

Gateways Admissions and Referrals Policy

02.04.25

What is Gateways?

Gateways is an Alternative Education Provider, offering bespoke education to students whose mental health, social and emotional challenges or critical illness prevent them from accessing mainstream education.

A growing number of young people struggle to function within mainstream schools and need another approach to education. While many believe that there is no other option available to them, we believe that every young person should have opportunities to progress and thrive, regardless of the challenges they face.

Our unique offering to the UK Jewish community delivers a broad, individually tailored curriculum, catering for the interests, abilities and specific needs of each student and preparing them for a life beyond education.

Who is Gateways for?

Gateways is for students in year 9 upwards with identified medical or other challenges which mean they struggle to remain in mainstream school.

We are by intention and design a small setting. Our limited capacity means we cannot admit all those we would wish to accommodate, but this is to ensure we provide an environment where students can study successfully, develop self-efficacy, and feel physically and emotionally safe at all times.

All Gateways students must be able to work together with others as part of a supportive community. This is a key consideration, and those making referrals need to confident that any young person referred to Gateways will:

- aim to grow and develop, academically, socially, and emotionally, throughout their time with us.
- behave at all times in a way that supports the growth and development of everyone else around them
- contribute positively to the environment or, at the very least, not actively damage the learning or personal development of their peers.

Who is eligible for Gateways?

Admission to Gateways is by referral. Those eligible to be considered for a place are

- Jewish students of statutory school age (years 9 - 13) and young adults (aged 19-25 years)
- who have been or are likely to be absent from school/college or unable to work
- for a minimum 15 days in one academic year (not necessarily consecutive)
- due to a diagnosed mental health condition.
- able to access and work at an upper key stage 3 level (evidence of independent reading, writing at an upper key stage 3 level).

Many of our students are dual-registered, remaining on role at their existing school or college as well as at Gateways. Some are home schooled and attend Gateways alongside this, while others are no longer of school age and engage in work alongside attending Gateways.

Those admitted over the age of 19 have generally missed many years of education and have experienced mental health difficulties. They are seeking to re-engage in education so as to obtain qualifications needed for meaningful and fulfilling employment.

What kind of mental health needs are eligible?

We support students with significant, complex mental health needs which prevent them from accessing a mainstream school curriculum. These can include:

- EBSA (emotional based school avoidance)
- low mood (general pervasive unhappiness) adversely affecting social and emotional functioning
- anxiety symptoms such as intense, specific fears or school phobia, obsessive compulsive behaviours, difficulties separating from parents, panic attacks - often also manifesting in social isolation or physical symptoms
- eating disorders (where successful treatment has accessed, and the young person is deemed emotionally and physically stable)
- historical self-harm and risky behaviours, with no incidents in the past 12 months prior to a referral being made
- experience of trauma (e.g. sexual, physical or emotional abuse, domestic violence, medical trauma, suicide and other traumatic losses) resulting in severe, persistent social and emotional difficulties.
- clinical depression that is being treated with medication, and or therapies

What is the Gateways curriculum?

Placements with Gateways are according to need. Most students remain at Gateways from their entry point until they are academically and emotionally ready to take their exams and vocational qualifications. These may be taken over time, rather than only during the traditional summer exam period. Each Gateways student has a bespoke learning plan

designed to meet their individual needs, which may include days or part days divided between Gateways and their existing mainstream school placement.

We provide lessons in core academic subjects (English, Maths & Science) together with a range of accredited vocational qualifications (GCSE, BTEC, VTCT and Functional Skills). We offer vocational qualifications in Photography, Home Cooking, Hair and Beauty and Gym Instruction as well as a non-qualification-based art group.

We also offer enrichment sessions to develop critical thinking, social and communication skills along with regular social events.

We currently teach students in small groups of up to 8 in our Vocational and Science classes, and in smaller groups of up to 3 for English and Maths. All lessons take place in the Gateways building.

Who can make a referral?

Access to Gateways is by professional referral, which will be considered by our Referrals Team. Referrals can be made by:

- The student's mainstream school
- A Local Authority Head of Inclusion & Alternative Education Service
- A Local Authority School Admissions Team
- A Local Authority Education Welfare Service
- Social Care
- Looked After Children Team
- Early Help Team
- CAMHS
- A GP
- A registered Psychiatrist, Clinical Psychologist or Therapist,
- A mental health or educational charity such as JAMI, NOA Girls and The Boy's Clubhouse

What supporting information is needed?

We need a completed referral form supported by:

- evidence from one of the following medical professionals:
 - Medical Consultant
 - Child or Adolescent Psychiatrist
 - Senior Medical Clinical Officer
 - Child and Family Therapy Service
 - Clinical Psychologist
 - CAMHS professional

indicating the impact of the mental health needs on the student's ability to access education in a mainstream school

- all available information on current attainment levels in English, Maths and Science, plus recent attendance data and a school behaviour report
- all relevant safeguarding reports from CPOMS (school or social care recording systems or other) - we will seek parental/carer consent for these
- Evidence from professional and, or school reports that the young person understands and complies with appropriate online and offline behaviour and does not engage in behaviours that place them or others at risk
- copies of any relevant educational, medical consultant and, or psychiatric assessment reports and outcomes
- a copy of any draft or final EHCP (or the application if one has made recently) if applicable
- School reports and relevant academic data for KS3 and above where relevant
- An Enhanced DBS check for all young people over the age of 18 will be required
- An Overseas police check, if the young person has worked or lived abroad for more than a month (and is over 18 years) will be required

Any overseas reports and diagnosis will need to be in a certified translated format.

What is the process of applying for admission?

Parents, carers, schools, Local Authorities, CAMHS, or other supporting organisations can get in touch with any questions by completing the form below or email Danielle Helfgott, our admissions officer at admissions@gateways.org.uk

Step 1

Initial enquiry - Enquiries can be made via our online enquiry form, calling our admissions officer, or emailing our admissions email address

Step 2

Referral form - We will send a referral form to provide the Gateways team with background information on the prospective student and the reason for the referral. The form should only be completed by the referring organisation e.g. school, local authority, CAMHS, private psychiatrist or another supporting organisation.

Step 3

Referrals Meeting - The Gateways team review each referral to determine whether the young person meets the admissions criteria and would be compatible with the profile of the existing Gateways cohort. Referrals that meet these criteria are progressed to Step 4.

Step 4

Initial meeting - The parent/carer or referring organisation and student will be invited to Gateways for a meeting with 2 members of our team and given a tour of our building. There may be further information that the team require following the initial interview. This interview does not secure a placement offer from Gateways.

Step 5

Final Decision - The team will review the referral and make a final decision about offering a place at Gateways. Please note that not everyone can be offered a place at Gateways.

Step 6

Welcome - If an offer of a place is made, a welcome pack will be sent out including details of an induction date and time, an agreed timetable and details of the student's teachers and therapists. A New Student Induction must take place before a student can begin lessons at Gateways. The first 6 weeks will be an initial trial period to ensure the young person is attending regularly and is settling in with the existing group.

Useful links

Supporting students at school with medical conditions, Department for Education
[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#)