

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

School name	WAC Arts College
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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

WAC Arts College plans to open in September 2014 as mixed arts college providing alternative education for 14 to 19 year olds through a creative arts and media curriculum. The school is primarily intended for students who have been 'alienated from or excluded by traditional and mainstream statutory education'. The curriculum will ensure that students are able to work towards meaningful accreditation and qualifications leading to employment in the creative industries or places in further and higher education. The intention is to offer 16 places for Year 10 and 11 students and 40 places for Year 12 and 13 students in the first year, rising to a maximum capacity of 64 students in September 2016. Of the 15 students registered for enrolment to date, one has a statement of special educational needs. Qualifying criteria for entrance to the school include a disengagement from mainstream education and evidence of an interest in the creative arts. Students will work towards a range of qualifications, including traditional academic and media-focused vocational qualifications as well as an extended enrichment programme, including instrumental tuition, residential trips and involvement in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. The development of students' English, mathematics, humanities and information technology skills will be a priority.

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 code of conduct confirms that staff and students can expect to work in a positive and safe environment which values everybody equally. The school will promote an awareness of cultural diversity and British values through personal, social, citizenship and health education (PSCHE) which will include common projects across all creative subjects. For example, the project 'Who am I' will look at personal and group identity, culture and 'Britishness' while the project on 'Crime and Punishment' will include a trip to the Old Bailey and follow-up work using video interviews and performance. Another project entitled 'The big London' will focus on local art, music and drama, including producing a commercial to support tourism involving creative writing, composing music, performance, filming and video editing. The work will aim to ensure that all students learn to differentiate between right and

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

wrong, and understand their rights and responsibilities while respecting the rights and responsibilities of others. The PSCE course has elements which will encourage students to develop tolerance of the beliefs and cultures of others. Its citizenship element will develop students' awareness of the workings of civil law and local and national institutions. Sex and relationship education will promote self-esteem, well-being and emotional health, focusing on attitudes and values, knowledge and understanding, and personal and social skills. Staff will model and promote expected behaviour, treating all people as valuable individuals and showing respect for students and their families. Political views and issues will be presented in a balanced way so as to avoid any partisan bias.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Documentary evidence suggests that all regulations are likely to be met but implementation could not be seen. The school has produced a range of suitable policy documents including those for anti-bullying, behaviour, curriculum, child protection and safeguarding, health and safety, and recruitment and selection. The Deputy Operations Officer of the WAC charity is the school's designated child protection officer and has received suitable training for this role. The Principal and deputy Principal will also undertake additional training to support this role. The child protection and safeguarding policy confirms the school's commitment to 'helping young people achieve good outcomes by providing a safe learning environment that promotes their welfare and helps them to develop socially and emotionally so that they can make the most of their life chances'. The school intends to offer additional training to all staff covering safeguarding prior to the school's opening, so that requirements are likely to be met. The school has identified a number of first aiders who have received suitable training, with additional training offered to interested staff. The Principal is aware of his responsibilities for safer recruitment and is booked to attend a course before the start of the academic year. Safer recruitment practices have been applied to the recruitment of all staff to date. Policies have been prepared for all required aspects of health and safety and a fire safety risk policy and a fire risk assessment carried out for the building, with further staff training planned to be carried out before the school opens so that requirements are likely to be met. Admission and attendance registers are likely to meet requirements. An equal opportunities policy and a three-year access improvement plan have been written to encourage good practice in relation to equality and diversity and to promote equality of opportunity.

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

The school's checks on the suitability of staff, including enhanced criminal record checks and checks against the DfE list 99, indicate that all regulations are likely to be met. Details have been recorded, checked and dated on a suitable single central register covering staff and trustees. The school does not intend to employ supply staff but is aware of its responsibilities to make checks should the need arise in the future.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The school is likely to meet all of the regulations. The school is housed in the old Hampstead Town Hall which is managed by WAC Arts. The school building will comprise two classrooms and rooms for information technology, dance, media, drama and music as well as access to additional space for assemblies and dining. Sport will be offered off-site at neighbouring leisure facilities offering a variety of activities and providing suitable changing facilities. The building has suitable access for those with disabilities and a recently refurbished medical room will be used for medical examinations or for students who may be ill. Discussion with the Principal and a review of the plans confirm that sufficient regard has been given to health, safety and security of the site. There are sufficient staff and student toilets. An order has been collated for suitable furniture, fixtures and fittings. The premises are likely to meet the requirements for heating, lighting, ventilation, decoration and flooring. Water supplies, including safely regulated hot water and a labelled supply of drinking water, are likely to meet requirements. There is a suitable area for outdoor play.

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: 64

Recommended number of boarders: 0

Recommended age range: 14-19

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: Not applicable.