

Cambian New Elizabethan School

Address: Quarry Bank, Hartlebury, DY11 7TE

Unique reference number (URN): 117030

Inspection report: 17 March 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	● ● ● ●
Expected standard	● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

✔ Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.
- **Insufficient evidence:** Inspectors were unable to gather sufficient evidence to judge whether safeguarding standards are met.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Many pupils join the school with records of low attendance at previous schools. Leaders are successful in removing barriers to pupils' regular attendance. The school works with pupils, parents and carers to re-engage pupils with learning. The improvement in pupils' attendance, compared with their attendance in previous schools, is notable. It is testimony to the school's high-quality work in promoting regular attendance. Pupils want to attend school because they feel valued and experience success.

The school has established a behaviour policy that is informed by pupils' needs. Staff apply the behaviour policy effectively. Indeed, staff go beyond managing pupils' behaviour to changing pupils' behaviour for the better.

Pupils have a say in how the school's rewards system works. Staff implement the rewards system with fairness and consistency. Where appropriate, staff make reasonable adjustments to the rewards system to recognise individual pupils' needs. Pupils appreciate this approach and respond positively. Bullying and unkind behaviour are uncommon. Staff do not allow such behaviour to persist.

Around the school, pupils get on with their peers and maintain constructive relationships with staff. In lessons, pupils are attentive and keen to learn. When pupils do not meet the school's expectations, staff act swiftly and skilfully to support pupils in managing their behaviour.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

The school has strengthened the processes for identifying and meeting pupils' specific needs. Crucially, these rigorous processes begin before pupils join the school. Leaders liaise closely with parents and carers to understand pupils' needs and check that the school can meet those needs, which typically include autism. This helps pupils to make a positive start at the school.

The school's close attention to pupils' individual needs continues throughout their time at the school. Leaders ensure staff have regular training in meeting these needs. Leaders have developed a pupil-centred culture. From school clubs to educational trips and from physical education to therapy sessions, every pupil benefits from provision that is tailored to their needs and interests.

Leaders keep a watchful eye on how well pupils are doing, both educationally and personally and socially. When provision is effective, leaders build further on that provision. When provision is less effective in meeting pupils' individual needs, leaders make swift and appropriate changes.

The school's inclusive approach, supported with internal and external clinical expertise, is highly effective in reducing pupils' barriers to learning and wellbeing. It enables pupils to both thrive and achieve. Indeed, pupils have a true sense of belonging to the school. This

belonging is evident in pupils' relationships with their peers. It is also evident in the manner in which they talk with staff and visitors.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and priorities for improvement of the school. They have achieved rapid improvement in the quality of the school's provision. They have raised staff expectations of what pupils can achieve. Swift and effective action has ensured that previously unmet independent school standards were addressed quickly and all the areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been tackled with success. Furthermore, there have been recent and significant improvements to teaching and learning. On top of this, the school grounds and facilities have improved significantly and further developments are planned.

Leaders' informed attention to staff training and development has been a key factor in sustaining improvement. This has clarified and lifted expectations. Leaders at all levels know exactly what is required from them. They make a consistently positive contribution to the school's development. Similarly, staff know how to do their jobs well. If staff need extra help, they know leaders will provide it. This supports staff wellbeing. Staff feel well equipped to manage their work and do their best for pupils.

The proprietor has established effective systems for oversight of the school's work and performance. This includes a tier of local governance and external scrutiny. This ensures that statutory duties are met. It also ensures continued compliance with the independent school standards. The proprietor maintains regular communication with school leaders and provides appropriate rigour in supporting and challenging school leaders. Together, the proprietor and leaders make decisions about school provision that are in pupils' best interests.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Pupils' personal development is a thread that runs through every aspect of the school's work. For most pupils, it is the strong progress they make in how they feel about themselves and others that enables them to re-engage with learning and make constructive plans for their futures. Indeed, the school's work to prepare pupils for life beyond school is highly effective.

In lessons and at breaktimes, staff support pupils to share their ideas and interact with others. Staff are calm and pupils respond very well to them. Beyond the everyday routines, there is a coherent deliberateness to the school's extra-curricular offer. Clubs such as gardening, board games and sports extend pupils' interests. Trips to local venues support the curriculum, pupils' knowledge of fundamental British values and build pupils' social skills. For example, walking to the post office means pupils meet and talk with different people. Attending church services and a faith day in school supports their spiritual reflection and understanding of different people's beliefs. All pupils make regular day trips to an activity centre and this prepares them for a whole-school residential stay there.

The same sense of deliberateness is apparent in the school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and relationships and sex education (RSE). However, PSHE

and RSE are also readily adapted to respond to needs as they arise. For example, it includes timely reminders about the features of safe, healthy relationships and how to stay safe online.

