

Chesham House

Inspection dates

1 July 2015

Overall outcome**Unmet independent school standards identified****Reason for the inspection**

- The registration authority commissioned this emergency inspection because of a complaint received about the quality of education, the welfare of students and leadership and management.
- The inspection was carried out at no notice to the school. It took place on the first day of a full inspection of a children's home which shares the same building.

Main findings

- The school is effective in helping students to make progress despite their, sometimes complex, learning and behavioural needs. Case study files for individual students give clear evidence of their increased engagement and learning. However, students' progress can sometimes be interrupted when essential, urgent changes to students' residential placements have to be made.
- It was only possible to observe one short example of teaching and learning as only one student was attending school on the day of the inspection. Students' work and conversation with students indicate that the education they receive helps them to learn.
- A variety of teaching and learning approaches are used. Staff use their good knowledge of students to match these approaches to individual student's needs. This helps students to make progress.
- Where appropriate, students are entered for external qualifications. School staff work with colleagues from other schools to check that their assessment of students' work is accurate.
- Most aspects of the arrangements to ensure that students are safe and well-cared for are effective. However, during this inspection, a number of deficiencies with the arrangements to ensure students are fully protected from risk of fire were identified. As the building is shared between the school and a children's home the issues were common to both. While these issues were not resolved during this one-day education inspection, another inspector confirmed that this was done by the end of the following day.
- School staff have clear systems to manage the behaviour of students; any significant incidents of poor behaviour are recorded and staff receive appropriate training so that they know what is expected.
- Staff and students confirm that students generally meet the standards of behaviour expected in school; however, in the recent past, incidents of poor behaviour in the children's home have made the task of ensuring students behave as well as possible while in school harder. A 'handover book' has recently been introduced to allow information on any incidents or concerns about resident students' behaviour to be better

shared as students move from being under the care of the school to under that of the children's home and vice versa. This book is not filled in systematically enough to provide school staff with information which would be helpful as they manage students' sometimes challenging behaviour.

- A student and members of staff reported that there is little bullying in the school and that the rewards system is fairly used to encourage students to work hard and behave well.
- The accommodation provided for the short term care of sick and injured students is not suitable. The education rooms are on the ground floor and second floor of the building which houses the school. The sick room is on the first floor. This means that any unwell students have to use a flight of stairs, up or down, to reach the sick room. The stairs present an additional risk of falling to any such student who is feeling unsteady. In addition, the sick room is also used as a bedroom for the children's-home staff who sleep in. During this inspection, the bedclothes in the sick room had been used. This means that the sick room is not hygienic for any student who has to use the bed, or subsequent to that, to any adult who then uses it out of school hours.
- While it was not possible to discuss the leadership of the school directly with the lead teacher as she was not available on the day of the inspection, other members of staff confirmed that senior leadership is effective. Leaders from the Cambian Group share this confidence. As the school does not meet all the regulations, including those concerning students' welfare, the regulations with respect to leadership and ensuring students' well-being are not met.
- No evidence was found to substantiate the concerns raised in the complaint received by the regulatory authority.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements

In order to meet the requirements in full, the school should ensure that the following standards are met.

The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–	7
arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and	7(a)
The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 ¹ .	12
The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils, including–	24(1)
accommodation for the short term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility	24(1)(b)
The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management	34(1)

¹ S.I. 2005/1541, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

responsibilities at the school–	
demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;	34(1)(a)
fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and	34(1)(b)
actively promote the well-being of pupils.	34(1)(c)

Inspection team

David Selby, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- The school is a small independent special school which meets the needs of up to eight male and female pupils who have moderate learning and or behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. The school is registered for the age range 10-18 years.
- The school was registered in September 2013 and is part of the Cambian group of schools.
- Some students are resident in the children's home which shares the building with the school. Other students travel to the school from other children's homes in the Cambian group.
- The majority of pupils who attend have a statement of special educational needs for their behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- The school was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2014.

School details

Unique reference number	140205
Inspection number	465213
DfE registration number	351/6002

This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

Type of school	Independent special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	10–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	2
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Cambian Group PLC
Chair	Stephen Bradshaw
Headteacher	Vicky Heaton
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 June 2104
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,000
Telephone number	0161 7637072
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	vicky.heaton@cambianguroup.com

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