

# Gesher School

The Hope Centre, 228 Walm Lane, London NW2 3BS

**Inspection date**

6 May 2021

**Overall outcome**

**The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material changes relating to the school provision are implemented**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

#### *All paragraphs*

- The previous standard inspection in June 2018 judged the quality of education to be outstanding. Pupils made strong progress with their speech, language and communication skills, and in mathematics and science. This was because pupils were taught particularly well. The curriculum was planned effectively, ensuring that pupils gained a broad experience. This was enhanced by the wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- This material change inspection found that leaders have continued to ensure that the curriculum is well planned. The proposed curriculum for secondary-aged pupils provides a broad and aspirational experience for pupils. It covers a wide range of subjects, including English, mathematics, science, art, history, Jewish studies, religious studies, physical education, and design and technology. The curriculum is planned flexibly so that it takes account of pupils' individual needs. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who have an education and health care (EHC) plan.
- The curriculum ensures that pupils are likely to gain the skills necessary to make sense of the wider world. For example, the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, including careers guidance, promotes fundamental British values appropriately. Pupils are taught about the importance of respecting others, particularly in relation to the protected characteristics as set out in the 2010 Equality Act. The policy for relationship and sex education enhances this work further and the detailed scheme of work shows what pupils should know by the ages of 11 and 16.
- The Jewish studies curriculum reflects the school's ethos well. The detailed life skills programme helps to ensure that pupils leave school equipped with the knowledge they need for life after school. Information about these programmes is detailed and the plans show how they link together to provide a well-thought-out programme for pupils.

- Leaders have drawn up comprehensive teaching programmes for pupils in Years 7 to 11. These set out the objectives for each subject and what staff expect pupils to learn. In addition, staff have prepared lesson plans that show not just what is to be taught but when and how. The range of extra-curricular activities proposed by leaders is suitably broad and helps to build pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Arrangements for checking pupils' achievements and reporting these to parents are thorough. As a result, leaders' proposals for extending the school to cover secondary education are clear, well-founded and aspirational.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards if the Department for Education (DfE) approves the material change.

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

### *All paragraphs*

- The previous inspection found that the school's work to promote pupils' personal development was outstanding.
- This inspection found that leaders and governors continue to put pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development at the heart of their work. This is illustrated by the PSHE programme as well the plans for Jewish and religious studies. There is also a detailed behaviour policy that sets out the school's expectations. Together, these policies and programmes promote pupils' understanding of right from wrong. Leaders use a commercial programme to monitor patterns of behaviour so that they can take appropriate action should concerns arise.
- The PSHE and Jewish and religious studies programmes, promote pupils' respect for other religious and cultural traditions. They also develop a broad knowledge of how government in England works. Planned visits to places of interest enhance this knowledge appropriately.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards listed above if the DfE approves the material change.

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

### *Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b) and 32(1)(c)*

- The previous standard inspection judged that safeguarding arrangements were effective. Pupils' welfare was at the top of leaders' and governors' agendas.
- This inspection found that leaders have maintained their focus on the welfare, health and safety of pupils. The safeguarding policy has been updated to reflect current guidance, including procedures for safeguarding pupils during the COVID-19 pandemic. The policy is comprehensive and refers to the school's proposal for a material change. For example, there are specific references to safety in science, and design and technology for secondary-aged pupils. The policy also identifies links with other relevant policies, such as health and safety, behaviour and staff recruitment. All policies are available to parents and carers through the school's website.
- Leaders and staff have developed strong links with outside agencies, including those in the local authorities from which they take pupils. In addition, the school employs a

wide range of therapists to support pupils' social and emotional needs. Leaders have clear proposals to extend this support as the school grows.

- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards listed above if the DfE approves the material change.

*Paragraphs 11, 12, 14, 16, 16(a) and 16(b)*

- The previous inspection found that arrangements to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety were secure.
- This inspection found that arrangements to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety remain secure. The health and safety policy has been adjusted effectively to reflect the proposed new building. An external contractor has carried out a fire risk assessment for the new building and identified potential risks which have been acted on. For example, the fire alarm in the new building has been upgraded and new signage installed. Leaders have also carried out risk assessments to ensure that any identified concerns are acted on in a timely manner.
- Leaders have drawn up a comprehensive staff handbook that includes the policy for supervision around the school, including at breaktimes and lunchtimes. This is supplemented by clear rota arrangements to ensure there is always sufficient supervision of pupils. For example, leaders use a minimum ratio of four adults to 16 pupils to plan the supervision rota.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards listed above if the DfE approves the material change.

