



Department  
for Education

# **Free schools: pre-opening guide**

## **Annexes A-F checklists and briefs**

**September 2022**

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## Annex A: Project task checklists

The checklists below provide a summary of the tasks that you will need to complete during the pre-opening phase. They should be used in conjunction with the information in the relevant chapters, to satisfy the Secretary of State that your school will open on time, with a viable number of pupils, and provide a good standard of education. The timescales for each phase referred to in the checklists are:

- **Phase 1** – 12 months or more before the school opens
- **Phase 2** – 8 to 11 months before the school opens
- **Phase 3** – 5 to 7 months before the school opens
- **Phase 4** – 3 to 4 months before the school opens
- **Phase 5** – 2 months before the school opens

**Table 1 Managing your project: checklist of activities**

Activities to complete	Who has responsibility	Recommended timescales to complete
Review the capacity within your group to ensure there is sufficient expertise with the right skills sets, capability and time commitment to deliver your school project successfully. Submit governance plan to delivery officer.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Ensure you have a robust project plan in place with key project milestones and sufficient resources allocated to manage all the tasks in pre-opening, including expertise to manage your project plan.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Ensure you have a marketing plan in place so that marketing is a continuous priority process.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Kick-off meeting with DfE.	Delivery officer	Phase 1
Principal designate recruitment, draw up timeline and set interview dates. If benchmarking is necessary, liaise with external expert to ensure they feed in and can scrutinise.	Academy trust	Phase 1

**Table 2 Procurement and additional support: checklist of activities**

<b>Activities to complete</b>	<b>Who has responsibility</b>	<b>Recommended timescales to complete</b>
Plan pre-opening expenditure, agree approach to procurement and set up arrangements to manage the budget.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Decide where you will need to buy in services and support and plan the appropriate procurement to ensure suppliers/goods are in place as and when required.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Ensure the requirements of public procurement policy have been properly followed	Academy trust	Phase 1

**Table 3 Governance: checklist of activities**

<b>Activities to complete</b>	<b>Who has responsibility</b>	<b>Recommended timescales to complete</b>
To have established a company limited by guarantee (the academy trust) using the department's model memorandum and articles of association. Set governing body size.	Academy trust	Pre-application
Pen portraits on new trustees. Procedures in place to identify and manage conflicts of interest.	Academy trust	Phase 1
To have in place plans for the structure of your governing body and plans for how you will source, recruit and train your trustees.	Academy trust	Phase 1
To have recruited the chair and be on track to recruit remaining trustees and support staff. Workable plans in place for recruiting the remainder, and any training.	Academy trust	Phase 3
Trustee recruitment complete and work completed/underway on key protocols and documents for term one.	Academy trust/chair of trustees	Phase 4

**Table 4 Due diligence: checklist of activities**

<b>Activities to complete</b>	<b>Who has responsibility</b>	<b>Recommended timescales to complete</b>
Chair of academy trust has obtained an enhanced DBS certificate countersigned by the department.	Chair of academy trust	Phase 2
Ensure that all enhanced DBS checks have been commissioned for the academy trustees.	Chair of academy trust	Phase 2
Ensure you inform the department of all new members and trustees and have sent in all completed suitability and declaration forms to your delivery officer.	Chair of academy trust	Whenever a new member or trustee is appointed until the school opens

**Table 5 Funding checklist**

<b>Activities to complete</b>	<b>Who has responsibility</b>	<b>Recommended timescales to complete</b>
Issue project development grant (PDG) agreement.	Delivery officer	Phase 1
Plan pre-opening expenditure, open bank account (if this does not already exist), agree approach to procurement and set up arrangements to manage the budget and comply with the terms of the grant agreement.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Sign and return PDG agreement.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Submit plans for expenditure of PDG throughout pre-opening to your delivery officer as defined in your grant agreement.	Academy trust	Ongoing
Continue to develop school finance plan as project develops and review staffing structure.	Academy trust	Ongoing
Assess financial plan and planned governance arrangements for the school.	Delivery officer	Phase 3

Issue indicative funding letter based on approved financial plan and agreed estimate of pupil numbers.	ESFA (revenue)	Phase 5
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**Table 6 Site and buildings: checklist of activities**

