

Purbeck View School

Northbrook Road, Swanage, Dorset BH19 1PR

Inspection dates

8–10 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Sixth form provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have tackled successfully, with persistence and determination, the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. As a result, the school is now good.
- Safeguarding is effective because it is part of the culture of the school. Staff understand their responsibilities and take them seriously. They are trained appropriately.
- The attendance of pupils, all with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is in line with all pupils nationally.
- Students above the age of 16 are as well served as all other pupils in the school. Provision is good and prepares students well for their next steps once they leave the school.
- Some of leaders' strategies to improve the school are new. They are not yet fully embedded or having maximum impact.
- Relationships with stakeholders have improved significantly. Nevertheless, there are small numbers of staff and parents who are not satisfied with aspects of the school's work.
- Pupils are well taught and achieve well because staff meet their complex needs effectively.
- Pupils follow a curriculum that is adapted precisely to their special educational needs. As a result, pupils acquire important skills and knowledge which are invaluable in later life.
- Leaders know their school well. They are clear about their immediate priorities and what needs to improve. Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards are met.
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour well. Consequently, in the main, pupils exhibit warmth, tolerance and respect when interacting with adults and each other.
- Pupils do not have sufficient access to activities and resources outside of school to support learning. There are too few extra-curricular opportunities for pupils.
- Staff are beginning to work more closely with other schools to improve the moderation of assessment. However, this work is yet to show impact.

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.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders continue to embed and consolidate the effective systems they have introduced since the previous inspection
 - leaders engage the minority of staff and parents who are not yet fully satisfied with aspects of the school's work
 - external moderation is strengthened through links with other schools to improve further the quality of assessment and teaching.
- Improve pupils' personal development by ensuring that pupils take advantage of an increased range of activities and resources outside of school, alongside further extra-curricular opportunities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have been determined and persistent in their efforts to improve the school. They have been successful. The principal has provided confident, strategic leadership and is well supported by other leaders in the school.
- Leaders know the school well. They promote its strengths and recognise the weaknesses that are still to be overcome. Leaders' understanding of the school's effectiveness, coupled with ambitious improvement plans, means that staff are clear about the school's aspirations.
- There is now greater stability in the school than at the time of the previous inspection. Staff are more settled and practice is more consistent because of effective management. Leaders have successfully implemented policies, procedures and systems which have been necessary to ensure the school's smooth running.
- Staff morale is generally high. Staff enjoy their work, work well together as a team and consider young people's best interests to be at the heart of their work.
- There is strong oversight of the leadership of teaching. Clear processes are in place for setting pupils' targets, reviewing teachers' planning and monitoring progress. Leaders review the quality of teaching regularly and take appropriate action to remedy underperformance. However, leaders acknowledge that external moderation with other schools, which would help improve practice further, is not yet sufficiently well developed.
- The curriculum is adapted to the different complex needs of all the pupils in the school. Staff ensure that all pupils access an appropriate curriculum which not only meets certain academic needs but, fundamentally, underpins their physical, social, emotional and behavioural development.
- Leaders have nurtured an open culture. Staff are encouraged to share their ideas and develop their own leadership skills, regardless of their role in the school. Most staff who responded to the survey issued during the inspection agree that the school is well led and managed. However, a small number of staff do not share the positive views of the majority.
- Leaders have benefited from the support provided by the school improvement partner. She has had regular involvement with the school and provided leaders with useful guidance and direction over time.
- The school's work to improve pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education is good. Staff lead by example and model values such as tolerance, empathy and respect. These values inform relationships between all and underpin the culture of the school. Consequently, occasions such as lunchtime are happy, communal affairs which encourage pupils to enjoy each other's company and take pleasure in social interaction. Other examples of SMSC include pupils learning to make healthy eating choices and developing their enterprise skills by making products, such as tomato chutney, and selling them in the local town.

- Some of the strategies implemented recently by leaders have not yet had time to establish themselves and demonstrate impact. Nevertheless, they have started well and are being driven forward with enthusiasm and commitment.
- Relationships with parents and the local community have improved significantly since the previous inspection. This is because leaders have worked hard to foster relationships based on trust, mutual respect and good communication. They want the school to be welcoming and accessible to parents. One parent, typical of others who responded to the Parent View survey, said, 'I am extremely impressed with the dedication and continued efforts of the staff to develop and care for my son, along with their team approach and strong communication with parents'. Nevertheless, a small minority of parents are not satisfied with some aspects of the school's work.
- Each of the independent school standards have been met.

