



PROSPECTUS

*Specialist education services in Asperger's Syndrome  
(high-functioning autism) and complex needs*

# Cambian Potterspury Lodge School

Mixed gender | 8-18 years | 52 week residential | Flexible placements





# Welcome

We are pleased to welcome you on behalf of the students and staff of Cambian Potterspurry Lodge School.

We understand that the process of moving to a new school can be a difficult experience for both the student and the parent or carer. A move to a specialist residential school will no doubt raise many questions, we hope this prospectus will help you find answers and discover more about our school, students, staff routines and everyday life.

Once you have read our prospectus we would encourage you to visit us for an opportunity to meet with students and staff, and learn more about our school.

We are sure that should your child join us, they will enjoy and benefit from their experience at Cambian Potterspurry Lodge School.

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## Student profile

# Achieving their personal best

*Cambian has a history of delivering 'Outstanding' education and care for students with Asperger's Syndrome or high-functioning autism and other associated needs.*

Cambian Potterspurty Lodge School is an Ofsted registered independent specialist school offering flexible placements for up to 52 weeks residential for boys and girls aged 8 – 18 years old with Asperger's Syndrome / high-functioning autism, complex needs and challenging behaviour.

The purpose of the school is to prepare students for the demands of adult life through staff expertise and specialist approaches. We provide a nurturing environment that encourages students to flourish academically, socially and emotionally.

We aim to teach self-management that allows students to utilise their strengths and manage their difficulties successfully. Our work is based upon understanding the ability of the student to manage as an individual, as part of a group and within their family and the wider community.

We celebrate success and achievement at every opportunity, recognising that these outcomes for our students can be measured in many forms. This may include achieving qualifications, such as GCSEs, functional skills, ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation

Network) certificates, or achieving personal learning aims and goals.

We pride ourselves on the range of specialist support services within our multidisciplinary team who work together to enhance the learning experiences of our students. We draw out the potential in each student and work alongside them to discover their own personal strengths.

Above all, students thrive at Cambian Potterspurty Lodge School, and enjoy the learning experience.

### Student profile

- ✓ Mixed gender, ages 8-18yrs
- ✓ Primary diagnosis of Asperger's Syndrome or high-functioning autism and associated conditions
- ✓ Complex needs and associated challenging behaviour
- ✓ Often multiple exclusions and placement breakdowns
- ✓ A history of school refusal, periods of time out of school
- ✓ May have experienced previous admission to a CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) inpatient unit
- ✓ Specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia
- ✓ Issued with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

## Our approach

# Dedicated to each and every student

*Cambian Potterspury Lodge School consists of small class groups, creating a supportive and relaxing environment where students can learn and achieve their personal best.*

The school's approach to behaviour change is positive and non-aversive. The teaching styles and strategies are developed with Asperger's Syndrome / high-functioning autism in mind and are very much led by the needs of the students.

The work of staff is based upon understanding the ability of the student to manage academically, socially and emotionally in various situations.

Individualised plans are designed to meet students' specific needs, and these plans form the basis of the four-way partnership between the student, school, family and local authority.

The curriculum is tailored to individual needs and it is supported by Individual Education Plans (IEPs). These plans allow each student to have access to a challenging, broad, relevant and differentiated curriculum that is designed to be Asperger's Syndrome / high-functioning autism friendly.

### Therapeutic services

Cambian Potterspury Lodge School makes use of the crisis prevention intervention (CPI) framework. CPI is an international training organisation

committed to best practices and safe behaviour management methods that focus on prevention.

The therapeutic services approach ensures difficulties are detected and allows students to receive support as needed.

Our overall aim is for our multidisciplinary team to work alongside the care and education teams, enabling students to overcome their difficulties and promote their individual strengths.

### Students are supported by:

- ✓ Maximum class size of eight students
- ✓ High staff ratio of between 1:4 and 1:1 (this is decided at assessment specific to student needs)
- ✓ On-site therapeutic team

The school day provides opportunities for academic, personal and social skills to be developed. Full use is also made of resources in the local environment. We have a well-developed work experience programme that allows all students once in key stage 4 and post-16 to attend supported or individual work experience placements.