Activities to complete	Who has responsibility	Recommended timescales to complete
Arrange site kick-off meeting.	Delivery officer	Phase 1
Search for a site.	FSFES/LocatED	Phase 1
Confirm a suitable site has been secured that can be delivered in the timescales and represents value for money.	FSFES/LocatED	Phase 1
Checkpoint meeting to discuss confirmation of the provisional opening date.	FSFES/Delivery officer	Phase 1
Confirm technical feasibility of site, including planning.	FSFES	Phase 2
Procure construction works and ICT.	FSFES	Phase 3
Build or refurbish school.	FSFES	Phase 3
Building works complete and site handed over.	FSFES	Phase 5

**Table 7 Admissions: checklist of activities**

Activities to complete	Who has responsibility	Recommended timescales to complete
Develop plans for admission arrangements.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Submit admission arrangements to delivery officer. These should include the timeline and process for accepting applications and making offers.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Academy trust to work with delivery officer and admissions team to agree admission arrangements for the free school.	Academy trust/delivery officer	Phase 1
Develop marketing plan	Academy trust	Phase 1

Include draft admissions policy in S10 consultation.	Academy Trust	Phase 2 (to link with S10 consultation timeline)
Monitor pupil recruitment, providing frequent updates with supporting evidence to your delivery officer and consider how this relates to the financial and educational viability of the free school.	Academy trust/	Ongoing
Make offers to pupils in line with published admission arrangements. When offering places, free schools without a signed funding agreement must make it clear that the offer is conditional on the funding agreement being signed.	Academy trust	First week of March – secondary national offer day Mid-April – primary national offer day
Ensure an independent appeals panel is in place	Academy trust	Before the offer of places

**Table 8 Faith: checklist of activities**

Activities to complete	Who has responsibility	Recommended timescales to complete
Identify a religious authority for admissions.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Identify a religious authority for inspections.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Submit FSRDApp1 form to the department.	Academy trust	Phase 1

**Table 9 Statutory consultation: checklist of activities**

Activities to complete	Who has responsibility	Recommended timescales to complete
Develop clear plans for carrying out consultation	Academy trust	Phase 1
Launch consultation in line with Section 10 of the Academies Act 2010.	Academy trust	Phase 2

Consider the responses to consultation and whether there is a need to make any changes or additions to the plans for the school.	Academy trust	Phase 2
Provide a report of the consultation, including key findings, to the department.	Academy trust	Phase 3

**Table 10 Equalities duty: checklist of activities**

<b>Activities to complete</b>	<b>Who has responsibility</b>	<b>Recommended timescales to complete</b>
Review your on-going commitment to your equalities duty for all your plans and policies throughout pre-opening and after the school has opened.	Academy trust	Ongoing

**Table 11 Staffing, education plans and policies: checklist of activities**

<b>Activities to complete</b>	<b>Who has responsibility</b>	<b>Recommended timescales to complete</b>
Discuss your proposed staffing structure with the DfE.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Consider how you will meet your statutory duties in relation to the Equalities Act through recruitment material for staff.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Begin the recruitment process for your principal designate.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Include the recruitment of staff and the development of your educational plans and policies in your project plan.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Recruitment of essential senior staff begins.	Academy trust	Phase 2
Begin drafting all the staff policies required for recruitment of staff.	Academy trust	Phase 2
Single Central Register (SCR) set up.	Academy trust	Phase 2
Staffing structure finalised and financially viable given likely number of pupils and curriculum offer.	Academy trust	Phase 3



Key appointments made and minimum staff appointed, DBS checks, contracts and pension arrangements underway.	Academy trust	Phase 3
Have in place all education plans and policies that are required for your Ofsted pre-registration inspection.	Academy trust	Phase 3
Produce curriculum plan.	Academy trust	Phase 3
Produce three-year development plan/ <a href="#">education brief</a> (the overarching plan to which all other policies and plans relate).	Academy trust	Phase 4
Schemes of work developed that cover at least the first year of opening.	Academy trust	Phase 4
Pupil level assessment and accreditation plans in place.	Academy trust	Phase 4
All <a href="#">policies the trust has a statutory duty to produce</a> are in place.	Academy trust	Phase 4
Plans for pupil induction in place.	Academy trust	Phase 4
Begin staff induction and training.	Academy trust	Phase 4

**Table 12 Funding agreement: checklist of activities**

<b>Activities to complete</b>	<b>Who has responsibility</b>	<b>Recommended timescales to complete</b>
Complete your statutory consultation and submit report to your delivery officer.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Meet your requirements, as a public authority, under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Have appointed sufficient, and appropriate, staff to start in September of opening (including PD).	Academy trust	Phase 1
Secure enough pupils (with conditional offers) to meet your PAN.	Academy trust	Phase 1
Submit your financial plans to your delivery officer for approval.	Academy trust	Phase 1

