

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

School name	The Flagship School
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	845/7004
Unique reference number (URN)	148055
Inspection number	10189029
Inspection dates	13/05/2021
Reporting inspector	Clive Dunn

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 chair of trustees as lead proposer, another trustee, the programme and project manager, and the principal designate. The inspector was not able to visit the school site because building works were not completed to a stage where it was possible to do so. However, he reviewed plans of the proposed temporary and permanent buildings and considered email correspondence with the building contractor to make an assessment against all the relevant standards.

Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

Number of day pupils	72
Age range	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Type of special educational needs	Social, emotional and mental health

Context of the school

This will be a new special free school with 'high ambitions to be a pioneering school for neuro-diverse pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs'. This standalone school is proposed by the trustees of The Flagship Trust. Initially, the group came together as a small group of parents concerned about what they saw as a lack of provision for their children within the area. Plans are in place for a new purpose-built building on the site of a former school, expected to be ready for pupils from September 2022. Before then, trustees propose to open the school to 24 pupils in newly renovated premises on the same site that were previously occupied by another school.

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.
------------------------	---

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 promotion of pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is central to the proposed school's ethos. Leaders have considered carefully how they will create the right culture, taking account of pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs. Leaders propose a dual approach of being proactive in the direct teaching of fundamental concepts, such as those underpinning fundamental British values, but also being responsive to pupils' individual needs.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school is likely to meet all the relevant requirements in this part. The safeguarding policy makes clear that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. It sets out plausible arrangements for the school's work in this important area. Leaders are acutely aware of the additional vulnerabilities that the school's potential pupils will likely have. In creating the associated behaviour and welfare policies, leaders have kept pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs and well-being at the forefront of their minds. Trustees are systematically finalising all required policies to ensure that they are both specific and relevant to the proposed operations.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school is likely to meet all the relevant requirements in this part. A detailed policy about pre-employment checks sets out procedures that adhere to statutory guidance. A single central record has been created and is being populated with details of all necessary checks as staff are appointed.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

The school is likely to meet all the relevant requirements in this part. Leaders have received reassurances that renovation work is on track for the school's proposed opening date in September 2021. Following clarification that a washing facility is included in the area earmarked for the short-term care of sick or injured pupils, it is likely that both the temporary and permanent accommodation will meet the relevant requirements.

Part 6. Provision of information

The school is likely to meet all the relevant requirements in this part. Leaders are aware of the content the school must publish. The design of a new website is underway and will be launched in advance of the school opening. Arrangements are in place to provide all other required information to parents, carers and local authorities once the school is operating.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. The complaints policy advocates a positive culture around hearing and responding to concerns and complaints. It sets out suitable processes and timescales for dealing with complaints. Proposed arrangements for a complaints panel hearing are likely to meet all requirements, including those relating to impartiality and independence.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. Trustees have used guidance about effective governance in single or standalone academies when creating plans and policies for this new school. Schemes of delegation are already in place. Trustees have a rich range of relevant experience and there are strategic plans in place for further recruitment. The trust has already forged partnership links with other similar trusts and schools to ensure that the school is not isolated and has the opportunity to collaborate with, and learn from, others.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

Leaders have considered issues of accessibility to information, the environment and the curriculum in creating plans and policies. They are in the process of creating an ongoing plan to improve accessibility.

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 children looked after, 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.

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, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022