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

*All paragraphs*

- The previous inspection found that leaders' pre-employment checks on staff were robust. The school's single central record of staff recruitment checks was up to date and complied with the guidance.
- This inspection found that leaders' pre-employment vetting checks on staff follow government guidance. The single central record is meticulously maintained, complies with current guidance and records all staff, including those that are temporary. Checks on governors are also up to date and incorporate checks under section 128 of the 2008 Act.
- Policies for safer recruitment and staff induction and probation reinforce the school's work to ensure the suitability of staff. Leaders and governors are suitably trained in safer recruitment principles and procedures.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards if the DfE approves the material change.

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

*All paragraphs*

- The school plans to move to new premises at Cannon Lane, Pinner HA1 5JF in September 2021. The building is a purpose-built primary school that has recently closed. It is in particularly good order and has all the infrastructure needed for a

modern school, including phone and internet connections, interactive whiteboards, air-conditioning, heating, water and lighting.

- All the paragraphs in this part of the independent school standards are met in full. As leaders note, the building is 'fit for purpose'. It does not require refurbishment. Lighting, both inside and outside, is suitable, as are the acoustics in classrooms. Security is strong with a school-wide CCTV system, automatic gates and electronic entry to the site.
- Drinking water is provided in each classroom. There are also drinking fountains in the playground. Shower and toilet facilities are suitable and are provided separately for boys and girls. The hot water supply is temperature controlled. There is a dedicated medical room, which is close to the toilets.
- Outdoor space is generous with both hard and soft play areas. There are dedicated outdoor areas for children in the early years. The playground has a wide range of play equipment, including swings, climbing frames and outdoor fitness machines. There are numerous covered areas available for outside play.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards if the DfE approves the material change.

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

##### *Paragraphs 34, 34(a), 34(b), 34(c)*

- The previous inspection judged that leadership and management were outstanding. Trustees, governors and leaders had a shared vision for the school. In addition, the curriculum was extremely well planned.
- This inspection found that trustees, governors and leaders continue to be passionate about the school's aims and purpose. They are highly aspirational for pupils and are determined to provide the highest quality of education.
- Leaders have developed a wide range of policies and procedures to support their proposal to provide pupils education in Years 7 to 11. The detail of these policies is impressive and sets out in detail leaders' expectations. In addition, leaders have ensured that the proposed curriculum, policies and plans meet the independent school standards.
- All staff have up-to-date training on issues related to safeguarding. The school has a number of trained first aiders, and the designated safeguarding lead has a level 3 qualification.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards if the DfE approves the material change.

#### Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders have drawn up an accessibility plan that meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school is likely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that are relevant to the material change.

## School details

Unique reference number	144738
DfE registration number	304/6005
Inspection number	10181875

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Other independent school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	The Gesher Trust
Chair	Howard Zetter
Headteacher	Miss Tamaryn Yartu
Annual fees (day pupils)	£31,500 to £39,500
Telephone number	020 7884 5102
Website	<a href="http://www.gesherschool.com">www.gesherschool.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@gesherschool.com">admin@gesherschool.com</a>
Dates of previous standard inspection	5–7 June 2018

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11	4 to 16	4 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	40	120	120

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	40	120
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	40	120
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	25	Up to 120
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	25	Up to 120

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	49.75	79.6
Number of part-time teaching staff	20	30
Number of staff in the welfare provision	4	9

## Information about this school

- Gesher School currently caters for pupils with SEND aged four to 11.
- The school's religious ethos is Jewish, but it admits pupils from all faiths. Most pupils have speech, language, communication and social needs. The school specialises in supporting pupils who have autism spectrum disorder.
- The school opened in September 2017. Currently, most pupils have an EHC plan and are funded by their local authority.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the DfE to consider the school's application for a material change to the location of the school's premises and registered address to Cannon Lane, Pinner HA5 1JF. The application also includes an increase in the number of pupils to 120 and age range to four to 16. The school intends to admit pupils who have autism spectrum disorder and who have speech, language, communication and social needs.
- The inspection was conducted with two days' notice.
- The focus of the inspection was to consider whether the independent school standards in Parts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 8 were met.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the executive headteacher and an external consultant. The inspector met with two governors, who also represented the Geshar Trust, to discuss how they ensured that the independent school standards were met.
- The inspector considered a wide range of written policies, including those for the curriculum, safeguarding, behaviour, safe recruitment, assessment, staff training, health and safety and risk assessments. The inspector toured the building with the headteacher, the executive headteacher and the external consultant.

## Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector



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