**Table 13 Ofsted inspections and school registration: checklist of activities**

<b>Activities to complete</b>	<b>Who has responsibility</b>	<b>Recommended timescales to complete</b>
Submit the completed GIAS form to the department.	Academy trust	Phase 2
Inform the trust when the inspection will take place.	Ofsted	Phase/4
Submit the required documentation for the pre-registration inspection.	Academy trust	Phase 4
Address any conditions of registration identified by Ofsted.	Academy trust	Phase 4/5
Provide approver details for DfE Sign-In	Academy trust	Phase 5

**Table 14 Readiness to open: checklist of activities**

<b>Activities to complete</b>	<b>Who has responsibility</b>	<b>Recommended timescales to complete</b>
Agree date/details of readiness to open meeting (ROM).	Delivery officer / academy trust	At least one month prior to the ROM (Phase 4)
Discussion/briefing on ROM.	Delivery officer / academy trust	At least one month prior to the ROM (Phase 4)
Completion of principal designate risk report.	Principal designate	At least two weeks prior to the ROM (Phase 4)
ROM meeting.	Principal designate, lead proposer, chair of academy trustees, delivery officer and ESFA.	Phase 4

ROM risk register and key actions document.	Delivery officer	Two weeks after ROM (Phase 4)
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**Table 15 Handover to ESFA: checklist of activities**

<b>Activities to complete</b>	<b>Who has responsibility</b>	<b>Recommended timescales to complete</b>
Complete actions generated from the ROM.	Academy trust	Phase 4
Meet with ESFA representative as required.	Academy trust/ESFA	Phase 4
Ensure your free school is prepared for an external expert visit during the first term if required.	Academy trust	First term
Sign up to the ESFA Information Exchange.	Academy trust	By the first week of opening
Complete and submit the land and buildings collection tool.	Academy trust	By the following November
Ensure that the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook are in place when the school opens, including formation of a finance committee, the appointment of external auditors, responsible officer and accounting officer.	Academy trust	By opening
Approval and submission to ESFA of the academy trust's budget forecast return outturn and the budget forecast return 3-year return.	Academy trust	Budget forecast return outturn in May. Budget forecast return 3- year in July
Completion and submission to ESFA of academies' financial management and governance self-assessment.	Academy trust	Within 3 months of opening

## Annex B: Memorandum and Articles of Association – confirmation of model articles checklist

DfE’s model articles have been designed to follow best practice in corporate, charitable and school governance. Academy trusts are therefore expected to adopt our model articles to establish their academy trust.

Trust Articles of Association (using the model document in Word, with tracked changes) should be submitted, with this completed form, to your delivery officer. Your delivery officer will need to be satisfied that they are in line with our model before recommending that ministers enter into a funding agreement to open your free school.

Free school academy trust	
Free school name	
Model articles used	Yes/No*
Date articles downloaded (from gov.uk)	

Please sign below to confirm that no changes have been made to the model clauses over and above those indicated as required within the model.

Signature of chair of academy trustees		Date	
Signature of senior executive leader		Date	

\*Please delete as appropriate.

## Annex C: Governance plan – checklist for academy trusts

All proposer groups **must complete** the checklist below before submitting governance plans to the department.

The checklist revolves around the 6 features of effective governance captured in the [Governance Handbook and Competency Framework](#) and highlights areas we commonly see incorrectly completed or overlooked resulting in delays in clearing plans. For each item, please reference the page number in which the information can be found. If you have answered 'No' to any of the questions, please include a brief explanation in the comments section.

The checklist should be signed by the lead proposer or chair of academy trustees to confirm their agreement that each item on the checklist has been addressed in the governance plan.

