

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

School name	The Family School London
DfE registration number	N/A
Unique reference number (URN)	1704
Inspection number	446930
Inspection dates	11 August 2014
Reporting inspector	Sheila Nolan

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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 Family School, an initiative from the Anna Freud Centre, will open in temporary premises close to Kings Cross. It is intended to move to a permanent base, also close to Kings Cross, in 2015. It plans to provide innovative alternative provision for pupils with behavioural and mental health related barriers to learning who are at risk of permanent exclusion from mainstream school. In its first year, it hopes to admit pupils across the five to 14 age range.

The school is due to open on 7 September 2014, although there remain unresolved issues with regard to access to the temporary building. The school is assured of full access before the middle of September, however. It has applied to be registered to admit 48 pupils aged five to 14 years, most on short-term placements. Its aim is the re-integration of pupils into mainstream schools. The number of pupils registered for enrolment in the first year is currently 15. All have been referred by two London local authorities. At present, it is not known how many of the enrolled pupils have statements of special educational needs. All pupils, however, will have significant special educational needs in terms of behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD). The school will have no specific religious affiliation and intends to promote a culture where every young person, whatever their circumstances, can learn and achieve. The curriculum will be underpinned by trusting and respectful relationships between pupils, family members, staff and the agencies with which the school works.

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 Family School intends to require a parent or significant adult family member to participate on planned occasions in the classroom with the child. At any one time, 12 parents or carers can attend with their children. The focus is on families helping themselves and each other to establish the conditions and make the changes necessary to resolve problems. A successful outcome will be pupils who are functioning learners and who can return to school. Therapeutic techniques are to be embedded in all aspects of the teaching and learning programme so that pupils will not only progress academically but also improve their challenging behaviours, recover their psychological and emotional well-being and gain resilience.

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

The Family School plans to unblock barriers to learning, particularly in literacy, numeracy and problem solving. For older pupils, in particular, there will be a strong emphasis on citizenship as well as a culture of creativity for all. All elements of the National Curriculum will be taught.

Central to its planned provision for the personal, social and health education of the pupils is the personalised programme of social skills and competencies. The main themes besides citizenship include learning, managing information, relating to people and managing situations. A wide range of opportunities is planned for pupils to explore and learn to tolerate the diverse faiths and traditions within the school and local community and which also reflect the changing make up of British society. There is planned rich provision for extended activities beyond the timetabled school day, particularly through the London Curriculum. Activities include visits to public institutions and services in England and opportunities to learn about the workings of civil law. There is a secure basis in the personal, social, moral, cultural and health programme to help stimulate the pupils' spiritual development. Training and proposed monitoring schedules are aimed carefully at ensuring staff adhere to the school's intended ethos of promoting equality and respecting difference. Particular attention is planned to ensure that British values are well promoted and that balanced views are presented on all political, social and religious matters.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Scrutiny of the documentation and the site plans indicates that all regulations are likely to be met. Policies for managing confidential reporting (whistle blowing), safer recruitment, child protection and safeguarding, behaviour for learning, and anti-bullying have been prepared in accordance with requirements. The behaviour policy emphasises the encouragement of pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and to build personal relationships. There are clearly laid out plans for sanctions and rewards and how these are to be applied. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been trained in safer recruitment and child protection.

A member of staff has an up-to-date first aid qualification. For other members of staff, first aid training is planned. The headteacher has the required qualifications to take on the role of child protection officer and relevant training is planned for all staff at the start of term, so that requirements are likely to be met. The health and safety policy statement and risk assessments have been completed as far as possible, given the limited access, for all required aspects. Fire safety requirements are likely to be met and there is a planned check to be made as soon as full access to the temporary building is possible. Admission and attendance registers will be maintained electronically and manually and their formats meet requirements. The school's three-year accessibility plan details arrangements to review and improve access for disabled students.

Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

All the required vetting checks on appointed staff and members of the governing body are captured in a single central record which meets requirements. The school does not intend to employ supply staff but has appropriate procedures in place to conduct the required checks if need be. However, the implementation of the checks could not be seen.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

Sight of the architect's plans confirms that very minor refurbishment of the building is likely to enable it to meet the regulations in readiness for opening in September. Classroom accommodation will be sufficient for the projected numbers on roll. There is a suitable number of washrooms available, with safely regulated hot water, including an existing washroom for disabled users. The temporary premises have recently been used by a university, and heating, lighting and fire safety systems are likely to meet requirements. Pupils will have ready access to drinking water and arrangements for access for disabled pupils are sound. A medical room, complete with a hand basin, with an adjacent washroom, is already available and meets requirements. For lessons in physical education, the school has access to an adjacent building and gym with changing and showering facilities. In the short term, outdoor recreation is planned on a daily basis in a community recreation facility close by. There is also a small outdoor space adjacent to the building, but risk assessments have yet to be completed for its use.

Provision of information

The provision is likely to meet all the regulations.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The provision is likely to meet all the 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: 48

Recommended number of boarders: 0

Recommended age range: 5–14

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: BESD.