

Gust Independent School

1 Haldane Street, Ashington, Northumberland NE63 8SF

Inspection date

27 September 2023

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7(a), 7(b)

- These independent school standards (the standards) were met at the last standard inspection and the previous progress monitoring inspection.
- The school has maintained a strong focus on keeping pupils safe. There is an appropriate policy for safeguarding in place. The policy reflects the current statutory guidance.
- The proprietor has ensured that staff are suitably trained to safeguard pupils. Safeguarding concerns are dealt with in a timely way. The school liaises with external agencies, when necessary, to support pupils and their families.
- The safety and welfare of pupils is a high priority for the school. Records for safeguarding are thorough. There is a tenacious approach to following up on concerns and pursuing the best outcomes to keep pupils safe.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a), 9(b)

- Although these standards were met at the last standard inspection in February 2022, they were found to be not met at the last progress monitoring inspection in November 2022. The school was sending pupils home to 'cool off' when pupils demonstrated particularly challenging behaviour. This practice was not detailed in the school's behaviour policy as a measure the school may take to support and improve pupils' behaviour at school.
- Leaders have now implemented the actions proposed in their action plan submitted to the Department for Education (DfE). The policy for the management of pupils' behaviour has been revised. The policy sets out clearly how periods of suspension may be used to help pupils improve their behaviour.
- The school monitors the recording of suspensions closely. Leaders make sure that they are used appropriately. The recently appointed attendance officer ensures that periods of suspension are recorded accurately in attendance registers. Leaders work with parents, staff and pupils to help pupils successfully return to school after a period of suspension.
- These standards are now met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- At the previous progress monitoring inspection, the inspector found that leaders had not ensured that the standards were met consistently. Leaders' actions relating to paragraph 9 in part 3 were at odds with the school's behaviour policy.
- The school has implemented a revised behaviour policy. Staff receive relevant training and support from leaders. The policy now matches the school's practice and procedures.
- Clear routines help to support pupils to manage their behaviour and promote positive attitudes to learning. There are high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Leaders are clear that suspensions are only used in response to significant incidents.
- The correct attendance code is applied when a pupil is sent home from school. Leaders rigorously monitor incidents of behaviour. They often check the effectiveness of the use of sanctions and rewards, including suspensions.
- The proprietor visits the school regularly to make sure that the welfare and safety of pupils remain a high priority.
- These standards are now met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets 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. 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 now meets 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.

School details

Unique reference number	137385
DfE registration number	929/6002
Inspection number	10288591

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	36
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Philip Gallagher
Headteacher	Karen Gibb
Annual fees (day pupils)	£20,000 to £40,000
Telephone number	01670850943
Website	www.gustschool.com
Email address	info@gustschool.com
Date 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 school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school provides education for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs and attention deficit hyperactivity disorders. Some pupils have autism. Most pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school has section 41 approval from the DfE.

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.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and leaders for safeguarding and oversight of behaviour and attendance. The inspector spoke on the telephone with the proprietor.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents including the school's policies and records relating to pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. The inspector toured the school site with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- This was the second progress monitoring inspection of the school since some standards were found not to be met at the last standard inspection.
- The previous progress monitoring inspection took place in November 2022. The inspector found that some previously met standards were found not to be met.
- The DfE required the school to prepare a statutory action plan to meet the unmet standards identified at the previous progress monitoring inspection. Ofsted evaluated the action plan on 6 March 2023. The action plan was accepted by the DfE.

Inspection team

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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