to suitable outside space, including a multi-use games area. Architects' plans indicate that there will be appropriate fire exits for use in the case of an emergency. These exits are currently under construction. There is also likely to be suitable medical accommodation, which will include a sink, bed and toilet facility. Pupils will have access to appropriate toilet facilities and drinking water on each floor.

Leaders have also considered the possible implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, they have plans to ensure that appropriate social distancing measures are in place when the school opens should they be required.

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

The school is likely to meet the standards in this part. The school website contains links to helpful information for parents including school policies and procedures. The website also includes appropriate contact details for the school and the trust. Leaders have thought carefully about how they will share information about pupils' academic progress and behaviour with parents.

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

The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part. The complaints policy is fully compliant and is available on the school website. The policy sets out clearly the process for making a complaint. For example, there is provision for a complaint to be made and considered initially on an informal basis. If a parent is not satisfied with the school's response to a complaint, there is provision within the policy for the complaint to be heard by a panel. The policy also sets out how the details of any complaint will be recorded and to whom this information will be made available.

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

The standards in this part are likely to be met. The new school will be part of a multi-academy trust that is already operating primary and secondary schools successfully. School leaders, including governors and trustees, are experienced in educational leadership and demonstrate a strong understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They have a clear vision for the school and will adopt robust central systems to help them achieve this. There are also appropriate systems in place for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of provision. As a result, the independent school standards are likely to be met consistently.

Leaders have thought carefully about pupils' safety and well-being. There are clear procedures in place for keeping pupils safe, and leaders intend to work closely with external agencies to access additional help for pupils when they need it. Leaders will ensure that all staff receive thorough safeguarding training. This will be updated regularly. Leaders will actively seek to promote the well-being of pupils.

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

The school is likely to meet the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Leaders have developed a clear and detailed accessibility plan. The policy provides examples of the actions leaders will take to ensure that all members of the school community are treated equally. Leaders have plans to adapt the curriculum so that all pupils can access it, including pupils with SEND. They have also considered the needs of pupils with SEND in a range of other policies including those that relate to behaviour. Leaders have adapted the temporary school building to ensure that no pupil is disadvantaged. For example, there are lifts so that disabled pupils can access all parts of the school. Leaders have plans to ensure that information can be accessed by all parents, including those with an impairment and those who do not have access to the internet.

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