

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

---

School name	Bolton Wanderers Free School
DfE registration number	N/A
Unique reference number (URN)	1699
Inspection number	446925
Inspection dates	15 July 2014
Reporting inspector	Sarah Drake

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our website for news, information and updates at [www.ofsted.gov.uk/user](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/user).

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

No. 090080

© Crown copyright 2013



## 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.<sup>1</sup> *(Please delete as appropriate)*

## Context of the school

The proposed Bolton Wanderers Free School is a non-denominational free school for day students aged between 16 and 19 years old. It is planned that the school will be accommodated within the Macron Stadium of Bolton Wanderers Football Club [for the first year](#). The free school intends to accept both boys and girls on to its roll, including some who have special educational needs. It plans to admit up to 200 students from September 2014 and to expand this to 400 students from September 2015. The free school's proprietor is the Eddie Davis Educational Trust.

The vision of the planned school states that: 'We believe in cultivating in our students, the life-long ability to take the right course of action in any particular situation, supported by a continuing interest in learning and self-development.' It intends to do this through offering a sports-led curriculum leading to BTEC accreditation, with the option for students of also completing GCSE or functional skills English and mathematics qualifications.

## Compliance with the regulations

### Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The proposed school is likely to meet all of the regulations but implementation could not be seen as it has yet to open. The school's ethos of promoting tolerance and equality of opportunity is made abundantly clear in all its promotional literature and many policy documents, including the curriculum policy. The detailed spiritual, moral, social and cultural policy outlines specifically how the school intends to promote this aspect of students' development.

Based within the Bolton Wanderers football stadium [in the first year](#), the proposed school lies at the heart of the community. Already, 90% of the students who have accepted offers have signed up to act as volunteers at an imminent Family Fun Day, showing families around the building or supervising various activities. It is intended that students will benefit from 'First Team Talks' from the club's footballers for whom treating others with respect and abiding by the rules is of high importance. It is also intended that the school will develop a strong, elected Student Voice and that students will participate in, for example, the appointment of new staff. In such ways

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/section/99](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/section/99)

as these, it is planned that students will develop an understanding of the democratic process and of the importance of participating and contributing to society.

Empowering students to make the right choices in life is central to the school's vision and curriculum. The school plans to run a series of themed weeks covering such topics as 'Equality and Diversity' and 'Multicultural Awareness', as well as themes chosen by students. The proposed school has already developed close relationships with members of the local police force and it is intended that they, as well as, for example, members of the National Health Service, will support tutorial sessions and themed weeks. Through this broad range of means, the school plans to develop students' awareness of criminal and civil law as well as public institutions. There is no evidence that the school is likely to present political or partisan views in anything other than an unbiased manner.

## **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

It is likely that the proposed school will meet all the regulations although their implementation could not be seen. It is planned that the school will be accommodated within the east stand of the football stadium [in the first and possibly second year of operation](#). This is licensed for public use, checked by the local authority on an annual basis and has extensive premises and fire risk assessments and procedures in place. The proposed very minor adaptations to the building will have no impact on the already established fire escape routes, risk assessments or procedures. The school's comprehensive policies relating to first aid, educational visits and health and safety, clearly outline the responsibilities of staff at different levels and also those of students. Discussions with the headteacher and the health and safety officer for the building confirm their good awareness of potential hazards. The headteacher has completed fire warden training. All staff are due to complete one full week of training in areas such as first aid, health and safety, and child protection in the middle of August, prior to the school opening, so that requirements are likely to be met. There are detailed plans to ensure that only those with legitimate business have access to the school.

The school's policies, such as those to promote safeguarding and good behaviour, and against bullying, are underpinned by its overarching aim to ensure that, 'all members of our learning community have a right to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, and make a positive contribution, all without fear of intimidation.' References to staff training are frequent, with an emphasis on the need for vigilance and being alert to students' possible concerns. Different types of bullying, including homophobia, are referred to along with specific emphasis on the growing incidence of cyber-bullying. It is planned that the school's tutorial programmes and six-to-seven weekly review weeks will provide plenty of opportunity for individual support.

Comprehensive checks are in place to ensure the safe recruitment of staff. Equality of opportunity is central to the school's planning and there is an access improvement strategy in place to ensure that it fulfils its duties under schedule 10 of the Equality

Act 2010. The admission register is in place and the school intends to use an approved electronic system to record students' attendance.

### **Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors**

The proposed school is likely to meet all of the regulations. Checks to ensure the suitability of staff, members of the proprietor trust and members of the board of governors to work with children have either been completed or are being processed. The school's safer recruitment policy confirms the need to ensure that any contract staff, supply staff or external coaching staff have also undergone similar checks. All relevant details about individuals are contained on a single central record which is kept confidentially and only accessible to those with the relevant, changing, password. The school is aware of its duty to inform the Independent Safeguarding Authority should any person connected with the school be deemed unfit for working with children.

### **Premises of and accommodation at the school**

Scrutiny of the detailed plans for the proposed [temporary accommodation for the school](#) along with inspection of the current accommodation and discussions with the headteacher indicate that it is likely that the school will meet all the regulations. The premises are modern, well lit, well maintained and provide a suitable balance between 'whole school' areas and classrooms of varying sizes to accommodate up to 200 students. Plans for minor adaptations, which are scheduled to be completed by 18 August 2014, include the provision for an appropriately equipped room for medical examination and treatment or the short term care of injured or sick students. Water supplies, including a labelled supply of drinking water and safely regulated hot water, are likely to meet requirements. Heating and ventilation arrangements are suitable. It is planned that sporting activities will play a large part in the proposed school's curriculum. The school has an agreement with Bolton Arena, close to the Macron Stadium, that students will have safe access to its facilities, including suitable changing accommodation and showers, at certain points of the school day. Students will also have access to Bolton Wanderers training ground and changing facilities at Lostock, about one mile away. There is ample room around the stadium for students to relax in the open air.

### **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: 200

Recommended number of boarders: not applicable

Recommended age range: 16 to 19 years

Recommended gender of pupils: mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: not applicable.

The school originally applied to accept 400 students, making clear that it intends to accept only up to 200 students in the first year of operation. The accommodation currently available to the school is sufficient to accept no more than 200 students. ~~It is intended that the school will have access to a 'mirror image' of the current accommodation within the Macron Stadium when numbers grow, with a second intake of students, in September 2015.~~ The lead inspector informed the headteacher that, ~~when that time arrives~~ when either the school is in expanded temporary premises in the second year or moves into their permanent premises, the school will need to inform the Department of a material change since it will be occupying different accommodation.