### Strategic leadership

	Completed	Page no.	Comments
Does the plan clearly and concisely outline the vision and ethos of the academy trust?			
Does the plan include processes to monitor and review progress against agreed strategic goals periodically and as necessary? <i>(This should include processes to monitor progress at key growth stages the trust has identified or if the performance drops)</i>			
Does the plan include mechanisms for enabling the board to listen, understand and respond to the voices of parents/carers, pupils, staff, local communities and employers?			
Does the plan include procedures for the board to set and manage risk appetite? <i>(This is the amount and type of risk that academy trusts are willing to take in order to meet objectives. Risks should be aligned with the academy trust's strategic priorities and improvement plans, intervention strategies should be in place and there should be plans to embed risk management at every layer of governance.)</i>			

## Accountability

	Completed	Page no.	Comments
Does the plan state how trustees will ensure they know their school's cohort?			
Does the plan set out <u>how</u> the board (and LGB, if applicable) will be involved in developing the strategic academic priorities for the school, in setting associated targets and in monitoring performance, in terms of both attainment and pupil progress?			
Does the plan state how the board (and LGB, if applicable) will monitor performance of the school? <i>(Does this plan outline the range of sources the board will consider to assess school performance?)</i>			
Does the plan have clear processes for overseeing and monitoring school improvement and providing constructive challenge to school leaders?			
Does the plan state what intervention will be used if improvement at the school is not progressing according to plan? <i>(The plan should outline how the board will ensure that senior leaders are challenged to improve the education of pupils)</i>			
Does the plan include a clear annual process for performance managing the head teacher? <i>(Does this process build in external challenge?)</i>			
Does the plan provide scope for the effective oversight of all other employees and the framework for their pay and conditions?			
Does the plan include details of a regular cycle of meetings and appropriate processes to support business and financial planning?			

	Completed	Page no.	Comments
Does the plan explain how governors will monitor and challenge how the academy trust is managing within its available resources and ensuring regularity, propriety and value for money?			

## People

	Completed	Page no.	Comments
Does the plan state how many members there will be?			
Does the plan include a biography for each member that clearly states how their skills and experience makes them suitable for their role?			
Does the plan state how many trustees there will be? <i>(If there will be more than 12 trustees, does the plan include a clear justification for this number?)</i> <i>(Note: trusts are still required to reserve 2 places at either board level or on every LGB for parent governors)</i>			
Does the plan state whether a chair of trustees and professional clerk are in place? <i>(If not, does the plan state how and by when the trust will recruit a chair of trustees and professional clerk?)</i>			
What is the split between members and trustees and is any overlap clearly articulated? <i>(The majority of members must be independent of the trustees. Trusts should also confirm whether there are family relationships between members and trustees).</i>			
Does the plan include a biography for each trustee, including the chair of trustees that clearly states how their skills and experience makes them suitable for their role? <i>(The trust should have all the necessary skills, as outlined in the <a href="#">Competency Framework for Governance</a>).</i>			

	Completed	Page no.	Comments
Does the plan include a clear succession plan for trustees? <i>In normal circumstances, no trustee should serve longer than two terms in office and the chair should be replaced every six years)</i>			
Does the plan include timed plans for when trustees will be recruited to any remaining positions?			
Does the plan consider what training the board/ individual trustees/LGB (if applicable) will need, both in preparation for the school's opening and on an ongoing basis?			
Does the plan address how this training will be provided, whether external specialists will be involved and what are the timeframes? <i>(The trust may wish to consider the training and support available via their local authority or the <a href="#">NGA training packages</a>)</i>			
Does the plan include a clear process for the induction of future trustees/governors?			
Does the plan include any plans for training/support for the AO and CFO (business manager/finance director) roles? <i>(This is particularly important if the individuals appointed are new to the role)</i>			
Does the plan state how many governors there will be on the LGB (if applicable)? Is a chair of governors in place? <i>(If there will be more than 10 governors, does the plan include a clear justification for this number?)</i>			

## Structures

	Completed	Page no.	Comments
Does the plan clearly outline how the board/committees will be structured? <i>(The structure should reflect the scale and structure of the organisation as well as the key functions expected of a governing body)</i>			
Does the plan include processes for ensuring appropriate communication			



	Completed	Page no.	Comments
between all levels and structures of governance and to pupils/students, parents/carers, staff and communities to ensure transparency of decision-making?			
For multi academy trusts, will the board of trustees manage the schools in the trust or will schools have local governing bodies (LGBs)? <i>(If the trust does not intend to have LGBs, does the board of trustees have the capacity to provide the necessary challenge and support to all schools within the trust?)</i>			
Does the plan clearly explain at which level the responsibilities of the board will be executed or delegated to the LGBs and committees or individuals? <i>(For instance: in determining each schools' vision, ethos and strategic direction; recruiting each school's principal; the performance management of each school's principal; determination of the HR policy and practice; oversight of each school's budget; assessment of risks for each school)</i> Once finalised, the scheme of delegation should be published on the school's website.			
Does the plan clearly state what structures are in place for LGBs to escalate issues to the board?			
Does the plan include processes for ensuring appropriate communication between all levels and structures of governance and to pupils/students, parents/carers, staff and communities to ensure transparency of decision-making?			
Does the plan include a developed terms of reference for committees?			
Does the plan clearly explain at which level the responsibilities of the board will be executed or delegated to committees or individuals?			
Does the plan set out how frequently committees/LGBs will meet and an			

