

Inspection of Gateshead Jewish Boarding School

10 Rydal Street, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE8 1HG

Inspection dates: 2 to 4 November 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a caring school. Leaders are approachable. Pupils feel safe and valued. Bullying is extremely rare. Staff deal promptly with any concerns that pupils have. Pupils are proud of their school and feel part of a community. One pupil described everyone in the school as being 'united'. Pupils show consistently positive attitudes to learning. They attend well and enjoy the challenge of their lessons. Pupils are eager to talk about how much they are learning.

Leaders have high expectations of themselves, staff and pupils. Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum. The school day is long, with Kodesh studies in the morning and secular subjects in the afternoon. Pupils stay motivated and focused throughout the day. They love to learn about their faith and culture, but they are also pleased to have the chance to learn new subjects and study for GCSEs. All subjects are taught by well-qualified teachers. However, staff do not have many opportunities to attend refresher training or discuss subject developments with colleagues.

Pupils learn about themselves and the world around them. However, the programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE) does not cover all the protected characteristics. This means the proprietor is failing to meet some of the independent school standards.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders ensure there is an ambitious curriculum. The secular subject offer includes English, mathematics, physics, business studies, citizenship, information technology and physical education. Teachers follow the national curriculum for these subjects. Pupils can take functional skills qualifications and GCSEs. Teachers are all subject specialists who exude a passion for their subject. Pupils show respect and passion for all their subjects. Pupils say the Kodesh and secular lessons complement each other. For example, a group of pupils explained how they learn skills in mathematics that help them study the Talmud.

Teachers have a clear understanding of pupils' starting points. When pupils join the school, leaders gather information about their ability to learn and solve problems. Subject leaders check what pupils know and can do. Teachers use this information to adapt their curriculum plans. Schemes of work are well sequenced. Teachers identify key learning points and ensure pupils know them. Staff regularly check pupils' understanding of what is being taught. Staff are quick to address any misconceptions or gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities well. Leaders are quick to identify any additional needs that pupils may have. Leaders set up extra help for pupils when this is needed. For example, pupils have access to support teachers for their Kodesh lessons. If a pupil has an education, health and care plan, they receive additional support. Sometimes this is from a local special school.

Leaders understand that books are significant in the Jewish community. Leaders prioritise reading in school. They identify gaps in pupils' word knowledge and reading fluency. Pupils who need help to improve their reading follow an intervention programme. The school library is a welcoming space but is underdeveloped at present. Leaders are in the process of making a link with the local community library service. COVID-19 has delayed this improvement work.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are excellent. Leaders have established in pupils a desire to know more about their world and debate ideas. Pupils want to learn, at times, simply for the desire to discuss and acquire knowledge. Pupils are confident in their opinions. They also show respect and consideration to their peers, staff and visitors. Pupils expect to have a positive work ethic. They are keen to be at school and attend very well.

Pupils' motivation to be part of the school's community is reflected in their willingness to participate in extra-curricular activities. These activities include putting on shows, developing a school magazine, singing in the choir and visiting particular communities in the locality, such as a local care home for the elderly.

There are policies and learning plans in place for PSHE and relationships and sex education (RSE). Leaders have consulted with parents on the RSE policy. Parents are aware of their right to withdraw their son from sex education lessons.

The school provision for PSHE is woven throughout the Kodesh and secular curriculums. Pupils learn about themselves and the world in which they live. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They learn about democracy through school council elections and mock elections. Pupils in all year groups learn about the world of work and employability skills. Older pupils get independent careers advice and work experience within the community. Pupils respect people who are different to them and know about other cultures and faiths. Pupils are not, however, taught about all of the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010. This means they are not fully prepared for life in modern Britain.

The ethos, vision and shared values of the school come across clearly in school policies and in the way governors and staff interact with pupils. Governors have a wide range of experience and skills. They monitor school leaders closely through regular meetings and visits to the school.

Leaders work closely with community stakeholders, including parents. Parents speak highly of the school and its leaders. Parents say their child is happy at school and feels safe. Parents appreciate the positive behaviour in the school and how excited their child is about what they are learning. One parent said, 'My son loves the school and he learns a lot in a very good range of subjects'.