Governance

- The governing body, which includes representatives of the proprietor, has acted swiftly and decisively to respond to the issues raised in the previous inspection. Governors' recruitment procedures are now more rigorous. Senior leaders recruited since the previous inspection have had a notable impact on improving school provision and pupils' outcomes.
- Governors have implemented effective procedures to hold leaders stringently to account, including through the appraisal system and regular meetings to measure progress against key performance indicators (KPIs). KPIs relate to safeguarding, recruitment and retention, academic progress and financial management.
- Governors have a good grasp of safeguarding procedures and understand their importance. They know the outcome of various checks, such as external safeguarding audits and monitoring of the single central record by the school improvement partner. Safeguarding is a standing item on all meeting agendas. Governors ensure that safeguarding is embedded in the staff supervision process, which promotes regular communication between staff and their line managers.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The principal is also the designated safeguarding lead. She works closely with a dedicated and appropriately trained team of staff, all of whom are aware of the importance of their responsibilities.
- Leaders have ensured that the child protection policy is up to date, comprehensive and written in conjunction with the latest government guidance. It is published on the school's website. They have also ensured that day-to-day procedures are in place which enable the policy to be applied in practice. Staff have a good understanding of these procedures and apply them consistently. These are all fundamental developments since the previous inspection, when safeguarding was found to be inadequate.
- Staff know what to do and whom to speak to if they have concerns about a pupil. These referrals are processed in a way which makes clear the chronology of events, the

involvement of staff and actions taken to resolve matters. Leaders work well with external partners, such as social workers, to ensure that pupils receive the support they need.

- Checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children are up to date, thorough and complete.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils benefit from positive relationships with their teachers. There is close communication, empathy and a high level of trust. All pupils are supported well by teaching assistants and additional staff on at least a one-to-one basis. Many pupils receive valuable support from more than one adult at any one time. Staff are patient, understanding and caring. Consequently, pupils feel safe and comfortable in their learning environments.
- Teachers use their subject knowledge to devise activities which pupils enjoy and find stimulating. Tasks are very well matched to individual pupils' complex needs, which demand a bespoke approach. Some staff also bring specialised expertise to bear to help pupils to access their learning, such as the Makaton language scheme. This scheme assists pupils who struggle to communicate through speech.
- Teaching assistants work with teachers closely to plan sessions and provide strong support to pupils. Consequently, staff provide ambitious, stimulating activities for pupils. For example, in one session observed by the lead inspector pupils were helped to use a needle and thread to lash two branches together during a craft activity. This activity required a high level of physical dexterity, precise coordination and concentration. The pupils were absorbed in the task and patiently took their time to get it right.
- Staff have high expectations of pupils. Pupils' special educational needs are not used as an excuse to limit their potential. Staff are quick to recognise pupils' interests and talents. They find creative, imaginative ways to capitalise on what pupils enjoy and are good at.
- Leaders have introduced accredited qualifications, such as 'early mathematics', for pupils who have an aptitude in certain academic subjects. This approach is helping to challenge the most able pupils in the school and ensure that they fulfil their academic potential.
- Teachers' assessment, target setting and monitoring of pupils' progress are effective because staff know their pupils well. They use pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans to good effect, so that effective assessment leads to appropriate teaching and provision.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- A high level of wraparound care exists in the school. In addition to the support that pupils receive from teachers and teaching assistants, pupils are supported by clinical and therapeutic staff. These staff, including medical practitioners, occupational therapists and psychologists, help pupils' social, emotional, physical and behavioural development.

Furthermore, pupils are supported well by a young person's advocate, whose role it is to help them communicate their wishes and act on their behalf.

- On the rare occasions that bullying occurs, it is dealt with effectively by staff. Pupils who spoke with the lead inspector said that they were not aware of any bullying in the school. Moreover, there were no parents who responded to Parent View who disagreed that bullying was dealt with effectively by staff.
- The school has a calm, welcoming and positive atmosphere. Examples of pupils' artwork and pictures of them engaging in different activities, such as work-related learning, adorn the walls. Many displays celebrate pupils' achievements so that the school 'feels' aspirational.
- Pupils are encouraged to take on leadership roles to develop their independence and help them understand their valued place in the wider school community. For example, pupils collect registers each morning and let the attendance officer know who is or is not in school. They also take lunch orders from other pupils and return these to the kitchen.
- Pupils do not have enough access to activities and resources beyond the school in the local community to assist with their development. For example, they are not able to access swimming facilities as much as leaders would like. Although the 'portfolio' of activities and resources is increasing, it is not yet sufficient. Furthermore, not enough extra-curricular activities are in place for pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well, in the main, both in lessons and around the school site. The behaviour management team has been effective in training staff to de-escalate difficult situations and provide preventative solutions. They also monitor behaviour incidents over time to detect patterns and trends. This has helped their efforts to reduce the number of incidents of poor behaviour, including those requiring restraint.
- Pupils are happy, friendly and polite. When meeting each other, staff or visitors around the school, pupils use polite greetings such as 'Good afternoon!'. Even if pupils are unable to verbalise their greeting, they find other ways to communicate, including using tablet devices to articulate the words.
- Attendance is a strength of the school and is in line with the national average for state school attendance, even though every pupil attending the school has SEND. Moreover, many pupils are disadvantaged and looked after.
- Information provided by the school indicates that there have not been any exclusions since 2014.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils of different abilities make good progress from their starting points, which are well below average. This is because work is pitched to their needs appropriately and engages their interest. As a result, pupils feel motivated to complete their work and move forward in their learning.