### Our specialist team:

- ✓ Specialist teachers
- ✓ Teaching assistants
- ✓ Residential staff / keyworkers
- ✓ Speech and language therapists
- ✓ Clinical psychologist
- ✓ Consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist
- ✓ Occupational therapists

Our educational programmes allow individuals to engage and participate in activities such as shopping, sports, swimming, social skills, library visits, fishing and country walks.

Every member of staff is dedicated to help all students achieve their potential through a personalised curriculum. This approach is designed to assist the students in developing academic, social and life skills that will enable them to achieve the maximum amount of independence in their adult lives.

# Specialist interventions for students

*Our therapy team contributes to a therapeutic environment through staff training, support and personalised intervention for all students.*

## **Tailored AS-friendly environments**

Classroom layouts are flexible, allowing for individual needs. There is plenty of room for students who work better alone in their own personal space. Equipment can easily be arranged to accommodate those who thrive on collaborative approaches to learning.

## **Holistic approaches**

The school has access to a full range of qualified clinicians accommodating for students' individual needs.

## **Training in life/work skills**

Work related learning gives our students real life experiences in the local community. This develops not only their work skills but also self-esteem, confidence, team work and communication skills.

## **Curriculum flexibility**

We support all types of students with varying abilities, entering individuals for qualifications ranging from Entry Level and Level 1 courses right up through to GCSE and Level 3 equivalents. We also work with local colleges to allow a wider curriculum offer.

In the first 3 months of a student joining Cambian Potterspurty Lodge School, they are assessed by the multidisciplinary therapy team. In addition, students can be referred for further individual therapy appointments throughout their time at the school. Following an assessment, an individualised programme will be developed; sessions will take the form of 1:1 direct sessions with the therapist, indirect sessions via the key worker and teacher, and group sessions with a selected peer group.

Appointments with therapists are confidential. However, parents will receive feedback alongside other aspects of their schooling and will be aware that their son or daughter is receiving support. Telephone appointments can be made with therapists, and there is an opportunity to meet and talk with them on our annual parents evening or by individual appointment.

Students may suffer from additional mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression. These students are given the opportunity to attend sessions with therapists. For those students who

struggle to engage with the therapy team, care can be provided indirectly through the care and education staff and local services. Our overall aim is to work alongside the care and education teams, enabling students to overcome their difficulties and promote their individual strengths.

In addition, the therapy team devise and implement anger/anxiety management programmes through 1:1 and indirect work with the students.

Each term, a student has an education review meeting with staff members who are closely involved in their care. This meeting is an opportunity to discuss a student's overall care, education and therapy needs.

### **Speech and language therapy (SaLT) aims**

- ✓ Assist students to use their existing communication skills effectively.
- ✓ Enable students to develop and learn new functional communication skills.
- ✓ Support students to develop their social integration skills with an improved ability to consider the thoughts and feelings of others.

### **Occupational therapy services aims**

Occupational therapy supports students to meet a wide range of needs in:

- ✓ Sensory difficulties.
- ✓ Life skills including personal care, cooking and eating, domestic skills and independence skills.
- ✓ Coordination of the arms, legs to allow actions such as running, crawling, and swimming.
- ✓ Self-regulation to improve concentration and management of emotions.
- ✓ Organisational skills.

### **Psychology service (including clinical psychologist and cognitive behaviour therapist)**

The psychology service is integrated within the school's multidisciplinary service and works jointly with psychiatry, occupational therapy and speech and language therapy. This approach enables staff to deliver a service that is holistic and collaborative dependent on each student's needs.

Aims of this service:

- ✓ Promote emotional health and wellbeing.
- ✓ Support the individual to develop positive and more secure relationships with others.
- ✓ Promote positive behaviour.
- ✓ Encourage individuals to learn and employ appropriate coping strategies to regulate their behaviour and support their own emotional wellbeing.

