

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

School name	Chatten Free School
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	881/7005
Unique reference number (URN)	148543
Inspection number	10189053
Inspection date	19/05/2021
Reporting inspector	Liz Smith

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](#).

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.¹

The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation related to the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards and spoke to the lead proposer from the trust and the headteacher. The inspector had a tour of the proposed school site, where building works are still ongoing.

Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

Number of day pupils	75 (initially 19 in September 2021)
Age range	4 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Type of special educational needs	Autism spectrum disorder

Context of the school

This new provision is a special school within the Hope Learning Community trust. It is proposed that it will be an all-through school, for pupils aged four to 19. The school will cater for pupils with autism spectrum disorder and severe cognitive and language needs. It is anticipated that pupils will be in receipt of education, health and care plans.

Chatten Free School is located near to another special school in the trust. The building works will be completed on 23 August 2021.

The school will open in September 2021. It will initially start with 19 pupils who vary in age, including admissions to Reception Year. Numbers are planned to rise over time. The final capacity of the school will be 75.

¹ Part 1 to Schedule 1 is not reported against because it does not apply to academies, free schools, studio schools and university technical colleges.

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 requirements in this part. The school's policy for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education (SMSC) places appropriate emphasis on pupils developing self-esteem, self-confidence and independence into adulthood. Leaders have given careful thought as to how pupils will learn about beliefs, cultures and traditions. Documentation shows that pupils will explore public institutions and services through the curriculum and the use of immersive classrooms. This will help to teach pupils about difference and respect. The SMSC policy promotes fundamental British values.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school is likely to meet all the relevant requirements in this part. Policies are in place and adhere to the latest government guidance. This includes the safeguarding policy and the recruitment procedure policy. The designated safeguarding leader has completed level 3 training. Leaders have plans in place ready for the staff's training in safeguarding. Leaders have produced extensive guidance for staff in relation to behaviour. This includes a comprehensive behaviour support policy, an intimate care policy and guidance on restrictive physical intervention procedures. The school's anti-bullying policy is detailed and includes relevant strategies for addressing any issues. The health and safety policy is comprehensive. Leaders consider risk appropriately for the setting. For example, they consider staff-to-pupil ratios for effective supervision of pupils with high levels of need.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. The single central record is already in place. This register holds records of the checks that have been made, including details of who made the checks and when. Checks are made on all adults who work in the school, including governors and trustees. Leaders follow safer recruitment practices in line with statutory guidance and this is reflected in the recruitment paperwork.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. The building is almost complete, and has been constructed to a high specification. The design of the building caters specifically for the needs of the pupils that the school will have. Leaders have given careful thought to lighting, acoustics and the use of space. Leaders have also given due consideration to age-appropriate resources, with sensory rooms, soft-play areas and self-contained apartments to support pupils' independent living skills. Pupils will have access to many play spaces, including a

courtyard and garden area. It is intended that the building will meet all of the current requirements, including provision for showering, toileting and medical facilities.

Part 6. Provision of information

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. Appropriate policies are in place, and are available to parents. The school's chosen method of contact with parents is through a website. The school's website is still being updated, but it already contains helpful information for parents, including access to some of the school's policies and procedures. For example, there is a section on the school's website for remote education, should the need arise for this when the school opens. Leaders are in the process of uploading the remaining policies, ready for when the school opens.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The school is likely to meet all the relevant requirements in this part. The complaints policy is comprehensive and clearly written. It contains all the necessary information. It is a trust-wide policy which parents can currently find on the trust's website. Leaders are in the process of uploading this policy to the school's website as well. Copies can be made available if requested.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. Trust leaders have a detailed understanding of the regulatory requirements, and have experience of running specialist provision for pupils of this age range. Leaders have a clear vision for the school and have created policies that focus closely on developing the life skills of pupils so that they can gain independence. There is a sharp focus on the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Careful thought has been given to the premises and resources to provide a rich experience of education. Leaders have the necessary skills and knowledge to make sure that the independent school standards are met consistently.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

The school is likely to meet all the requirements of Schedule 10. The equality and diversity policy outlines clearly how this will be addressed. Leaders have also given careful thought as to how protected characteristics will be taught to pupils in the curriculum and through conversation between staff and pupils. The building has adaptations to cater for the varying needs of the pupils. The accessibility plan is in place and will be reviewed routinely once the school opens.

Statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage

All the statutory requirements for the early years are likely to be met. The school will have a Reception Year class. The member of staff who has been appointed to teach

Reception Year is suitably qualified and experienced. Leaders are in the process of recruiting a school nurse who will be trained in paediatric first aid. If unsuccessful, leaders have plans in place to ensure that they are able to provide appropriate paediatric first aid for children. Where applicable, policies contain references to early years and there is an early years section on the school's website, for parents.

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