

Advice note for a pre-registration inspection of an academy

School name	Houlton School
Department for Education (DfE) registration number	937/4010
Unique reference number (URN)	143707
Inspection number	10189054
Inspection dates	26/05/2021
Reporting inspector	Nicola Harwood



Information about the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted at the request of the Secretary of State for Education. It was carried out under [section 99\(1\) of the Education and Skills Act 2008](#).

In carrying out this type of inspection, inspectors assess the extent to which the school is likely to meet 'The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014' when it opens.¹

The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation related to the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards and spoke to the principal, vice-principal and the chief executive officer of the trust. The inspector also spoke to one of the trustees and toured the school site.

Information about the registration

The school is seeking registration as a free school for:

Number of day pupils	1,100
Age range	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Type of special educational needs	Not applicable

Context of the school

This new provision is a secondary school within the Transforming Lives Educational Trust. The school will serve the newly constructed community of Houlton on the edge of Rugby, Warwickshire. In the first few years of opening, the school will provide additional capacity to support Warwickshire local authority school-place planning.

The school site was formerly Rugby radio station. The school will occupy the grade 2 listed radio station buildings which are in the process of being redeveloped. These are complemented by three state-of-the-art teaching blocks for science and technology, humanities and sports. The school campus provides extensive external space and will link directly with the civic centre of the new community.

The school will open in September 2021 with 180 Year 7 pupils. The school will grow with an additional year group in subsequent years until 2027. The final capacity of the school will be 1,100 including 200 pupils in the sixth form.

¹ Part 1 to Schedule 1 is not reported against because it does not apply to academies, free schools, studio schools and university technical colleges.

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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Compliance with The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

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

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. Policies and plans for personal, health and social education reflect the trust's values of kindness, loyalty and courage, and the school's commitment to developing confident individuals and responsible citizens. School timetables show how leaders will use tutor time and pupil leadership programmes to promote fundamental British values. They place spiritual, moral, social and cultural education at the heart of the curriculum so that pupils flourish and are well prepared for life beyond school.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school is likely to meet all the relevant requirements in this part. School policies for positive behaviour management and anti-bullying provide clear guidance and procedures for pupils, staff and parents. The safeguarding policy has regard to the latest government guidance. Leaders have drawn up a range of very comprehensive policies such as health and safety, first aid and risk assessment. Roles and responsibilities are made clear in each document. All policies are bespoke to the school and comply with statutory guidance.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. An appropriate single central record is already in place and all required checks have been completed for senior leaders. Leaders follow safer recruitment procedures when appointing the staff team. The trust HR manager is tenacious in ensuring that all pre-employment checks are completed on new staff before school starts in September.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. The buildings and site are nearing completion and on track to be handed over to the trust on 10 August 2021. The school campus provides a range of classrooms, laboratories and specialist teaching spaces resourced to enhance pupils' learning and meet all the relevant standards. Suitable changing rooms, showers, toilets and medical facilities are in place. The school has a large sports hall, a dance studio and extensive outdoor space.

Part 6. Provision of information

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. All the required policies and information are already on the school's website including an up-to-date safeguarding policy. Printed copies of policies and information are available on request. Pupils starting in September have been sent personalised, relevant information by post.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. The school complaint's policy complements that of the trust. It sets out clearly the process for dealing with concerns and complaints and includes appropriate timescales. Leaders look to address all complaints informally in the first instance. A named clerk maintains written records of all complaints, meetings and actions taken to resolve the issues raised.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

The school is likely to meet all the requirements in this part. Leaders have a full understanding of the regulatory requirements. All the relevant policies, plans and risk assessments are in place to promote pupils' learning and well-being. Leaders and trustees are highly effective and have considerable experience in running successful schools. They have given very careful consideration to how this school will be established and grow over time. Leaders are suitably ambitious for this new school community. They are determined and committed to providing a world-class education and transforming the lives of all stakeholders.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

The school is likely to meet all the requirements of Schedule 10. Leaders have prepared an accessibility plan which describes how individual groups will be supported to access the premises and the education on offer. Leaders intend to review and update the plan as appropriate once the buildings have been completed. They ensure that the principles of the Equality Act 2010 are threaded through all school policies.

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