

Advice note for a pre-registration inspection of an independent day school or a children's home

School name	Jane Austen College
DfE registration number	926/4013
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Reporting inspector	Susan Lewis

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Information about the inspection

This inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.¹

Context of the school

This free school is part of the Inspirations Trust, which is also based in Norwich. The Trust comprises a family of seven schools and a teaching and learning academy in Norfolk. The school will be supported by other schools within the group. Although it will have a separate identity, the school will work particularly closely with the Sir Isaac Newton Sixth Form which is also in Norwich. The Principal of Jane Austen College is Executive Principal of Sir Isaac Newton College.

Jane Austen College intends to provide secondary and sixth form education, from Year 7 to Year 13, for up to 1100 boys and girls in a central location in Colegate in Norwich. It has no religious affiliation. The building comprises two adjoining buildings, 46-48 Colegate and Claxton House which are linked on the first floor. This will be the school's permanent site. There will be two phases of opening of the building with the first scheduled for completion and handover a few days before the school's opening on 5 September 2014. The contractors had been on site for just over three weeks at the time of this pre-registration visit. An off-site sports centre is also planned to be part of the school's provision but is due to open later in 2015.

The school will open with 210 students; 135 of these will be in Year 7 and 75 in Year 12. The large majority of the 128 students currently registered are White British, with a few from other European or Asian heritages. There are five students registered for enrolment who have a statement of special educational need, mostly in relation to moderate learning difficulties, and a total of 29 students on the school's special educational needs register. Although two registered students have English as an additional language neither are at an early stage of acquiring English.

The school aims to 'create a culture that is focused on promoting excellence and supporting our students in achieving their academic potential.' It will have an English specialism.

Compliance with the regulations

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

All regulations are likely to be met although implementation could not be seen. The school is writing clear statements into all of its curriculum policies and schemes of work as to how it will ensure that no political partisan view will be promoted. This

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/section/99.

was seen, for example, in the philosophy scheme of work. A detailed map of how each subject will address and support spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was being drawn up at the time of the visit and examples provided. Students will be given strong support to develop their self-knowledge and self-confidence. There will be significant attention to personal development through the pastoral care system and through subjects such as philosophy. This will include religious study as well as personal, social, health and economic issues. These will provide students with good insights into the workings of civil law and into the role of public institutions in England. There is also an emphasis on mutual respect and tolerance for other cultures and religions in this programme, further supported through a range of other subjects, and through the school's enrichment activities and proposed clubs such as a debating club.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school is likely to meet all requirements. Implementation could not be seen. Jane Austen College has identified clear procedures and detailed policies for all the required aspects of welfare, health and safety. There has been meticulous attention to ensuring that all safeguarding procedures will be covered. The designated child protection staff will receive training in the week following this visit. All of the senior leadership team will have an enhanced level of training. One of these, an Assistant Principal, will have the lead role. Safe recruitment procedures are fully in place and have been implemented. The school's single central register shows that all the required checks have been made on staff and governors appointed to date including members of the Trust's Board. All staff will be trained at the basic level of child protection during induction in August and September 2014, so that requirements are likely to be met, and the school will update this training at least annually. The school's health and safety policy clearly identifies procedures and responsibilities.

The behaviour policy demonstrates high expectations of behaviour and linked documents make clear the school's approach to rewards and sanctions. The elimination of bullying and any form of discrimination is of high priority and carefully linked into the school's promotion of tolerance and respect. The information for parents provides details of all of these policies and also notes why good attendance is essential both for the wellbeing of their children and for their academic and personal success.

The first aid policy has all the required information, including dealing with blood and bodily fluids. The equalities policy includes the required disability access improvement plan in relation to the curriculum, information and premises.

The school understands its responsibilities as to fire safety and the required fire risk assessments and reports are firmly planned for, so that requirements are likely to be met. Careful consideration has been given to how to ensure that access to the building and students' safety is secured when contractors are still working on the building. Contractors have already been identified to carry out the required safety checks on equipment and the premises once the school is operating. The leadership understands the requirements related to the provision of drinking water and the

control and checking of hot water temperatures and the plans will ensure these are met.

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The school is likely to meet all requirements. All the required checks are made on staff and the Trust Board. Contractors who are on site at the same time as students are also subject to checks. The single central register has all the elements required and is meticulously updated as each member of staff is appointed. The school does not intend to appoint supply staff but is aware of the checks to be made should it do so in future.

Premises and accommodation at the school

All regulations are likely to be met. Although the accommodation is not yet fully refurbished, the inspector was able to see work to date; some parts of the building do not require extensive remodelling. Several toilet facilities had already been renovated and installed and are of good quality. Partition walls have started to be erected. The school is currently working with the architect to ensure there are sufficient showers incorporated into the building for when physical education takes place on site and has already identified possible locations for these.

The building extends over five floors including a basement. Lifts were already installed within the building and they and the existing lighting, heating and ventilation systems are being refurbished and will meet requirements. The plans indicate that all regulations will be met as there will be sufficient teaching spaces along with suitable medical and toilet facilities. Part of the outdoor space currently has contractors equipment located on it. However clearly designated outdoor areas with seating and leisure activities will be in place by the time the school opens and a much larger area will be available when Phase 2 is completed and contractors' equipment removed. An off-site, extensive sports facility is also being developed by the school but will not be completed until late in 2015. The school currently has use of nearby playing fields with showering and changing facilities.

Clear timelines are established for the different parts of the building work to be completed and the contractors are working well within these. The project manager is confident about Phase 1 of the building being completed on time. A temporary kitchen and dining facility has been incorporated, building on a pre-existing facility and the contractors who have been engaged to oversee this installation will also be delivering the longer-term refectory services.

The building includes a good sized hall and planned specialist departments for all of the school's subject areas. The sixth form will have its own access and recreation facilities but will share some teaching rooms. Phase 2 of the building work will be completed by Easter 2015. Careful thought has been taken to ensure that students are safe and issues such as noise do not intrude into their learning environment.

Provision of information

- The provision meets all the regulations

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

- The provision meets all the regulations.

Recommendation to the Department for Education

- YES. This school is likely to meet all regulations and national minimum standards when it opens and is recommended for registration

If registration is recommended, please state:

Recommended number of day pupils: 1,100

Recommended age range: 11-19

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: n/a.