

Cambian Chesham House School

Chesham House, Thrush Drive, Bury BL9 6JD

Inspection date

24 April 2025

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 3 to 3(e), 3(g)

- At the school's last standard inspection in October 2020⁴, inspectors found that the school had not ensured that teachers had the expertise to design activities that supported pupils to learn the curriculum well. Staff did not routinely check for misconceptions that pupils may have had or identify gaps in their knowledge. In addition, the school's strategies to identify the additional needs of some pupils were not effective. Some of pupils' barriers to learning were not understood or addressed.
- The school's programme to support pupils with their reading was at the early stages. Pupils who struggled to read did not receive the support that they needed to help them catch up with their peers.
- The school has put in place a programme of training for staff to help them understand its expectations for how the curriculum should be delivered. This includes its expectations for how pupils' gaps in knowledge will be identified and how this information will impact planning future learning. As a result of this, pupils learn new knowledge that builds on what they already know. Staff are more confident about what pupils' gaps in knowledge are. Leaders regularly monitor the impact of this increased support for staff and provide additional guidance where required.
- There is an ongoing programme of support in place for staff to deepen their understanding of how to design learning activities that help pupils learn the intended curriculum. Learning activities are now more closely supporting pupils to know and remember more over time.
- The school has increased the depth and frequency of the evaluations it makes on pupils' progress. This includes identifying and reviewing any additional needs that pupils may have, as many pupils join the school after long periods of disengagement with education.
- There is now a more robust approach to identifying and supporting pupils' gaps in reading knowledge. The school has put a phonics programme in place. This is delivered by staff with the relevant background and expertise. This helps pupils develop

confidence and fluency in reading. The profile of reading across the school has been raised. There are regular opportunities for pupils to read for pleasure, and an increasing number of pupils are making use of this. Pupils benefit from a range of activities to develop a love of reading such as visiting the local library to choose books.

- These requirements are now met.

Paragraph 3(h)

- There are still significant inconsistencies in how staff implement the behaviour policy. Some staff do not utilise effective strategies for managing behaviour or encourage pupils to act responsibly. Consequently, pupils miss parts of learning and, at times, behave with little respect for other pupils, staff or visitors.
- This requirement remains not met.
- This independent school standard (the standard) remains not met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 7 to 7(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- Leaders seek the appropriate assurances about the school's culture of safeguarding. The safeguarding policy reflects the most recent statutory guidance and is published on the school's website. Staff know what the proprietor's expectations are for identifying and reporting concerns. They benefit from regular training that takes pupils' additional vulnerabilities into account. Staff are familiar with the procedures for reporting concerns about adults who work in the school should these arise.
- The standards in these parts continue to be met.

Paragraphs 9, 9(b)

- At the last standard inspection, inspectors found that some staff did not use the school's agreed behaviour management strategies consistently well.
- There has been some improvement to how staff deal with higher level behaviour incidents. Reporting and recording are more thorough. However, there are not consistently well-used approaches to manage some other behaviour. Sometimes, pupils exhibit poor behaviour over time, and staff are unclear about the school's expectations for how this behaviour should be managed.
- This standard remains not met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1) to 34(1)(b)

- At the last standard inspection, inspectors found that the proprietor had not addressed some of the weaknesses in the quality of education quickly enough. It had not ensured that the standards were met.
- There is a new headteacher in position. This is a very recent change to the leadership structure. The proprietor has provided additional support to the school to make some of

the necessary improvements. This is mainly in relation to the quality of education. There is a regular cycle of quality assurance monitoring in place. However, some standards remain unmet.

- The standard in this part remains not met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet 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.

School details

Unique reference number	140205
DfE registration number	351/6002
Inspection number	10389693

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 day school
Age range of pupils	10 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	13
Proprietor	Cambian Childcare Limited
Chair	Farouq Sheikh
Headteacher	Tonia Lewis
Annual fees (day pupils)	£57,136
Telephone number	0161 763 7072
Website	www.cambianguroup.com/specialist-education
Email address	tonia.lewis@cambianguroup.com
Date of previous standard inspection	8 to 10 October 2024

Information about this school

- The school is located at Chesham House, Thrush Drive, Bury, Greater Manchester, BL9 6JD. It operates from one site and the majority of teaching takes place on this site. Physical education is largely taught at a nearby sports centre.
- This is a small, independent special school which caters for up to 20 pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. The majority of pupils who attend have an education, health and care plan.
- There have been some recent changes to the leadership of the school. The current headteacher started her role a few weeks before the inspection. The previous headteacher is now one of two deputy headteachers.

- The school is registered for the age range 10 to 18 years. At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils in the sixth form.
- The school is part of the Cambian Group. The Cambian Group provides both education and care services for young people. The school's proprietor is Cambian Childcare Limited.
- The school makes use of two unregistered alternative provisions.

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.
- This is the school's first monitoring inspection following the standard inspection in October 2024.
- The Department for Education (DfE) required the school to prepare a statutory action plan. The action plan was reviewed by Ofsted on 13 January 2025. The DfE accepted the school's action plan with some amendments.
- This inspection was carried out without notice.
- The inspector met with both deputy headteachers and the headteacher. She looked at, and discussed, documentation evidencing the impact of the proprietor.
- The inspector met with some pupils and looked at examples of pupils' work from across the curriculum.
- The inspector made a tour of the site.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of documentation. This included information relating to the standards, the school's curriculum, the school's improvement priorities, the school's approach to safeguarding pupils and the checks it carries out on newly appointed staff.

Inspection team

Jane Dennis, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school-
 - 3(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that-
 - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively.

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.

The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 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;
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;
 - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;

- 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.

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