

Cambian Northampton School

67a Queens Park Parade, Kingsthorpe, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN2 6LR

Inspection dates

5 October 2017

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 and 3(a)

- The previous standard inspection in March 2017 found that pupils did not make consistently good progress over time. In its action plan, the school indicated that it intended to accurately baseline all pupils' attainment. The baseline would include information about pupils' starting points in English, mathematics, science and personal development. Pupils would have access to a personalised learning journey to help them make improved progress and achieve external accreditations.
- As a result of implementing its action plan, the school has introduced suitable arrangements to assess pupils' starting points. These arrangements were introduced in September 2017 and staff now have reliable information on which to produce personalised learning plans for each pupil. Teachers' planning now includes more consistent access to external awards at various levels suited to pupils' individual learning needs.
- Teachers' planning and assessment arrangements are now more systematic. Pupils have a clearer understanding of how they may progress through different levels of awards. Senior leaders' visits to meet individually with pupils' parents have contributed positively to pupils' awareness that staff and parents are working together to support them.
- The school has not yet had sufficient time to demonstrate the impact of these new arrangements on pupils' outcomes. It is too soon to judge whether pupils will make consistently good progress over time as a result of the changes introduced by school leaders.
- Staff expectations of pupils' standards of work are not consistent. Staff do not agree sufficiently about:
 - the pace of learning required to maximise the use of time
 - the quality of oral and written responses of which pupils are capable
 - the need to accelerate the challenge in tasks and activities in response to pupils' successes.
- The requirements of these independent school standards are not met.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

Part 2, paragraphs 5, 5(b) and 5(b)(iii). Part 1, paragraphs 3, 3(b) and 3(h).

Part 3, paragraphs 9 and 9(b).

- At the time of the previous inspection, staff were not consistently successful in ensuring that pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and appropriate work habits. Pupils did not all have sufficient self-respect or desire to accept the challenge of working hard to achieve success. The school's behaviour policy was not implemented effectively.
- In its action plan, the school planned to establish a pupil-voice forum to encourage pupils to contribute their ideas and to take more consistent ownership of their work and achievements. The school planned to review the points award system to improve pupils' self-motivation. Plans also included arrangements for staff training in supporting pupils to take greater responsibility for their learning.
- Pupils have responded positively to the opportunity to voice opinions and suggestions about their experiences at the school. To date, their ideas have focused mainly on practical aspects of school organisation, including lunchtime menus, the tuck shop and leisure-time activities.
- The school has produced a revised behaviour policy. This includes details of an appropriate new points and rewards system.
- Staff have improved pupils' behaviour plans and agreed individual targets with them. Pupils have an appropriate say in deciding their individual targets. Details of these targets form part of staff's regular conversations with parents.
- A number of staff have completed additional training or are working towards additional qualifications. The training includes understanding challenging behaviour, mental health awareness and behaviour management. These are planned to further develop staff strategies for improving behaviour.
- Pupils are mostly responding positively to the new points reward system. They are keen to achieve the maximum available points throughout each day. Overall, pupils' respect and cooperation are improving. However, pupils still do not show sufficient urgency in being punctual to lessons.
- There has been insufficient time for the school to demonstrate the sustainability of the revised procedures. Pupils new to the school, in particular, are still adjusting to the demands of taking responsibility for their own learning. They demonstrate inconsistent self-motivation and effort.
- Staff have not yet had sufficient opportunities to share the outcomes from their training in order to improve the consistency of their responses to pupils' inability to manage their own behaviour. It is too soon to judge the impact of the revised behaviour policy and procedures.
- The requirements of these independent school standards are not met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils.

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 32(1) and 32(1)(c).

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Safeguarding is given a high priority in the training and allocated responsibilities of staff. The headteacher had firm plans in place for refresher training for all staff in the week following this inspection. This will reinforce staff's understanding of the latest statutory guidance and ensure consistent implementation of the school's safeguarding procedures.
- The safeguarding policy has regard to the latest statutory guidance and is reviewed regularly. The current version is published on the school's website.
- The requirements of these independent school standards are met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a) and (b).

