

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

School name	Lower Farm Primary Academy
DfE registration number	2067
Unique reference number (URN)	147078
Inspection number	10103266
Inspection dates	12/06/2019 to 12/06/2019
Reporting inspector	Nicola Harwood HMI



Information about the inspection

This inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the Secretary of State for Education. It was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.¹

The inspector scrutinised plans for the school, read and discussed a range of policy documents with leaders, checked the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks, and considered the school's recruitment processes. She held discussions with the headteacher and the Regional Deputy Director for Education.

Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

Number of day pupils	420, plus 26 children part time in the nursery
Age range	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Type of special educational needs	Not applicable

Context of the school

The school is seeking registration as a free school for pupils aged three to 11. It will be run by REAch2 Academy Trust, a charitable company limited by guarantee.

The school will be sited at the heart of three new housing developments near to Nuneaton in Warwickshire and will serve the local population. It will be housed in purpose-built accommodation, which will be built by a contractor on behalf of the Trust and the local authority.

The school is opening a year ahead of schedule due to the high demand for school places in the local area. Initially, high-quality temporary accommodation will be used to house one Reception class while the new school is built.

The headteacher has been in post since April 2019 and the early years foundation stage leader and teacher has been appointed ready to start in August 2019. A school business manager has been appointed and will begin work at the beginning of August 2019. The school is currently recruiting for a teaching assistant for the Reception class. A transitional board of governors, which is accountable to the trust board, is in place for the first year during which a local governing body will be created.

Nine children are registered to join the school in September 2019. The proprietors anticipate that others will join the class during the year, up to a maximum of 30. From September 2020, a maximum of 60 children will be admitted each year into the

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

Reception Year. Up to 26 children will attend part-time in the nursery. By 2026, the school will cater for up to 420 pupils aged three to 11 years and up to 26 children in the nursery.

Advice to the Secretary of State for Education

Overall outcome	The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards when it opens.
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Recommended number of day pupils	420, plus 26 children part time in the nursery
Recommended age range	3–11
Recommended gender of pupils	Mixed
Recommended type of special educational needs	Not applicable

Compliance with The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 can be found here: www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/contents/made. Part 1 to Schedule 1 is not reported against because it does not apply to academies, free schools, studio schools and UTCs.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students

The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part. The school's policies and curriculum plans reflect its core values of respect, care, collaboration, achievement, resilience and integrity. Leaders plan to provide each and every pupil with a wide range of opportunities to enhance their personal development. Detailed plans map out how spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and fundamental British values are embedded in the curriculum. The school's '11 before 11' programme will ensure that all pupils have opportunities to develop life skills such as growing and cooking their own food. The school intends to promote an understanding of democracy through the establishment of a pupil parliament. Leaders have taken care to ensure that all elements of the protected characteristics and how they will be promoted are evident in the school's policies and plans.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school is likely to meet all of the standards in this part. Leaders have developed robust procedures to safeguard pupils and promote their welfare. Policies, bespoke to the school, are in place such as child protection, anti-bullying, first aid, health and safety, and risk assessments. They take account of the most up-to-date guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

The safeguarding policy is clear and sufficiently detailed. It takes account of local contextual issues and makes clear the roles and responsibilities of all connected with the school. Leaders have completed safeguarding training so that they are fully trained ready for the opening of the school. Safeguarding training for all other staff is booked.

Arrangements for health and safety, including fire safety, are thorough and detailed. The school's policies for all aspect of welfare, health and safety include explicit requirements for recording and monitoring incidents, actions taken and implementation.

The detail in the policies demonstrates how carefully leaders have considered their responsibilities for the welfare, health and safety of pupils who will attend the school.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school is likely to meet all of the standards in this part. The school has a comprehensive Safer Recruitment policy in place, that details all the checks and processes to be followed. Leaders have made all required pre-employment checks for staff appointed so far. The single central record is populated with all the information received to date. The outcomes of some checks are still awaited but it is anticipated that they will be received before the end of June.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Due to opening a year ahead of schedule, leaders are putting into place temporary accommodation for the first year while the purpose-built school is completed. No buildings are currently on the school site. However, leaders have detailed and thorough plans, explicit timescales and clear expectations of contractors, in order to ensure that appropriate accommodation is on site and ready to use for the planned opening date of 6 September 2019. The trust has previous experience of doing this successfully which lends confidence to the current plans.

The temporary building will be of a good standard with appropriate lighting, acoustics and security. There is sufficient teaching space, dining and physical education space as well as administrative areas. Facilities for toilets, washrooms and medical facilities meet requirements. There is sufficient external play space. The premises and external areas will be fully fenced and away from the immediate site of the new-build school. The contractors have agreed a handover date for the temporary premises and accommodation on 16 August 2019.

Plans and timescales for the purpose-built school are just as detailed. Leaders have taken account of all the requirements of this part to ensure that the school is not just built to an acceptable standard but provides a positive learning environment.

All appropriate documentation is in place for lease arrangements, fire-safety checks and risk assessments. Leaders have clear timescales and there are plans for pre-opening checks for both the temporary and permanent accommodation prior to opening. The trust's estates manager supports school leaders effectively with this work.

Part 6. Provision of information

The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part. The school has produced all the required policies including a safeguarding policy. These are available to parents on the school's website and on request. Leaders have examples of reports that will be used to inform parents of their child's progress and performance. Leaders are fully aware of their responsibilities to provide additional information, such as copies of any Ofsted inspections and details of academic performance, as this becomes available during the life of the school. The website contains comprehensive

information about the school, its values, curriculum and admissions process for prospective parents.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The school is likely to meet all of the standards in this part. The trust has a comprehensive policy that sets out clearly the procedures and timescales for dealing with complaints. It makes provision for a complainant to be accompanied at the appeal panel stage and for a member of that appeals panel to be independent of the school's leadership and management. The policy is available to parents on the website and on request.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part. The trust has a wide range of experience of running successful schools. Leaders have a full understanding of the regulatory requirements of opening a free school. All the relevant plans, policies and risk assessments are in place to promote pupils' learning and well-being. Leaders are thoroughly prepared for the opening of the school.

Leaders collaborate with prospective parents, the local authority and other trust schools and local schools in a strategic way. Leaders have a clear shared vision for the school and how they will develop this over time.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

The school is likely to meet all of the requirements. It is evident in plans and policies that thoughtful consideration is given to appropriate access to the premises, both temporary and permanent, and how the curriculum and other information can be easily accessed. The protected characteristics are a central feature front and centre in all the policy documents.

Statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The school is likely to meet the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage. A comprehensive policy document is in place and the trust has already appointed an experienced leader for the early years.

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