

Cambian Dunbroch School

Fordham Road, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 7LF

Unique reference number (URN): 149442

Emergency inspection report: 12 March 2026

Overall outcome

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

This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE), which is the registration authority for independent schools. It was commissioned because of concerns raised with the DfE about safeguarding at the school.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

When we carry out emergency inspections of independent schools, we report on the school's likely compliance with part 8 of the independent school standards (ISS) first. Under part 8, the proprietor is required to ensure that the school meets all of the ISS consistently. The standard in part 8 is intended to ensure that the quality of leadership and management at the school is sufficient for that purpose.

Leaders have not developed sufficiently robust systems to ensure that safeguarding arrangements remain consistently effective. The school's systems for managing information do not always reflect the full picture of pupils' needs. This means that risk assessments and support planning are generic and lack the detail that will help professionals to support pupils effectively.

Leaders work hard to make pupils feel welcome and safe. However, the systems in place do not ensure that essential safeguarding and welfare information is received, recorded and acted on. Leaders' concerns about pupils' care and health support are not communicated with other professionals, such as those in the local authorities who commission places at the school, as required and set out in statutory guidance. As a result, the proprietor cannot demonstrate that the school consistently meets the ISS.

The school is committed to supporting pupils who have complex social, emotional and mental health needs. Leaders have established a calm and nurturing environment where pupils are treated with respect. Staff receive regular and appropriate safeguarding training, which the proprietor regularly checks is taking place. Staff demonstrate kindness, patience and understanding of pupils' needs. Pupils who attend regularly build trusting relationships with staff and are able to engage with the school's educational and pastoral offer.

The ISS in this part are not met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Safeguarding

Weaknesses in the school's safeguarding culture mean that concerns about the care pupils receive are not always escalated within the company or to the local authority. When incidents outside school negatively affect pupils' safety, wellbeing or ability to engage in education, leaders do not consistently raise the alarm with statutory partners or update risk assessments promptly. This limits the school's ability to respond effectively and hampers the oversight that other agencies should be providing.

The school ensures that the safeguarding policy reflects current statutory guidance. Staff are knowledgeable about contextual vulnerabilities and understand how to report concerns. They know pupils well, and relationships between staff and pupils are strong.

The single central record meets the associated standards outlined in part 4 of the ISS. Recruitment checks are thorough and well organised. The school regularly reviews its safeguarding systems and participates in the proprietor's safeguarding audits.

This part of the ISS is not met.

Behaviour and supervision of pupils

The behaviour policy aligns with legislation and guidance and is appropriate to the school's context and pupils' needs. The school has clear behaviour expectations and a well-understood approach to support pupils.

Staff consistently apply the procedures set out in the behaviour policy. They use calm, supportive strategies to improve behaviour and pupils' motivation. As a result, the school has a demonstrably positive impact on the confidence, behaviour and motivation of pupils who attend regularly.

High staff-to-pupil ratios allow staff to supervise pupils closely throughout the day. Staff respond consistently when pupils struggle with their emotions. When pupils require additional support, staff act quickly and work with a range of professionals to ensure pupils remain safe.

This part of the ISS continues to be met.

Anti-bullying

Bullying is very rare. The school's anti-bullying policy is appropriate and well considered. The small number of pupils and the high level of adult supervision mean that staff can quickly notice and address any emerging difficulties between pupils. Staff promote respectful relationships, and pupils are supported to understand what appropriate behaviour looks like.

This part of the ISS continues to be met.

Health and safety

The school has an appropriate health and safety policy. The proprietor has established a range of systems to check the safety of the premises and the quality of equipment. They work closely with the school to ensure these checks are regular and comprehensive.

Pupils at the school have a range of complex needs. This requires staff to have an accurate understanding and knowledge of pupils' individual circumstances. While staff know pupils well, the information the school receives, such as reports of self-harm, is not fed through to pupils' risk assessments and provision. As a result, pupils do not consistently get the help needed to overcome barriers to their safety and wellbeing. This leads to pupils repeating risky behaviours or withdrawing from learning.

This part of the ISS is not met.

Admissions and attendance

The school maintains an accurate admissions register. Leaders regularly check information about pupils to ensure records are up to date. Attendance is monitored closely. Staff take appropriate steps to follow up on absences.

Staff recognise that pupils sometimes struggle to attend school due to their complex needs. When this happens, school staff work with other professionals to encourage pupils to return to their learning. Where possible, staff visit pupils in their homes to support their engagement with education. The systems in place

provide leaders with a clear overview of pupils' attendance and support appropriate follow-up action.

This part of the ISS continues to be met.

About this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under sections 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. Inspectors checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

The school is part of Cambian Childcare Ltd, which is owned by CareTech. Cambian has 22 schools and colleges across England.

This school operates from Fordham Road, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 7LF.

The school caters for pupils who have a primary special educational need and/or disability diagnosis relating to their social and emotional mental health. Some pupils have an education, health and care plan.

Placements are commissioned by a range of local authorities.

The school does not currently use alternative provision.

Lead inspector

Hannah Stoten

His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector

Daniel Short

His Majesty's Inspector

About this school

Proprietor

Cambian Childcare Limited

Headteacher

Karen Carrington

Type of school

Other independent special school

Capacity

22

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age on roll

9

Number of part-time pupils of compulsory school age on roll	0
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Annual fees for day pupils	£59,993
Email address	karen.carrington@cambiangroup.com

Annex. Independent school standards and national minimum standards

Independent school standards that the school does not meet

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

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; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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