

# Cambian Chesham House School

Chesham House, Thrush Drive, Bury, Manchester BL9 6JD

## Inspection dates

17–19 October 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The proprietor and leaders ensure that the school meets all of the independent school standards.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points. They achieve well in a wide range of subjects, particularly English and art.
- The school's curriculum is broad, balanced and carefully designed to meet pupils' needs. It provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and skills well. The curriculum strongly promotes pupils' understanding of British values and equality.
- Pupils receive useful advice and guidance about their future education and career options. The range of vocational opportunities informs pupils' choices and prepares them well for their next stages of education or the world of work.
- Pupils' manners and conduct are good. Pupils are welcoming, often overcoming significant social, emotional and mental health issues to engage with visitors and share their learning. Pupils have good attitudes in class. They show the pride they have in their school and attend well. However, pupils' punctuality is not so good.
- Safeguarding is a strength of the school. Staff are well trained, highly skilled and vigilant. Effective systems ensure that pupils are safe and risks are well managed.
- Leaders know their school well and plan appropriate priorities for improvement. The plans for school development sometimes do not contain sufficiently detailed expectations to allow leaders to evaluate easily what difference their actions are making.
- Leaders frequently check pupils' progress and use this information effectively to hold teachers to account. However, refinements to recording systems to include the changes made to key stage 2 assessments have not yet been fully implemented.
- Teaching across the school is good. Pupils acquire knowledge and understanding effectively and make good progress from their starting points. Teachers plan activities carefully to capture pupils' interests and promote understanding. However, the level of challenge presented to pupils who have higher levels of ability is sometimes more limited, particularly in mathematics.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2015 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance the quality of leadership and management by:
  - refining the school's development planning to allow leaders and proprietors to more easily check that actions are having the expected impact on pupils' learning
  - completing appropriate amendments to assessment recording systems to ensure new attainment information from key stage 2 assessments contributes fully to the evaluation of pupils' progress over time.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to enhance pupils' achievement further by:
  - developing teachers' knowledge of strategies to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding at greater depth, particularly in mathematics.
- Improve the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils by
  - improving the punctuality of pupils at the start of the school day, particularly those who attend from the company's own care homes.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The proprietor and leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- The headteacher and senior teacher have a clear vision and passion to provide the best education for their pupils. This is shared by all members of staff and by the regional manager within the company. Leaders' high expectations of pupils and staff are firmly rooted in the school's ethos of mutual respect. This leads to pupils developing good relationships with adults that help them to develop good manners, learn and succeed.
- Leaders ensure that they meet the requirement to provide information for parents, carers and others on request, including those required by the standards on the proprietary company's website.
- The Department for Education (DfE) commissioned Ofsted to consider, as part of this standard inspection, the school's application to increase the number of pupils on roll from six pupils to 20 pupils. Leaders have taken effective action to ensure that the school's premises, curriculum and resourcing is sufficient to sustain this increase. Leaders have immediate access to sufficient and appropriate staff from other schools within the proprietary company to ensure that standards are likely to be maintained.
- Discussions with social workers and care home managers affirm the positive work of the school. These professionals recognise the positive impact that school staff have on the academic and social development of pupils. Comments typically identified the high regard in which the school is held and how well the school meets the needs of its pupils. Social workers were able to exemplify how well pupils' attitudes to learning had improved since they started attending the school.
- This is a caring school which strongly promotes fundamental British values. Pupils develop strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. They learn about a range of faiths, cultures and human relationships through a well-planned curriculum that prepares them well for life within British society.
- Teachers' professional development links closely to the school's priorities, particularly its responsibilities for keeping pupils safe. Good induction processes and frequent updates ensure that staff receive the correct training to help them meet statutory requirements and do their job well. All staff have received up-to-date training in safeguarding and safe ways to restrain a pupil for their own and others' safety. Subject instructors and teaching assistants diligently bolster their skills and knowledge through appropriate university courses, for example by engaging in a course to qualify as a teacher for pupils with learning difficulties.
- The school follows, where possible, the national curriculum. Leaders and teachers modify good-quality subject schemes of work to meet pupils' individual needs well. As a result, pupils, who often are only in the school for a short time, are able to succeed in achieving accreditation for their learning. Pupils who stay longer are able to succeed in more challenging qualifications, including GCSEs. A wide range of additional activities and therapies greatly enrich pupils' opportunities to learn. These include services from professional therapists, outdoor learning and a range of vocational opportunities.