Staff feel well supported by leaders. However, teachers do not get much professional development or time to discuss their practice with other teachers. This is something governors are aware of and are working towards implementation.

Leaders have failed to meet the independent school standards that relate to the teaching of the protected characteristics.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The culture of safeguarding in the school is strengthened by leaders' knowledge of their local community and the positive relationships they have with parents. Pupils trust school staff and are confident about speaking to them if they are worried about anything.

The proprietor ensures that staff receive regular training in child protection and health and safety. The designated lead for safeguarding (DSL) and the two deputy DSLs have received enhanced training in child protection. The DSL knows how to identify pupils who may need additional help and support. He is quick to make any necessary referrals to external agencies. He keeps detailed records relating to all incidents and concerns.

The proprietor ensures that the school is a safe place for pupils and staff. The maintenance of the school building and safety equipment is checked on a weekly basis.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders are ambitious and committed to improving the school. However, subject staff have few opportunities to meet as a staff team and have limited access to professional development outside of school. This is restricting potential improvements to the teaching of the curriculum. Leaders should review the opportunities teachers have to meet with each other and engage in subject-specific professional development.
- There is a broad PSHE curriculum which supports pupils' personal development. However, leaders have not ensured that pupils are taught about the protected characteristics of sexual orientation and gender reassignment. This is limiting pupils' understanding of the legal rights of people with protected characteristics and not preparing pupils fully for life in modern Britain. Leaders should ensure that pupils develop an understanding of, and respect for, all nine of the protected characteristics as defined in law.

How can I feed back my views?

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If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	108414
DfE registration number	390/6002
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10202197
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	10 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	113
Proprietor	Gateshead Jewish Boarding School
Chair	David Schleider
Headteacher	Naftoli Wolinsky
Annual fees (day pupils)	Contributions from parents and the community
Telephone number	0191 477 1431
Website	The school does not have a website
Email address	admin@gjbs.gateshead.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 to 12 July 2018

Information about this school

- The Gateshead Jewish Boarding School is a registered charity. It is run by trustees who have set up a governing body to oversee the leadership and management of the school.
- The school is also known as Gateshead Mechina.
- The school is registered for up to 147 pupils.
- The school caters for boys of differing abilities whose families are part of the Orthodox Jewish community.
- Parents send their sons to the school to enable them to gain a sound knowledge of the Jewish faith by studying the Talmud (the core of the Kodesh curriculum). Pupils also study for GCSEs. Most pupils leave the school to attend a yeshiva at the end of Year 10. However, a small number leave for other destinations, such as local colleges.
- The school uses the services of Haskel School, an independent special school, as an alternative provider of education.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders including the DSL. They also met with a range of other staff, the chair of the proprietorial board and governors.
- Inspectors undertook a tour of the school and visited the classrooms, social areas and other facilities. They checked the school buildings and grounds against the independent school standards.
- Inspectors did deep dives into English, mathematics, physics and business studies. The deep dive for each subject included a meeting with curriculum leaders and a review of subject documents and plans. The deep dive also involved lesson visits, meetings with pupils and scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited lessons of other subjects taught at the school and looked at pupils' work from these subjects. They observed pupils' behaviour around the school throughout the day, including break and in lessons.
- Inspectors scrutinised school documents and the arrangements to safeguard pupils. This included checking the school's safeguarding systems and the single

central record, meeting with the DSL and speaking with staff and pupils about safeguarding.

- Inspectors had contact with 60 parents through written responses to Ofsted's parental questionnaire and free-text entries to Parent View. They considered surveys completed by 10 staff. They met with pupils to gain their views and received 49 written responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders from Haskel School.

Inspection team

Patricia Head, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gordon Watts

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
 - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which-
 - 2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act;
 - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.
 - 2A(1)(b) ensures that every registered pupil who is provided with secondary education at the school is provided with relationships and sex education, except in so far as the pupil is excused as mentioned in sub-paragraph (2),
 - 2A(1)(d) in making arrangements for the purposes of paragraphs (a), (b) or (c), has regard to any guidance under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 that applies in relation to the provision of education by maintained schools.

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

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor-
 - 5(b)(vi) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

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