

Inspection of The Gateshead Cheder School

Bede House, Sunderland Road, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE8 3HY

Inspection dates:

6 to 8 July 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Inadequate

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school and attend regularly. They feel safe and adults make sure that they are. Pupils say that behaviour has improved since the last inspection. The headteacher expects pupils to behave well and work hard. Pupils rise to these expectations. They say that although bullying happened occasionally in the past, it is unlikely to happen now. If it did, they are confident that adults would deal with it quickly.

Over recent years, pupils have accessed a narrow curriculum. This has resulted in some gaps in pupils' knowledge. Pupils enjoy their Hebrew studies on a morning and secular curriculum every afternoon. Long-term curriculum plans are now in place for a wide range of subjects. These plans are new but beginning to support pupils to learn more. These wider curriculum subjects are being fully implemented gradually across the school. Pupils are beginning to catch up.

Pupils enjoy enrichment activities such as singing in the choir or learning to ride a bicycle safely. They benefit from educational visits to the Lake District or local historical areas. Pupils learn some aspects of the fundamental British values. They learn basic facts about some world religions in their Hebrew studies. However, pupils do not learn sufficient information about tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, or that the law protects certain groups of people in society. As a result, the proprietary body is not making sure that the independent school standards are met.

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

The headteacher has prioritised developing a broader curriculum offer. All leaders have contributed to producing a well-sequenced, ambitious curriculum design. Well-structured long-term plans are in place and delivered for English, mathematics and science. In other curriculum subjects, including geography and personal, social and health education, plans are also well structured and beginning to be delivered to most pupils. In technological subjects such as design and technology and computing, plans are in the earliest stages and due to be rolled out fully in September.

The headteacher leads on most of the curriculum subjects. This is because there are few staff with leadership responsibilities. He has appointed teachers to some subject leadership roles. They require further leadership development. Leaders check what pupils know and can do in mathematics and English. The headteacher has designed an appropriate assessment system for wider curriculum subjects, but this is not fully embedded.

Leaders' recent curriculum plans for geography are well sequenced. They have been introduced up to Year 5. In key stage 1, pupils are confident to use geographical terms such as 'locality', 'physical features' and 'climate'. Pupils in key stage 2 can name some continents, oceans, capital cities and landmarks in Europe. Pupils in key stage 2 have some gaps in their knowledge. This is because the sequence of

learning in geography is new and previous learning has been limited. Assessment in these subjects is beginning to help teachers to adapt the lessons specifically to pupils' exact starting points. There is more work to do for this to be in place and embedded.

Mathematics lessons are well sequenced. Pupils solve mathematical problems by recalling the facts they know. For example, when calculating the perimeter of a segment of a circle, pupils recalled their knowledge of measurement and division. Teachers check pupils' understanding and adjust their teaching accordingly if pupils have a misconception.

A coherent curriculum is place for science up to Year 7. In Years 8 to 10, science is based on the GCSE specification. The science curriculum design includes new content to broaden pupils' scientific knowledge. Teachers assess what pupils know and understand in science lessons. Leaders plan to embed the new whole-school assessment system at the end of each year.

Children get off to a strong start in the early years. The leader and staff understand how young children learn. Children use early mathematical knowledge to count, measure and compare lengths of cardboard when constructing models. By the end of Reception, they are ready for the mathematics curriculum in key stage 1. In 'understanding the world', they experiment with natural materials. Children know to add water to make sand firm when they are building sand models. They make their own maps and learn about different cultures around the world. Leaders have used research to develop the outdoor learning environment. Children take part in learning with palpable enthusiasm.

Leaders have recently introduced a new phonics programme in Reception classes. They plan to roll out the full programme in September. This will include children applying their phonics knowledge when writing. The Reception class teacher accessed training and has shared this knowledge with other Reception staff. Leaders have purchased new reading books to match the sounds that children know. Children are becoming fluent readers. However, pupils in key stage 1 learn to read in a different way. They do not access the same phonics programme. Pupils do not have any books to take home so that they can practise their reading. For some pupils in key stage 1, there is a delay in their reading fluency. Leaders intend to introduce the phonics sessions into key stage 1 in September.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) follows external professional recommendations. This has improved pupils' speech and language and their physical development. The SENCo provides additional reading tuition for pupils in key stage 1.

Leaders promote some aspects of the fundamental British values such as democracy, individual liberty, rule of law and mutual respect. However, the promotion of tolerance of different faiths and those who have no faith is not as well planned.

Leaders' written curriculum policy includes what they will teach pupils about some of the protected characteristics and differences in society that are protected in law. However, this does not include all of them. Leaders refuse to teach pupils about sexual orientation, gender reassignment or lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans. Pupils do not understand that these groups of people are protected by law. The relevant independent schools standards are not met.

Leaders have withdrawn the sex education part of the relationship, sex education and health education for every pupil, due to parental request. However, the school's remaining relationships education does not meet the requirements of the end-of-secondary statement, with regard to teaching about sex, gender and sexual orientation.

