

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

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School name	Duke of Lancaster School
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	926/7011
Unique reference number (URN)	148859
Inspection number	10208829
Inspection date	15/10/2021
Reporting inspector	David Milligan

## 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 lead proposer from the trust and the headteacher. The inspector toured the site.

## Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

<b>Number of day pupils</b>	100 (43 in Jan 2022)
<b>Age range</b>	5 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Type of special educational needs</b>	Communication and interaction Autistic spectrum disorder (ASD)

## Context of the school

The Duke of Lancaster School proposes to open in January 2022.

Leaders plan to have 48 pupils on roll initially, rising to 100 by September 2023. The school proposes to cater for pupils from age five to 16. All pupils at the school will have an education, health and care plan.

The school will be part of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Academics Trust (SENDAT).

The school is a new, purpose-built building, which is located on the former Fakenham sixth-form site.

## Advice to the Secretary of State for Education

<b>Overall outcome</b>	The school is likely to meet all the 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 the requirements in this part.

The school's British values policy clearly sets out expectations for curriculum coverage. Leaders are determined that pupils will experience a broad curriculum, including wider opportunities that will develop and promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Much of this will be promoted through the school's personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. This will be adapted to provide appropriate learning opportunities for pupils according to their varying needs. Leaders have developed the curriculum to ensure that staff actively promote fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect for those of different faiths and beliefs.

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

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part.

The school will work in partnership with the lead safeguarding officer from the trust. An experienced designated safeguarding lead (DSL) from the trust oversees policy. Leaders have thought carefully about how to manage safeguarding effectively for their vulnerable pupils. The headteacher has been appointed as DSL. A deputy DSL will be trained and appointed once all staff take up post. All staff will receive safeguarding training before the school opens to pupils.

Trust policies relating to behaviour, safeguarding, anti-bullying, visits, risk assessment, admissions and attendance, and health and safety are in place and comply with appropriate legislation. The policies have been adapted to ensure that they relate to the specific needs of the school. Policies outline the many systems and procedures that will be followed to keep pupils and staff safe and secure.

### **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 and relevant checks have been carried out appropriately on staff who have been employed. Leaders in both the school and within the trust understand fully the checks that must be made on any adults who are employed or visit the school.

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

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part.

The new building is on track to be ready in November 2021. The building plans show that the building is designed to meet current requirements of the independent school standards.

All classrooms include additional quiet rooms and acoustic support, plus carefully designed rooms for subjects such as science, art and design, and technology. Every classroom has access to an outdoor area. Additional, designated space has been created for meeting with parents and external agencies. Outdoor facilities include defined games areas as well as access to green space and quiet areas.

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

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part.

Leaders understand their responsibilities related to the requirements of part 6 of the independent school standards. They have clear plans about how they will communicate information to all relevant stakeholders. The school is currently developing its own website, which leaders plan to use to share appropriate and relevant information. For any parents who cannot access information electronically, leaders plan to ensure that paper copies are available.

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

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part.

The complaints policy follows the trust's system for managing complaints. It is clearly written and contains all the necessary steps and timelines for the school to follow if it needs to handle a complaint.

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

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part.

Leaders have a good understanding of the regulatory requirements and priorities for the opening of the new school. They are aware of the importance of monitoring pupils' safety and how to manage their welfare and well-being.

Leaders in the school and trust have extensive experience of leading and managing educational provisions for children and young people aged five to 25. Leaders have a good understanding of how to support pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities.

All teaching staff for January 2022 have been appointed.

Leaders have carefully thought through the long-term development of the school, including at governance level. Trustees will initially oversee the strategic development of the school. A local governing body is currently being appointed.

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

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. The new building includes features such as classroom sizes, and additional rooms have been planned to meet the specific needs of pupils. The accessibility plan outlines appropriately how the school will meet the particulars of paragraph 3 of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act.

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