

Manor Cottage

c/o Cambian Group, 4th Floor, Waterfront Building, Chancellor's Road, Hammersmith Embankment, London, W6 9RU

Inspection dates 17–18 March 2015

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings

This is a good school

- Students with extremely challenging behaviour are successfully engaged in learning; they are now happy to come to school.
- The school works well with residential and clinical staff to improve behaviour. Bullying and negative behaviour are now almost eliminated.
- Students who have missed significant portions of their education to date are now making good progress and are proud of their achievements.
- Teachers are skilled at adapting lessons to the interests of students and ensuring that they continue to learn even when they are reluctant to participate.
- The proprietors provide good support for the professional development of staff.
- Leaders and managers ensure that all the independent school regulations are met and that students achieve well and are safe.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not consistently follow the school's marking policy so students are not always shown what to do to improve their work.
- School policies have not been fully updated. They are kept electronically which can make them difficult for staff to access and use.
- The school's system for monitoring and improving teaching is not yet firmly in place.
- Temporary staff do not always have a clear understanding of the abilities of students so sometimes do not teach at an appropriate level.
- Occasionally, there are minor personality clashes between students.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspector spoke to students, staff and senior managers, as well as to staff from the residential provisions. He met with a director of the Cambian Group and spoke by telephone to a social worker from a local authority placing students in the school.
- The inspector observed two lessons taught by one teacher. He examined samples of students' work and the school's records of students' behaviour and achievement. He scrutinised school policies, curriculum documents and staff records to check compliance with the independent school standards.
- The inspector considered the response to one survey completed by a member of staff. There were no responses to the Parent View online survey or to questionnaires sent to local authorities placing students in the school.

Inspection team

Michael Glickman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Manor Cottage is a small special school for vulnerable students with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. It is part of the Cambian Group, a national company which owns special schools and residential provisions throughout the country. It aims 'to improve young people's approach to education so that they may yield positive outcomes and be able to fully integrate into society'.
- The school is registered for 12 students aged seven to 16 years. There are currently four students on the roll, all of whom are of secondary age. The school does not use any alternative education provision.
- All students are looked after by local authorities and live in Cambian Group residential provisions. Two have statements of special educational needs. No student has a disability.
- The school opened in June 2014. This is its first inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve student achievement by:
 - ensuring that all work is marked in accordance with the school's marking policy so that students know what they need to do to improve
 - ensuring that clear lesson planning and communication enables temporary staff to consistently teach students at an appropriate level for developing their understanding of the subjects.
- Continue to work with residential and clinical staff to resolve remaining personality issues between students which sometimes impede learning.
- Leaders and managers should further develop their systems for monitoring and improving teaching.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that all school policies are updated in line with group requirements and that staff can easily refer to them.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

are good

- Leaders and managers ensure that all independent school regulations are met. They have created a calm and purposeful atmosphere within the school. As a result, students who previously exhibited serious behavioural issues now behave well almost all of the time and are successfully involved in learning.
- The headteacher has carried out an accurate self-evaluation of the school. He has used this to produce a development plan with clear priorities and targets.
- At present, the school teaching staff consists mainly of the headteacher and one teaching assistant. A second teacher has been appointed and will start work shortly. Given the number of pupils on roll at the moment, there is no middle management tier. The headteacher's teaching commitment in the short term makes it difficult for him to fulfil all of his administrative duties. The proprietors are aware of this and second staff from other schools within the Cambian Group to provide support when required. To date, there has been little monitoring of lessons taught by temporary staff.
- The Cambian Group has produced standardised policies for all its schools which comply with all requirements. These are currently held electronically and some are awaiting personalisation for the school. Accessing policies is unnecessarily cumbersome for staff.
- The school teaches all students the full range of subjects in the National Curriculum. This enables them to make good progress and to develop their literacy and numeracy skills.
- The Cambian group's careers officer visits the school to provide students with appropriate careers advice. Some students already have clear ideas of which career they wish to follow and are aware of the entry requirements for courses they wish to follow.
- The school effectively promotes equality of opportunity for all students. The student body is culturally and ethnically diverse and students learn to respect one another. They are taught about other faiths and are interested to learn about visitors' differing lifestyles.
- The school prepares students well for life in modern Britain. They learn about the democratic process and have raised funds for charity. The school ensures that they are not exposed to extremist views at any time.
- The school places considerable emphasis on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. A specially-developed programme encourages them to identify their interests and dislikes and to appreciate what they have in common with others. This is used effectively to promote the integration of new students into the school.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet requirements. It has carried out all the required checks on staff and has recorded these in a single central register. Its safeguarding policy covers all the risks that students may be exposed to and the headteacher has attended local authority training for designated safeguarding officers.
- The school has a complaints policy which meets with requirements. It provides all the required information to parents and carers and placing authorities via its prospectus. The school participates in local authority meetings to discuss students and submits accounts to the authorities which fund students in the school.
- The school premises are bright and welcoming. They are decorated with students' artwork and with inspirational posters and comply with all requirements. Physical education is delivered in a local leisure centre where changing rooms and showers are available for student use.

