

Fenton Grange School

Inspection dates

12–14 February 2019

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and proprietor ensure that all the independent school standards are met consistently.
- The headteacher focuses her vision on providing high quality levels of care and support to promote pupils' well-being and achievement successfully.
- Staff, including therapists, share the headteacher's commitment. They are highly motivated. They build trusting relationships with pupils. As a result, pupils feel well supported and begin to flourish.
- All staff maintain a very strong focus on keeping pupils safe. Safeguarding arrangements are rigorously followed. Pupils feel safe.
- Pupils improve their attendance rapidly from often very low starting points. Some pupils arrive at school late, and after the register closes and are, therefore, counted as persistently absent.
- From their different starting points, pupils make strong progress across a range of subjects. They demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.
- Teachers plan learning, effectively, using the information they gather when pupils enter the school. Teachers do not make full use of periodic checks on pupils' progress.
- The proprietor ensures that arrangements for governance are well planned and systematic. Information gathered is used to challenge and support school leaders. However, records of visits are not consistently evaluative.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - making greater use of periodic checks on pupils' progress to refine planning for learning, so that pupils are challenged to deepen their thinking and move on when they are ready.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management further by:
 - ensuring that those responsible for governance evaluate the school's performance in greater depth, so that they can support and hold leaders fully to account
 - developing further ways to ensure that pupils arrive punctually to school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is determined to ensure that pupils have every opportunity to re-engage in education and develop the skills they need to thrive and achieve well. She is ambitious for all pupils. She sets high expectations for herself, the staff and pupils.
- The headteacher, with the proprietor, ensures that all the independent school standards are met consistently. With staff, the headteacher builds on this to provide individual pathways for pupils' personal development and achievement to meet their needs best in a safe and caring environment.
- Staff share the headteacher's focus on pupils' well-being and personal development, as a precursor for improvement in their learning and progress. They are committed to do their best for pupils in their care. They value their training, in particular with regard to safeguarding, and are keen to keep developing their wider teaching skills. They build strong relationships with pupils. Pupils trust staff and respond positively to them.
- Leaders check on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They provide guidance to staff to promote ongoing improvement, so that they can build on their knowledge of pupils' needs gained on entry into the school.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides pupils with ample opportunity to develop the personal skills and attributes that equip them well for the future. Complemented by appropriate therapeutic support, the curriculum enables pupils to grow in self-worth and to appreciate the diversity of the society in which they live. Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong and show respect for others who come from different backgrounds from their own.
- The curriculum is well planned. It ensures that pupils, and students in the sixth form, develop effective basic skills by identifying and addressing significant gaps in their learning. Pupils quickly begin to make strong improvement and make good progress in preparation for external examinations. Leaders seek to mirror subjects and courses for individual pupils started at previous schools to support their future reintegration into mainstream schools.
- Leaders have ensured that suitable plans are in place to cater for the personal development and learning needs of any students who may enter the sixth form. Leaders have considered how they can apply the approaches to keeping pupils safe to future students in the sixth form. Leaders personalise the programme of personal development and approaches to risk assessments to meet students' need appropriately. Leaders understand the range of requirements that a sixth-form programme must include and have demonstrated their ability to deliver this effectively with previous students.
- Leaders work closely with a range of teams and agencies. They ensure that there is a shared and holistic approach to the support and care pupils need to enable them to start afresh and develop well personally. Leaders ensure that risk assessments of pupils' needs are thorough and focus on minimising risks effectively for each individual.
- Leaders are committed to improving punctual arrival at school. However, in some instances, support to ensure that pupils arrive in school promptly at the start of the day is not successful. As a consequence, too many pupils, while they are kept safe at all times,

are recorded as persistently absent.

Governance

- The arrangements for governance are well considered and planned systematically. Those responsible for governance demonstrate a good understanding of the school by:
 - ensuring that the arrangements to safeguard pupils remain a top priority for the school at all times
 - supporting and encouraging close working relationships between the school and a range of teams and agencies to meet pupils' individual needs best
 - carrying out regular, planned visits to check the school's performance, including compliance with the independent school standards
 - considering the regular reports from the headteacher, and supporting plans for staff professional development, for example through visits to similar schools
 - scrutinising pupils' work to check that the work produced matches records of pupils' progress. However, records of checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are not consistently evaluative. As a consequence, leaders are not supported and challenged as well as they might be in this respect.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders make sure that the school's current up-to-date safeguarding policy is available on request. They ensure that all the required checks on adults working with pupils are carried out carefully and recorded appropriately. Designated leaders for safeguarding have suitable, up-to-date training and ensure that all staff have a good understanding of the current guidance of the Secretary of State.
- Staff are well trained and are vigilant for any signs of neglect or abuse. They know how to raise any concerns about pupils' welfare with safeguarding leaders. Shared meetings with other teams on a daily basis ensure that appropriate information sharing is the norm. They use this information to respond to any emerging risks and promote safe behaviours and healthy choices with pupils informally. This supplements the planned learning and development through the personal, health, social and economic programme. The close involvement of therapeutic services support pupils further. Individual risk assessments are carried out to plan ways to minimise risks to pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have very detailed knowledge of pupils' needs. They expect and encourage pupils to re-engage in learning as they settle into school, after periods of disruption in their education. They model and promote positive attitudes for learning.
- Pupils respond well to staff encouragement and their own early experiences of success. They show increasingly that they value their learning and make strong progress from their particular starting points at entry to the school.

