

# Inspection of Cambian Chesham House School

Chesham House, Thrush Drive, Bury BL9 6JD

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Inspection dates: 8 to 10 October 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

**No**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Some pupils value the opportunity that this school provides them with to have a second chance at their education. They appreciate the care that is given by some staff. This helps them to feel a sense of belonging.

For some pupils, the school's behaviour management systems have been transformational in helping them to improve their conduct. Some pupils increasingly develop a positive attitude to learning and begin to enjoy school. Nonetheless, some pupils are not supported as well as they should be to overcome the challenges of managing their behaviour. Consequently, some pupils continue to spoil the learning experiences of other pupils and do not engage in their own learning.

The school is developing an ambitious curriculum that meets the social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs of pupils. Some aspects of this new curriculum help pupils to build resilience and prepare them well for life beyond school. However, pupils' learning across the curriculum is uneven as, in some subjects, their needs are not met as well as they should be.

The school is at the early stages of developing opportunities to promote pupils' personal development. Some pupils enjoy the sporting activities that the school arranges for them. For instance, they enjoy using the gym and spending time on adventurous activities such as climbing.

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

The school is starting to shape its curriculum to better meet the additional needs of pupils. It has placed a strong focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. However, the wider curriculum is not fully developed.

Across subjects, the school has identified the essential knowledge that it wants pupils to learn. However, it has not ensured that teachers have the expertise to design activities that support pupils to learn the curriculum well. Moreover, staff do not routinely check what pupils know and can remember to identify gaps and misconceptions in pupils' knowledge. This prevents some pupils from achieving as well as they should.

The school's strategies to identify the additional needs of some pupils are not effective. This limits how well staff understand and address the barriers to learning that these pupils face. This hinders how well these pupils can access the curriculum.

The school's programme to support pupils with their reading is in its infancy. Currently, some pupils who struggle to read with fluency and confidence do not receive the support that they need to help them to catch up with their peers. Reading for pleasure is not promoted effectively enough. As such, some pupils do not enjoy or develop confidence in reading.

Most pupils understand what is expected of them at this school. Over time, they learn how to manage their emotions well. Nonetheless, some staff are not using the school's behaviour management strategies consistently well. Some pupils struggle to regulate their emotions. These pupils do not engage with their learning sufficiently well.

Some pupils attend school on time every day. However, the school does not fully understand how to overcome the barriers that other pupils face in attending school. Consequently, the school's actions have not ensured that these pupils improve their attendance.

The school provides pupils with a strong personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. Pupils learn about risks such as smoking and vaping and how to keep physically healthy. Some pupils benefit from a strong careers programme which is tailored to their needs. This raises their aspirations about their future, motivating them to succeed in their next stage of education, employment and/or training.

The school's programme to promote pupils' wider development is underdeveloped. It has introduced projects that enable pupils to contribute to their local community. However, pupils have limited opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities.

The new members of the proprietor body understand their roles and responsibilities. The proprietor now provides effective support and challenge to the school. Nonetheless, the proprietor has not addressed some of the weaknesses in the quality of education quickly enough. As a result, it has not ensured that all the independent school standards ('the standards') are met.

The proprietor ensures that the school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. It meets other statutory requirements, such as the information that it makes available to parents and carers on the school's website.

Staff appreciate the school's consideration for their workload and well-being during a period of change.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)**

- At times, some staff do not choose suitable activities to help pupils to learn the intended curriculum. This hinders how well some pupils engage in their learning and develop their subject knowledge. The school should ensure that staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills that they need to design effective learning activities which help pupils to learn well.

- The school's assessment strategies are underdeveloped. Teachers do not fully understand what pupils have learned and remembered. At times, this means that some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. The school should ensure that assessment strategies focus sharply on gaps in pupils' knowledge so that teachers can address these effectively.
- The school does not identify the additional needs of some pupils sufficiently well. At times, this means that these pupils do not access the curriculum as well as they should. The school should ensure that staff understand pupils' specific needs so that they can better support pupils to access the curriculum.
- The school has not ensured that some pupils who are struggling to learn to read are supported effectively. This means that these pupils do not read with confidence and fluency. The school should ensure that gaps in pupils' reading knowledge are identified and addressed effectively so that pupils learn to read as well as they should.
- The behaviour management strategies that are used by some staff are not effective. This means that some pupils do not engage with their learning well. The school should ensure that staff have the support that they need to help some pupils to regulate their emotions and behaviour to minimise disruption to their learning and that of other pupils.
- At times, the school does not help some pupils to overcome their barriers to attending school. This leaves some pupils with longstanding absences that impact how well they learn. The school should further develop the strategies that it uses to help improve the attendance of some pupils.

## **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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140205
<b>DfE registration number</b>	351/6002
<b>Local authority</b>	Bury
<b>Inspection number</b>	10342089
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	10 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	14
<b>Proprietor</b>	Cambian Childcare Limited
<b>Chair</b>	Farouq Sheikh
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jennifer Lees
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£57,136
<b>Telephone number</b>	01617 637072
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.cambiangroup.com/specialist-education/our-schools/semh-schools/cambian-chesham-house-school">www.cambiangroup.com/specialist-education/our-schools/semh-schools/cambian-chesham-house-school</a>
<b>Email address</b>	Jenni.Lees@cambiangroup.com
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	19 to 21 October 2021

## Information about this school

- The school is located at Chesham House, Thrush Drive, Bury, Greater Manchester, BL9 6JD. It operates from one site and the majority of teaching takes place on this site. Physical education is largely taught at a nearby sports centre.
- This is a small, independent special school which caters for up to 20 pupils who have SEMH needs. The majority of pupils who attend have an education, health and care plan.
- There have been some changes to the leadership of the school. The current headteacher was appointed in May 2024. The deputy headteacher was appointed in July 2024.
- The school is registered for the age range 10 to 18 years. At the time of the inspection, the school had pupils in Year 9 to Year 11. There were no sixth-form students.
- The school is part of the Cambian Group. The Cambian Group provides both education and care services for young people. The Cambian Group become part of CareTech. Currently the school is registered under Cambian Childcare Limited.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## 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 has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school. (if had inspection after pandemic)
- The lead inspector met with members of the proprietor body.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. They also held meetings with staff, including those responsible for attendance and pupils' behaviour, SEND and personal development.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including those relating to the standards and the curriculum.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at social times, in lessons and around the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, art and design and English. They met leaders and teachers and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their learning in these subjects. They also considered the curriculum across some other subject areas and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also met with leaders to review other areas of the curriculum.
- The lead inspector made a tour of the school premises to check the suitability of the premises and accommodation against the relevant standards.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- There were no responses from the Ofsted survey for pupils, parents and carers. However, inspectors spoke with a range of pupils during the inspection.
- The inspectors spoke with staff to discuss leaders' support for their workload and well-being. Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Amina Modan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

## **Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements**

### **The school failed to meet the following independent school standards**

#### **Part 1. Quality of education provided**

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school-
  - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
  - 3(b) 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;
  - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
  - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;
  - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
  - 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress;
  - 3(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

#### **Part 3. Welfare, Health and Safety**

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that-
  - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively.

#### **Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
  - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
  - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.



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