Older pupils benefit from a carefully tailored and managed careers guidance programme that includes links with many colleges and various employers. This offer continues to improve and helps pupils to form ideas about future careers. Importantly, the school gives pupils the self-belief to aspire. This, in turn, motivates them to attend regularly and work hard in school.

In short, this school builds character and gives pupils self-worth and purpose.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

In many cases, pupils who join the school have fallen behind with their education, often because of disrupted schooling elsewhere. All have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school's highly effective work to re-engage pupils with learning has a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Across the curriculum, pupils make appropriate progress from their starting points. Pupils secure essential knowledge in English and mathematics. They apply that knowledge effectively.

Furthermore, the school helps prepare pupils well for their next steps in education, training and employment. Pupils learn how to manage in unfamiliar situations with people they do not know. For many pupils, this is a significant achievement. It builds pupils' confidence and contributes to pupils raising their aspirations. The school supports pupils to develop ambitions for their future lives and careers. Pupils gain qualifications that enable them to go to college and get jobs.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of the school's curriculum. They ensure that its content, structure and delivery are well thought through, supported by staff's understanding of pupils' specific needs. The curriculum is broad and ambitious and, in all subjects, clearly sets out the knowledge pupils are expected to learn and the order in which that knowledge is taught.

The school has daily phonics lessons for pupils, who are at an early stage of reading. In all subjects, staff support the development of pupils' basic literacy and mathematics. For example, in food technology and outdoor learning activities pupils get meaningful opportunities to apply their knowledge of mathematics. The school's regular 'talk about' sessions focus on developing pupils' oracy. These sessions cover a range of topics and are particularly helpful for pupils who find it hard to express themselves.

Staff have appropriate subject knowledge. Most of the time, staff check what pupils understand before moving on to new work. In subjects such as art and music, teaching

builds successfully on what pupils already know and can do. However, in some subjects staff do not check pupils' understanding consistently to ensure learning builds securely.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Being a pupil at this much improved school is a positive experience. Many pupils join the school having struggled to achieve in previous settings. Sometimes, pupils have been out of education for long periods of time before joining the school. The school provides pupils with a welcoming, calm and structured environment. Staff understand pupils' needs and help pupils with their learning. Staff are kind and patient. Pupils feel safe and supported. As a result, pupils begin to enjoy school again. They gain a sense of belonging and attend much more regularly than they have at previous schools.

Staff regularly check on pupils' progress and adapt learning to meet individual pupils' needs. Staff work to remove pupils' barriers to learning so that every pupil can experience success. Pupils enjoy varied and engaging lessons. The school supports pupils' learning with a wide range of experiences. These experiences include therapy sessions, outdoor activities and opportunities to develop communication skills.

Positive relationships are a feature of school life. Bullying is rare. Pupils get on well with each other and with staff. Indeed, staff support pupils to manage their behaviour and emotions effectively. Staff listen to pupils' views. Pupils value the opportunity to help develop aspects of school life, such as rewards and extra-curricular activities. The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.

Beyond the classroom, pupils take part in clubs and enjoy visits to local community venues, such as an activity centre. These experiences help pupils build their confidence, independence and social skills.

Careers guidance, work placements and links with colleges support pupils in considering and planning their next steps. Over time, pupils develop ambitious aspirations for what they might achieve. Pupils gain the skills and qualifications they need to move on to the next stage of their education, training or employment.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that staff check pupils' understanding consistently before moving on to the next stage of learning, so that pupils can securely build a coherent body of knowledge and skills.
-

About this inspection

The proprietor of the school is Cambian Whinfell School Limited. The chair of the proprietor body is Farouq Sheikh.

All pupils who attend the school have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Typically, pupils have autism. All have an education, health and care plan.

The annual fees range from £98,570 to £129,920.

The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.

The school's email address is: info@caretech-uk.com

Inspectors carried out this standard inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, and 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.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other leaders, representatives of the proprietor body, members of staff and pupils. They visited lessons in different subjects, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils about their learning and school life.

Carrie McConomy: Headteacher

Independent school standards

Independent school standards are either met or not met for each category.

1. Quality of education provided

Standards met

All standards have been met.

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

Standards met

All standards have been met.

3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Standards met

All standards have been met.

4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Standards met

All standards have been met.

5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Standards met

All standards have been met.

6. Provision of information

Standards met

All standards have been met.

7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Standards met

All standards have been met.

8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Standards met

All standards have been met.

Lead inspector:

Martin Pye, Ofsted Inspector

Team inspector:

Chris Field, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 17 March 2026

Total pupils

50

School capacity

50

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

50

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

0

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

Insufficient evidence

Inspectors were unable to gather reliable enough evidence to grade an evaluation area. This is rare and normally only happens if there are no pupils on roll at the school.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2026



