

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

School name	Aspire Academy
DfE registration number	999/1641
Unique reference number (URN)	1641
Inspection number	446715
Inspection dates	16 July 2014
Reporting inspector	Amraz Ali HMI

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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 proprietor, Archbishop Sentamu Academy, seeks to establish this free academy for 150 students who are in danger of exclusion. The proposed Aspire Academy is to be located in a new building on the site of a former maintained school in East Hull. The construction work is on schedule to complete the building by the end of December 2014. The new building is located next to a community sports facility and students will have regular access to these sports facilities, including changing rooms and showers. The academy plans to admit up to 150 male and female students aged from 10 to 16 years. Early indications are that the vast majority will be supported by pupil premium funding. In its first term the academy will be located on a temporary site, a former maintained school building. From September 2014, when the academy intends to open, it is proposed there will initially be up to 60 students, aged 10 to 16 years of age.

Aspire Academy will be part of a multi-academy trust that includes Archbishop Sentamu Academy. Although, as an alternative provision academy, it does not have a specific religious designation, it will have a broadly Christian character (Church of England). The academy intends to offer a curriculum with a strong work related element. Places at the academy have been commissioned by Hull local authority.

Compliance with the regulations

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The academy is likely to meet all of the regulations, but implementation could not be seen. The academy's website and documentation outlines the importance of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These aspects are said to be at the heart of the curriculum. The start and end of each day will involve circle time and may include an act of collective worship. A focus on 'crucial skills' is designed to ensure that students have the basic social skills needed to become good citizens, including knowing about relationships, self-discipline, engagement, collaboration and tenacity. Reflection time is intended to allow students to face the consequences of poor choices in a supportive way, and learn how to make good choices. Personal, social, health and citizenship education will be timetabled weekly for both Key Stage 3 and 4 students. The comprehensive programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education will be delivered thematically as an integral

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

part of the curriculum. This will be complemented by religious education lessons and students will be taught about their own and other cultures, and to tolerate the beliefs of others, through a thematic approach. They will learn about Christianity and other world religions. There are plans to teach students about the law, services and public institutions in England through topics such as the judiciary and visits to law courts. They will be taught how to access the National Health Service using a health passport. They will learn about democracy through visits to the local council offices and will take part in elections for members of the academy's student council. The staff handbook is under development and the Principal states that this will make clear to all staff that they are not to express partisan views to their students.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Requirements are likely to be met, but implementation could not be seen. All of the required policy documents have been prepared, including safeguarding, health and safety, behaviour, anti-bullying and first aid. A senior member of staff has been trained to the required level so that she can execute the role of designated person for child protection. All of the staff who will work at the academy from September are currently employed by the proprietor and currently work in an academy; they have had appropriate training in child protection. Admission and attendance registers will be maintained electronically and their formats meet requirements. The plans for the building indicate it has been designed to meet the requirements of the Equality Act and provide full equality of access for disabled students, with ramps at the entrance, a lift to the second floor and disabled toilets. The school building has been designed to meet all health and safety standards.

On the day of the inspection the temporary site was subject to a number of health and safety inspections. Checks were carried out on the fire alarms, extinguishers, drinking water and the gas supply. All were found to be safe. The proprietor has commissioned fire risk assessments for both the temporary site and the new building which will be completed before any students are allowed on site. Given the nature of the students, the planned staffing levels will allow students to be supervised at all times.

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Requirements are likely to be met. All staff who will work at the school when it opens in September 2014 are currently employed by the proprietor and currently work in an academy. Although all staff have been subjected to appropriate checks for their current employment and these checks are recorded on Aspire Academy's single central record, there are plans to re-check all staff ready for the opening of the academy. The executive Principal of the proprietorial body and the Principal, along with some governors, have up to date training in safer recruitment.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

All requirements are likely to be met. A new building is under construction. This has been designed with the regulations and the needs of students in mind. The 20 classrooms and teaching spaces are of a good size and will accommodate the proposed 150 students over two floors. There will be a suitable medical room located close to a toilet. There are detailed design briefs which indicate that the building will have appropriate acoustics and lighting. The rooms will have a good amount of natural light due to the location of windows. The outside recreation areas are appropriate and the academy plans to make use of nearby community sports facilities, including changing rooms and showers.

The temporary site comprises a Victorian school building with classrooms and toilets, a building that had been used for administration and a building with two classrooms and a dining room. Collectively they provide ten classrooms of various sizes and offer sufficient space for the school to accommodate its initial 60 students. There is an adequate number of toilets for pupils and staff and there are suitable medical facilities. There are plans in place for students to undertake physical education at a community sports facility and this has suitable changing rooms and showers.

Provision of information

The provision meets all regulations.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The provision meets 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.**

If registration is recommended, please state:

Recommended number of day pupils: 150 (Initially with up to 60 on the temporary site)

Recommended age range: 10-16

Recommended gender of pupils: mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: not applicable.

The academy intends to open in September 2014 on a temporary site with up to 60 students. An inspection of the temporary site confirmed there to be suitable space for this number.