■ The governance of the school:

The group directors are aware of the difficulties facing the headteacher because of the lack of staff. They have supported him by seconding teaching staff from other schools. Peer support has been given by other group headteachers. For example, this has enabled him to improve the quality of teaching through discussion with colleagues.

The group director for education convenes regular meetings of headteachers to encourage the sharing of ideas. She is well informed of the good progress of students in the school and has a clear understanding of its strengths and areas for development.

The group has a performance management process in place which strongly supports the professional development and training of staff. For example, the headteacher is working towards the national professional qualification for headship.

A senior director of the group has responsibility for safeguarding and the group has clear procedures in place for responding to safeguarding concerns in its schools.

The behaviour and safety of pupils**are good****Behaviour**

- The behaviour of students is good. This enables them to participate well in lessons and make good progress.
- Students enter the school exhibiting very challenging behaviour and refusing to participate in education. The school successfully manages their behaviour and engages them quickly in learning. The school maintains detailed records of student behaviour. These show a dramatic decline in serious incidents of misbehaviour as students settle in to the school.
- Although most students had very poor attendance records in their previous schools, their attendance is now good and they say that they enjoy coming to school.
- The school recently identified that relationships between certain students was a problem and that bullying sometimes occurred. They worked closely with the care staff in the residential provisions and with clinical therapists who have almost completely eradicated the problem. The school is aware that some personality issues still exist and continues to monitor the effect that changing group dynamics has on learning.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students say they feel safe and can speak to a member of staff if they have a problem.
- Students know how to keep themselves safe in and out of school and online.
- Students know about different types of bullying. Most feel that the school has effectively dealt with bullying and that it is no longer a problem. However, students are emotionally very vulnerable and the school is constantly alert for any developing issues.
- School staff liaise closely with the staff of the residential provisions to ensure that everyone working with students is aware of any problems that arise. Formal handovers take place at the beginning and end of the school day; in addition, residential staff are available throughout the day to provide effective support for behaviour, if required.
- The school works effectively to keep students safe at all times. Students are well supervised within the school and are never left alone. Risk assessments have been carried out for all school activities and for visits off-site. Fire safety equipment is professionally inspected and serviced and regular fire drills are carried out.

The quality of teaching**is good**

- The quality of teaching is good. Staff effectively involve students individually in their learning which results in them making good progress, including in literacy, reading and mathematics.
- Teachers enjoy excellent relationships with their students. Although there is an informal atmosphere in lessons, teachers remain focused on the purpose of the lesson and constantly ensure that students carry out their work.
- Because students are sometimes reluctant to cooperate, teachers are ingenious in devising ways of persuading them to carry out their work. For example, a student who wanted to draw rather than participate in a mathematics lesson was led into a discussion of patterns in art through which she was redirected to the mathematical task originally set.
- Some students have to be educated separately on occasions because of behavioural issues. This has necessitated bringing in staff from other group schools to ensure that there are sufficient staff at all times. Because they are not familiar with the students, visiting staff sometimes misunderstand their instructions and do not teach at an appropriate level to enable students to progress.
- The school has a detailed marking policy which includes correction codes for technical errors to improve students' written work in all subjects. However, although work has been marked and helpful comments are sometimes given, marking does not consistently follow the policy. This reduces students' opportunities to improve their work.

The achievement of pupils**is good**

- The achievement of students is good because teachers are able to involve them in learning. As a result, they make good progress, including in literacy, reading and numeracy.
- Students usually enter the school with low levels of attainment in comparison to their peers because they have missed significant parts of their previous schooling. The school promptly uses a number of standard tests to assess their level of ability and to identify what they need to be taught. They are then set appropriate achievement targets.
- Students are regularly assessed and results are monitored termly. These indicate that students improve quickly and begin to make similar progress to students in mainstream schools.
- Students are proud of their work and are eager to talk about it. They are keen to show visitors their art work or to offer samples to taste from their food technology lesson.
- More-able students are given work at an appropriate level which enables them to progress at the same rate as students of a similar ability elsewhere.
- Because the school has been open for only nine months, no students have yet been entered for external examinations. The school does not intend to make early entries for GCSE. It plans to offer vocational qualifications to students for whom they are more appropriate.
- Students with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. The education provided meets the requirements of the statements of special educational needs for those students who have them.

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.gov.uk/government/publications/non-association-independent-school-inspection-handbook.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 140615 |
| Inspection number | 454303 |
| DfE registration number | 811/6013 |

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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.

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|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Type of school | Special school |
| School status | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 7–16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 4 |
| Proprietor | Cambian Group |
| Chair | Stephen Bradshaw |
| Headteacher | Mark Panting |
| Date of previous school inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £31,000–£38,000 |
| Email address | mark.panting@cambiangroup.com |

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