

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

School name	XP Gateshead
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	390/4004
Unique reference number (URN)	148617
Inspection number	10189014
Inspection dates	16/06/2021
Reporting inspector	Lee Elliott 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.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 principle designate. The inspector toured the school site with the lead proposer, principal designate and a representative from the DfE.

Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

Number of day pupils	250. Initially 50 in September 2021
Age range	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Type of special educational needs	Mixed

Context of the school

This new provision is a secondary school within the XP multi-academy trust (MAT). The MAT is an established trust that includes four primary schools, two secondary schools and post-16 provision. The trust schools that are open currently are located in Doncaster.

XP Gateshead will open in September 2021, initially to 50 pupils in Year 7. The school will admit a further 50 pupils per year group every September until the school has a total of 250 pupils across Years 7 to 11.

XP Gateshead will be located in part of the former Thomas Hepburn School in the east of Gateshead. Over time, the school will expand and make use of the entire building.

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, provided that it addresses the regulations noted in the tables as set out in part 3.
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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. Curriculum plans, most of which are already in use across the MAT, highlight that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils will be a central feature of pupils' learning. During 'Wise Wednesdays', leaders anticipate that pupils will develop life skills and learn how to stay healthy, be safe and become socially responsible by participating in community activities.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part provided that it addresses the regulations relating to standard 12, which ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(4). Leaders have adapted established policies that are in use across the MAT. Accordingly, the school's policies for behaviour, anti-bullying, health and safety, risk assessment and first aid are comprehensive and link closely, where necessary, to relevant legislation and government guidance. The arrangements and equipment relating to fire safety are still under consultation between the school's leaders and the local authority. As such, leaders have been unable to start making arrangements or create appropriate policies that ensure compliance with fire safety regulations.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. Leaders are experienced and understand the importance of safer recruitment. The school has appropriate policies in place that will support staff during the recruitment process. The school's single central record (SCR) is similar to others within the trust. Leaders have already started the process of recruiting staff, and the SCR demonstrates that leaders make the appropriate safeguarding checks to ensure that staff are suitable.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. The school will initially be located in an annex of a school building that was decommissioned in 2019. The school's leaders are working closely with the local authority and the DfE to bring parts of the building back into use. The school will meet all current requirements, including suitable toilet and washing facilities, changing accommodation and showers, suitable drinking water facilities, and rooms that can be used to care for sick and injured pupils. Appropriate flooring and lighting will be installed where needed. Pupils will have access to a large playground and playing fields to use during social times.

Part 6. Provision of information

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. Leaders intend to use the same assessment and reporting systems already in place across the trust. Parents will receive regular written reports highlighting the progress and attainment of each pupil. The school website includes appropriate information for parents in electronic format and instructions for parents should they wish to receive paper copies of reports and policies.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. The school policy outlining how parents may complain is detailed and easy to understand. The policy includes clear timescales and contact details. Parents will be able to escalate a complaint to a panel, which includes a panel member who is independent of the management and running of the school. Leaders have an appropriate understanding of the need to ensure confidentiality throughout the complaints process.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. Leaders are experienced in the management of schools. The lead proposer has successfully opened a free school in the past. Inspection evidence demonstrates that leaders are fully committed to ensuring that pupils connect with the world and develop personally over time. In this way, the school's policies and intended ways of working provide a solid foundation for pupils to achieve well. Leaders have a secure understanding of the regulatory requirements and independent school standards.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

The school is likely to meet all the requirements of Schedule 10. The school's curriculum plans, pastoral systems and approach to learning help to support the aims and objectives of Schedule 10. The school site is accessible and arrangements during school visits will ensure that all pupils can participate in the school's curriculum. Leaders have created an appropriate accessibility strategy and assigned resources to ensure that the school includes lifts, accessible toilet facilities, ramps and walkways for pupils who need to use them.

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