- All pupils attending the school have SEND. Teachers plan provision on the basis of pupils' EHC plans. These plans are detailed, incorporate the expertise of different professionals, take account of the views of parents and are centred around the needs of the pupil. They are reviewed regularly. Pupils make good progress because of the integral nature of the plans in devising and monitoring provision.
- Leaders have high aspirations for the most able pupils. These pupils follow courses which develop skills, such as literacy and numeracy, and lead to accredited qualifications. Pupils' work shows the rapid progress pupils make because they are stimulated and required to think at a deeper level. For example, in one pupil's book the work in September showed that the pupil was calculating numbers such as $0+10=10$. In October, the pupil was calculating addition sums such as $327+148=475$, using the column method.
- The work of the school helps pupils to develop the skills necessary to become valued, contributing members of the community. Learning which occurs as part of their explicit studies or in other ways, such as through interaction with adults and each other, promotes pupils' personal development. Pupils become more independent and more socially aware, and form a better understanding of the wider world.
- Pupils receive impartial and individualised careers advice from an external provider. They benefit from regular and frequent one-to-one interviews and an increasing level of work experience and work-related learning. For example, pupils work in a voluntary capacity at a nearby farm and at the local library. They are also able to help out on the school paper round, set up in conjunction with a local paper. This arrangement enables pupils to earn money for their work. Leaders are currently implementing the Gatsby benchmarks, which provide a framework for high-quality careers guidance.

Sixth form provision

Good

- The two vice-principals and assistant vice-principal take responsibility for leadership of key stage 5. Together, they ensure that provision for students above the age of 16 is good. Such is the small size of the school and the nature of the pupils, the transition between key stages 4 and 5 is seamless. The systems and procedures in place for the lower school are applied as successfully in the upper school.
- Teaching is effective. As is the case for younger pupils, students above the age of 16 are provided with stimulating tasks in lessons. Tasks are enjoyable, and encourage students to persevere and develop their concentration.
- Students receive the bespoke care they require as they move through adolescence and contend with potentially worrying issues, such as what happens when they leave school. They are well known to staff, who provide them with reassurance and guidance.
- Students are excellent ambassadors for their school and want visitors to form a positive impression. They are expressive and charismatic young people who, through whichever means of communication is most suitable, want to share their experiences, achievements and interests. Students are responsible role models for younger pupils in the school.
- Safeguarding is effective for post-16 students. They are subject to the same policy and procedures as other pupils in the school.

- All students go on to appropriate and secure destinations once they leave school. They may gain assisted placements in residential housing or take up appropriate courses at further education colleges. Staff work successfully to ensure that students' next steps are appropriate and continue their journeys to increased self-reliance and greater independence.

School details

Unique reference number	113950
DfE registration number	835/6016
Inspection number	10056304

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 residential special school
Age range of pupils	7 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	29
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	17
Proprietor	Cambian Group
Chair	Anne Marie Carrie
Headteacher	Ginny Bellard
Annual fees (day pupils)	£80,534
Telephone number	01929 422760
Website	www.cambianguroup.com/ourservices/service/home/tabid/106/id/46/s/14/xmps/1816/default.aspx
Email address	ginny.bellard@cambianguroup.com
Date of previous inspection	27–29 June 2017

Information about this school

- Purbeck View School is registered as an independent special school for boys and girls aged from seven to 19 who have complex needs, including autism spectrum disorder, severe learning disabilities and severe emotional, social and mental health difficulties. The school is owned by the Cambian Group.

- The principal has been in post since September 2017, following the previous inspection. The vice-principal responsible for education was appointed in September 2017.
- There are 29 pupils currently on roll. There are currently no pupils of primary age attending the school.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. The proprietor has responsibility for the governance of the school. Governance has been overseen by the director for children's services of Cambian Group, but is in the process of handover to a different member of the company.
- No pupils use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector observed pupils' learning jointly with senior leaders.
- The lead inspector spoke with senior leaders, middle leaders and a cross-section of staff. He also spoke with pupils. The lead inspector also held meetings with the director of children's services for Cambian Group, clinical staff, the attendance officer and the young person's advocate.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with the school improvement partner.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised, including information on pupils' outcomes, destinations, the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, governance minutes and external monitoring reports. The lead inspector also scrutinised records relating to the monitoring of teaching, behaviour, attendance, exclusion and the safeguarding of pupils.
- The lead inspector took account of nine responses to the Parent View survey and free text comments. He also took account of 51 responses to the staff survey.
- The lead inspector scrutinised pupils' work, in part jointly with the vice-principal for education. He observed pupils' conduct during social times.

Inspection team

Steve Smith, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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