

Eaton Hall School

Inspection report for residential special school

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Inspector	Clive Lucas
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Address	Eaton Hall School Pettus Road NORWICH NR4 7BU
Telephone number	01603 457480
Email	office@eatonhall.norfolk.sch.uk
Registered person	Norfolk County Council Children's Services
Head of care	
Head / Principal	Valerie Moore
Date of last inspection	29 January 2007

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About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Service information

Brief description of the service

The school, which is part of Norfolk's Children's Services Department, is located in a residential area of Norwich, with partially wooded grounds. It is purpose built and largely single storey; the boarding accommodation is divided into four areas on the main site and an annex nearby which consists of a pair of semi-detached houses. The school achieved specialist status in behaviour in July 2007. The school provides places for 37 boys with emotional and behavioural difficulties, 24 of whom board for some part of the week. On the day of the inspection 14 children were boarding, 12 took part in the inspection.

Summary

This inspection was announced and looked at the key National Minimum Standards and also the accommodation (standard 24). The service has made improvements since the previous inspection. Overall the school provides an good standard of care. Outcome groups for Enjoying and Achieving, Positive Contribution and Organisation are judged as outstanding, those for Being Healthy and Staying Safe are judged as good and Achieving Economic Wellbeing is judged as satisfactory. The school does particularly well at: identifying and planning in order to meet individual needs; involving children in decision making; working as a whole school team and providing a consistent and competent staff group. The sleeping areas in the main school site are very small and limit children's privacy.

The overall quality rating is good.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the previous inspection on 29th January 2007, recommendations were made relating to: medication; making children aware of action taken by staff to reduce bullying; sourcing advice on child protection matters and increasing privacy in sleeping areas. The member of staff responsible for overseeing medical issues has sought advice from the local pharmacist and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's website, she has reviewed the procedures for handling medicines and reminded staff that records must be made in ink. When a member of staff deals with an incident relating to bullying, they now go back to the children involved and speak to them, so that they can be assured that the matter has been dealt with. The school have links with a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for child protection in Norfolk's Children's Services Department. All of these developments help to create a safer environment for children at the school. No work has been done to increase the privacy in the sleeping areas in the main school. There are plans that could address this, but they rely on substantial building work, which has not yet taken place. While the accommodation remains as it does the privacy of children sleeping at the main site is potentially compromised.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children who board at the school live in a healthy environment and the health needs of each child are identified and promoted. The member of staff responsible for medicines has re-written the medical policy since the previous inspection, with guidance from the local pharmacist and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's website. Only senior staff will give medicines to children; they keep appropriate records of medicines and ensure that medicines are securely stored so

as to prevent inappropriate access by children. Parents decide if their children are to be registered with the school's GP or remain with their home GP. If appointments are made by the school, older children may decide if they wish to see the GP alone or with a member of staff. This promotes children's independence and involvement in decisions about their health. The school provides very good advice and support for children to help them maintain a healthy lifestyle; the school has received a Healthy Schools Award. Staff keep appropriate records of accidents that children have; the head teacher monitors accident and medicine records. Children's health is further promoted through good links between the school and specialist health services.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff respect children's privacy. Children can lock doors when they are using baths, showers or WCs. Children sleep in individual areas that have curtains instead of doors due to the limited space available. Staff will call out to children and await a response before entering their sleeping areas, but other children do not always do this. Consequently children's privacy in their sleeping areas can be compromised. There is a pay telephone that children can use in private. Children are able to speak to staff about any concerns that they have, but not all are aware of a complaints process, although complaints information is included in the children's guide, which children receive. Ofsted details are available for parents in the school's prospectus, but the details in the children's guide are for the Commission for Social Care Inspection, which are no longer relevant. There have not been any complaints made since the previous inspection. The welfare of children is promoted and they are protected from abuse. Children feel safe at the school. Staff are trained in child protection and have access to child protection procedures and guidance. Senior staff keep records of child protection issues; these show that the school appropriately reports and manages these matters. Children are protected from bullying. They feel confident that they can tell staff of any incidents of bullying and that staff will take them seriously and deal with them. Staff across the school do work to prevent bullying, including making a film on bullying which has been shown to other schools. They pick up on and address any negative comments made by children about other children. Staff know what to do if a child leaves the school without authority. Children are helped and encouraged to develop appropriate behaviour. Each child has a behaviour plan that identifies potential triggers to poor behaviour; details of what type of behaviour may be exhibited; supportive strategies to avoid the behaviour and preferred handling strategies should they be necessary. Staff recognise positive behaviour and children know about and understand the award system for good behaviour. Staff record sanctions in a bound book, but the pages of the book are not numbered. Staff do not use unreasonable, idiosyncratic or excessive sanctions. Staff are trained in managing challenging behaviour and restraint and are able to ask for refresher training or advice from trained senior staff whenever they need to. The school has recently been awarded the gold standard in Team Teach de-escalation and restraint techniques. The basic details of restraints are kept in a bound log book, with more comprehensive detail in a recognised Team Teach record system and an electronic system. Children are encouraged to go through the restraint record (with a member of staff who was not involved) and state if they wish to discuss the restraint further with a member of staff of their choice. Senior staff monitor all records of restraints to look at patterns including staff involved in restraints and injuries to children. Children know what to do in the event of a fire and they take part in regular evacuation drills, including during the evening. Staff test the fire alarm and emergency light system regularly. Children are also protected by regular testing of electrical appliances and boilers. There are recruitment procedures to help ensure that children are not looked after by unsuitable staff. However, in one recent appointment