	Completed	Page no.	Comments
<p>overarching work-plan for the academic year?  <i>(The work plan should be focused on school improvement and take account of the key areas of influence for the board)</i></p>			

## Compliance

	Completed	Page no.	Comments
Does the plan clearly set out how the board/LGB will execute its responsibilities around safeguarding, SEND, inclusion and Prevent?			
Does the plan set out how the board will monitor the impact of the pupil premium and other targeted funding streams?			

## Evaluation

	Completed	Page no.	Comments
<p>Does the plan include a skills audit that clearly identifies any skill gaps in the existing trustees?  <i>(There are a number of resources available online that trusts may wish use to identify the skills gaps in their governing body including the National Governors Association (NGA) <a href="#">skills audit and matrix</a>)</i></p>			
Does the plan state how skills gaps will be addressed through the recruitment of additional trustees or training?			
Does the plan include a clear process for how the board will manage their own performance (both individually and as a whole) and how the board will demonstrate its impact at the school? <i>(This should include commissioning external reviews of board effectiveness, particularly at key growth or transition points, to gain an independent expert assessment of strengths and areas for development)</i>			

	Completed	Page no.	Comments
For single academy trusts, does the plan include a clear process for <u>how</u> the board the measure the impact of the LGB? <i>(How will the LGB monitor its own impact?)</i>			

## Financial governance

	Completed	Page no.	Comments
Does the plan set out how trustees have ensured they understand their responsibilities and the legal framework in which the trust operates? <i>(Legal framework: Articles, Funding Agreement, Academy Trust Handbook, Charity Commission and company law. For example, has the academy trust looked at the financial management and governance questions newly opened academies have to answer?)</i>			
Does the plan clearly explain who the academy trust's accounting officer (AO) is and whether the individual understands the duties and responsibilities of the role/or set out the trust's plans to ensure they appoint an appropriate AO?			
Does the plan state who will be the lead finance governor(s) and explain their suitability for the role?			
Does the plan set out how the academy trust ensures appropriate oversight of financial transactions? <i>(For example, by having all the academy trust's property under the control of trustees; measures in place to prevent losses or misuse; having bank accounts and a financial system in place operated by more than one person; keeping and maintaining full and accurate accounting records; and preparing accruals accounts, giving a true and fair view of the trust's use of resources, in accordance with existing accounting standards)</i>			

	Completed	Page no.	Comments
Does the plan confirm the academy trust has a written scheme of delegation of financial powers that maintains robust internal control arrangements? <i>(For example, management checks/approval arrangements, financial regulations/procedures manual)</i>			
Does the academy trust have clear plans for assurance functions including the appointment of external auditors?			
Does the plan show how the chief financial officer will be held to account by the governing body?			
Does the plan set out how the academy trust has ensured they understand procurement rules and regulations and have appropriate controls in place, including connected party transactions and register of business interest? <i>(For example, are trustees providing any services/goods and, if so, are procurement rules being followed carefully?)</i>			

### Transition from pre-opening to open

	Completed	Page no.	Comments
Does the plan clearly outline the arrangements for when the board and LGB (if applicable) will start operating?			

Signed (by lead proposer or chair of trustees):

Name:

Date:

## Annex D: Section 10 consultation – checklist for all trusts

Below is a checklist that should be sent to your delivery officer when submitting your final consultation report. The questions asked are just a sample of the key issues to address. Your delivery officer will consider your entire report and provide feedback as necessary.

Questions	Responses
Over what period did your consultation take place?	[Exact dates]
How did you disseminate your consultation materials? (Online platform, emails, questionnaires, leaflets, letters inviting responses, events)	[Explanation]
List the respondents and stakeholders you proactively engaged with in your consultation process (such as local schools, local authorities, parents, community groups and leaders, local residents, prospective students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [Name]</li> <li>• [Name]</li> <li>• [Name]</li> <li>• [Name]</li> <li>• [Name]</li> </ul>
What information was made available to consultees? Which school policies did you share (such as admissions, SEND)?	[Explanation]
What information did you provide about the school's site?	[Explanation]
Did your consultation specifically ask respondents to confirm whether they agreed that your trust should open the new free school?	[Yes/No]
How many respondents in total did you get to this specific question?	[Number]
What percentage of respondents agreed that your academy trust should open the new school/ should not open the new school/ or made no comment/ other/were neutral?	[Number]
What issues were raised by respondents about any part of your consultation?	[Explanation]
What is the academy trust's response to each of these issues?	[Explanation]

