

# Inspection of Ateres Girls High School

Willow Grove, Felling, Gateshead NE10 9PQ

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Inspection dates: 12 to 14 July 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

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?**

Pupils really enjoy coming to this school. This is demonstrated through high attendance rates and the enthusiastic way pupils speak about their school. They are proud to be a member of this school. Pupils are articulate and desperate to share with visitors the great things about their school. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. Pupils truly want to learn. They speak confidently about how adults want to help them do well. Teachers carefully plan the curriculum so that pupils have the building blocks of learning that help them gain a greater understanding of the subjects they study. Pupils remember what they have learned.

Parental feedback about the school is glowing. All 58 parents and carers who responded would recommend this school to another parent.

The Kodesh (religious) curriculum is interwoven into the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum to ensure that learning is strengthened and built on. Leaders make sure that pupils have an understanding of what is right and wrong. However, leaders have not ensured that the PSHE curriculum incorporates important elements of the relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum. Leaders do not ensure that the curriculum encourages respect for all of the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010. Older pupils do not receive PSHE lessons. This limits pupils' knowledge and understanding of people beyond their own community.

Teachers do not discuss vocabulary such as sexual harassment and sexual violence, so that pupils can understand what these mean and why these actions are always unacceptable.

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

At all levels of leadership, there is a sharp focus on pupils developing well academically. Leadership roles are clearly defined. Curriculum leaders demonstrate strong subject knowledge. The curriculum is well planned, so that pupils' learning builds over time and becomes more complex. Teachers use a range of teaching and assessment strategies to help pupils remember essential knowledge and skills. In lessons, teachers continuously check pupils' understanding and revisit previous learning. Pupils who need extra help receive suitable support during lessons to help them access and understand the curriculum. Occasionally, pupils have extra sessions if needed.

In some subjects, for example art and English, pupils access a large collection of resources to help them learn. This helps pupils draw knowledge from several sources, giving them a deeper and broader understanding of the subject. Pupils do not access the internet. However, the extensive bank of resources and the well-planned computing curriculum enable pupils to develop an appropriate understanding in this subject. There is a minority of subjects, including history, religious education and geography, for which the school does not provide as many resources to help pupils learn. Pupils learn from a limited number of extracts from

books that teachers provide for them. This, in part, limits pupils' curiosity, understanding and knowledge.

Pupils read well and often. Much of their reading for pleasure is at home. At school, the range of different books for pupils to read for pleasure, both fiction and non-fiction, is limited. The room currently dedicated for use as a library is not a comfortable environment that is conducive to reading for pleasure. Governors and leaders are planning to develop a library in the new school building. Some books were purchased and arrived during the inspection.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. Pupils are lively and inquisitive. They have a zest for learning. Pupils manage some of their own assemblies and debates without adult intervention. Pupils respect each other, and when quiet is requested from the assembly leader, pupils immediately settle down. Pupils speak of the lively debates they have and how they can disagree with someone, but also respect their point of view, and still be best friends. Leaders regularly seek pupils' opinions through discussion and confidential questionnaires. Pupils' responses are honest and direct, with a mature sensitivity.

Staff are very proud of this school. Thirty-four confidential staff responses were received as part of Ofsted's inspection questionnaire, and all were positive.

The proprietor has ensured that most of the independent school standards (the standards) have been met. The standards that have been met during this inspection are consistently met. Standards relating to the teaching of all the protected characteristics remain consistently unmet. The proprietor and school leaders follow the wishes of parents by not making pupils aware of two of the protected characteristics. They make some provision in the sex education element of the RSE curriculum. However, the RSE curriculum is not planned in line with statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education. The curriculum does not encourage respect for all of the protected characteristics. As a result, pupils do not have the opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationships.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. All staff are appropriately trained. The proprietor has ensured that the safeguarding policy meets requirements. A parental handbook, along with the safeguarding policy, are handed to parents, giving them all the safeguarding information they require.

Leaders have supported pupils' mental health during a difficult period with external therapeutic support. They also ensure that pupils have access to external agencies, such as the NSPCC and Childline. Pupils know that their form teacher and the head of pastoral care are also there to support them should they need to talk.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and proprietor)**

- While safeguarding is judged to be effective, there is more that leaders and staff can do to ensure that pupils understand potential safeguarding risks linked to sexual harassment and sexual violence. Leaders must ensure that pupils learn about sexual harassment and violence, as outlined in statutory RSE guidance.
- Pupils do not learn about all the protected characteristics. They do not learn, for example, about sexual orientation, different types of stable relationships and vocabulary such as 'consent' and the implications of this word. Therefore, pupils are not fully informed of different groups who are protected by law, so that they can understand these, show respect and recognise situations where they may be at risk of harmful relationships. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum is planned and taught so that pupils are fully informed and that these documents contain all the elements as required by law.
- Although pupils read widely at home, the range of fiction and non-fiction literature available for pupils to read for pleasure at school is limited. The library is not a comfortable environment in which to read. Consequently, pupils do not read widely at school for pleasure. Leaders need to continue with the acquisition of further literature. They need to improve the current library room environment while waiting for the new build.
- In some of the foundation subjects, the planned curriculum is not implemented as successfully as in other subjects, particularly in key stage 3, for example in history, geography and religious education. In these subjects, there is a lack of a range of resources, including literature, available for pupils. Consequently, pupils do not always learn as well as they could. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum in all subjects is implemented with purpose, ensuring that pupils learn in a systematic and logical sequence. Leaders must improve the resources available to pupils, so that pupils can draw on and use appropriate materials, helping them to learn more over time.

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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138118
<b>DfE registration number</b>	390/6000
<b>Local authority</b>	Gateshead
<b>Inspection number</b>	10220884
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	252
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	David Shleider
<b>Chair</b>	David Shleider
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rabbi Y M Katz
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	Voluntary contributions
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 469 2969
<b>Website</b>	None
<b>Email address</b>	admin@ateres.org.uk
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 April 2021

## Information about this school

- Ateres Girls High School is an Orthodox Jewish school providing education for girls between the ages of 11 and 16 years.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in November 2019, when the overall effectiveness of the school was judged to require improvement. The school underwent a progress monitoring inspection in April 2021, when it was judged that the school continued to not meet the independent school standards.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has currently exceeded its registration requirements by two pupils.
- The proprietor has plans to build another school building with at least eight classrooms in the extensive school grounds. This project has been curtailed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 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 inspection team met with governors, including the proprietor, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and heads of department. The deputy headteacher is also the head of curriculum. The headteacher is also the designated safeguarding lead and head of pastoral care.
- The inspectors met with pupils and staff both formally and informally.
- The lead inspector toured the premises to check compliance with the independent school standards for premises.
- Inspectors took account of responses to the Ofsted survey questionnaires from pupils, 34 staff and 58 parents.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in PSHE, computing, mathematics and English. To complete deep dives, inspectors considered curriculum planning and pupils' work. They visited lessons and spoke to pupils and heads of department. Inspectors also considered curriculum plans, resources and pupils' work in art, geography, history and science.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation relating to the independent school standards, including those relating to safeguarding and recruitment checks made on staff.

## **Inspection team**

Jo Sharpe, lead inspector

Ofsted 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—
  - (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—
  - (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;

### **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—
  - (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;

### **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



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