

Chase House School

Hummingbirds, 70 Vicarage Road, Brownhills, Walsall, West Midlands, WS8 6AR

Inspection dates	21–23 October 2014
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Overall effectiveness	No judgement made
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Leadership and management	No judgement made
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Behaviour and safety of pupils	No judgement made
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Quality of teaching	No judgement made
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Achievement of pupils	No judgement made
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Summary of key findings

No judgements are made about this school as there is insufficient evidence. This is because on the day of the inspection the school was closed and no pupils were on its roll.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with a day's notice.
- The inspection took place shortly after the proprietor had closed the school. No pupils were on roll or present in the school when the inspection took place. The inspection took place under these circumstances because of the proprietor's stated intention to open the school again once improvements had been made.
- The purpose of the inspection was to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards required for continued registration and to report on the extent to which the school is ready to educate and safeguard pupils.
- The inspector looked at schoolwork that pupils had done before the school was closed. He held meetings with representatives of the proprietor and with the headteacher and staff members who had been in post when the school was open.
- He looked at documentation including policy statements, schemes of work, teachers' planning and records of pupils' progress and of staff training.
- There were too few responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) to provide any meaningful analysis. Six questionnaire responses from staff were taken into account.

Inspection team

John Gush, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school was closed on the day prior to the inspection being announced. This was because the proprietor decided that it did not provide a suitable quality of education for the pupils. In a letter to the Department for Education the proprietor states that the closure will be for a 'short period' while measures are taken to improve the quality of education.
- The school building is located on the outskirts of Walsall in premises recently converted for educational use. It is adjacent to a children's home that is operated by the same proprietor.
- The school was opened in November 2013 to cater for up to 12 boys and girls between the ages of seven and 16. In May 2014, the company that had previously run the school was taken over by a new proprietor, Cambian Ltd. This company is responsible for similar schools in different areas of the country, as well as other services, including children's homes.
- Eight boys and girls aged between nine and 12 years of age had, until recently, been on the roll of the school. Six of them had statements of special educational needs associated with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. All were resident in one of three children's homes operated by the school's proprietor. All the pupils were in the care of their local authority and had previously resided in various different parts of the country.
- The school did not use any off-site training.
- The school's aims included to 'provide a positive, safe and caring environment within which young people feel happy and secure in the process of learning'.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

■ **The school must meet the following independent school standards.**

Ensure that the school's curriculum policy is adequately supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work and that it is implemented effectively (paragraph 2(1)).

Ensure that, where a pupil has a statement of special educational needs, the education provided fulfils the requirements of that statement (paragraph 2(2)(e)).

Ensure that suitable personal, social and health education is provided for pupils (paragraph 2(2)(f)).

Ensure that appropriate careers guidance is provided for pupils receiving secondary education (paragraph 2(2)(g)).

Ensure that adequate preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life is made available for pupils (paragraph 2(2)(j)).

Actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (paragraph 5(a)).

Ensure that pupils acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England (paragraph 5(b)(iv)).

Ensure that principals are promoted that further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures (paragraph 5(b)(v)).

Ensure that principals are promoted that encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 (paragraph 5(b)(vi)).

Ensure that principals are promoted that encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England (paragraph 5(b)(vii)).

Ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 7(a) and 7(b)).

Ensure that a written policy to promote good behaviour among pupils and which sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils' misbehaviour is drawn up and effectively implemented (paragraph 9).

Ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented (paragraph 10).

Ensure that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 17).

Ensure that all the checks required to ensure the suitability of supply staff to work with children are entered correctly on the school's single central register (paragraphs 22(5) to 22(5)(a)(ii) inclusive and 22(5)(c)).

Ensure that the information that is provided or made available for parents, carers and others includes details of the academic achievements of pupils and a summary of staff qualifications (paragraph 24(1)(b)).

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

No judgement made

- There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the leadership and management of the school. This is because the school is closed and no pupils were present during the inspection. Nonetheless, scrutiny of the school's documents and meetings with representatives of the proprietor and school staff indicate that a substantial number of independent school standards were not met. Therefore, the leadership and management of the school would be likely to be judged inadequate if the school was open.
- Some of the information that an independent school is required to provide for parents, carers and others is not available in the school's prospectus. There is no statement about pupils' academic achievements or summary of the staff's qualifications.
- The school leaders used a very limited range of formal arrangements to ensure that teachers had the best opportunities to help pupils to achieve. They did not know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. This was because checking systems were not robust and there were insufficiently clear plans to bring about improvements. Information about pupils' abilities and achievements were not regularly analysed to make sure that every possible opportunity was identified to help all pupils to make progress in line with their level of ability. Leaders did not know whether any group of pupils, for example, girls or boys or the most able, were doing any better or worse than any other group. This fact made it difficult for the staff to accurately tailor support for any group or individual who needed it.
- The school had limited arrangements to support teachers. Teachers were not regularly observed and their performance was not reviewed. As a result, opportunities were missed to identify areas for improvement so that support or additional training could be provided when required.
- The school's policies were not thoroughly checked on a regular basis to make sure that they were being implemented to support pupils' learning and personal development.
- **The governance of the school:**

When the school was open the proprietor did not take sufficient steps to hold the school leaders to account. As a result, staff have been poorly led and pupils have not made the progress they could with their education and personal development.