- ✓ Support individuals to make their own treatment decisions and act as an advocate for them when necessary.
- ✓ Develop environments and a culture that promotes positive behaviour and emotional wellbeing.
- ✓ Support those that care for these individuals to reinforce positive behaviour and promote emotional wellbeing.
- ✓ Deliver regular training to staff teams to support them to promote positive behaviour and emotional wellbeing.

# A varied and fulfilling education

*We have a flexible approach to learning, personalising the curriculum and offering small teaching groups to meet students' learning needs and abilities.*



## Curriculum

At Cambian Potterspurty Lodge School we aim to provide consistent, diverse, enjoyable and structured learning opportunities through a waking day curriculum, seven days a week.

We understand that not all young people with Asperger's Syndrome / high-functioning autism will learn new skills at the same pace. Our curriculum caters for students with a wide range of needs regardless of the speed of their progress.

Cambian Potterspurty Lodge School believes that students are entitled to a curriculum that is characterised by breadth, balance, relevance and progression.

## Personalised approach

The curriculum followed is broadly based on the statutory requirements of the new national curriculum, but the delivery of subjects is adapted to meet the very particular needs of our students.

The curriculum model emphasises the importance of key core subjects, whilst offering the full national curriculum. Our curriculum offers a range of options in years 9 to 11 that can lead to external accreditation and qualifications. There is also an opportunity for students to have short periods of work experience; these may be on or off-site. Where possible, the school places students with local employers and works with partner organisations to ensure the suitability of placements.

Consistent teaching and learning takes place over a longer period than in mainstream day schools. Class groups are small, allowing for individual programmes of study. Alongside the formal curriculum, behaviour management strategies and the development of social skills are also an integral part of every lesson on the timetable.

## Qualifications and achievements

# Ensuring progress

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*Our students make good progress in all aspects of learning, whether it's social, emotional, behavioural or academic.*

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**We offer a range of qualifications, including:**

- ✓ GCSEs
- ✓ Information Technology Qualification Level 1 and 2
- ✓ AQA Unit Awards
- ✓ Entry Level
- ✓ Functional Skills
- ✓ Sports Leaders Award
- ✓ ASA Swimming and Gymnastics
- ✓ Open awards
- ✓ ASDAN qualification
- ✓ Through links with local further education colleges we provide a variety of post-16 courses including A Levels

**In addition to academic attainment, students are provided with the opportunity to develop their full personal potential in the following areas:**

- ✓ Physical health and wellbeing
- ✓ Independence, life skills and self-help
- ✓ Social acceptability
- ✓ Communication skills
- ✓ The development of relationships with adults and peers
- ✓ The ability to make informed choices
- ✓ Intellectual development and problem-solving
- ✓ Moral, social, cultural and emotional fulfilment
- ✓ Positive self-esteem, self-awareness and self-confidence
- ✓ Leisure and self-occupation skills



## Our environment

# A home away from home

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*Cambian Potterspury Lodge School is situated in a rural setting between Milton Keynes and Towcester in Northamptonshire.*

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The school is set in a large country house and grounds with additional education and residential premises within the twenty-two acre site. We have a large playing field and hard court surfaces for recreation and there is an adventure playground in the grounds for younger students.

Each house has its own lounge and kitchenette. All houses have toilets and showers, with most houses containing baths. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for tidiness around the house and in their own

rooms. They are encouraged to bring pictures, books and any other special items that are personal to them.

Students can watch television in their free time in the lounges, which offers a selection of Freeview digital channels. A range of resources and games are also available in each living area for students to use.



## Family contact

# Supporting students and their families

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*Our aim at Cambian Potterspury Lodge School is to work in partnership with parents and siblings to create an environment where families feel supported.*

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### Access to staff

We understand that families may be anxious when a child starts at a new school. All parents and carers have access to members of staff that are involved in the education and care of their child, including our therapy team. We welcome questions and are happy to provide advice to help parents support their children. Residential staff also provide a weekly report to parents and carers.

The therapy and care teams are an important link for families. They offer practical support to parents in transferring strategies from school to home and management of challenging behaviour in the home environment. Individual appointments can be made with members of the therapy team to discuss individual needs.

