

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

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School name	Digitech Studio School
DfE registration number	803/4007
Unique reference number (URN)	142079
Inspection number	465532
Inspection dates	30 June and 29 July 2015
Reporting inspector	Fatiha Maitland

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## 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.

## Context of the school

- The proposed Digitech Studio School is a free school. It will be one of the 13 schools within Cabot Learning Federation (CLF), a multi-academy trust. The school is to be situated in Warmley, Bristol. It is not operating at present, but intends to open its doors in September 2015.
- The school will occupy one part of the Grange Studio School and Sports College. The school is planning to use these premises temporarily to accommodate up to 140 students in Years 10 and 12 from September 2015.
- The school aims to move to permanent accommodation (a new school building) in September 2016. This accommodation is adjacent to the temporary site. The school will then admit up to 360 boys and girls, aged between 14 and 19 years.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs will be admitted to the school. The school also plans to make provision for students who speak English as an additional language.
- During the initial visit on 30 June 2015, the inspector viewed the temporary premises. She also carried out a scrutiny of documentation and held discussions with the management team of the school.
- The inspector and some members of the senior management team visited the new site. The proposed school consists of three large buildings that belong to the Grange Studio School and Sports College. These are currently used as classrooms. It is reported that the buildings will be demolished in the near future and the land will be used to build a new school.
- The school aims 'to address the growing gap between the skills and knowledge that young people require to succeed, and those that the current education system provides'. The school has no specific religious affiliation.

## Information about the registration

- The school received an initial visit on 30 June 2015. At that visit there were standards that were not likely to be met for the provision for students' welfare, health and safety, together with shortcomings in the premises and accommodation and the quality of leadership in and management of the school.
- The school drew up an action plan for improvement in response to the findings of the initial visit. This was sent to the lead inspector. The school submitted evidence to show how it has planned to rectify the shortcomings identified during the initial visit. This includes a wide range of risk assessments on the premises and resources.

- The lead inspector led on the initial visit, but did not visit the site during the follow-up exercise. She undertook a scrutiny of the documentation provided by the school.
- The inspector also had several telephone discussions with the senior leadership of the school. The information and evidence provided by CLF indicate that the school is likely to meet all of the relevant requirements.
- The school is seeking registration as a studio school for:

<b>Number of day pupils</b>	360
<b>Age range</b>	14–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	mixed
<b>Type of special educational needs</b>	n/a

## Compliance with The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014<sup>1</sup>

### Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- The planned provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is likely to meet all of the relevant requirements, but implementation could not be seen.
- The provision clearly encompasses the development of self-knowledge and the acceptance of responsibility for each student’s behaviour and actions.
- Planned activities in personal, social, health and economic education, assemblies and tutorial support will enhance students’ spiritual, moral and social development, some examples of which are noted below.
- Students will be helped to differentiate right from wrong, to empathise with people who are different from themselves and to respect the civil and criminal law. Learning about different religions, cultures and traditions and taking part in inter-faith dialogues will provide students with opportunities to develop an appreciation and respect for other faiths and cultures around them.
- Visits to places of interest, support from workplace professionals in school, alongside the citizenship programme, will provide students with adequate opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding of public institutions and services in England and to respect the fundamental British values of democracy.
- The school will take advantage of its location to enable students to visit the local law courts and, in doing so, they will gain an increased awareness of civic responsibilities in society.
- The school has prepared clear guidance for staff, parents and others to prevent radicalisation and extremism. The school will be vigilant in ensuring that balanced

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/3283/schedule/made>; Part 1 to Schedule 1 is not reported against because it does not apply to academies, free schools, studio schools and UTCs.

political messages are promoted.