The decision to close the school demonstrates the proprietor's awareness of the substantial improvements needed to make the school safe and effective for pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

No judgement made

- There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the behaviour and safety of pupils. This is because the school is closed and no pupils were present during the inspection. However, the inspection evidence available shows that many independent school standards were not met. As a result, if pupils had been on roll at the school, it is likely that behaviour and safety would have been judged inadequate.
- **Behaviour**
- The school's behaviour policy did not provide adequate guidance for staff and was not properly implemented. As a result, pupils' behaviour was frequently inappropriate and learning was regularly disrupted. Incidents of poor behaviour and restrictive physical interventions were adequately reported. However they were not analysed to look for patterns of behaviour that could help staff to bring about improvements. Analysis during the inspection showed that incidents of poor behaviour took place very often and that no significant reduction was seen while the school was open.
- Insufficient plans were made to support improvement in behaviour. This was a requirement in most statements of special educational needs for those pupils who had one.
- Pupils learned about the dangers of bullying and how to avoid it through a well-structured programme. However, this did not include helping them to understand the bullying that is often related to the differences between people.
- The school promoted some aspects of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils adequately. Pupils showed some improvements in their self-knowledge and self-confidence, in particular through their efforts to raise funds for national charities. However, the school did not provide them with sufficient opportunities to learn about other cultural traditions and religions, about English institutions or about British values including democracy and the rule of law. Because of this, pupils were not prepared for life in modern Britain as well as they could have been.

- Pupils' attendance at school was not routinely examined to make sure that pupils were provided with the best possible support and encouragement to come to school. Analysis during the inspection showed that most pupils attended regularly and that, during the time that the school was open, attendance was only slightly below the average for all schools nationally. The punctuality of pupils to their lessons improved markedly during their time at the school.
- The school has a clearly stated policy that requires all staff members to ensure partisan political views are never promoted. Staff are required to make sure that whenever political views are brought to the attention of pupils, they are presented in a balanced manner.
- **Safety**
- The school did not do enough to promote the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Safeguarding and child protection policies had not been suitably reviewed and provided misleading guidance to staff. The most recent headteacher was suitably trained in child protection to the required advanced level. However, another staff member, who had not had the advanced level training, was named as the designated lead person for safeguarding. Other members of staff had received appropriate child protection training. Nevertheless, records do not show whether the many supply staff who only stayed at the school for short periods of time received training in the school's child protection practice. Records showed that concerns about child protection were suitably followed up and reported appropriately.
- Procedures to promote fire safety and pupils' health and safety, including on school trips and visits, were adequately carried out. The school had effective measures to make sure that first aid was available to pupils. Most of the required checks to make sure that staff members are suitable to work with children had been carried out. However, the checks carried out with regard to supply staff were not recorded on the single central register as required. No senior staff member in the school had undertaken training in safer recruitment. The attendance register was regularly maintained but the way it was completed meant that the school did not always record the correct reason for a pupil's absence. These issues show that the school did not pay sufficient attention to the safety and welfare of pupils in the school.

The quality of teaching

No judgement made

- There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. This is because the school is closed and no pupils were present in school during the inspection. The inspection evidence available shows that some of the independent school standards related to the quality of teaching were not met. As a result, if pupils were on roll at the school, the quality of teaching would be likely to be judged inadequate.
- Pupils' books showed that in some subjects they had worked carefully and presented their written work neatly, especially in English and mathematics. Books were marked regularly and some had helpful comments about how pupils could improve. In other subjects, very little work had been completed.
- Teachers' lesson plans showed that they had some awareness of pupils' abilities. Teachers' planning requires improvement because of the limited range and scope of activities planned to help pupils to learn. In addition, insufficient details were provided for learning support assistants to enable them to help pupils with their learning. Wall displays in the classrooms and the content of pupils' books indicate that teachers had suitable subject knowledge and that they used it appropriately.
- Teachers had various ways of evaluating what pupils know and can do. They used these to help them provide suitable work for most pupils and to set targets for their progress. However, they had not developed a way of making sure that the levels they allocated to individual pupils were accurate. Also, the targets set for pupils were frequently too vague and sometimes inconsistent. Because of this, teachers could not be sure that they were providing pupils with the best chances to learn well.

The achievement of pupils

No judgement made

- There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the pupils' achievements. This is because the school is closed and no pupils were present during the inspection. The inspection evidence available shows that some of the independent school standards related to pupils' achievements were not met. As a result, if pupils were on roll at the school, pupils' achievement would be likely to be judged inadequate.
- The curriculum provided a suitably broad and balanced range of subjects, delivered through topics designed to motivate pupils and engage their interest. However, planning for effective delivery of personal, social and health education was inadequate and no careers education was planned or made available for Key Stage 3 pupils.
- Most pupils had statements of special educational needs. Although some of the requirements made in the

statements were met for some pupils, for a substantial number of pupils the requirements were not met, particularly in relation to planned programmes designed to support improvement in behaviour.

- Work in pupils' books showed that in the six weeks of the current term during which the school was open pupils had made some progress, especially in mathematics and English. Very limited evidence was available for pupils' achievements in other subjects. Some pupils had clearly taken pride in their work. Mathematics problems were carefully presented and answers were frequently accurate. Some Key Stage 3 pupils had written imaginative stories and used correct spelling and punctuation that was at the level expected for their age.

However, the information the school keeps about pupils' progress and achievement was incomplete and, in some instances, misleading. Because of this the school does not know how much progress pupils made from their starting points. In addition, it is not possible to tell whether they achieved at a level that that would usually be expected. The school has no information to indicate whether the most able, those who require additional support or any other group were making suitable progress.

What inspection judgements mean

School	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053.

School details

Unique reference number	140273
Inspection number	447297
DfE registration number	355/6002

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as inserted by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Special school for pupils with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	Not applicable
Gender of pupils	Not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	0
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Cambian Ltd
Chair	Stephen Bradshaw
Headteacher	Position vacant
Date of previous school inspection	First inspection
Annual fees (day pupils)	£31,000 – £35,000
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