- Staff make strong use of available information about pupils' prior achievement, and from baseline checks, to plan lessons that meet pupils' needs. Teachers plan learning to fill gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding and promote good progress. However, at this early point in the school's development, staff do not make all the use they might of the information gathered through periodic checks on pupils' progress to refine planning and challenge pupils' thinking when they are ready to be moved on.
- Staff set high expectations of pupils' conduct. Teachers and assistants respond to pupils' needs effectively during lessons. They note when pupils need further support and help to keep concentrating. They employ a range of well-considered strategies, so pupils can remain focused on their learning. As a result, time in lessons is used productively.
- Throughout the curriculum, there is a strong focus on literacy. Staff model the use of subject-specific vocabulary. As a result, pupils adopt appropriate language and begin to articulate their ideas with clarity.
- Numeracy is well supported through maths lessons and routes to accreditation at different levels. Work at home provides opportunities to reapply mathematics in real life. Pupils also practise these skills, for example in food technology.
- Staff provide oral and written feedback regularly. Pupils respond positively, especially to oral feedback, and this helps them resolve any misunderstandings and move forward. Written feedback is more variably in quality, but pupils say that they find it useful.
- Staff checks on pupils' understanding during lessons is effective. They quickly identify when pupils misunderstand or have gaps in their previous knowledge which are hindering their progress. Staff give additional explanations and examples, so that pupils are able to move on and continue to make progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils, including those in the sixth form, respond well to staff instructions and settle over time to re-engage with education, after long periods of disrupted educational histories.
- They begin to grow in self-confidence as they build trusting relationships with staff. This helps them apply themselves well to their learning.
- As pupils settle, they begin to find interest in, and begin to value, their learning again. They find small steps for success encouraging and, as a result, begin to plan for their futures with optimism and growing enthusiasm. Pupils appreciate the personalised guidance they receive to help them decide their next steps in education and training.
- Pupils have a very clearly well-defined sense of right and wrong. They understand that bullying is wrong and hurtful. They routinely show respect for each other and their staff. They understand that learning about bullying in school is linked to the wrongs of discrimination in wider society. They are open-minded and accept others' differences, backgrounds, beliefs and traditions.
- Pupils are kept safe by the school. Pupils recognise that they are in a safe place, with staff who care for them well. They say they feel safe in school, and have a trusted adult

with whom they can talk when they have a concern or worry. The strong messages about how to keep safe are reinforced throughout the curriculum and complemented through the use of specialist counselling.

- Pupils understand the role of public services such as the police and fire rescue services. The integrated and dynamic approach to pupils' personal development enables the school to respond to emerging needs. They re-order scheduled themes and topics as needed. This contributes to pupils' safety and strengthens their understanding of how to keep well emotionally and physically.
- Pupils enjoy physical education activities at a nearby sports centre and learn about healthy eating in practical food technology lessons.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils learn to manage their own behaviours better, including students who attend the sixth form, as they become accustomed to the school's routines and benefit from the therapeutic interventions programme.
- When pupils are distressed and struggle to manage themselves, they know that staff will help them; with support, pupils settle again. Staff consistently tackle inappropriate language.
- Pupils improve their attendance rapidly once they have settled into the routines of their new school compared to their previous low rates of attendance. However, some pupils arrive at school late and after the register has closed.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Currently, all pupils are in key stage 4. They make good progress from their individual starting points on entry across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Pupils' learning in other subjects helps pupils to develop a wider range of knowledge and understanding. Pupils learn to reapply basic skills in new contexts.
- The school opened in September 2018. Very few pupils have been on roll from that date. Some have joined the school and for a range of reasons have left again after a few weeks, including those who were in the sixth form. Scrutiny of pupils' work confirms the outcomes of the school's periodic checks on pupils' progress
- Wider skills are developed well, for example through food-technology, science and vocational courses. Pupils develop good knowledge and skills, which prepare them well both for further study and for independent living as young adults. For example, the practical work in preparing a healthy meal carefully combined specific skills, such as knife skills for the kitchen, with mathematics and understanding of healthy diet and the digestive system.
- Pupils make strong progress in art and design, as they develop their individual skills in moving from research to planning to modelling, production and evaluation. For example, pupils explored the impact of geometric design in fashion clothing. The insights they gained strengthened their understanding and their use of subject-specific vocabulary

supported them well in expressing their ideas.

- The strong sense of re-engagement in learning and growing ambition of pupils for their own futures make a strong contribution to the school's work to prepare pupils well for the next steps in their education and training.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 145241 |
| DfE registration number | 815/6044 |
| Inspection number | 10077927 |

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 | Other independent special school |
| School category | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 8 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 0 |
| Proprietor | Cambian Group |
| Chair | Anne Marie Carrie |
| Headteacher | Andrea Conway |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £41,500 |
| Telephone number | 020 8735 6150 |
| Website | Not applicable |
| Email address | fentonschooladmin@cambiangroup.com |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Cambian Group. The Cambian Group provides a range of different children's services, including 38 registered special schools nationwide.
- The school caters for the needs of up to 20 pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school is registered to provide education for boys and girls from the ages of 11 to 18. Currently, all pupils are female and are in key stage 4.
- A small number of pupils are supported through an education, health and care plan. All pupils have identified special educational needs. The school offers therapeutic approaches

to educating pupils who have experienced high levels of trauma.

- The school is located in a quiet rural area.
- The school grounds and building are purpose-built, with pupils' safety, as well as their education, a key focus of the design.
- This was the first standard inspection of the school. The school was registered by the Department for Education in August 2018.
- The school does not make use of any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning during lessons and scrutinised pupils' books. He observed pupils as they moved around the school and at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspector held meetings with staff, school leaders and representatives of the proprietor. A short meeting was also held with a regional services leader for the Cambian Group.
- The inspector talked with pupils at several points throughout the inspection to gather their views. The responses made by parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and those of staff were considered.
- The inspector considered a wide range of documents, including those about the school's safeguarding arrangements, attendance and behaviour and pupils' progress.

Inspection team

Chris Campbell, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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