- Leaders do not receive any additional pupil premium or special educational needs funding from local authorities placing children in the school. This funding is an intrinsic part of the school fees charged to local authorities, and it is used well to provide carefully considered provision that meets pupils' social, academic and welfare needs.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school because of the rigour of their monitoring. Frequent observations of teaching and the checking of teachers' planning and pupils' work in books keeps leaders well informed and up to date about how pupils are progressing, particularly in English and mathematics. Records of progress are kept meticulously and used effectively by leaders to hold teachers to account. Current progress records do not reflect the changes to the information the school will now receive about pupils' progress in the new key stage 2 national assessments. Leaders are aware of the need to amend their records but their actions have not yet been fully implemented.
- Leaders keep up-to-date records and logs of events within the school, including those that record incidents of bullying, use of physical restraint by staff and/or serious behaviour incidents. These records are detailed, well maintained and include the clear recording of any outcomes, actions or learning points.
- Leaders evaluate the information they collect during their monitoring activities and use this to inform their judgements of staff performance and to identify school-development priorities. Leaders report the findings of their self-evaluation weekly to the school's proprietary company using a set of information, known to the school as key performance indicators.
- Leaders' development plans are well structured and detailed. They contain appropriate priorities for development. However, the expectations identified within the school development plan are sometimes not sufficiently detailed to allow managers and leaders to check easily if their actions are having the desired impact.

## **Governance**

- The governance of the school is effective and has ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- Senior managers from the proprietary company work closely with senior leaders. Pupils trust and know senior managers well because of their frequent visits. Consequently, senior managers have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Senior managers hold the school's senior leadership closely to account, through supervisory meetings that link closely to effective performance management procedures.
- The proprietary company has ensured that appropriate monitoring and filtering is in place for the school's internet connection.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's detailed safeguarding policy takes into account the most up-to-date guidance from the Secretary of State. It is published on the school's section of the proprietary company's website.

- The proprietors ensure that the school meets all the statutory requirements for safeguarding. There is effective checking of the suitability of adults to work with children in school and appropriate filtering and monitoring of the school's internet provision.
- Highly-effective systems, including those to ensure safe and appropriate access to the internet, and meticulous record-keeping ensure that safeguarding information is thorough, detailed and easily accessible to appropriate authorities.
- All staff are highly vigilant and trained to a high standard to protect pupils from potential safeguarding risks, including radicalisation and extremism. Leaders' frequent briefings ensure that staff are kept up to date and have a deep understanding of the risks to each individual pupil.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teachers' high expectations and good subject knowledge in nearly all subjects, particularly in English, computing, catering and art, contribute well to the planning of effective learning. Teachers plan activities carefully to capture pupils' interests. As a result, pupils sustain their concentration, attention and focus. This allows them to make good progress. For example, pupils working in art on a topic of the Mexican festival of the 'day of the dead' took great care when building a plaster facemask. As a result, they ensured their masks were symmetrical and sufficiently well prepared to withstand the next stages of decoration. The work in pupils' books shows that lessons planned in sequence, particularly in English, science and catering, build well on pupils' prior learning and allow them to succeed.
- Pupils, nearly all of whom have an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs, develop their confidence and vocabulary and communicate well, because of the effective teaching they receive in English. For example, pupils were keen to engage in conversation with the inspector including sharing an emotionally charged and descriptively rich rap about their life and family.
- Educational visits, vocational training and community volunteering activities provide pupils with additional opportunities to apply their communication skills in different contexts.
- Teachers respond quickly and effectively to pupils' often rapidly changing emotions. They adapt their teaching styles and the curriculum on offer to closely meet pupils' needs and seize upon their interests. This means that they enable pupils to overcome very short attention spans and challenging behaviours, and make good progress. For example, a teacher's rapid changes of the focus of a computing activity to include appropriate work on a music/rapping festival ensured a pupil's continued engagement, learning and progress in the session.
- Teachers have improved the quality and consistency of the guidance they give to pupils, an area for improvement at the school's last inspection. Consequently, pupils receive guidance about how to improve their work in line with the school's policy.
- Teachers' effective use of practical activities ensures that pupils consolidate their knowledge and grow in confidence in the application of their skills, particularly in subjects such as science and catering. For example, pupils recently undertook the careful dissection of animal organs in science. Pupils worked confidently and safely during a cookery lesson to produce a bolognese sauce from scratch, while also giving clear

