

Inspection of Cambian Scarborough School

Unit 11, Plaxton Park, Cayton Low Road, Eastfield, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO11 3BQ

Inspection dates: 26 to 28 April 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is small, which pupils say helps them to settle in quickly and gives them confidence. Staff feel that the small size of the school enables them to get to know pupils very well. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and enjoy attending because 'being in school feels like being in a family'. Staff believe that pupils can succeed and they have high expectations for all pupils. Over time, pupils believe this too, and most leave with a range of qualifications.

Former pupils often visit the school. Most come proudly to tell staff how well they are doing in their new placements. Past pupils' actions show that the strong relationship between staff and pupils remains even after pupils have left school. These relationships are the bedrock on which pupils' confidence to move forward and succeed is built. A reflection from a successful previous pupil sums up the ethos of the school well: 'I would tell my younger self not to do things differently, but to work harder and believe staff when they told me I could succeed.'

Although school is usually calm, pupils can and do have moments of crisis. Staff manage these well, supporting and offering pupils space to talk about their feelings. As a result, few incidents require physical intervention. Incidents of bullying occur infrequently. Pupils say that if these do happen, staff deal with them quickly and well.

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

Leaders recognise that pupils need to gain as many skills and as much knowledge as they can from their time in school. Most pupils leave with a wide range of qualifications. Many leave school with achievements beyond their own expectations, and more than many had expected to achieve when they started at the school.

The curriculum is planned and delivered well. The national curriculum is followed closely in most subject areas. Learning is adapted to meet individual pupils' needs, but this does not detract from the high expectations staff have for every pupil.

Staff are determined to improve outcomes for pupils. For example, in the past, the coordinators for English identified gaps in pupils' knowledge of reading and spelling. Assessments showed that many secondary-age pupils did not have a strong enough knowledge of phonics. Leaders identified and attended a course on teaching phonics to older pupils. Whole-school training for staff followed and weekly phonics lessons were timetabled. The team teaching English realised that older pupils would associate phonics with their earlier years in education and so might not cooperate, so phonics was renamed 'cracking the English code'.

Pupils enjoy this approach to learning and participate enthusiastically. Some were observed practising 'ow', 'aw' and 'ou' sounds in class. The impact of this approach can be seen in the rise in the number of pupils who are now reading more fluently.

Staff are planning to introduce short daily sessions of 'cracking the English code' to pastoral time.

Staff's skilful use of questioning enables them to assess pupils' starting points and ongoing learning. This could be seen in a physical education (PE) lesson, where younger pupils competed to be the first to explain the different ways to throw a ball. The information they provided was then used to build further learning.

Learning in mathematics is systematically planned. Staff identify and address gaps in pupils' learning. This ensures that pupils are as successful in mathematics as they are in English.

Over time, pupils learn to manage their own behaviour. When pupils see how well they are doing, it spurs them on to study even harder. One pupil commented that before coming to the school, she did not believe she could pass an exam. Her recent success has inspired her to continue to study at GCSE level. The pupil commented, 'I don't mess around anymore. I just keep my head down and work. Thanks to school I have a future.'

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is exceptionally well planned. Staff focus on developing pupils' self-esteem and self-belief, which is key to their educational success. Pupils are offered a very wide range of experiences while in school. These include survival skills, abseiling, off-road cycling, trips to local museums, forest school and horse riding. Leaders recognise that many pupils do not leave the area in which they live and many have little knowledge about regions other than their own. Recently, pupils went on a trip to London during which they experienced a live theatre performance and visited the National History Museum and the London Eye. The visit helped develop pupils' understanding of the geography of England, as well as experiencing what it is like to live in a city. Many pupils commented that this had been the most exciting experience of their lives.

Relationships and sex education (RSE) is woven into the PSHE curriculum. During the inspection, pupils talked about how they recognised the importance of consent and how their behaviour impacted on others. For example, one pupil described how she now recognises 'red flags' in the behaviour of others. An independent careers adviser visits the school regularly. He produces individual plans that offer pupils a variety of different choices of pathway that enable them to make informed career choices.

On the proprietorial board, the managing director of children's services provides suitable support and challenge to the school's leaders, directly and through educational managers assigned to a group of schools. Central policies are written by the company and it is expected that each school will display these on its website. These policies do not always contain the correct information to meet the requirements of the independent school standards. The headteacher and educational managers have worked together to adapt the policies to ensure that they are fit for purpose for this school. However, both policies are displayed on the

school's website, which is confusing for parents and carers and can lead to mistakes being made if, for example, a parent wishes to make a complaint about the school.