Staff feel valued and welcome the recent improvements to the quality of education. The headteacher is mindful of staff workload. The members of the proprietary body know their responsibilities but have not ensured that all of the independent school standards are met. The proprietary body ensures that the school handles complaints effectively and that the related independent school standard is met.

Leaders have requested a material change to increase the school capacity from 350 pupils to 475. The independent school standards which are met in this inspection, are likely to be met if the Department for Education (DfE) decides to approve the material change.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) has ensured that three other leaders are trained as deputy DSLs. The proprietor has made sure that the safeguarding policy is made available to parents. The policy is detailed and in line with government guidance. Staff have accessed relevant and up-to-date safeguarding training. They are aware of the signs of neglect or abuse, and know how to follow the systems to record concerns. The premises manager ensures that the school premises and grounds are safe.

Leaders make sure that they carry out necessary recruitment checks on all adults who work or volunteer in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The headteacher leads on almost all curriculum subjects. This is because of a lack of staff appointed to leadership roles. This means the significant improvements the headteacher has made to the curriculum are not fully embedded. Curriculum leaders are new to the role and have not had leadership training. The proprietor,

governors and headteacher should ensure that those new to curriculum leadership roles access appropriate and relevant professional development.

- In English and mathematics, schemes of work are in place and delivered. However, other curriculum subjects are in their early stages. Many older pupils have gaps in their knowledge in wider curriculum subjects from missed learning over recent years. Leaders should ensure that they embed schemes of work for all wider curriculum subjects across the school as soon as possible.
- Over recent years, there has been no assessment system to check how well pupils have understood what they have learned in subjects other than mathematics and English. The headteacher has designed and introduced a new assessment system for wider curriculum subjects. This system is still in its infancy. This means teachers have only recently started to assess the exact starting points of pupils when they have gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should ensure that the new assessment system is in place and staff are trained to implement it fully across all foundation curriculum subjects.
- Pupils in key stage 1 do not access the same systematic, synthetic, phonics (SSP) programme as younger pupils. They learn to read differently to the children in Reception who have started an SSP this year. For some pupils in key stage 1, this means that they are not becoming fluent readers quickly enough. Leaders should ensure that all key stage 1 staff access the relevant training to competently deliver high-quality phonics to pupils.
- Leaders do not teach, or actively promote, the protected characteristics of sexual orientation or gender reassignment to older pupils. As a result, pupils do not have any understanding of how people with protected characteristics are protected by the law. This also means that pupils are not being fully prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum delivered encourages pupils to understand and respect other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

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

School details

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| Unique reference number | 136000 |
| DfE registration number | 390/6008 |
| Local authority | Gateshead |
| Inspection number | 10212946 |
| Type of school | Other Independent School |
| School category | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Boys |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 347 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 25 |
| Proprietor | The Gateshead Cheder Ltd |
| Chair | Pinchos Abenson |
| Headteacher | Shimon Wallace |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £0 to £3,328 |
| Telephone number | 0191 477 7255 |
| Website | None |
| Email address | mrsrebenwurzels@thecheder.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 2 to 4 April 2019 |

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed.
- The school is an Orthodox Jewish school with a Jewish ethos. It provides education for up to 350 boys between the ages of three and 16 years.
- The school has 25 children in the early years who attend on a part-time basis.
- A small number of pupils with SEND attend an alternative education provision at Haskel School.

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.

The DfE requested that inspectors considered a complaint related to concerns around safeguarding and pupils' well-being.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, who is also the DSL and the curriculum leader for several subjects, including geography, mathematics and science. Inspectors also met with the chair of the board of governors, the chair of the proprietary board, the premises manager, the SENCo, curriculum leaders and several teaching staff.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Additional evidence was gathered to inspect the quality of education. Inspectors looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about other curriculum subjects.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector carried out checks on the single central record to ensure that all recruitment and safety checks on staff were completed correctly. The lead inspector checked the safeguarding policy and safeguarding records, and met with the DSL. Inspectors gathered evidence on safeguarding throughout their inspection activities. This included staff knowledge of safeguarding following relevant training, behaviour logs and attendance records.
- Checks were carried out on the school's premises, with the premises manager, to ensure compliance with Part 5 of the independent school standards.

- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally in the classroom and in the playground. The lead inspector listened to younger pupils read to a familiar adult. They met with pupils in small groups to find out what it was like to attend this school. Inspectors were requested not to ask certain questions related to the protected characteristics. An adult was present for some of the time when inspectors spoke with pupils.
- Inspectors considered responses from Ofsted's Parent View, the online survey, including free-text responses. They also considered responses to the survey for staff.

The school's proposed change to the maximum number of pupils

The school has applied to the DfE to make a 'material change' to its registration. At the DfE's request, we checked whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the change. This part of the inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002.

- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: the school is likely to meet some of the relevant independent school standards, but not all, if the material change relating to the school is implemented.

Inspection team

Alison Aitchison, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Bernard Clark

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) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 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[9];
- 2A(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor-
 - 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),

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) ensures that principles are actively promoted which-
 - 5(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act; and

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)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and

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