

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

School name	Seva School
DfE registration number	999/1719
Unique reference number (URN)	1719
Inspection number	446948
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Reporting inspector	Michael Best

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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 trustees seek to establish a free school for up to 1,450 male and female pupils aged four to 16 years in north Coventry. The primary department will open in September 2014. The school expects 139 pupils to enrol when it opens on 3 September 2014. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 will start school full-time on that day; Reception children will make a phased start following home visits by their teachers and will all be in school on a full-time basis by 9 September. The first intake of Year 7 and Year 8 students will start their secondary education in 2015.

The school will initially occupy temporary premises in a former pupil referral unit, conversion of which is due to start as soon as the legal formalities have been completed. The first phase of the permanent school building is due for occupation from September 2015.

The school has drawn up a travel plan in conjunction with the local authority for all pupils other than in Reception. A board of governors is being created and will hold their first meeting on 25 July 2014. Staff commence training on 11 August 2014 and the refurbishment is due to be completed by week commencing 25 August 2014.

The school aims to 'create a high achieving, all-through school from ages four to 16 years, which will follow the principles and values of the Sikh faith. The school will develop an exciting rigorous curriculum which will produce excellent examination results, while also creating rounded and morally sound individuals who are prepared for the global challenges that face them'.

'Seva' literally means to perform selfless service without seeking reward.

Compliance with the regulations

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The school is likely to meet all the requirements for registration. Implementation could not be seen as the school is not yet operating. The proposed provision for pupils' personal development is appropriate to the age range of the pupils and fully reflects the school's aims and ethos. Enrichment to promote pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is planned through half-termly cross-curricular themes and topics, together with extra-curricular activities including outside visits.

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

The school's proposed programme focuses on raising pupils' awareness of their feelings and emotions, and building their confidence and self-esteem as successful learners and members of society. Inspiring children's imagination and fascination of the wider world is a focus from the start of the Reception year. Developing pupils' self-respect, understanding and tolerance of others and their differences, beliefs and cultures are recurrent themes throughout the school's plans.

The school's policies and procedures promote pupils' good behaviour and active involvement as members of a learning community. Pupils will be encouraged to value themselves as individuals; to work and play with others; to recognise right from wrong when faced with difficult decisions and to have the confidence to learn from the consequences of their actions. Pupils' experience and understanding of different cultural traditions as well as their own will be promoted through art, drama and music provision, visits and visitors. The school's plans include helping pupils to understand their rights and responsibilities within a democratic society, leading healthy and safe lives, and developing values and attitudes within a clear moral framework. Pupils will learn to respect the criminal and civil law. They will develop a broad knowledge of public institutions and services in England as they look beyond their own communities into the wider world and undertake a wide range of visits.

The school has taken suitable steps to ensure that pupils will always be given balanced viewpoints, particularly on any controversial or political issues. Guidance on this and the ways in which the school will monitor it is published in the staff handbook.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school is likely to meet all of the requirements for registration. Implementation could not be seen as the school is not yet operating. The school's safeguarding policy reflects the latest guidance provided by the Secretary of State and makes specific references to the local children's safeguarding board (LCSB). The policy provides clear guidance to staff, governors and others about recognising and reporting abuse. The headteacher designate has attended higher level training in child protection and will take on the role of designated person temporarily when the school opens. Higher level training for other senior staff, including the substantive designated lead for safeguarding, is due to take place with Coventry LCSB on 27 and 28 October 2014, the first available dates. All staff will be provided with comprehensive training in safeguarding matters as part of their induction programme prior to the first pupils starting school, so that requirements are likely to be met. The headteacher designate has completed a recognised training course in safe recruitment procedures and there are firm plans to train members of the governing body once they are in post. The school has a suitable policy and procedures for recruiting staff. All the required checks are being made on staff and the members of the proprietorial body as they are appointed, and the single central register is being populated as these checks are completed.

The school's policies for promoting pupils' good behaviour and preventing bullying meet requirements. They outline different forms of unacceptable behaviour and specify rewards and sanctions that are proportionate to pupils' ages. The policies and procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety, both in school and when on visits, meet requirements. The school has a service level agreement with the authority who are going to conduct a full risk assessment as soon as the accommodation is handed over. This will involve the local fire officer, who has already been consulted over the plans for the premises. Suitable and secure electronic records will be maintained of the sanctions imposed on pupils for serious misbehaviour. The first aid policy provides appropriate guidance and one of the newly appointed staff has recently completed a level 2 paediatric emergency first aid course. Further named staff will be trained in first aid before the school opens. The school will use a computerised database to provide admission and attendance registers that reflects requirements.

The headteacher designate has made firm arrangements to provide the Department for Education with copies of the contractor's handover certificate, building regulations certificate and the fire risk assessment when the temporary accommodation is ready. These actions are likely to meet requirements. The school has due regard to the Equality Act 2010, with an action plan drawn up to improve access to the premises, the curriculum and to information.

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The school is likely to meet all of the requirements for registration. All the required checks are being made on staff and the members of the proprietorial body, including their suitability for working with children, as they are appointed. These are being suitably recorded on the school's single central register of staff checks. The school's records of the checks made on the identity and qualifications of staff, together with their medical fitness and any other checks, are complete for those already in post, and are in the process of being completed for others as they are appointed. The school obtains and checks written references on all applicants in line with safe recruitment guidelines. The school does not intend to employ staff through an agency but is aware of the procedures to be followed should this become necessary in the future.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The school is likely to meet all of the requirements for registration. A site visit could not undertaken on this inspection visit due to delays in completing the legal handover of the temporary premises. Discussions were held with the headteacher designate and plans were scrutinised. These show that the refurbishment work will provide sufficient classrooms, offices and other facilities, including a suitable number of toilets and washbasins for the pupils on roll, with separate facilities for staff, and a suitably furnished medical room. There will be a designated outside area for the use of children in Reception, and a playground and grassed field for all pupils' play and physical education. Showers and changing facilities for pupils in Key Stage 3 and above are planned for the permanent building.

The school has ordered furnishings and equipment and these are awaiting delivery for when the first pupils arrive in September. Mains services are connected to the temporary premises and have been confirmed as operational. The school has made arrangements for the maintenance of the premises, and for keeping them clean and tidy. Appropriate standards of decoration, internal and external lighting, ventilation, heating and flooring are specified. The school's plans indicate that all the requirements regarding hot and cold water supplies are likely to be met. There will be suitable washroom facilities for disabled people and visitors. The school will provide pupils with drinking water throughout the day from a labelled supply. The security of the buildings and grounds is likely to meet requirements.

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

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

Recommended number of day pupils: 1,450

Recommended number of boarders: N/A

Recommended age range: 4–16 years

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: N/A.