Leaders ensure that the school's accessibility plan meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The headteacher and other leaders know their pupils well. They seek to overturn any barriers that hinder pupils' success.

Leaders are rightly proud of the year-on-year increase in the number of qualifications gained by pupils. Leaders are equally passionate about the forest school curriculum and music provision, which support pupils to be successful. Staff are very positive about how leaders support them. They say that they feel valued and skilled at their jobs.

School leaders recognise that their relationships with some parents and carers need to be better. Work undertaken by the new pastoral lead has started to tackle this area. However, school leaders know that they need to do more to make sure that parents and carers fully support the school in its efforts to improve pupils' behaviour and attitudes in school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's safeguarding policy is on the company's website and makes reference to the latest government guidance, 'Keeping children safe in education' (2021). The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSL regularly deliver training to staff. This ensures that staff are clear about what to do should a pupil be in need.

Safeguarding records show that the DSL identifies pupils in need of help and works closely with outside agencies to secure the relevant support. Records are securely kept and chronologically ordered, ensuring that confidential information is safely kept and viewed appropriately. The proprietor ensures that leaders involved with staff recruitment have completed the relevant training and follow current government guidance when appointing new staff.

Through the school curriculum, pupils learn how to stay safe when online and how to recognise inappropriate content should they come across it. The RSE and health education curriculums enable pupils to make clear and informed choices involving their sexual health and well-being. This is in addition to enabling pupils to recognise potential sexual abuse and harassment.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- The company's school policies are written by the company's policy team. It is current company policy that these are displayed on individual schools' websites. However, the policies written by the policy team do not meet the requirements

of the independent school standards. They contain information that is not pertinent to schools. Some school staff and parents find them difficult to understand. School leaders recognise that the corporate policies do not meet the independent school standards. Leaders have designed their own policies, which meet the requirements of the independent school standards, and have uploaded these onto this school's website. This practice leads to two sets of policies being displayed on the website, which is confusing for both parents and staff. Urgent action needs to be taken by the company to ensure that only one set of advice and guidance for parents and carers is displayed on the website, and that the guidance meets the requirements of the independent school standards.

- The school has recognised that relationships with parents are still in need of further improvement. Parents do not always support the school in dealing with pupils' difficult behaviour. For example, some parents do not give their consent for pupils to stay after school to catch up on missed work. This undermines the school's ability to hold pupils to account for their behaviour and slows pupils' progress overall. Leaders should engage more effectively with parents to gain their cooperation and support in improving outcomes for their children.

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.

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

School details

Unique reference number	134660
DfE registration number	815/6036
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10220888
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	8 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	20
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Cambian schools
Chair	David Sutherland
Headteacher	Patricia Peake
Annual fees (day pupils)	£46,000 to £60,000
Telephone number	01723 582073
Website	www.cambiangroup.com/specialist-education/our-schools/semh-schools/cambian-scarborough-school/
Email address	vanessa.moore@cambiangroup.com
Date of previous inspection	9 to 11 May 2018

Information about this school

- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider, Coast Tuition, Auborough Street, Scarborough YO11 1HT.
- The school caters for the needs of pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. Some pupils have additional needs, including autism spectrum disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- The school is operating within its registration agreed with the Department for Education.

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.

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

- The inspection team met with the headteacher, who is also the school's DSL. Inspectors also met both deputy headteachers, one of whom is also the deputy DSL. Discussions were held with the DSL in order to establish the frequency and quality of staff training.
- The lead inspector also met with the school's regional manager for supporting pupils with SEMH needs.
- A telephone discussion was conducted with the managing director of children's services.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, reading, mathematics, PE and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Checks were carried out on the school's completion of the single central record to ensure that all required recruitment checks had been carried out.
- Safeguarding records were scrutinised to check on the quality and effectiveness of actions taken by the school to safeguard pupils' welfare.
- Inspectors also visited learning in science, construction and art. Inspectors checked curriculum plans and spoke to leaders in some of these areas.
- The inspection team checked health and safety documents, documents relating to the school's fire evacuation policy, first-aid boxes to check the contents, and certificates of staff attendance on first-aid courses.
- A tour of the building was carried out to check the school's compliance with part 5 of the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Suzette Garland-Grimes

Ofsted Inspector

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