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- The school is likely to meet all of the relevant requirements, although implementation could not be seen in full. The follow-up exercise found that the school has appointed a health and safety adviser who has inspected the temporary accommodation and has made recommendations for the school to act upon. The school has implemented its health and safety and risk assessment policies and procedures. Leaders have conducted interim checks on the school's temporary premises and resources to reduce risks and to ensure students' health and safety. Checks include all parts of the school, such as classrooms, the staffroom, administration offices, science laboratories, the information and communication technology suite, physical education equipment, sports facilities, the first aid room, toilets and outdoor areas. There are firm plans to update the risk assessments on the temporary premises once the building work has been accomplished. Therefore, the school is likely to meet these requirements.
- The initial visit noted that the school had not conducted the required fire risk assessment on the temporary premises to ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The school has now appointed PCS Enterprises Ltd to undertake the required fire risk assessment on the temporary premises. The fire risk assessment is now scheduled to take place on 24 August 2015. A copy of the fire risk assessment will be sent to the Department for Education before the school receives students. Therefore this standard is likely to be met.
- Fire evacuation procedures are in place. Fire equipment and electrical appliances have been recently tested by professional engineers to ensure that they are safely operational. There are two fire wardens in school. The school has firm plans to provide fire awareness training to its staff by the end of July 2015.
- The school is aware of its duty to carry out the necessary fire risk assessments and checks on the new premises and resources once the new school is built and is ready to accommodate students.
- The school's safeguarding policy has regard to the latest safeguarding guidance provided in the Department for Education's publication *Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2015*. All members of staff, including the designated senior persons, have received the relevant child protection training. Staff members have read Part 1 of the above guidance, as required. There are clear plans to train more staff in child protection once the school opens.
- The school has prepared written policies and procedures to promote good behaviour among students, with clear codes of conduct and a set of rewards and sanctions, and information about the prevention of bullying.
- A first-aid policy is in place. The school has a sufficient number of first aiders to attend to the needs of individuals. The admission and attendance registers are ready for use.

## **Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors**

- The school is likely to meet all of the relevant requirements related to the suitability of the proprietor and staff. Scrutiny of documentation and discussions with the management of the school indicate that they are aware of all safeguarding requirements.
- The school leaders have made all of the required vetting checks on all members of staff to ensure their suitability to work with young people.
- Suitable recruitment procedures are in place in the event that additional staff are employed.
- The Department for Education has conducted all of the required vetting checks on the chairperson of the proprietorial body.
- The school has prepared a suitable single central register and recorded in this all the necessary information on all members of staff and the proprietorial body.

## **Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools**

- The school's temporary accommodation is likely to meet all of the relevant requirements, although implementation could not be seen in full. The initial visit noted that some areas of the school were in need of decoration and the installation of flooring. Discussions with the executive headteacher of the school and checks of the school's documentary evidence suggest that the refurbishment programme is due to be completed by 24 August 2015. Weaknesses have been attended to and the school is likely to meet this requirement.
- The premises include several classrooms, practical areas and designated facilities for science, information and communication technology, art and design and photography.
- The school has ensured that there is a suitable designated area for students to go to when they are unwell. The provision has a washbasin and is located near toilet facilities.
- The current provision of toilets and washbasins is sufficient for staff, visitors and the proposed number of students.
- Students will have access to an outdoor area to play safely. They will use the local sports centre for physical education. This facility is adjacent to the school's building. A written agreement has been signed between the school and South Gloucestershire local authority for such use.
- The acoustic conditions, sound insulation, lighting and water supply, including labelled drinking water facilities, are likely to meet requirements.
- The new school will consist of several classrooms and 'break out' areas, as seen from the site plan. The premises will benefit from specialist facilities for science, computing, art and design and drama.
- There are outdoor areas for students to use. The school will continue to use the local leisure centre where students will have access to showers and changing facilities under appropriate supervision.
- The plan of the premises also shows that the new school will have a medical room for students to go to when they are unwell or injured. This provision will have a washbasin with running water and will be located reasonably near washroom

facilities. There will be a sufficient number of toilets for staff, students and visitors to access.

- The Education Funding Agency is managing the process of acquiring the new premises on behalf of the governing body. The Department will continue to monitor the progress of the premises directly with the Agency.

## Part 6. Provision of information

- The school's provision of information for parents, carers and others is likely to meet all of the relevant requirements. The school has a website. All of the required information is provided and made available to parents on the school's website, including the safeguarding policy. Copies of policies and procedures, including the safeguarding policy, have been prepared and are made available to parents from the school's office on request.

## Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

- The school's complaints policy and procedures are likely to meet all the requirements in relation to this part.

## Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- The school leaders have taken effective steps to remedy the weaknesses identified at the initial visit.
- They have demonstrated sufficient knowledge and understanding appropriate to their roles and have ensured that all of the required independent school standards are likely to be met.
- Students' well-being is likely to be assured.

## Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has a written equal opportunities policy. It has devised an appropriate three-year accessibility improvement plan to fulfil its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

## Advice to the Secretary of State for Education

<b>Overall outcome</b>	The school is likely to meet all the relevant independent school standards when it opens.
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<b>Recommended number of day pupils</b>	360
<b>Recommended age range</b>	14-19
<b>Recommended gender of pupils</b>	mixed
<b>Recommended type of special educational needs</b>	n/a