instruction to ensure a supporting teacher did not burn the accompanying rice.

- Pupils' confidence and self-esteem prosper because of the strong relationships they have with their teachers. Staff care deeply for their pupils and ensure that the atmosphere in and out of class is one that encourages pupils' trust and respect. As a result, pupils frequently contribute to class discussions and grow in confidence to ask and answer questions maturely.
- The teaching of mathematics is systematic and closely matched to pupils' abilities and needs. Teachers make appropriate use of practical experiences to consolidate theoretical work. However, sometimes teachers' explanations are unclear and over-focused on repeating basic instructions. On occasions, some adults are too keen to undertake themselves the practical work expected of their pupils. As a result, pupils, particularly those who are most able, receive more limited opportunities to develop their understanding of concepts in greater depth.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils overcome many obstacles to their learning, including those relating to their mental health and self-esteem, because of the school's carefully considered and closely targeted curriculum and effective use of staff to provide one-to-one support and guidance. Consequently, pupils reinvigorate their commitment to learning and develop their confidence to talk about their interests with visitors, for example sharing their new-found skills in animal care and talking of their aspirations for their future lives.
- Pupils value their excellent relationships with staff and the effective care and guidance they receive. As a result, pupils are prepared well for their next stages of education and ready for life after care in modern Britain. A wide range of carefully chosen, suitably checked and closely monitored placements and activities allow pupils, where possible, to develop their skills for employment and future life. For example, work experience in a local hospice and in a vocational centre ensures that pupils develop their self-confidence. They learn work-related skills in communication and compassion. Other pupils who attend vocational training develop trade skills such as plumbing and horticulture.
- Frequent visits from independent careers guidance specialists ensure that pupils receive effective advice and information about options for their future lives. Frequent visits to career fairs, colleges and university open days and visits from a variety of occupations including the military broaden pupils' horizons and raise aspirations about future employment choices.
- Pupils receive good spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupils study a range of cultures and faiths through well-structured schemes of work that make good use of links between subjects. Visits, including those to a Sikh temple, local churches and a museum about the Jewish faith, effectively bring studies to life and expand pupils' experiences of modern British society. In school, pupils learn effectively about democratic processes, the rule of law and the value of tolerance, particularly in relation to racism and gender equality.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' manners around the school are good. Pupils typically show respect for each other and adults because staff consistently and calmly demonstrate respect and manners to them. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and typically concentrate well in class.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is typically good. Pupils try hard and frequently succeed in improving their behaviours to meet carefully considered targets, for example by reducing the frequency of inappropriate language. However, there are times when pupils' social and emotional needs result in a deterioration of behaviour. The consistent application of the school's effective behaviour policy ensures that staff quickly resolve these incidents.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including the use of homophobic terms and online abuse, and know that bullying is wrong. Pupils say that they nearly always get along well with each other but are confident that teachers and other adults would deal quickly and effectively with any instances of bullying if it did occur.
- Pupils attend well and considerably more frequently than they did in previous educational settings. Absences are generally for good reason such as illness or emotional crisis. Leaders ensure that pupils who are not attending receive appropriate support from school staff. The punctuality of pupils is not as strong as it should be. Leaders are aware of this. They are working to develop a suitable strategy that gets pupils to school on time. However, the impact of this is not yet evident.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- All pupils currently attending the school are disadvantaged in some way. Most have an education, health and care plan. Pupils make strong progress from their starting points in a wide variety of subjects, particularly in English, science and art. Pupils also develop appropriate social and emotional skills because of the teaching, support and guidance they receive. As a result, pupils are quickly diminishing the differences in attainment with other pupils nationally.
- The school's assessments, known as 'flight paths', and work in pupils' books show that pupils' progress since joining the school is rapid, particularly in writing, science and catering. Gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are diminishing quickly and securely. Consequently, although their attainment is below that of their peers nationally, pupils are making up ground.
- Pupils make good progress in reading and quickly improve their reading skills. They often overcome deep-rooted reluctance to read, and become effective readers, because of support and appropriate resources provided for them.
- Very few key stage 2 pupils attended the school during 2017 and none were entered for national assessments.
- Pupils currently in key stages 3 and 4 are completing appropriate accredited qualifications in a wide range of subjects, including English, mathematics, science and catering.