### Keeping in touch

We encourage students to maintain close contact with their families, supporting them in remembering family birthdays, and special and seasonal occasions.

Students are encouraged to maintain contact with family and are supported to phone, write and send photographs regularly. Contact is very important to our students, and they benefit greatly from receiving letters, postcards and calls from parents and their wider family, as often as possible. This enables the students to feel they have a continuing role in, and knowledge of, family life.

### Two-way support

We operate an open door policy for parents who are welcome to arrange visits with the school at any time. Telephone can be a crucial link, as well as email communication and / or Skype. We have a firm commitment to two-way support and openness of attitude where partnership with parents is concerned, and we involve families in care, target-setting and individual programme content, to achieve a greater degree of consistency.



## Case study

# JT's Journey



*A student's story from  
Cambian Potterspurty Lodge School.*

### When we first met JT

"When I had my interview, Mrs Haylett said 'we would like you to come to Potterspurty. We think you would fit in and do well here.' No other school had ever said that to me. The others seemed to find reasons why I wouldn't fit in."

JT arrived with a history of failed education caused by behavioural problems associated with his diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Despite disliking attention he exhibited loud noises and caused deliberate disruption. JT did not settle in well on his first evening as a residential student; setting off the fire alarm in an attempt to stop his parents leaving.

### JT's progress

JT worked hard to achieve the GCSE results needed to take a Level 2 ICT course at a local mainstream college. Building on this success, he continued with his post-16 education for 3 years and completed the Level 3 ICT course. During this time JT showed an improvement in his maturity, gained independence skills, and with the help of staff demonstrated an ability to manage his time effectively "I hated being sent away at first. But in the end I stayed on longer than any other student and the school supported me throughout college too."

JT went on to support the school Scout troop as a Young Leader, helping to prepare and run Scout evenings for younger students.

JT said his favourite subject at Potterspurty Lodge School was music. "It wasn't taught like any other music lesson I had ever had before. My teacher taught me to play the music that really meant something to me."

### JT's care

The care JT received concentrated on helping him understand his condition and how it impacted on his behaviours. There was a strong focus on developing his social skills, both in the school environment and the wider community. The development of trusting relationships with staff helped JT take the steps needed to fulfil his potential. JT had an interest in gadgets and staff encouraged him to channel this interest productively towards his goals.

