



Gesher School - Admissions Policy - September 2018

Gesher School is a unique independent Jewish primary school for children aged 4 years to 11 years old, which recently received an Outstanding rating in its first Ofsted inspection. Gesher School provides a specialist, meaningful and functional learning environment for children with special educational needs. Currently Gesher School is accepting in-year applications for children who, from September 2018, will be in Reception or Years 1 to 4. Gesher School will be accepting children from September 2019 who will be in Reception through to Year 6.

Children are at the heart of Gesher School where a sense of belonging and community are fostered. Gesher School is a safe, friendly and stimulating environment in which children are supported to learn, interact and have fun. We believe that *all* children have the ability to progress to their potential; that every child is individual and requires a child-centred approach to learning. Our curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of the cohort of Gesher School Children.

Gesher School Children

Gesher children are unique, individual and learn in their own special way. They may benefit from being educated differently in regards to communication and social interactions; tailoring and adapting their environment to their own learning style. Gesher children are likely to have mild-moderate learning needs and/or autism. Many children have sensory processing difficulties and need support with their attention skills. Gesher School is not a school for children whose primary need is emotional and behavioural difficulties or severe learning difficulties. Children that attend Gesher School will come from a family that understands and respects the values and ethos of the school and the Jewish way of life.

Gesher children may have difficulty with:

A mainstream environment
Accessing the curriculum
Anxiety
Social Communication & Interaction

Flexibility of thought
Sensory processing
Attention skills
Understanding the world around them

Gesher children would benefit from:

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| Small classroom sizes | A multi-sensory approach |
| Predictable environment | A therapeutic approach |
| Personalised curriculum | A multi-professional approach |
| Support to make and maintain friendships | Access to specialist teachers |

The Gesher School Team think collaboratively and creatively to ensure each pupil feels valued, respected and is able to access their education regardless of their special educational needs.

The Admissions Team

The Gesher Admissions Team consists of an Educational Psychologist, Dramatherapist, Speech and Language Therapist and Occupational Therapist. The Admissions Team use a variety of assessment tools at each step of the application process in order to understand each child's strengths and difficulties and to deem whether Gesher School is able to provide the support the child needs to succeed.

Introduction to Gesher School Admission Process

A child-centred approach enables the Gesher Admissions Team to ensure Gesher School is the appropriate educational setting for your child. All information provided is considered during the admissions process.

The admissions process may require the disclosure of personally sensitive and confidential information. The information provided is securely stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and full confidentiality is provided in keeping with a professional organisation. Should your application not be successful, upon written request the information provided by you will be deleted from the records held at Gesher School.

In the interest of ensuring an optimal educational experience, we require that all questions be answered honestly and all of the information required during the admissions process be disclosed. This includes any significant change in your child's medical, social, emotional and/or educational status from the date an application is received until the first day of attendance at Gesher School. Gesher School reserves the right to deny admission or remove a child by expulsion if the required information has not been or has erroneously been disclosed.

Admissions Criteria

- The child is the correct age for provision of Gesher School at the time of admission.
- The Admission Team being satisfied that the child will fit with the existing cohort of children and the description of Gesher children as above.
- Each child will be admitted on consideration of the submitted documentation and the observations conducted by the Admissions Team to ensure that Gesher School can suitably meet his/her needs.

When to Apply for In-Year Admissions (2018/2019):

Applications for in-year admissions are on a rolling basis. You are welcome to contact the Admissions Team at admissions@gesherschool.com to enquire about spaces within your child's year group.

When to Apply for the 2019/2020 Academic Year:

Complete applications for Reception and Years 1 to 6 need to be received by noon on Friday 21 December 2018. Applications received after the deadline will be considered on a rolling admissions basis only.

How to apply:

To apply, send your Gesher Application Pack by email to admissions@gesherschool.com

Your Gesher Application Pack must include:

- Gesher Application Form. <https://www.gesherschool.com/registration-form/>
- The child's most recent Education and Health Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs (if applicable).
- The child's professional and therapy reports, current within one year. This may include a Paediatrician, Psychologist, Speech & Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist and/or Creative Arts Therapists.
- Medical documentation including any diagnosis and/or prescribed medication.

