

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

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School name	Highwood Copse Primary School
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	869/2002
Unique reference number (URN)	141882
Inspection number	10189055
Inspection dates	17/06/2021
Reporting inspector	Janet Pearce 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](#).

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>1</sup>

The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation related to the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards and spoke to the chair of the academy trust, the proposed executive headteacher, the head of school designate, the lead for human resources from the academy trust and the finance officer for the proposed school. The inspector toured the school site.

## Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

<b>Number of day pupils</b>	240 with 30 initially in Reception class
<b>Age range</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Type of special educational needs</b>	Not applicable

## Context of the school

Highwood Copse Primary School, sponsored by Newbury College Trust, will be situated on the Newbury College site in purpose-built premises. The school will be a one-form entry primary school, with capacity for expansion in the future. In due course, leaders plan to open a Nursery class for up to 30 children from the age of 3. The school is not operating yet. It will open in September 2021 with up to 30 children in the Reception class. The school is in a soft federation with Theale Primary School and Enborne Primary School. The executive headteacher for these schools will also oversee Highwood Copse, with a head of school based on site.

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

## **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 standards in this part. Policies and the school's personal, social and health 'life skills' curriculum are solidly built on core values of kindness, resilience and understanding of difference. A strong commitment to the arts is likely to foster pupils' self-esteem, confidence and understanding of different cultures. Right from the early years, children will be taught about democracy, key British institutions such as the monarchy, and how to take responsibility for themselves.

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

The school is likely to meet all relevant standards in this part. The policy for safeguarding and child protection, training of senior staff and planned procedures for record-keeping are in line with the guidance from the Secretary of State. The headteacher has completed all the necessary training to be a designated safeguarding lead (DSL), and the school will also benefit from DSL support across the federation of schools. Policies relating to health and safety, risk assessment and first aid are in place and provide helpful guidance. The school will operate a positive behaviour policy which is likely to encourage pupils' self-discipline and intrinsic motivation. Within this policy, the school's strategy to prevent bullying is comprehensive and fair.

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

The school is likely to meet all relevant standards in this part. The school benefits from advice and guidance from the human resources leader at Newbury College, who has drawn up a suitable single central record and knows exactly what checks need to be made on staff, trustees, governors and visitors to the school. Most leaders have completed safer recruitment training, with more planned for the new head of school.

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

The school is likely to meet all relevant standards in this part. The new building is a state-of-the-art premises, designed specifically for primary-age pupils. Until recently, the new building was being used as a temporary COVID-19 testing centre, which has helped to identify quickly any snags in the building. The school is therefore on track to be ready for opening in September 2021. Pleasant, covered outdoor areas are available for pupils to play and learn outside each classroom. The school is situated in spacious grounds with plenty of room for physical education, outdoor activities and recreation.

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

The school is likely to meet all standards in this part. The school's website is already up and running. It includes all the current relevant information. Policies and a handbook are ready for prospective parents to access. Information includes the school's policy on remote learning, should pupils have to learn at home in the future. School leaders have designed a clear format for their annual report to parents. Copies of all policies are available for parents on request.

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

The school is likely to meet all standards in this part. The complaints policy is thorough and clearly outlines all the steps of the complaints process, including timescales, representation on the panel and how findings will be recorded. The policy is available to parents on request.

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

The school is likely to meet all standards in this part. The executive headteacher leads two primary schools which will form the soft federation. She is highly experienced in school leadership and improvement. The prospective head of school is an experienced senior leader from the federation, with a specialism in the early years and key stage 1. The school also benefits from leadership expertise and experience from Newbury College. School leaders have ensured that policies and planning will meet the requirements of the independent school standards.

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

The school's equality policy is fit for purpose and meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The school has been designed and built in order to be fully accessible.

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

The school is likely to comply fully with the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage. The head of school is an experienced early years and key stage 1 leader. Planning for learning and children's well-being is in place and the school will be ready to cater effectively for the children enrolled in Reception.

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