Signed (by lead proposer or chair of trustees):

Name:

Date:

## **Annex E: What should an education brief contain?**

The education brief is one document that contains all your school's policies and strategies. This will make it easy for everyone involved in the organisation to understand the vision for your new school, how it will operate, the educational programme that the school will deliver, goals the school wishes to achieve and its ambitions for the future. The education brief should describe the following contents:

### **1. Vision, ethos and values**

- Context of the new school
- Mission statement
- Principles – the key values upon which the school will be based

### **2. School development planning cycle**

- Quality assurance and accountability system – how the school will quality assure its practices and outcomes
- Review and evaluation process – internal and external

### **3. Strategic objectives**

### **4. Key performance indicators and targets for at least the opening year**

### **5. Leadership and governance**

- SLT structure, roles, responsibilities and organisation chart
- Structure of the governing body, sub-committees, roles and responsibilities

### **6. Curriculum strategy**

- Principles upon which the curriculum is based
- How you will ensure the affordability and value of your curriculum (including key financial health and efficiency metrics)
- Curriculum programme, the number of lessons scheduled for each subject and/or programme for KS1, KS2, KS3, KS4 and Post 16 (as appropriate)
- Provision for EYFS if appropriate including provision for play
- Literacy and numeracy provision, including provision for literacy recovery
- Enrichment programme
- ICT to improve learning
- Provision for SEND, G&T, EAL and LAC
- Learning support

### **7. Quality of teaching**

- Approaches to pedagogy and expectations

- Lesson planning and differentiation
- Monitoring practice
- Improving the quality of teaching

## **8. Quality of learning**

- Approaches to learning and expectations
- Baseline testing, on entry and mid-year/phase
- Tracking system and pupil level data handling
- Standards to be attained and achieved
- Targets setting process
- Assessment, recording and reporting to parents

## **9. Staffing**

- General principles
- Staffing structure, roles and responsibilities, organisation chart
- Training and development
- Performance management
- Terms and conditions

## **10. School organisation**

- The school year and day, timing arrangements including registration timings
- Student organisation/settings/groupings
- Eating arrangements
- Commissioning and reintegration to home school arrangements (for AP or PRU)

## **11. Student support services**

- Welfare/pastoral arrangements
- Transition arrangements
- Student, numbers on roll with a chart indicating expected numbers from opening through to year when school will be full
- Attendance and registration arrangements
- Behaviour for learning and conduct outside the classroom, support, rewards and sanctions

## **12. Working with others**

- Including parents and multi-agency support

## Annex F: Safeguarding checklist

Below is a checklist that summarises the requirements of the safeguarding arrangements you must have in place. It provides a useful aide so trusts can ensure compliance. However, this does not replace the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), or the [Keeping children safe in education](#) (KCSIE) or [Working together to safeguard children](#) (WT) statutory guidance trusts must have regard to.

### Audit plan

Has the school completed a safeguarding self-assessment/audit?	Yes / No	
Has the school utilised the audit action plan/outcomes?	Yes / No	

### Policies and procedures

<p>Child Protection Policy (<i>updated annually and available publicly</i>) KCSIE</p> <p>Policy contributes to interagency working in line with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' KCSIE</p> <p>Safeguarding procedures take into account local procedures set up by Safeguarding partners KCSIE</p>	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p>	<p>Date of last policy review:</p>
<p>Staff Behaviour Policy/Code of Conduct (<i>relationships, social media and acceptable use of technologies</i>) KCSIE</p> <p>Staff induction should include briefing on Child Protection Policy, Staff conduct, role of DSL and part 1 of KCSIE Annex C KCSIE</p> <p>All staff should be aware of early help process and their role within it KCSIE</p>	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p>	<p>Date of last policy review:</p> <p>Date of Staff briefing:</p>



