

# Gust Independent School

1 Haldane Street, Ashington, Northumberland NE63 8SF

**Inspection date**

8 November 2022

**Overall outcome**

**The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection**

## Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

*Paragraph 7(a)–7(b)*

- These standards were met at the last inspection in February 2022.
- Leaders and the proprietor have ensured that safeguarding remains a high priority. The arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements and take account of the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory guidance, 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'.
- Staff are vigilant. They pick up on, record and report swiftly any safeguarding matters to designated safeguarding leaders. In this way, pupils who need help are supported appropriately and in a timely manner. Leaders work well with external professionals and agencies to ensure that pupils with complex needs have the opportunity to share a concern or seek differing views and support.
- These standards continue to be met.

*Paragraph 9, 9(a)–9(b)*

- These standards were met at the time of the last inspection in February 2022. However, inspection evidence demonstrates that leaders occasionally send pupils home to 'cool off' when a pupil demonstrates particularly challenging behaviour. Leaders ensure that pupils' parents or carers are informed. This practice is not detailed in the school's behaviour policy as a measure leaders may take to support and improve pupils' behaviour at the school.
- These standards are now not met.

*Paragraph 13*

- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that the quality of recording of first-aid incidents was not sufficiently robust. Not all incidents were recorded fully and oversight by leaders was not sufficiently vigilant.
- The school's first-aid policy is appropriate and available to view via the school's website.

- Since the last inspection, all staff have received first-aid training. The designated safeguarding leaders have also attended refresher training to ensure that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to support staff's and pupils' first-aid needs.
- Leaders have completed a review of how staff in other schools carry out their responsibilities linked to first aid. This included a review of different accident books and methods of recording first-aid issues. As a result, leaders have introduced a new system to record accidents. Staff have received training in this regard. All entries into the school's new accident book are reviewed by a suitably qualified first aider to ensure that records are thorough and the measures taken to support pupils are appropriate.
- This standard is now met.

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

*Paragraph 18(2)–18(3), 19(2)–19(3), 20(6)–20(6)(c), 21(1)–21(7)*

- Leaders and those involved in the appointment of staff are safer recruitment trained. They understand clearly their responsibilities relating to pre-employment checks in order to ensure staff are suitable to work with children.
- The school's single central register of recruitment checks meets requirements.
- Leaders and the proprietor ensure staff have the appropriate training or qualifications to carry out their duties effectively.
- These standards were met at the last inspection and continue to be met.

#### Part 6. Provision of information

*Paragraph 32(1)(c)*

- The school's safeguarding and child protection policies are easily accessible via the school's website. A wide range of safeguarding information is available for pupils and parents to view.
- This standard was met at the time of the last inspection and continues to be met.

*Paragraph 32(3)(d)*

- At the last inspection, policies and ways of working relating to first-aid, behaviour, bullying and health and safety were either not available and/or not easy to read or understand.
- The policies and arrangements highlighted in this paragraph are now available in hard-copy or via the school's website. Policies meet requirements and outline the school's approach to each aspect.
- This standard is now met.

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

*Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c), 34(2)*

- At the last inspection, inspectors found that leaders had not ensured the independent school standards were met consistently.
- Leaders have improved the curriculum. They have started to think more strategically about what they want pupils to know at each stage of their learning and how to do this effectively. Pupils now study discrete lessons in science, history and geography.

Additional qualifications have been introduced to meet the needs of pupils in Years 10 and 11. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the changes leaders have made. They say they particularly enjoy the extra-curricular trips and activities that link to their new learning.

- Leaders' actions relating to paragraph 9 in Part 3 are at odds with the school's behaviour policy. Leaders are not carrying out their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.
- These standards remain unmet.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection, as set out in the annex of this report. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

### **The school does not meet the following independent school standards**

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

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that–
  - 9(a) a written behaviour policy is drawn up that, amongst other matters, sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour; and
  - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively.

#### **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; and
  - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.
  - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

### **The school now meets the following independent school standards**

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

- 13 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that first aid is administered in a timely and competent manner by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written first aid policy.

#### **Part 6. Provision of information**

- 32(3) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is–
  - 32(3)(d) particulars of arrangements for meeting the standards contained in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 13.

## School details

Unique reference number	137385
DfE registration number	929/6002
Inspection number	10254612

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

Type of school	Other independent special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	6 to 17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Philip Gallagher
Headteacher	Mrs Karen Gibb
Annual fees (day pupils)	£20,000 to £40,000
Telephone number	01670 850 943
Website	<a href="http://www.gustschool.com">www.gustschool.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@gustschool.com">info@gustschool.com</a>
Dates of previous standard inspection	15 to 17 February 2022

## Information about this school

- The school's last standard inspection took place in February 2022.
- The head of school became the headteacher in September 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Most pupils have an education, health and care plan. The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs and attention deficit hyperactivity disorders. There are also a number of pupils with an autism spectrum disorder. The school has section 41 approval from the Department for Education.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- The inspection was conducted without notice.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff with responsibility for first aid and two groups of pupils. The inspector spoke on the telephone with the proprietor.
- Prior to, and during, the inspection the inspector reviewed a range of documents and policies relating to safeguarding, first aid, health and safety and anti-bullying. The inspector toured the school site and observed pupils during social times.

## Inspection team

Lee Elliott, lead inspector

Senior His Majesty's Inspector

## **Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements**

### **The school does not meet the following independent school standards**

*Standards that were met at the previous inspection and are now not met at this inspection*

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

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that–
  - 9(a) a written behaviour policy is drawn up that, amongst other matters, sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour; and
  - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively.

*Standards that were met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection*

#### **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; and
  - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.
  - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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