### Today

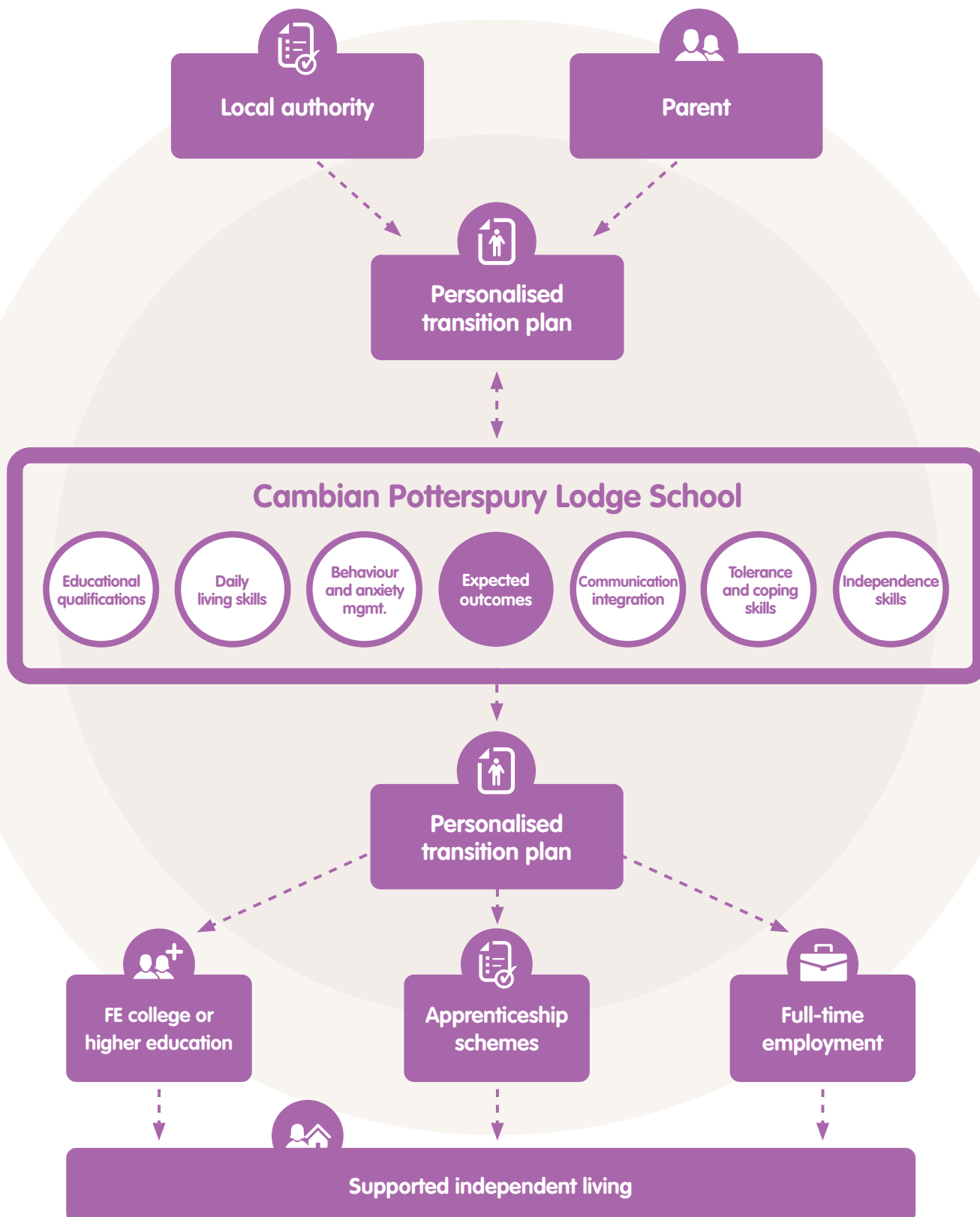
After gaining his ICT qualifications, JT returned to his hometown and successfully gained employment in a role very much suited to his skills, working in IT at a car dealership. JT's role involves setting up new software, building new computers and supporting his colleagues with software and network troubleshooting "I love it, it involves computers and cars - who wouldn't?", said JT. JT learned how to drive as part of our post-16 programme and enjoys the benefits of a company car provided by his new employer.

### What is the future like for AT?

JT is a confident and happy young man with a good job and a bright future. He visited us in the summer with his girlfriend and parents who thanked us unreservedly for "giving JT a life".

## Transition pathway

We focus on developing education, life and vocational skills that support a successful transition into adulthood.



# Opportunities in and out of school

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*It is important to ensure our students are supported to live in the community and not just in our school environment, so every opportunity is taken to teach in real-life situations.*

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### **Interacting with the community**

We aim to provide plenty of opportunities for our students to be included in life outside the school, while still allowing them to remain in their comfort zone. Students are given a range of experiences within the area and contact with the local community is an essential part of our weekly routine.

Students are encouraged to take up small jobs such as working in local cafes and charity shops. The school has links with local religious communities, and arrangements can be made for students who wish to attend their own denominational churches and places of worship.

Opportunities to become involved in community projects are provided throughout the year, such as local fêtes, competitions, Red Nose Day, Children in Need, Remembrance Day, and other festivals and events.

### **Extra curricular activities**

Opportunities are available locally for students to join clubs and successful links have been forged with the following: a golf club, a football club, athletics, a youth club, riding schools, a drama club, Scouts and Judo.

Students participate in independence training in the community. This teaches them how to go off site into town and make safe use of public transport, local amenities and shopping centres.

Cambian Potterspurty Lodge School is at the very heart of our local community. The school has built excellent links with local businesses and leisure facilities, offering work experience, learning opportunities and life skills.

