

Cambian Devon School

Intek House, 52 Borough Road, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7DQ

Inspection dates

25 November 2015

Overall outcome

Unmet independent school standards identified

Reason for the inspection

- The inspection was conducted with no notice. The inspection was commissioned because concerns were raised about the school's safeguarding arrangements, including site security and supervision of pupils at the Borough Road site. The inspector was also asked to look at the quality of the school's procedures for providing information to pupils' local authorities.
- The inspector was requested to consider whether the independent school standards contained in Part 3, Part 5, Part 6 and Part 8 are met.
- The inspector was based at the Borough Road site. During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the executive headteacher, headteacher and school business manager. She also met with a number of staff. The inspector spoke to a director of the school by telephone. A range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils, health and safety documentation and policies on behaviour management. The inspector conducted a tour of the school's premises and accommodation. She also spoke with pupils during the day and at break- and lunchtimes.
- The last standard inspection of the school was carried out in February 2013. The school's provision was judged to be adequate at this time.

Main findings

- The school's child protection and safeguarding policy is out of date. It does not reference the most recent statutory guidance as set out in *Keeping children safe in education*, published by the Department for Education in July 2015.
- Information included in *Keeping children safe in education* has not been shared with all staff working at the school. They are unsure of its contents and have a limited understanding of the school's 'Prevent' duty to counter radicalisation.
- The school's detailed written risk assessment policy sets out what to do if a pupil chooses to leave the school site. The directors have significantly improved site security since the previous inspection. No visitor can access the site without gaining permission to enter. However, leaders confirm pupils can access the security codes and leave the site. Staff keep detailed records of the small number of these incidents. They hold prompt discussions with pupils to encourage them to reflect on and learn from their actions. Despite detailed policies in place for staff to manage these incidents, not all have received appropriate training and guidance. New staff in particular are unclear what to do in such a situation; this does not ensure the welfare, health and safety of all pupils.
- Established staff receive appropriate ongoing training for their roles. The designated officer for child protection has completed in-depth training. However, new staff have recently joined the school. These staff have not been provided with a detailed induction programme. They have yet to receive safeguarding and restraint training and are unsure how to manage incidents if they occur.
- Leaders have completed safer recruitment training. Appropriate checks on staff have been made and references taken up. The school business manager ensures the single central record of checks on staff is complete and meets requirements.

- Leaders and staff are working together to review the written behaviour policy. There is no recorded date for completion of this document. This leaves some staff unsure how to manage the challenging behaviour they deal with during this interim period. However, the school's new policy for recording concerns is being implemented by all staff. Detailed information is recorded and used in follow-up meetings with pupils to enable them to reflect on their behaviour. Incidents since the start of the year have reduced. However, staff confirm they need further guidance and training to support them in managing challenging behaviour and understanding their role in safeguarding the pupils.
- Leaders have drawn up a written risk assessment policy. This is set out to mitigate risks such as what to do if a pupil leaves the site and goes missing and assessment of risks on trips and visits. The executive headteacher has recognised staff need training in dealing with such instances. Currently staff are not well placed to deal with challenging situations effectively or to recognise when pupils are at risk from harm.
- Leaders have drawn up an extensive policy to comply with the relevant health and safety laws. However, staff confirm they do not have a thorough understanding of how to implement all of the policies.
- Admission and attendance registers are maintained daily. However, omissions in recording pupils' attendance were noted during the inspection. The school is taking steps to rectify this.
- Individual risk assessments and levels of staff supervision are appropriate. Pupils are clear the school is helping them improve their learning and behaviour. Teachers set suitable learning and behaviour targets for each pupil. However, targets lack a specific measure from which to track pupils' academic and personal development.
- Leaders ensure that the premises and accommodation are well maintained and resourced to suit the ages of the pupils. Remedial maintenance work is carried out swiftly when required to ensure that pupils are safe.
- Leaders have ensured that a robust first aid policy is in place. All injuries are carefully recorded. Fire safety checks and regular fire evacuation drills are carried out and logged.
- The outdoor areas are well maintained and used at break- and lunchtimes. The grounds are spacious, with football nets for pupils to use during free time.
- The school meets all the standards in Part 6, 'Provision of information'. Placing local authorities confirmed during the inspection that they have strong links with the school and receive appropriate information.
- The Cambian Group has recently restructured its organisation into localised regions. Directors are now better placed to monitor the school's performance and challenge and support leaders appropriately. Together with the school leaders, they have accurately identified the areas for improvement needed to strengthen safeguarding practice and provide appropriate training. They have plans in place for the development of the school.
- Directors and leaders have not ensured that the child protection and safeguarding policy includes the latest statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education. Information included in *Keeping children safe in education*, July 2015, has not yet been shared with staff employed at the school.
- Directors and leaders have not ensured that all staff, and particularly those new to the school, receive the induction, training and guidance they need to fulfil their role. They have not ensured that all the regulations are met and have not effectively promoted the welfare of pupils.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements:

- The directors must ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school, and that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraphs 7, 7(a), and 7(b)).

- The directors must ensure that a written behaviour policy is drawn up that, among other matters, sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour, and that the policy is implemented effectively (paragraphs 9, 9(a), 9(b)).
- The directors must ensure that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy (paragraph 11).
- The directors must ensure that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 15).
- The directors must ensure that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy, and that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraphs 16, 16(a), 16(b)).
- The directors must ensure that the persons with leadership and management responsibilities demonstrate good skills and knowledge relevant to their role, and fulfil these responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)).
- The directors must ensure that the persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraph 34(1)(c)).

Inspection team

Catherine Leahy, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Cambian Devon School is a small special school which provides education for boys and girls with emotional, social and mental health difficulties. Most pupils have levels of reading and writing attainment below that expected for their age and a small number have autistic spectrum conditions.
- Currently, there are 21 pupils aged between 10 and 18 years, most of whom have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. Six pupils are in the care of their local authority.
- The school is owned by The Cambian Group and operates on two sites. The premises at Borough Road accommodates the younger pupils. Older learners are taught at the site in Buckfastleigh.
- There is one headteacher who leads both schools. There is a leader on each site who has day-to-day responsibility for the school in the headteacher's absence.
- The school aims to provide a stimulating curriculum which recognises pupils' individual achievements and builds self-esteem. The executive headteacher, appointed in January 2015, oversees the work of this school.
- The school's last standard inspection was in February 2013. Its overall effectiveness was adequate. The school met schedule 1 of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	135803
Inspection number	10009730
DfE registration number	878/6213

This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

Type of school	Special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	10–18 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	21
Number of part time pupils	1
Proprietor	The Cambian Group
Headteacher	Greg Evans
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 February 2013
Annual fees (day pupils)	£51,300
Telephone number	01364 644824
Fax number	01364 644824
Email address	education@cambiangroup.com

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