

Advice note for a pre-registration inspection of an academy/free school/studio school/university technical college (UTC)

School name	Island Free School
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Inspection number	446872
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Reporting inspector	Paul Metcalf

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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

The Island Free School plans to open in September 2014 as a mixed, non-denominational school for pupils aged 11 to 16 years old. In the first year, the intention is to offer 125 places in Year 7, with a further 125 places each year to a maximum capacity of 625 students. To date, 125 students have been registered for enrolment. Students will follow a carefully balanced academic curriculum leading to the English Baccalaureate. All students will study Latin in Year 7 and two modern foreign languages will be introduced in Year 8. The school will offer music as a specialism, with 12 students being selected each year for special tuition on the basis of their musical aptitude. A compulsory enrichment programme will offer a range of activities to support students, widen their skills and raise their aspirations including art, music, dance, drama, sport, debating and public speaking. The school intends that every student will be supported by a personal mentor throughout their time at the school. Students with statements of special educational needs will be admitted. One such student has been registered for enrolment to date.

Compliance with the regulations

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school is likely to meet all of the regulations, but implementation could not be seen. The school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies set out a framework which encourages high standards of behaviour and respect, as well as ensuring that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment. The school's policy for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students sets out a vision for students to be equipped to take their place in society as valued, economically viable and responsible citizens. Planned provision includes: giving students the opportunity to explore values and beliefs; developing their ability to distinguish between right and wrong; encouraging respect for the needs, interests and feelings of others; providing opportunities for students to exercise leadership skills through activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme; as well as involvement in community enterprises such as a student radio station and a student newspaper. The programme for personal, social and health education is still being developed in conjunction with the other subjects. This programme will ensure that students leave school empowered as independent, cooperative, innovative and motivated young adults. They will gain an insight into the working of local and national institutions and

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

the workings of English civil law. The religious education curriculum will be offered as a series of dedicated days exploring a variety of issues and questions from a multi-faith perspective. Expectations in the school's documentation highlight the need for all staff to ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in any way and that political issues are presented in a balanced way acknowledging a range of opposing views.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Documentary evidence indicates that the majority of regulations are likely to be met. All the required policy documents have been produced, including comprehensive policies and procedures for child protection, safer recruitment, behaviour management, anti-bullying and first aid. Senior staff have been trained in safe recruitment and the principles have been applied effectively to the recruitment process to date. The head of year has received training in his role as the school's designated child protection officer, and all staff will be trained in child protection and safeguarding procedures prior to the school opening. Firm arrangements for this training are in place so that requirements are likely to be met. A governor has already been appointed as the nominated child protection governor. The school has identified sufficient suitably qualified first aiders and additional training will be provided for other staff prior to the school opening. Suitable policies have been prepared for all required aspects of health and safety. A fire safety risk assessment has been carried out and its recommendations will be instituted by the end of July. Admission and attendance registers are likely to meet requirements. The school's Equal Opportunities Policy is committed to ensuring equality regardless of 'creed, culture, class, race, gender, sexuality and/or disability' and the required three-year plan to increase accessibility has been completed.

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The school's planning for the completion of all required checks on the suitability of staff and implementation to date indicates that all regulations are likely to be met. All required checks have been completed for the proprietors and for staff appointed to date. These are recorded on a suitable single central register and updated as new staff are appointed. The school does not intend to employ supply staff, but is aware of its responsibilities should supply staff be appointed in the future.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The Island Free School is to be initially located in the premises of a former local authority school in Ventnor on the Isle of Wight. The premises are currently unoccupied and undergoing refurbishment, but the school is likely to meet the regulations in preparation for opening. There is a reception area and six teaching classrooms, a music room and a technology room. Plans indicate that classrooms are of adequate size and sufficient in number for the planned intake in September 2014. Due regard has been given to health, safety and security. The building has suitable

access for those with disabilities and appropriate arrangements for medical examinations or for students who may be ill. The premises are likely to meet the requirements for heating, lighting, ventilation, decoration and floor coverings. Toilet facilities for students and staff are adequate and water supplies, including safely regulated hot water and a labelled supply of drinking water, are likely to meet requirements. There are suitable plans for the hygienic preparation and serving of food. There is ample outdoor recreation space and sufficient furniture, fixtures and fittings have been ordered. Funding has been secured for a new school building adjacent to the Rew Valley Sports Centre which will open in September 2015. Appropriate plans are in place for students to shower in the sports centre premises after physical education sessions.

Provision of information

The provision is likely to meet all regulations.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The provision is likely to meet all regulations.

Recommendation to the Department for Education

Registration

Is registration recommended?

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

Recommended number of day pupils: 625

Recommended number of boarders: 0

Recommended age range: 11-16

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: Not applicable.