

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

School name	The Warwickshire Academy
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	937/7007
Unique reference number (URN)	148554
Inspection number	10189023
Inspection dates	16/12/2021
Reporting inspector	Wayne Simner 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. The inspector met with the headteacher during the inspection. He also spoke to the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust on the telephone. The inspector toured the school site.

Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

Number of day pupils	80
Age range	9 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Type of special educational needs	Social, emotional and mental health

Context of the school

The new provision is a special school in the Thrive Education Partnership multi-academy trust. Most pupils will be placed in the school by Warwickshire and Coventry local authorities.

The school site was formerly a school building owned by the Royal National Institute of Blind People. The main school building, the indoor gym and surrounding outdoor areas have been completely renovated. The building is due to be handed over to the trust on 28 February 2022.

Initially, pupils in Years 5, 6 and 7 will be admitted. There will be a maximum of eight pupils in each year group. The school will grow with additional year groups in subsequent years. The final capacity of the school will be 80 pupils, including the sixth-form provision.

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. Plans and schemes of work reflect the trust's vision to create a school community where there is a 'culture of challenge, high expectations and values-based decision making'. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum makes links to citizenship, life skills and the promotion of fundamental British values. Leaders have placed spiritual, moral, social and cultural education at the heart of the curriculum, so that pupils have opportunities to flourish and are well prepared for life beyond school.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. School policies for positive behaviour management and anti-bullying provide clear guidance and procedures for pupils, staff and parents. Staff intend to create positive behaviour support plans for each pupil that are personalised to the pupil's individual needs. This will be linked to the school's BEAR (behaviour, engagement, achievement and respect) behaviour management system. The safeguarding policy has regard to the latest government guidance. Leaders have drawn up a range of comprehensive policies and procedures linked to health and safety, including fire safety.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. All leaders have completed safer recruitment training. Appropriate recruitment procedures and a single central record are already in place. All required checks have been completed on the leaders, staff and governors who have been appointed so far. All checks are dated and a record is made of the person who completed them.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. The buildings and site are nearing completion and are on track to be handed over to the trust on 28 February 2022. Leaders have considered the needs of pupils when planning the layout of the school building. For example, every classroom has access to an outdoor space, and primary classrooms have access to a calm room and a breakout space. The school provides a range of specialist classrooms, including a science laboratory, a design and technology room, an art room, and a food technology room. The outdoor areas are spacious.

Part 6. Provision of information

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. Most of the required policies and information are already on the school's website including an up-to-date safeguarding policy. Other policies were provided electronically by the headteacher

before the inspection. Paper copies of policies and information are available on request.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. The school's complaints policy is aligned to that of the trust. The policy sets out the steps that parents and carers need to take if they have a concern. The aim is to resolve complaints informally where possible, but more formal steps are outlined if required, including a panel hearing. The policy sets out a suitable time frame for dealing with complaints.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. Leaders have an in-depth understanding of the regulatory requirements. All the relevant policies, plans and procedures are in place to promote pupils' learning and well-being. Thrive Education Partnership already has experience of running three special schools. School leaders are already in post and have previous experience of running successful schools. Initially, leaders have made the decision to recruit more staff than needed to provide greater capacity at the school. The role of the governing board is to monitor safeguarding, the quality of education, and health and safety. Other governance responsibilities will be retained by the trust.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

The school is likely to meet all the requirements of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Leaders have prepared an accessibility plan that describes how the physical environment has been adapted. Additional information is included in the plan linked to the curriculum and access to external specialist support.

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