<p>Appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect learners from harmful online material. <i>KCSIE</i></p> <p>Whistleblowing procedures in place and known by all stakeholders <i>(structures to report internally and beyond)</i> <i>KCSIE</i></p>	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p>	<p>Date of last policy review:</p>
<p>Staff know how to make a complaint and understand whistleblowing policy <i>(structures to report internally and beyond)</i> <i>KCSIE</i></p>	<p>Yes / No</p>	<p>Date of last policy review:</p>
<p>The school has a safer recruitment policy and adopts procedures that deter, reject or identify those who might be unsuitable to work with children. <i>KCSIE</i></p>	<p>Yes / No</p>	<p>Date of last policy review:</p>
<p>Policy and procedures for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• children’s health and safety and wellbeing including mental health</li> <li>• meeting the needs of SEND learners</li> <li>• use of reasonable force (including recording, monitoring and student voice)</li> <li>• learners with medical conditions</li> <li>• first aid</li> <li>• educational visits</li> <li>• intimate care and emotional wellbeing</li> <li>• online safety and associated issues appropriate arrangements to ensure children’s and learner’s security, taking into account the local context</li> <li>• early years settings implement safe use of mobile phones/cameras policy</li> <li>• risk assessment</li> <li>• safe use of electronic and social media by staff and learners</li> <li>• site safety and secure access</li> <li>• attendance policy including CME</li> </ul>	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p>	<p>Date adopted by school:</p>

## Designated person

DSL in place and member of SLT ( <i>Training refreshed every 2 years/other updates at least annually</i> )  <i>Annex C KCSIE</i>	Yes / No	Name:  Date of last training:
Deputy DSL/cover for DSL in place ( <i>Including holidays/out of hours</i> )  <i>Annex C KCSIE</i>	Yes / No	Name:  Date of last training:
Nominated governor/proprietor for safeguarding	Yes / No	Name:  Date of last training:
Governor and trustees safeguarding training	Yes / No	Name:  Date of last training:

## Concerns, record keeping and sharing information

Any concerns are shared immediately with DSL or social care ( <i>In line with safeguarding partner thresholds and DSL informed. The DSL is responsible for referrals</i> ) <i>KCSIE</i>	Yes / No	
Plans are in place with agreed procedures to protect children <i>Flowchart Part one KCSIE</i>	Yes / No	
Written records are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• made in a timely way</li> <li>• held securely</li> <li>• shared appropriately with consent</li> </ul>	Yes / No	
Staff have awareness of safeguarding issues including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• child abduction and community safety incidents</li> <li>• children missing from education</li> <li>• children missing from home or care</li> <li>• child sexual exploitation (CSE)</li> </ul>	Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No Yes / No	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• child criminal exploitation (CCE)</li> <li>• county lines</li> <li>• cybercrime</li> <li>• bullying including cyberbullying</li> <li>• domestic abuse</li> <li>• drugs</li> <li>• fabricated or induced illness</li> <li>• faith abuse</li> <li>• female genital mutilation (FGM)</li> <li>• forced marriage</li> <li>• gangs and youth violence</li> <li>• gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)</li> <li>• mental health</li> <li>• private fostering</li> <li>• preventing radicalisation</li> <li>• sexting</li> <li>• sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges</li> <li>• teenage relationship abuse</li> <li>• trafficking</li> </ul>	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p>	
<i>Para 41-43 &amp; Annex B KCSIE</i>		
FGM mandatory reporting <i>KCSIE</i>	Yes / No	
Prevent duty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk assessment</li> <li>• Partnership working</li> <li>• Staff training</li> <li>• IT policy</li> </ul> <i>KCSIE</i>	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p>	
Understand Channel Programme <i>KCSIE</i>	Yes / No	

## Looked-after-children (LAC)

Designated teacher for LAC in place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has undertaken designated teacher training</li> <li>• holds information on looked-after students including, PEP, social worker, virtual head teacher contact</li> <li>• delivers annual report to governors</li> </ul>	Yes / No	Name:
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>works with the virtual school head teacher on PP funding and PEP</li> </ul> <p><i>KCSIE</i> <i>Children &amp; Young Persons Act 2008</i></p>		
<p>Staff have information on looked after status/contact arrangements/care arrangements</p> <p><i>KCSIE</i></p>	Yes / No	Name:

