

Inspection of Cambian Northampton School

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

Inspection dates: 22–24 October 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement
Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils value the caring, inclusive culture that leaders have created. Pupils know it is important to behave well. They look forward to the rewards for good behaviour, such as visiting a local trampoline facility. They enjoy spending the points on their 'payslips'.

Pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour receive effective support from staff. This helps them to understand how to improve their behaviour. Pupils appreciate this support. Over time, their behaviour improves.

Most pupils engage well with their learning. They achieve well in different subjects and in the things that interest them. They know that their teachers have high expectations of them and expect them to 'achieve their full potential'. They know that staff will support them if they struggle to understand. This helps pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning.

Pupils say that they are happy at the school and feel safe. They know that staff will support them if they have a concern. Pupils say that bullying is rare. They are confident staff will deal with any bullying, should it occur.

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

Leaders and staff are ambitious for all pupils. They know what they want pupils to achieve while they are at the school. They help pupils to engage with learning and grow in confidence. They ensure that pupils develop the knowledge and skills they will need for adult life. Most pupils gain appropriate qualifications, including in English and mathematics. Pupils also develop their skills in work-based subjects, such as construction and animal care. These qualifications and experiences prepare them well for when they leave the school. All pupils move on to college or an apprenticeship.

Teachers plan learning which builds on what pupils already know and can do. They check pupils' understanding to help them to identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge. In most cases, teachers use this information well to fill these gaps and build up pupils' knowledge. They also adapt learning to meet specific needs. For example, in English, pupils read different texts to improve their reading skills and learn how to use language to communicate. They apply this learning to their own writing. Sometimes teachers do not consider the most important knowledge pupils need to know and how best they should learn it. When this happens, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Leaders have recently introduced new subjects in response to pupils' interests. The plans for these subjects are at an early stage.

Leaders know the importance of preparing pupils for their adult lives. Pupils learn how to manage money and live healthy lives. They learn to cook for themselves and others, working out how much the meals cost. Staff teach pupils about the local community. For example, pupils learn about homelessness in the local area. Pupils learn that people have different values or beliefs. They learn about different religions and cultures. Pupils understand that they must respect people who are different to them.

Pupils learn about different types of careers that may interest them. They attend careers fairs and visit colleges to help them make decisions about their next steps.

Some pupils struggle to understand how to conduct themselves in different situations. For example, some do not know how to use appropriate language when they talk with others.

Leaders make sure that there is a good range of resources to help pupils learn. Staff generally have good subject knowledge. Leaders have put in place training for new staff and for those whose subject knowledge is less strong.

Leaders contact parents and carers every morning to make sure that pupils are coming to school. Most pupils attend regularly. Leaders support pupils who struggle to attend school for long periods. For example, staff teach these pupils away from the school site.

Staff say leaders support them well. Leaders check on staff's well-being. They meet with staff to discuss pupils' learning and welfare.

Leaders have ensured that the school meets the independent school standards. The school complies with section 10 of the Equality Act 2010. All the necessary information about the school is available to parents. The safeguarding policy is available on the school's website.

The chair of the proprietorial body knows the school well. He has put in place support for the school's leaders to help them run the school well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant about pupils' welfare. They know the signs to look for that may indicate a concern. They know to pass on any such concerns to senior leaders.

Senior leaders respond quickly to any concerns about pupils' welfare. They work closely with parents and external agencies so that pupils receive the support they need. They provide staff with regular updates on safeguarding, so that all know how best to support the pupils.

Senior leaders check appropriately on new staff's suitability to work with children before the staff start to work at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- Teachers understand how to use assessment to identify gaps in pupils' learning. They identify the blocks to pupils' learning. Sometimes teachers do not use the information as well as they could. They do not always identify the most important knowledge pupils need to know and how best they will learn this. Leaders should ensure that all learning is well planned so that pupils achieve as highly as they are able in all subjects.
- Pupils learn about the importance of behaving well in lessons and around the school. They learn that it is important to respect other people. However, pupils do not always know how best to conduct themselves. On occasions, pupils use language that is not appropriate when talking to others. This means that not all pupils are as fully prepared as they could be for life after school. Leaders need to ensure that these pupils understand how to conduct themselves in different situations.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	131802
DfE registration number	928/6067
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10078684
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	11
Number of part-time pupils	3
Proprietor	Cambian Group
Chair	Chris Strong
Headteacher	Rebecca Hill
Annual fees (day pupils)	£42,687
Telephone number	01604 719711
Website	www.cambiangroup.com/childrensservices/specialisteducationservices/esddayschools.aspx
Email address	education@cambiangroup.com
Date of previous inspection	28–30 March 2017

Information about this school

- The school admits pupils aged 11 to 18 who have a range of behavioural, social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Almost all pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils in the school's sixth form.
- The school makes use of three alternative providers. These are: Moulton College, Northampton; Centurion Training Solutions Ltd, Northampton and Stable Mates, Daventry.
- The school's ethos is that 'all young people are entitled to achieve their full potential, at whatever level this may be'.
- The school's last standard inspection took place on 28–30 March 2017. There have been two progress monitoring inspections since the standard inspection. These took place on 5 October 2017 and 27 March 2019.

Information about this inspection

We 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.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- We met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and a senior leader from the Cambian Group. The lead inspector spoke with the chair of the proprietorial body by telephone.
- We undertook deep dives into English, mathematics, art and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. We met with the lead teacher for each subject, visited lessons, looked at pupils' workbooks, and met with some pupils.
- We met with staff to discuss their understanding of the school's procedures to keep pupils safe.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher to discuss safeguarding. He also considered documentation relating to safeguarding, the school's single central register and the system for undertaking checks on new staff.
- The lead inspector toured the school site to check the school's compliance with Part 5 of the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Simon Hollingsworth, lead inspector Her Majesty's Inspector

John Lawson Her Majesty's Inspector

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