

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

---

School name	Hatchside School
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	7001
Unique reference number (URN)	148240
Inspection number	10168848
Inspection dates	09/02/2021 to 10/02/2021
Reporting inspector	Gary Rawlings 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 inspector met with the chief executive officer, the head of school and the trust business leader. The inspector visited the school site, accompanied by leaders. He looked at documentation, such as policies and procedures, to understand how leaders intend to keep pupils safe and promote their well-being. The inspector scrutinised the process for recruiting staff, including how leaders record information related to staff suitability on the single central register.

## Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

<b>Number of day pupils</b>	64
<b>Age range</b>	2 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Type of special educational needs</b>	Speech, language and communication Social, emotional and mental health Cognition and learning Communication and interaction

## Context of the school

Astram multi-academy trust proposes to open Hatchside School in April 2021, at the start of the summer term. The trust already operates another academy, Newbridge School, in the same local authority. Hatchside will cater for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who have an education, health and care plan. The school will accommodate a range of needs. It will also provide assessment places for up to 16 pupils. These pupils will remain registered at their original school while an assessment of their needs is made. Central to the work of this school are the multi-disciplinary approaches that will be used to identify and meet pupils' needs. The multi-academy trust has well-established procedures for working with a range of

<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.

education, health and social care professionals and intends for this to extend to Hatchside.

Hatchside proposes to accommodate up to 64 pupils, which will include the pupils on assessment places.

## **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.
------------------------	---

## **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 the standards in this part. In all policies and procedures, leaders place a significant emphasis on supporting pupils' personal development and well-being. Leaders have planned a variety of school-wide opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In addition, the different 'curriculum pathways', specially designed according to pupils' needs, will be personalised to include personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Leaders have specific expertise in supporting children in the early years and pupils with SEND. They understand how to support pupils' social and emotional development. Leaders aim not only for pupils to develop an understanding and appreciation of their own strengths and talents, but also an awareness of others'. Leaders have plans in place for pupils to learn about the world around them, and to support and understand the needs of others.

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

The school is likely to meet the standards in this part. Astrum has robust systems and procedures for health and safety in its other school and these will extend to Hatchside. Leaders understand how to use risk assessments to maintain a safe environment for staff and pupils. Leaders have established well-thought-out arrangements for first aid, administration of medicines and meeting pupils' medical and welfare needs. The trust has prepared a programme of planned checks, including for fire safety, to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation.

Senior leaders, the local governing body and the trust board have considerable expertise in leading and managing safeguarding arrangements. Together, they understand how to ensure a positive culture for safeguarding and are highly aware of the additional vulnerabilities of pupils with SEND.

The school's 'promoting positive behaviour and pupils' well-being' policy clearly sets out leaders' vision and aims for managing pupils' behaviour. Anti-bullying procedures are in place. These acknowledge that, while the higher-than-average levels of adult supervision make bullying less common, sometimes pupils' needs may lead to them dominating others. A full programme of training for staff is planned, which includes supporting pupils' social and communication needs and managing behaviours positively.

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

The school is likely to meet the standards in this part. The trust already uses a single central register that is compliant. A central human resources team manages the recruitment of staff. This team works together with leaders to ensure that procedures are in place to carry out the statutory checks on new staff, governors

and trustees. Leaders do not plan to use day-to-day agency staff very often, but if the need arises, they are clear about the robust procedures to be followed to ensure that staff are suitable.

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

The school is likely to meet the standards in this part. The new, purpose-built two-storey building has been developed specifically to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. They have considered and thought carefully about the design and layout of the building, particularly the classrooms, therapy spaces and hygiene areas. It incorporates specialist features, such as a hoisting system and soft play and sensory rooms. Corridors are wide, with additional storage for wheelchairs and other specialist equipment. This means that pupils will be able to move around the site easily and safely. The school benefits from a playground and outdoor spaces for play and physical education. The 'play deck' on the first floor and the use of a multi-use games area provide additional space for outdoor activities. The site is fully accessible.

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

The school is likely to meet the standards in this part. The school's website is already up and running and provides a range of information to parents and carers, including links to all school policies and information related to safeguarding.

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

The school is likely to meet the standards in this part. The school's complaints policy is comprehensive. It explains the steps to follow in order to make a complaint. It outlines the timeframes for each stage of the complaints process. The policy outlines the roles and responsibilities related to complaints within the school and across the trust.

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

The school is likely to meet the standards in this part. Leaders have a secure understanding of the independent school standards and the statutory requirements of the early years.

Documentation, including policies and procedures, demonstrate leaders' clear aims and vision for Hatchside. Leaders bring a wealth of expertise to the school. They are supported by a capable and experienced local governing body and trust board. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and lines of accountability are well established. A programme of quality assurance, monitoring and moderation is in place to continually check the school's compliance with the independent school standards and the quality of education provided.

Leaders are firmly committed to providing the very best education to pupils with SEND. They plan to build on their strong associations and partnerships within the local authority to assess, identify and meet pupils' needs.

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

The school is likely to meet these regulations. The accessibility plan and other documents, such as the school's equality objectives, clearly state leaders' intentions to create a secure, inclusive environment for all pupils.

The building is designed specifically with the needs of pupils in mind, including those with complex needs. Nevertheless, the accessibility plan sets out leaders' plans to ensure that curriculum pathways are purposeful, relevant and personalised for individual pupils' needs.

### **Statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage**

The school is likely to meet the statutory requirements of the early years. The school will admit children from the age of two to seven. Senior leaders have the relevant expertise appropriate to this age group. School policies meet current requirements for the early years.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2021