

Inspection of Gesher School

Cannon Lane, Pinner HA5 1JF

Inspection dates: 13 to 15 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very happy attending this school. They enjoy an exciting curriculum designed to inspire them. Lessons, projects and therapies successfully develop pupils personally, socially and emotionally. Pupils said how much they enjoy attending lunchtime activities, including sports, drama and board games clubs. They also appreciate their time in the soft-play and sensory spaces.

Therapists, teachers and teaching assistants work together seamlessly as one team. They truly understand how to meet pupils' varied special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). While staff are nurturing, they also have high expectations of all pupils. As a result, pupils work hard and learn well.

Pupils are safe and cared for. They know that their trusted adults will help them to overcome challenges when they arise. Pupils are confident to be themselves and are supportive of each other. They learn to share, take turns and communicate well. Bullying is well dealt with on the rare occasions it arises. Pupils' attendance rates are excellent. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare.

Parents and carers are typically extremely positive about the school's work. In the online survey, parents often commented that their children are thriving at Gesher. They described the school's work as 'in a different league' and 'life changing'.

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

Pupils receive an exceptional quality of provision. Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum which is taught by the school's expert staff. The curriculum is highly effective in meeting the needs of pupils with autism spectrum disorder and other SEND. Leaders ensure staff have high-quality training, which helps to ensure that the quality of education is consistently excellent.

The school offers all the subjects of the national curriculum, taught mostly through exciting projects. Pupils really enjoy the practical nature of their project-based learning. This includes drama performances, gardening, creating works of art, going on trips and fundraising. Subjects and projects are carefully thought through, based on the goals staff know pupils need to achieve. Teachers anticipate and help pupils to overcome any difficulties, and skilfully adapt learning when they need to. Using the school's wide range of resources, they ensure teaching consistently helps pupils to learn well. Staff use assessment effectively. Teachers and therapists share their detailed knowledge of pupils regularly. This ensures teachers have a thorough understanding of how well each pupil is doing. They regularly review pupils' targets, and adapt lessons, to ensure that pupils are continually building on their prior learning.

The teaching of English and mathematics, including through projects, is highly effective. Leaders make sure that teaching pupils to read and communicate is a priority. Pupils are enthusiastic about using the new library and listening to stories.

Where they are able, pupils quickly learn to read fluently. Staff provide effective support to those who need additional help.

The school provides a highly effective programme of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Pupils learn about differences in modern society, British values and equality. They enjoy earning badges as they progress through the life-skills curriculum. Pupils also access a well-chosen range of therapies, including drama, art, speech and language and occupational. Together, the curriculum and therapies encourage pupils' independent living skills and emotional well-being very successfully. Pupils are also taught about age-appropriate relationships and sex education in line with requirements. Secondary-aged pupils receive impartial careers education and independent advice and guidance.

Leadership is exceptionally strong. Senior leaders are supported and challenged in equal measure by the school's governing body. The proprietor body, governors and leaders work closely together and continuously innovate what they offer to pupils and their families. Staff feel valued. They said they are very well supported. They are enthusiastic about how well leaders consider their well-being and workload.

Leaders and governors and the proprietor body have ensured that all the independent school standards are met. They have implemented a suitable accessibility plan which complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff work successfully to keep pupils as safe as possible. There are rigorous and consistent procedures in place to deal with concerns, incidents and allegations. Staff complete regular training to ensure they understand particular safeguarding risks to pupils. Pupils are repeatedly taught about how to keep themselves safe, including online.

The school's safeguarding policy is written in line with the current national guidance and is published online. The staff recruitment process is rigorous. Checks on adults who work with pupils are completed in line with statutory requirements.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	144738
DfE registration number	310/6014
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	10242787
Type of school	All-through day school for pupils with autism spectrum disorder and other SEND
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	4 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	51
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	The Gesher Trust
Chair	Howard Zetter
Headteacher	Tamaryn Yartu and Nikeisha Webb-Hardy (Co-headteachers)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£35,400 to £41,400
Telephone number	020 7884 5102
Website	www.gesherschool.com
Email address	admin@gesherschool.com
Date of previous inspection	5 to 7 June 2018

Information about this school

- Gesher School is registered for pupils aged four to 16. At the time of the inspection, there were no children on roll in the early years. The school currently caters for pupils in Years 1 to 8.
- Pupils all have education, health and care plans for autism spectrum disorder and other SEND. Pupils are placed at the school by eight local authorities.
- The school has a modern Orthodox Jewish religious ethos. Pupils study Jewish religious education twice a week.
- The proprietor delegates responsibility for governance to a governing body.
- The school's most recent inspection was a material change inspection in May 2021. Before this, the school's first standard inspection was in June 2018.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- This standard inspection was conducted with one day's notice.
- Inspectors completed deep dives in these areas: reading, mathematics, physical education and PSHE education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, looked at pupils' work, spoke to teachers and spoke to some pupils about their learning. Inspectors also heard some pupils read.
- Inspectors considered a range of evidence to consider pupils' safety, personal development and behaviour. They spoke with a range of pupils.
- Inspectors met with all the school's senior leaders, the chair of the proprietor body and three members of the governing body, including the chair.
- Inspectors met with the school's safeguarding lead and reviewed a range of safeguarding information, including the pre-appointment checks on staff.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey Ofsted Parent View, the staff survey and the pupil survey.

- Inspectors reviewed a range of evidence to check compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Alison Cartlidge

Ofsted Inspector

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