

Cambian Devon School

Intek House, 52 Borough Road, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7DQ

Inspection date

5 October 2023

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i)

- The previous inspection found that paragraph 2 of the independent school standards had not been met. Whereas the school had a written curriculum policy and related schemes of work, there were a significant number of pupils on part-time timetables who did not experience or learn all parts of the curriculum. Furthermore, these pupils often learned in isolation and were not able to learn alongside peers. This all meant that pupils did not have the chance to make progress or improve their behaviour.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has addressed the weaknesses relating to the quality of education provided. It has responded positively to the feedback from the previous inspection and in relation to the submitted action plan. It has implemented its plans for improvement in a timely and determined manner. This has helped ensure that local leaders and the proprietor have worked together to improve provision. As a result, leaders' work has been effective.
- The school has raised its expectations. The proprietor has worked with staff to revisit and strengthen the aims, values and objectives of the school. The leadership of curriculum subjects and areas of provision has been restructured, as well as developing curriculum planning and overall provision. Consequently, staff are working towards a common goal to ensure that all pupils learn a broad, meaningful and balanced curriculum.
- The proprietor now expects pupils to attend school. As they had planned, leaders have commissioned the support of an education welfare officer. Together they have developed new ways to promote attendance and systems to challenge parents when attendance is poor. All pupils are now expected to attend school to learn the curriculum and so none are now on a part-time table or learn remotely. Staff and pupils agree that attendance is now a much higher priority. This has led to pupils' overall attendance improving significantly. Pupils are now, typically, more settled and successful in the school. A very small proportion continue to find attending regularly a challenge. Even so, there is clear evidence that their attendance has improved. As a result, all pupils now have the opportunity to learn and make progress through the school's curriculum.

■ *Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(b)*

- The school has significantly improved the coherence, scope and sequencing of curriculum plans. It expects pupils to attend school so that they can work with their teachers and peers directly when learning content. When appropriate, the school adapts the improved curriculum plans to meet pupils' needs.
- English and reading are now a priority in curriculum design and planning. The school has utilised a published scheme to help design a robust approach to teaching early reading and writing. Staff have received appropriate training. As a result, they are better placed to deliver the reading curriculum. Pupils are assessed as soon as they arrive at the school and on an ongoing basis. They read texts that are well matched to their reading ability but with age-appropriate content.
- The school now meets all the previously unmet requirements in this part.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraphs 5, 5(b), 5(b)(i)

- The previous inspection found that paragraph 5 of the independent school standards were not met because pupils on part-time timetables were unable to access the therapeutic approaches on offer and often became increasingly disaffected by school.
- The proprietor and staff have addressed weaknesses relating to pupils being on part-time timetables. Pupils are now expected to attend the school full time to access their education. This means that pupils increasingly benefit from the therapeutic approaches of the school. Staff and pupils agree that attendance is improving and that the opportunities to learn have been significantly improved.
- Leaders have revisited all curriculum planning to build in opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils recognise the opportunities they now get to discuss points of interest, others' viewpoints and what they learn about other cultures. Useful links are made between curriculum planning and pupils' own experiences. For example, leaders amended planning to help ensure that extra time was given to learn about how to stay safe online. Consequently, pupils are increasingly enjoying school and beginning to develop much more positive attitudes to their learning.
- The school now meets all the previously unmet requirements in this part.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders had not ensured that all of the independent school standards were met. Consequently, paragraph 34 of the independent school standards was not met. The proprietor has taken effective action to rectify these shortfalls and so this independent school standard has also been met.
- The school has raised its expectations, particularly of pupils' attendance and the breadth of the curriculum. An education welfare officer has been commissioned to work with leaders to add rigour to the new ways they look to promote attendance. Admission arrangements have been tightened to ensure that all placements to the school are appropriate and the school is well placed to meet the needs of new pupils. All pupils are now expected to learn at school or a related alternative provision. When attendance is

poor, the school has effective processes to challenge this. As a result, pupils' attendance has significantly improved and they are learning the curriculum.

- The proprietor has provided useful support and challenge to the headteacher and deputy headteacher. There are regular meetings to review the implementation and impact of leaders' plans for improvement. The proprietor uses these opportunities to get a better understanding of how well provision is meeting the needs of pupils. This means the work of the school and the overview of the proprietor has much better alignment. Nevertheless, the proprietor has rightly identified a next step to ensure more regular, local scrutiny.
- The school has maintained effective safeguarding arrangements. Staff and pupils rightly report that they feel and are safe. A robust safeguarding policy remains, and staff follow policy and process diligently. The school community is calm and orderly. Curriculum opportunities are utilised well to help individual pupils develop the skills they need to be safe and well prepared for life in modern Britain.

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 that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
 - 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
 - 2(2)(a) full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education;
 - 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and
 - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school-
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - 3(b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor-
 - 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which-

- 5(b)(i) enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

School details

Unique reference number	135803
DfE registration number	878/6213
Inspection number	10294119

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 status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	7 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	21
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Cambian Childcare Ltd
Chair	Farouq Sheikh
Headteacher	Pamela Husbands
Annual fees (day pupils)	£61,802
Telephone number	01803524537
Website	www.cambianguroup.com/specialist-education/our-schools/semh-schools/cambian-devon-school/
Email address	pamela.husbands@cambianguroup.com
Date of previous standard inspection	18 to 20 October 2022

Information about this school

- The school operates on two sites. The main school site is Cambian Devon School, 52 Borough Road, Paignton, TQ4 7DQ. In addition, the school has premises at Cambian Devon School, Oaklands Park, Buckfastleigh, Devon, TQ11 OBW. At the second site, the school provides outdoor and vocational education. The school transports pupils between the two sites.
- Cambian Devon School is a specialist provision for pupils with social, emotional and

mental health needs and pupils with autism. All pupils have education, health and care plans. Their placements are funded by both Devon and Cornwall local partnerships.

- The school is included on the list of approved independent special schools in accordance with section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- The inspection was unannounced.
- A notice was served on this school by the Department for Education (DfE) following the last inspection which took place in October 2022. The school was judged inadequate overall, with the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes and leadership and management all being inadequate. The school submitted an action plan to the DfE and this was judged to acceptable with modifications.
- Inspectors were asked to review the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan and to check whether parts 1, 2 and 8 of the independent school standards are now met.

Inspection team

Matthew Barnes, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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