a List 99 check was not obtained before a member of staff commenced work, as required under Department of Children, Schools and Families guidance.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from very good links between school and boarding staff. Teaching staff and care staff work together during the school day to support children. All staff undertake joint training and there are daily handovers between education and residential staff, which helps build positive relationships and good communication. Students meet regularly with their personal tutors (boarding staff) and educational tutors to look at the student's progress and goals. Boarding staff are aware of children's educational needs and progress. Children receive very good individual support, each child has an Individual Social Programme (ISP) and risk assessment; ISPs identify individual needs and specific targets for children. Children are given awards and certificates that recognise their personal achievements. They are able to speak to staff about any concerns that they have, there is an independent listener who visits the school regularly and is available to speak to children during these visits. Children also benefit from therapeutic work in the school which addresses individual needs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are positively encouraged and supported to express their views and be involved in making decisions about their lives. Staff seek children's views in developing their ISPs, through tutorials, the school council and after restraints. Children are able to play a part in the recruitment of staff through the school council; they can put forward representatives to speak to prospective staff and their views are fed back to the head teacher. Children feel able to talk to staff. Children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these will be met. ISPs are updated regularly, they contain measurable and achievable goals and are signed by the child they relate to. Each child has a personal tutor who regularly meets with the child; records are kept of these meetings. Children are able and encouraged to maintain contact with their families. The importance of maintaining good contact is recognised in the school brochure, which states that 'Even though children return home frequently, it is important that parents and their children maintain good contact with each other.' There are pay telephones available for children to use and parents may visit their children at the school. Staff work very closely with parents, they contact them by telephone and visit them in their homes every half-term. Children benefit from the very good contact that staff have with parents, as this enables them to agree goals and provide consistent messages to the children.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is satisfactory.

Children live in accommodation which is appropriately, decorated, furnished and maintained. Accommodation is split between the main school site and Surlingham House, an annex a short distance away from the main site, which is used for older children. Children who sleep at the main site have individual sleeping areas that have very limited floor space and have curtains instead of doors due to the limited space available. Children are able to personalise these areas, but their privacy is limited.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Parents, staff and placing social workers have access to a statement of the school's care principles and practice through the school prospectus. Children are given a guide specifically for them which contains a summary of this information in an appropriate format. Children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them. There are sufficient numbers of staff to look after the children and meet the school's Statement of Purpose. The school brochure includes details of the number of staff on duty in the main site boarding units, but does not include all of the information required of a staffing policy as set out in National Minimum Standard 28. Children are able to form and maintain very good relationships with staff due to the attitudes and skills of staff and by the high level of consistency in the staff group. There is a very low turnover of staff and good staff morale. Staff are regularly supervised and feel comfortable to approach senior staff for additional advice or support when required. Children are looked after by competent staff who have had a high level of experience and a very good range of training. Staff are encouraged to pursue areas of particular interest that are of benefit to the children who attend the school. The school is very well run. The head teacher or senior staff monitor records and the head teacher prepares reports for governors every term.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- provide children with details of how they can make a complaint directly to Ofsted (NMS 4.8)
- ensure that the pages of the bound sanctions book are numbered (NMS 10.9)
- ensure that appropriate recruitment checks take place before a member of staff begins work (NMS 27.7)
- ensure that the school's staffing policy includes all of the information required in the National Minimum Standards. (NMS 28.2)

Annex

Annex A

National Minimum Standards for residential special school

Being healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted (NMS 14)
- children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs (NMS 15)

Ofsted considers 14 the key standard to be inspected.

Staying safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children's privacy is respected and information about them is confidentially handled (NMS 3)
- children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept informed of progress in their consideration (NMS 4)
- the welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse (NMS 5)
- children are protected from bullying (NMS 6)
- all significant events relating to the protection of children in the school are notified to the appropriate authorities by the head of the school or designated person (NMS 7)
- children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded to positively on return (NMS 8)
- children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff responses to inappropriate behaviour (NMS 10)
- children live in schools that provide physical safety and security (NMS 26)
- there is careful selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers (NMS 27)

Ofsted considers 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 26 and 27 the key standards to be inspected.

Enjoying and achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- the school's residential provision actively supports children's educational progress at the school (NMS 12)
- children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities within the school and in the local community (NMS 13)
- children receive individual support when they need it (NMS 22)

Ofsted considers 12 and 22 the key standards to be inspected.

Making a positive contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way the school is run; no child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views (NMS 2)
- children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect (NMS 9)
- children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes (NMS 11)

- children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school (NMS 17)
- in accordance with their wishes children are able and encouraged to maintain contact with their parents and families while at school (NMS 20)

Ofsted considers 2, 17 and 20 the key standards to be inspected.

Achieving economic well-being

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children can wear their own clothing outside school time, can secure personal requisites and stationery while at school, and are helped to look after their own money (NMS 16)
- children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living (NMS 21)
- children live in well designed and pleasant premises, which provide sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs
- children live in accommodation which is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use (NMS 24)
- children are able to carry out their personal care in privacy and with dignity (NMS 25)

Ofsted considers the key standard to be inspected.

Organisation

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils (NMS 1)
- children's needs, development and progress are recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions (NMS 18)
- there are adequate records of the staff and child groups of the school (NMS 19)
- children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently (NMS 28)
- children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs (NMS 29)
- children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare (NMS 30)
- children receive the care and services they need from competent staff (NMS 31)
- children and staff enjoy the stability of efficiently run schools (NMS 32)
- the governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body monitors the welfare of the children in the school (NMS 33)

Ofsted considers 1, 28, 31 and 32 the key standards to be inspected.