# Securing your child's future

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*For more information on Cambian Potterspury Lodge School and our staff, and an in-depth look at our curriculum, services, outcomes and approach, visit [www.cambiangroup.com](http://www.cambiangroup.com)*

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To discuss a placement in confidence, call us on **0161 507 3723** or email **[ccs.referrals@cambiangroup.com](mailto:ccs.referrals@cambiangroup.com)**

We understand that choosing the right school for your child can be a difficult decision. To support this process we have parent liaison officers available who can offer further support and guidance on how we could be the right school to meet your child's needs. We encourage you to visit our school to meet students and staff, as well as find answers to those questions not easily answered in this prospectus or on our website.

To initiate the assessment process, local authorities and/or children's services departments make formal requests for a placement. Parents should involve their local authorities at an early stage. This ensures that visits by local authority educational psychologists or other professionals can be arranged to ascertain the appropriateness of the school for each prospective student.

Referral paperwork made available by local authorities, other placing bodies and parents, such as a statement of educational needs plan or an education, health and care plan are read by members of the Senior Leadership

Team and if they feel the school is able to meet the child's needs, he or she will be invited to visit the school to meet some of the staff and students.

Throughout the admissions procedure, the student is kept at the centre of the process. We believe it is unhelpful for the prospective student to see the school before the initial assessment, as it can be a disruption or a disappointment if we ultimately feel we cannot meet their needs. Sometimes this strategy is changed, however we always work in partnership with the local authority and parents/carers to determine the best way forward. Following the assessment and review of reports, the head teacher is then able to make a decision as to whether Cambian Potterspury Lodge School is the right placement for the prospective student. The majority of students are referred and placed by their local education authorities, often supported by children's services and their healthcare colleagues. There are cases in which some students are privately funded.

# Additional information

*Our policies can be requested by contacting us on 0161 507 3723 or by emailing [ccs.referrals@cambianguroup.com](mailto:ccs.referrals@cambianguroup.com)*

## **Safeguarding statement**

The parents of students at Cambian Potterspury Lodge School should be aware that the school has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of their students. This responsibility necessitates a safeguarding policy and the school may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. This policy on child protection is in accordance with the locally agreed inter-agency procedures and Hampshire Child Protection procedures. The policy also complies with guidance from the Department for Education DfE and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The school recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

Anyone can make a referral to children's social care, if necessary. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for the school is Lisé Sugden and the deputy DSLs are Christine Haylett, Bev Grice, Carol Clews and Tori Snell.

## **Complaints procedures**

We know there will be times when students, carers, parents or placing authorities will want to give us feedback about our school and we will always be happy to hear from you. If you feel that you would like to make a suggestion, let us know about

something you were pleased with, or tell us we did not meet your expectations, please contact the school via the contact details at the back of this prospectus. A complaints procedure allows for both formal and informal complaints.

Informal complaints will be dealt with quickly, while formal complaints can be made in writing. Our full complaints policy is available from the school on request. This policy is designed to help you raise concerns and ensures your complaint will be listened to and dealt with fairly. Should you wish to take your complaint further or if you feel you are unable to discuss the details with the school, please contact Cambian via the contact details at the back of this prospectus, especially if your complaint relates to the school leadership.

