

# Inspection of Cambian Dunbroch School

Fordham Road, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 7LF

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Inspection dates: 8 to 10 July 2025

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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Sixth-form provision	<b>Good</b>
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	<b>Yes</b>
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## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are supported to feel safe and secure. All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have had many changes in their lives before coming here. Staff help pupils feel really valued and to start to build up their self-esteem. Pupils enjoy the varied activities and trips that help build up confidence. This all contributes to excellent attitudes to learning.

When pupils start at the school, staff spend time getting to know them and plan individualised curriculums. Pupils are supported to both follow existing interests and develop new knowledge. For example, after creating a poster for a football team, this was linked to an unfamiliar artist who works in the same style and new artwork was created. Many pupils have been out of school for some time. The individualised work they receive gives them assurance that they can succeed in school.

As pupils become regular attenders, the school is ambitious for what they can achieve. Most pupils aged 16 or above gain accredited qualifications. Experienced teachers support them to learn the content needed, sometimes in a very short timescale. However, some pupils do not attend regularly, so they do not benefit from the school's strong provision.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

One of the school's key strengths is how well and quickly it gets to know its pupils. The school makes them feel comfortable and welcome. Pupils work on engagement activities that help them settle into school, some for the first time in years.

This initial work leads into appropriately challenging academic learning. This builds up the skills and knowledge to enable pupils to access age-appropriate qualifications. Teachers continue to adjust the curriculum to engage pupils, for example linking poetry work to that of a pupils' favourite band.

All current pupils can read, but the school has ensured that staff are trained to teach early reading in case this is needed for pupils in the future. The school is developing its library and has ensured there are books that reflect pupils' own life experiences.

The school carefully tracks pupils' skills for learning, such as concentration and the ability to work with others. It undertakes initial checks, when pupils are ready, to identify any gaps in their understanding in English and mathematics. Teachers keep track of how well pupils progress through the curriculum. However, the information recorded varies. This makes it difficult for leaders to track how well pupils are learning over time. This is particularly the case where an individualised curriculum is being used. It is not always clear to leaders how activities provided are addressing gaps in pupils' learning.

The school works closely with therapy and clinical teams that are part of the same proprietor group. This means that any previously unidentified needs are quickly identified and assessed. Support is rapidly put in place to meet these needs as part of pupils' individual curriculums.

Pupils behave well. Staff have consistently high expectations, getting pupils into classrooms and learning. However, attendance is not yet as high as it needs to be. While the school is doing all that it can, the relationship between some parents and carers and the school is still at an early stage in encouraging pupils to build up their attendance. This means that some pupils miss out on both the academic learning and the building of self-esteem through other activities.

The core academic curriculum is enhanced by a range of vocational subjects, such as health and beauty, which broaden pupils' future career choices. The school has plenty of opportunities for pupils to go on visits, building up positive examples of key childhood experiences, such as visiting the beach. The enrichment programme in place for pupils who have completed their GCSEs is engaging and interesting. Staff skilfully develop vocabulary and knowledge through activities such as flower dissection and archaeology on the school site.

Careers education is effectively delivered. Pupils receive independent careers advice. The school works with a wide range of further education colleges to help pupils consider their next stage in education. The school teaches personal, social and health education sensitively, working closely with parents and carers where pupils have negative prior experiences.

The proprietor ensures that there is regular quality assurance of the school's provision, both from within and external to the group. The proprietor body checks on all aspects of the school's work. It ensures that the independent school standards are met. The school is compliant with the Equality Act 2010.

School leaders have ensured that the school has continued to improve from the previous standard and monitoring inspections. Staff feel well supported and access a wide range of relevant training.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

#### **(Information for the school and proprietor)**

- ✓ In some subjects, it is not clear how individualised programmes of study are meeting pupils' identified gaps in learning. Where this is the case, activities and sequences of lessons are not consistently linked to the gaps in pupils' learning. This means that pupils do not develop their knowledge in the way that they need to. Leaders cannot check that pupils are learning the right knowledge in the right order. The school needs to ensure that staff design activities and sequences of lessons that have more precise connections to pupils' knowledge gaps, so that pupils learn effectively across the full range of subjects they study.
- ✓ The school does not use assessment information effectively across the full range of subjects. This means the school does not have an accurate picture of how well pupils achieve across the curriculum. The school needs to ensure that assessment information is used effectively to identify how well pupils are achieving and to inform next steps in their learning.

### **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	149442
<b>DfE registration number</b>	935/6031
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10391818
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	13 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	9
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	6
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Cambian Childcare Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Farouq Sheikh
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Carrington
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£59,993
<b>Telephone number</b>	01638 598660
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.cambiangroup.com/residentialservices/our-care-homes/mental-healthservices/merida/dunbroch-school">www.cambiangroup.com/residentialservices/our-care-homes/mental-healthservices/merida/dunbroch-school</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:karen.carrington@cambiangroup.com">karen.carrington@cambiangroup.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	19 to 21 September 2023

## Information about this school

- ✓ The school caters for pupils who have a primary special educational needs and/or disabilities diagnosis relating to their social and emotional mental health. Pupils' needs may include: needs related to autism; cognition and learning needs; needs related to specific learning difficulties; behavioural, emotional and social development needs; communication and interaction needs; and speech and language needs.
- ✓ The school is registered for pupils aged 11 to 18, but currently does not have any 11- or 12-year-olds on roll.
- ✓ All students in the sixth form have been working on a key stage 4 programme of study.
- ✓ Placements are commissioned by a range of local authorities.
- ✓ The proprietor body is a private limited company.
- ✓ The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

- ✓ Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- ✓ Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- ✓ Inspectors spoke to the headteacher and other leaders. They met with the proprietor's representative and the proprietor's quality assurance leader.
- ✓ Inspectors checked the premises and documentation linked to the independent school standards.
- ✓ Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- ✓ Inspectors also discussed the curriculum and looked at samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- ✓ To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

## **Inspection team**

Tessa Holledge, lead inspector

Bessie Owen

His Majesty's Inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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**Inspection report:** Cambian Dunbroch School  
**9 to 10 July 2025**



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