- At the time of the previous inspection, the school did not meet all the standards for leadership and management. School leaders had not ensured that pupils made the progress of which they were capable. Leaders had not evaluated the quality of teaching and learning well enough and had not ensured that teachers had consistently high expectations of the standard of pupils' work. Leaders had not ensured that the school's behaviour policy was used consistently.
- Senior leaders planned a series of suitable actions to address each of these shortcomings. They have provided increased opportunities for staff training to improve the management of pupils' behaviour and to work consistently with pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour and progress.
- The headteacher has introduced revised arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. These arrangements judge the quality of teaching and learning against the national teachers' standards. This is raising teachers' expectations of the standards of work required of pupils. Additional training for staff has included a focus on the quality and quantity of work required to enable pupils to achieve success in external qualifications. However, leaders have not ensured that all staff have the same high expectations of pupils' work to ensure that pupils make sustained good progress.
- The daily timetable has been revised and lesson lengths adjusted to make sure that time is used effectively. Teachers' planning is now more systematic and based on an agreed framework. This is creating stronger links between pupils' learning in different subjects. The curriculum now has a stronger focus on preparing pupils for future employment.
- The revised behaviour policy now includes clear guidelines about the use of sanctions, including exclusion for serious incidents. This is being implemented consistently. Pupils are now clearer about the consequences that result from unacceptable behaviour.
- Arrangements for governance have been improved. This has resulted in clearer shared expectations between the headteacher and the proprietor's representative with responsibility for external oversight of the school.
- School leaders demonstrate improved knowledge and skills appropriate to their role. They have made improvements in a number of aspects of the independent school standards that were unmet at the time of the previous inspection. However, there has

been insufficient time for the school to demonstrate sustained improvement, including improved progress and behaviour.

- Senior leaders have not yet secured consistent self-motivation from pupils, or adequate awareness of the need to approach their work with increased urgency and commitment.
- The requirements of these independent school standards are 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. These 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.

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

- The proprietor must ensure that teaching at the school:
 - enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their abilities so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught
 - 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
 - utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly (paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(b) and 3(h)).
- The proprietor must ensure that:
 - they comply with the standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, by encouraging pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour (paragraphs 5, 5(b) and 5(b)(iii)).
- The proprietor must ensure that the behaviour policy is implemented effectively (paragraphs 9 and 9(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a) and (b)).

School details

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| Unique reference number | 131802 |
| DfE registration number | 928/6067 |
| Inspection number | 10043120 |

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.

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| Type of school | Other independent special school |
| School status | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in the sixth form | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 13 |
| Of which, number on roll in sixth form | 0 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 0 |
| Proprietor | Cambian Group |
| Chair | Anne-Marie Currie |
| Headteacher | Rebecca Hill |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £39,000 |
| Telephone number | 01604 719711 |
| Website | www.cambiangroup.com |
| Email address | Northampton.School@cambiangroup.com |
| Date of previous standard inspection | 28–30 March 2017 |

Information about this school

- Cambian Northampton School is located in the Kingsthorpe area of Northampton. It occupies a detached house which has been refurbished to operate as an independent day school. The school admits pupils in the age range 11 to 18 years who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties, together with associated challenging behaviour.
- The school is registered to admit up to 24 pupils. There are currently 13 pupils on the

school roll aged 11 to 16 years. All current pupils have an education, health and care plan related to their social, emotional and learning needs. A small number of pupils are looked after by their local authorities and reside in children's homes operated by the school's proprietor.

- The school uses the services of the following alternative providers to extend the curricular opportunities available to pupils: Melton Mowbray Learning Hub and Northampton College.
- The school's classroom motto is to 'give respect and get respect'.

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 was the school's first progress monitoring inspection since the previous standard inspection in March 2017. The Department for Education accepted the school's action plan for improvement in July 2017.
- This inspection was conducted without notice.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning across a range of subjects in both of the pupil groups present on the day of the inspection. This included pupils in Years 7 and 8, and Years 9 and 10. He looked at samples of pupils' work across the full age range.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the proprietor's education lead for the area, and members of staff with subject and leadership responsibilities. He spoke informally with a number of pupils.
- The inspector scrutinised a number of school policies, procedures and records, including staff training records, in order to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

David Young, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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