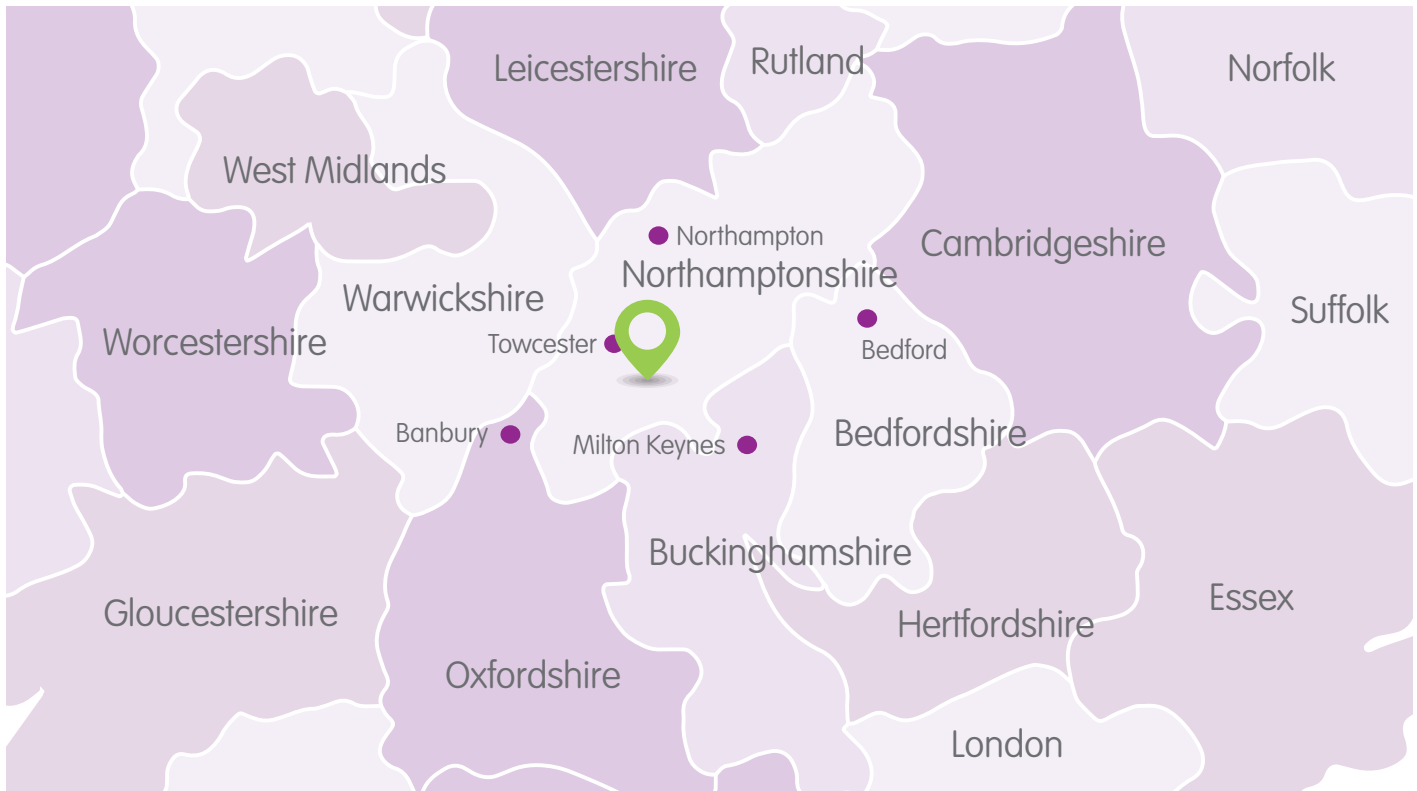
## **The proprietor**

The proprietor of the school is Farouq Sheikh, Chair of the CareTech Board. The representative of the Proprietor of the school, whose address for correspondence during both term times and holidays, is:

Chris Strong,  
Managing Director Education,  
Metropolitan House,  
3 Darkes Lane,  
Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG.  
The representative of the proprietor may be contacted at [chris.strong@caretech-uk.com](mailto:chris.strong@caretech-uk.com)



# Cambian Potterspury Lodge School



## How to find us

### By rail

Cambian Potterspury Lodge School is located about 8 miles and about a 15 minute taxi ride from Milton Keynes Central railway station. Milton Keynes is on the main line from London Euston, offering a direct service, so is easily accessible.

### By car

Cambian Potterspury Lodge School is located directly off the A5 between Milton Keynes and Towcester. We are just a few miles from many neighbouring towns - a central location for accessing many of the attractions in Northamptonshire.

To receive an application pack or to discuss a referral in confidence, please call us on **0161 507 3723** or email **[ccs.referrals@cambiangroup.com](mailto:ccs.referrals@cambiangroup.com)**

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**[www.cambiangroup.com](http://www.cambiangroup.com)**

