

25 September 2020

Gesher School set for move to former Moriah premises and expansion into Secondary provision

Gesher School and the Harrow Jewish Day School Trust are excited to announce that Gesher Special Primary School will be moving to new premises at the former Moriah School, in Pinner. Gesher will relocate from its current site in Willesden to the new, larger site in Pinner in September 2021.

Gesher opened its doors in 2017 for pupils with mild to moderate SEN needs with a specialism in Autism. The school achieved an Ofsted outstanding across all categories only 7 months later. As a result of its success Gesher is now full and currently operating a waiting list. The move will enable the primary school to offer an additional 16 primary places, growing to accommodate up to 56 pupils and to expand offering a specialist secondary provision in September 2021. This will mean that there is a clear educational pathway for children and young people aged 5-16 as Gesher develops to become an all-through school ultimately offering 120 places to pupils across our community.

By moving to new premises and utilising an existing community resource we are confident that Gesher will become a vital part of the primary and secondary educational landscape within our community. Gesher will work with other schools offering support and outreach in SEN education, wellbeing and life skills and will strive to become a centre of excellence and hub of SEN expertise.

In addition to the expansion, the school is also planning to open an assessment and diagnosis unit, and research centre working directly with Professor Simon Baron Cohen and the Autism Research Centre in Cambridge. The research unit will underpin the critical work the school is doing, ensuring it can provide a framework and evidence the direct impact of the Gesher way.

Says Sarah Sultman and Ali Durban, Co-founders: "This is the fulfilment of an ambitious dream, one which we have worked at tirelessly; to enable our community's SEN children to have access to an education that meets their needs, allowing them to develop, flourish and reach their potential. Gesher is truly grateful to HJDST for affording us this tremendous opportunity".

Says Howard Zetter, Chair of Governors: "This is a hugely exciting expansion project that will enable Gesher children and families to have a clear educational pathway and is testament to the huge success of the school, its necessity and its popularity in the community".

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Brian Leaver, Chair of Harrow Jewish Day School Trust, says: "We are pleased to be able to welcome Gesher to our beautiful 3-acre site in Pinner and look forward to nurturing Gesher's future growth in the buildings and grounds that were created with the generous help of our benefactors more than 20 years ago to educate Jewish children in this leafy corner of northwest London".

From The Chief Rabbi:

"The joy of a Jewish education should be as accessible to children with Special Educational Needs as it is to any other Jewish child. This broadening of Gesher School's provision, facilitated now by the move to permanent premises, is a very significant addition to the landscape of Jewish education in this country. It will benefit many more families, in ways that will have a transformative impact on the lives of SEN children. I heartily congratulate the Gesher team, together with the Harrow Jewish Day School Trust, on this far-sighted collaboration and considerable achievement for our community."

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