

# INTERIM INSPECTION REPORT FOR GATESHEAD TALMUDICAL COLLEGE

**UKVI LICENCE No: VJJM08VX9**

Education oversight inspection of private further education colleges on behalf of the Home Office's division of United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI)

## The overall inspection findings for this college

**UKVI Standards for**

<b>courses and qualifications are</b>	<b>MET</b>
<b>teaching, learning and assessment are</b>	<b>MET</b>
<b>the cultural and moral development of students are</b>	<b>MET</b>
<b>welfare, health and safety are</b>	<b>MET</b>
<b>the effectiveness and suitability of staff are</b>	<b>MET</b>
<b>financial sustainability, leadership and governance are</b>	<b>MET</b>
<b>premises and accommodation are</b>	<b>MET</b>
<b>information and complaints are</b>	<b>MET</b>

## **Compliance with UKVI Standards**

**The college meets all the UKVI Standards**

## **Introduction**

### **Purpose and scope of the inspection**

Mainland Education Ltd is an approved educational oversight body authorised by the United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI) section of the Home Office to inspect privately funded further education colleges in England, with a Steiner, Montessori or Eurythmy basis or background, or with a clear religious purpose. Inspection is designed to assess the college's compliance with the Standards for colleges agreed with the Home

Office. These Standards cover the quality of education and welfare provided to all students, including those from overseas who are sponsored by the college for Tier 4 visas, and, where applicable, those who are under eighteen or are vulnerable adults. On-site student accommodation, where provided, is assessed for compliance with the Standards but is not subject to a full boarding inspection. Inspection provides objective and reliable reports on the extent to which colleges meet the Standards. By placing reports in the public domain, the information they contain is available to students, the UKVI, and the wider community.

Inspection takes account of the context of each individual college, and of how it evaluates its own performance and demonstrates its success. It helps colleges, their staff and trustees, governors, and/or proprietors to recognise and build on their strengths and to identify and remedy their weaknesses in relation to compliance. The inspection also takes account of the college's financial performance since the last inspection and makes an assessment of the college's financial sustainability going forward, on the basis of information provided by the college. Prospective students, their parents and agents should make their own enquiries into the financial viability of institutions before accepting a place.

Colleges are subject to a full inspection once every four years which is conducted by two inspectors over two days. In the intervening years, colleges receive an annual interim inspection and are kept under review. Interim inspections build on the findings from the last full inspection and state whether or not the college continues to meet the agreed Standards.

The last full inspection of Gateshead Talmudical College was conducted by Mainland Education Ltd in January 2024 when the college met all the required Standards for privately funded colleges.

## **Characteristics of the college**

Gateshead Talmudical College (GTC), also known as Gateshead Yeshiva, was founded in 1929 and moved to its present site in 1931. It is a charitable trust governed by a board of trustees and managed by a group of senior staff, the Hanholoh, most of whom are rabbis. All the students are male orthodox Jews. Eighteen nationalities are represented in the college population, with the majority of students coming from Britain. Just under a fifth of the students are from European countries with the largest groups from Belgium, France and Switzerland. Most of the other students are from the USA with a small number from other countries. All the students live in residential accommodation on site. Students range in age from 16 to 21. Numbers have increased since the last inspection and now total 419 with 38 visa students of whom 3 are aged under eighteen. The college states that its purposes are the advancement, support and furtherance of orthodox religious Jewish studies, enabling students to live in accordance with the orthodox Jewish way of life, and providing a traditional Jewish education that is relevant to laymen, rabbis and ministers. The college is committed to helping less affluent students by means of scholarships and grants and about two thirds of students receive such support.

## **Main Findings of Interim Inspection**

The college meets the UKVI Standards.

Courses offered remain the same as at the time of the last inspection and continue to meet UKVI requirements in terms of level and time spent studying. Courses are offered at three levels: a foundation course, the main Talmudic studies course and an advanced Talmudic course. The main Talmudic course is at NVQ Level 3 and is accredited by Awards for Training and Higher Education (ATHE). This is the course taken by the 38 overseas students holding Tier 4 visas. Levels of course completion remain high.

Teaching and learning continue to be of very good quality as a result of the continued employment of expert rabbinical tutors led by the Principal, a highly respected scholar and authority in orthodox Jewish studies. The students are able and motivated, and travel to study in Gateshead from around the world on the basis of the yeshiva's reputation. A highly effective aspect of the yeshiva's work is the system of daily paired study of texts by the whole student body at the same time in the main study hall. This continues to be a driver of excellent progress. It allows the boys to compare their understanding of texts with their fellow students and with their rabbinical tutors who circulate constantly and engage in discussion and dialogue with them. The students confirm that they are well informed about their progress.