Initial Application Stage

The Application Pack will be reviewed by the Admission Team and a decision will be made as to whether or not the child will progress to the Observation Stage in the school.

All applicants will be informed in writing of this decision **by mid-January 2019** or within 3 term time weeks from receipt of application for in-year admissions.

If your child is invited to the school for the Observation Stage a choice of two dates will be offered.

Observation Stage

The observation is conducted within school hours. It will begin promptly at the time provided and will last for a maximum of one hour. During this time, the child alone will accompany two members of the Admissions Team into various areas of the school and will be encouraged to participate in a number of tasks presented in the form of games and activities. Parents are invited to wait in our reception area.

Admissions Decision Panel

Following the observation, a decision is made by the Admissions Team as to whether the applicant will be offered a place in the school. The Team's decision is final.

Applicants will be informed in writing of the decision **by early-March 2019** or within 2 term time weeks following an observation for in-year admissions.

Successful applicants will be sent an Admissions Response Form as well as an offer letter, which you are asked to return to the school with details of your funding situation.

Funding

Details of our school fees can be found here:

<https://www.gesherschool.com/admissions/>

Parents of children with EHCPs can apply to their Local Authority for funding for Gesher School. Parents are also welcome to self-fund for their child to attend Gesher School. For parents wishing to self-fund please review our self-funding Terms & Conditions and Fee Schedule on our website (at the same link as above).

Oversubscription

In the event that there are more suitable children than available places for a particular class, priority will be given to children in the following order:

1. A child who is looked after, or a child who was previously looked after by the local authority, and has a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education and Health Care Plan that names Gesher School or with local authority agreement that Gesher School will be named.
2. Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education and Health Care Plan that names Gesher School or with local authority agreement that Gesher School will be named.
3. Any other children, including those without a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education and Health Care Plan.

Provided that in each of the criteria 1 to 3 above children whose families can demonstrate practice of an aspect of Jewish faith, as set out below, will be given priority.

Tie - Breaker

Subject always to the Jewish faith priority referred to above, in the event of there being more suitable children within criteria 1 to 3 above, than places available, priority will then be given to children living nearest to Gesher School. The distance will be measured from the main entrance of the home address to the main gate of Gesher School using Brent Council's computerised mapping system. In the cases where more than one suitable applicant lives equidistant from Gesher School, and places cannot be offered to all these children, the available place will be determined by random allocation. This allocation will be supervised by a person independent of Gesher School.

Evidence required to demonstrate practice of an aspect of the Jewish faith

Demonstration of practice of an aspect of the Jewish faith is by evidence of any one of the following criteria:

1. Attendance by a parent / legal guardian at a minimum of 7 synagogue services in the 12 months before the closing date for admissions; or
2. A child's enrolment in formal Jewish education (either at nursery or pre-school having a Jewish character) for at least 6 months in the 24 months before the closing date for admissions; or

3. A parent / legal guardian's regular (at least monthly) involvement as a volunteer in any Jewish communal, charitable or welfare activity of at least a year's duration in the 2 years before the closing date for admissions; or
4. A parent / legal guardian's regular involvement on at least 7 individual occurrences either in organised Jewish learning or organised Jewish community activities in the year before the closing date for admissions.

For criteria 1 to 3 verification will be required from the organisation involved in order to demonstrate practice and thereby gain the faith priority.

For criteria 4, participation in each event must be verified with its own separate letter and author in order to demonstrate practice and thereby gain the faith priority.

Starting at Gesher School

Successful applicants will be sent a Gesher School Starter Pack at the end of the summer term or before an agreed start date for in-year admissions. The pack includes forms to be completed and useful information for parents/guardians and children. Children start full-time on the first day of the Autumn term, or at an agreed start date for in-year admissions.