Additionally, some pupils are working to achieve more advanced qualifications, including GCSEs in English and science.

- In 2017, all pupils who attended the school for more than half a term achieved recognised external accreditation for their studies in English, mathematics, science and a range of other subjects including catering and outdoor education. A small number of pupils were entered for GCSE art. All of the pupils who entered achieved a pass at grade C or above.
- All pupils who have left the school at the end of key stage 4 have gone on to education, employment or training.
- Pupils frequently enter the school disaffected from education. They go on to gain good skills in literacy and are able to communicate effectively and with confidence. Pupils have good basic number skills and are able to apply them confidently, for example in answering questions requiring them to calculate areas of irregular shapes. However, the development of more advanced skills, including those typical of their age, are more limited, particularly in mathematics, where pupils do not yet demonstrate a mastery of the subject.



## School details

Unique reference number	140205
DfE registration number	351/6002
Inspection number	10034033

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.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	10 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	6
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Cambian Group
Chair	Anne-Marie Carrie
Headteacher	Vicky Heaton
Annual fees (day pupils)	£41,500
Telephone number	0800 138 1184
Website	<a href="http://www.cambiangroup.com/childrensservices/specialisteducationservices/esddayschools.aspx">www.cambiangroup.com/childrensservices/specialisteducationservices/esddayschools.aspx</a>
Email address	education@cambiangroup.com
Date of previous inspection	28 April 2016

## Information about this school

- This is a small independent special school which meets the needs of up to six male and female pupils who have moderate learning and/or social, emotional or mental health 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.
- Since February 2016, the school has been registered as an education-only establishment, having previously shared the building with a children's home. Most pupils travel to the

school from children's homes in the Cambian Group.

- The majority of pupils who attend have an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs and have experienced substantial periods of time missing education.
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.
- The school received a progress monitoring inspection in April 2016. This inspection confirmed a number of previously unmet standards identified at an emergency inspection in July 2015 have been met.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted with one day's notice to the school.
- The inspector observed learning throughout the school, checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards and looked at samples of pupils' work across a range of subjects.
- The inspector held meetings with leaders, senior managers of the proprietary company, teachers and other adults working in the school and the manager of a care home of a pupil attending the school. The inspector held telephone conversations with social workers who were working with pupils who were attending or who had recently left the school.
- The inspector scrutinised an extensive range of school documentation, including policies, planning, information provided to governors, documentation relating to training and information about the progress, behaviour and attendance of pupils in the school. He looked at the school's single central record of employment checks.
- The inspector considered the one response to the online parent questionnaire, Parent View.
- There were no responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the online pupils' questionnaire.
- The inspector made a thorough tour of the school.
- The inspector considered the evidence to support an application made by the school for a material change to its registration to increase its capacity from six to 20 pupils.

## Inspection team

John Nixon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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