Students moral and cultural development continues to meet the Standards. Their involvement in an orthodox community ensures that they have a strong grounding in the college ethos of adherence to the law and an emphasis on respect for others. Older students take on the role of mentors to younger boys. A number of the students regularly take part in activities outside the college, including running summer camps, supporting the work of Jewish students from local yeshivas, assisting children with special needs and helping local Jewish families in their homes. These activities help to broaden the experience of the students and helps them to reflect on the wider community and its needs. There is scope for this element of the student experience to be extended to further enhance their cultural development.

Welfare, health and safety arrangements have continued to develop and meet the Standards. Records of admissions and attendance are maintained as at the time of the last inspection and meet requirements. Two fully qualified Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL), both rabbis, have a very good understanding of their pastoral duties and make sure that 'the voice of the student' is heard. The DSLs keep good notes of their pastoral interactions with students and meet weekly to discuss pastoral issues; they are very aware of the boys' needs and address them with care. Referrals to qualified professional help are made where appropriate. The policies and procedures for safeguarding are good. They are made clear to all staff, are regularly reviewed and updated (they refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024) and are retained in excellent and accessible order thanks to the good work of the new members of staff. Arrangements to ensure the effectiveness and suitability of staff continue to meet the Standards, with a well organised electronic Single Central Record of appointments.

A new initiative in safeguarding since the last inspection is the appointment of an overnight warden who supervises the boys at night-time and has the use of a flat within the dormitory building. This improves safeguarding, security and pastoral provision. There is now scope for further integrating the warden's routine overnight pastoral records with the DSLs' pastoral records. Accommodation remains well looked after and regular fire safety

checks are carried out, with students acting as fire marshals in their dormitories. CCTV has been installed at the entrances and exits of the boarding accommodation and in the corridors and this has improved the security of the buildings and the safety of boarders. There is a new system of checking rooms for cleanliness and tidiness, and a lift to provide disabled access to the upper floors of the buildings has been installed. These boarding initiatives reflect the hard work and determination of the facilities manager. Food preparation continues to meet local authority requirements and kitchen staff are trained in food hygiene to the required standard. Students say that the food is good and that catering staff are aware of food allergies.

The management group, the Hanholoh, meets weekly and works well with teaching and administrative staff to promote the aims and objectives of the yeshiva. Administration has been improved by the appointment of a Deputy CEO who has reviewed administrative procedures and put in place a more effective accounting system. The required policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated, with dates for future review clearly indicated. These documents have now been very well organised and presented in a handbook by a recently appointed member of staff. The college's recent financial performance, plans and forecasts show there is minimal risk that students will not be able to complete their course on financial grounds. A recent fundraising event raised a very significant amount of money for the yeshiva, and there are plans for further fundraising initiatives.

Recruitment to the yeshiva continues to be through recommendations by friends, family and feeder schools and colleges, both in the UK and in other countries, and numbers have risen significantly this academic year. Prospective students are required to show competency in English. Students are made aware of the yeshiva's complaints policy, and no formal complaints have been made since the time of the last inspection.

Overall Main Finding	Compliance	Outcome for the College
The college meets UKVI requirements.	It meets all the Standards.	It will receive an interim check in 2025.

## Actions Required

- No action is required

## COLLEGE AND INSPECTION DETAILS

### Details of college

Name of college:	Gateshead Talmudical College
Address of college:	88 Windermere Street, Gateshead NE8 1UB
Telephone number:	0191 477 2616
Email address:	<a href="mailto:office@gatesheadyeshiva.com">office@gatesheadyeshiva.com</a>
Proprietor:	Gateshead Talmudical College
Name of Principal:	Rabbi A. Gurwicz, Rosh Hayeshiva
Licence number:	VJJM08VX9
Type of college:	Independent Jewish Further Education

### Details of student body

Age range	16-21
-----------	-------

Number of students on roll:		Tier 4	UK
	Full Time:	38	381
	Over 18	35	316
	Below 18	3	65

Annual fees:	£10,660 per annum
--------------	-------------------

### Details of inspection

Type of inspection:	Educational Oversight: Interim	
Inspection Team:	Reporting Inspector:	Mr. Peter R. Jones
Date of inspection:	20th November 2024	