## Children not in school

<p>Absences are followed up;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>first day calling</li> <li>home visits</li> <li>other agencies alerted, LA informed of deletion from register</li> </ul>	Yes / No	
<p>Missing children arrangements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reporting in line with statutory guidance/LA guidelines (on and off roll)</li> <li>off roll procedures</li> <li>reasonable enquiries to establish whereabouts</li> </ul> <p>For children who go missing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>leaders and managers alert to signs that CME are at risk</li> <li>clear policies and procedures</li> <li>risks are understood and minimised</li> <li>local arrangements to notify LA, especially deletion from register</li> </ul>	Yes / No	
<p>Exclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>communications to parents/carers in line with guidance</li> <li>notify governors and LA of permanent exclusion, more than 5 days or 10 lunchtimes in a term, missing exam</li> <li>emergency review for children with SEN and LAC before exclusion</li> <li>role of governors</li> <li>6<sup>th</sup> day provision in place</li> </ul>		

<a href="#"><u>School suspensions and permanent exclusions</u></a>		
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## Single central register (SCR)

SCR covers all staff who work at the school including supply and teacher trainees	Yes / No	
<p>SCR records whether the following <b>checks</b> have been carried out, <b>certificates obtained</b>, <b>date</b> on which checks were completed and <b>by whom</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identity</li> <li>• barred list</li> <li>• enhanced DBS (with barred list check depending on role)</li> <li>• prohibition from teaching</li> <li>• section 128 check</li> <li>• professional qualifications</li> <li>• right to work in the UK</li> <li>• further checks on people working/living outside the UK (including EEA)</li> <li>• appropriate disqualification by association checks (early/late years provision)</li> </ul> <p><i>KCSIE</i></p>	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p> <p>Yes / No</p>	
<p>Evidence of references on HR files</p> <p>(Requested directly by the school on all candidates including internal candidates, scrutinised prior to appointment, evidence of follow up where appropriate)</p> <p><i>KCSIE</i></p>	Yes / No	
There are clear arrangements for monitoring and management of the SCR	Yes / No	
Undertake appropriate checks on all visitors who work with children or staff or to address assemblies	Yes / No	

## Allegations

Nominated governor/case manager to liaise with LADO officer in the event of allegations against head teacher  <i>KCSIE</i>	Yes / No	
Procedures in place to handle allegations against staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• referral to LADO officer</li> <li>• referral to DBS and consider referral to TRA when needed</li> </ul> <i>KCSIE</i>	Yes / No	
Clear comprehensive records  <i>KCSIE</i>		
Policy and procedures in place to deal with child-on-child abuse  <i>KCSIE</i>	Yes / No	

## Training

Staff undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction  <i>KCSIE</i>	Yes / No	
The whole school staff team have completed safeguarding basic awareness training which is regularly updated (at least annually), including non-teaching staff such as site maintenance staff, midday assistants and governors	Yes / No	
Whole staff training on local arrangements for referral and reporting	Yes / No	
Staff have undertaken input/briefing on Staff have undertaken input/briefing on KCSIE Part 1	Yes / No	
Governors have undertaken input/briefing on KCSIE Parts 2 & 3	Yes / No	

## Training undertaken

	DSL	Staff	Children	
Child abduction and community safety incidents				
Children missing from education				
Children missing from home or care				
Child sexual exploitation (CSE)				
Child criminal exploitation (CCE)				
County lines				
Cybercrime				
Bullying including cyberbullying				
Domestic abuse				
Drugs				
Fabricated or induced illness				
Faith abuse				
Female genital mutilation (FGM)				
Forced marriage				
Gangs and youth violence				
Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)				
Mental health				
Private fostering				
Preventing radicalisation				
Sexting				
Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges				
Teenage relationship abuse				
Trafficking				
Safeguarding				
Ensure that children are taught about safeguarding (online, PSHE, SRE)				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>children able to respond to and calculate risk effectively</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>children and learners are aware of support available to them.</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>children and learners are helped to keep themselves safe from bullying, homophobic behaviour, racism, sexism and other discrimination</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discriminatory behaviours are challenged</li> </ul>				

### Referrals in the past year

	Number	Comments
Number of children the school have considered as needing additional support/at risk		
Number of children looked-after		
Number of children referred to children's social care		
Number of referrals that were accepted by children's social care		
Number of referrals for which a CAF was recommended		
Number of CAFs running in the school Number of CAFs where school is the lead professional		

### Numbers of incidents in school in the past year

Racism	Bullying	Homophobia	PVE	CSE	FGM	FM
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<p><b>Key questions for referrals and incident data</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does this compare to previous years' data?</li> <li>Why are numbers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>high/low?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ increased/decreased rapidly/steadily?</li></ul> <p>Has staff training or lack of training impacted on figures?</p> <p>How many of these concerns have been managed through universal response/co-ordinated response/specialist response?</p>	
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