

# Eaton Hall School

Inspection report for Residential Special School

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<b>Inspection date</b>	31/03/2011
<b>Inspector</b>	Lucy Martin
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Key

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<b>Date of last inspection</b>	13/01/2010

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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 outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

## 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**

Eaton Hall School is a day and residential special school maintained by Norfolk County Council located in a residential area of Norwich, with partially wooded grounds.

It is purpose built and largely single storey; the boarding accommodation comprises of three units on the main site and a large semi-detached house, Kett House, situated a short distance away in a residential area. The school currently provides places for 43 boys with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, 25 of whom currently board for some part of the week. All students attend on a residential basis, including some weekends, when they first join the school.

### **Summary**

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This was an announced inspection during which all the standards identified by Ofsted as key areas were inspected. Eaton Hall School provides outstanding standards of care in all areas.

There is excellent leadership and management at the school and effective monitoring of practice. The education and care teams work exceptionally well together to ensure that the school has the welfare of the students at its centre. The students' emotional and health needs are well met and they are kept safe from harm. Students feel involved and listened to by staff who care about them and who know them well. There is regular contact with parents and there is an emphasis on further development and improvement throughout the school.

Since the last inspection, the residential units on the main school site have been rebuilt. The new units reopened in January 2011 and are of outstanding quality and design.

Although there are sound recruitment systems in place, there is no evidence that there is direct contact by the school with each referee to verify the reference given. This is required in the relevant national minimum standard and is a recommendation of this report.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

There was one recommendation made at the last inspection to ensure that the monitoring visits conducted by the local authority included all the required areas.

This has been met. Visits take place on a regular basis and the reports now include all the required areas.

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

The physical, emotional and mental health needs of students are identified and met to a high standard. The school places a strong emphasis on providing a healthy environment and there is excellent provision for promoting the health needs of each student. This includes encouraging students to eat a healthy diet; providing ample opportunities for physical activities; and comprehensive guidance and support with health issues.

All medication is securely stored and there are clear procedures for the administration of medication which is only undertaken by a small number of staff. Regular stock checks of the medication take place and there are sound procedures for ensuring that any changes to medication are fully documented. The students' medical history and specific needs are identified prior to admission, and medical appointments attended with school staff are well documented.

The school's well being programme ensures that students' emotional and mental health needs are met effectively. There are opportunities for all students to receive support from the well being forum and to be referred to appropriate specialist agencies if necessary.

Students are provided with a choice of healthy and varied food. Mealtimes are sociable occasions where staff and students eat together. The main meal is at lunchtime and there is always a choice of main course available. Students on a high privilege level are able to choose from four choices at lunch. Healthy eating is actively encouraged and there is a healthy eating initiative in operation at present with rewards in place. Students generally like the food provided and feel that there is enough to eat. Students living in Kett house, which is off the main school site, have opportunities to plan, shop and cook some of their own meals.

There is regular training in food hygiene provided to catering and care staff, and the kitchen has a five star award in food hygiene awarded by Norwich City Council.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

The students' welfare is given top priority and there are robust safeguarding practices which ensure that students are well protected at the school. All staff receive annual training in child protection and excellent records are maintained of incidents which give cause for concern. Prompt and effective action is taken in liaising with other agencies involved in child protection.

The school takes any incident of bullying seriously. Students are encouraged to talk to staff about concerns and are confident that they will be quickly and effectively dealt with. When incidents have occurred, class time is spent discussing issues to ensure that all students learn from the experience. The school has a 'buddy' system in place and meetings take place on how to promote anti-bullying. Activities include workshops, role playing, videos and group discussions around anti-bullying. There is consistent attitude throughout the school that bullying is not tolerated and low level incidents are always challenged.

Boarders' privacy is well respected and they are able to make and receive telephone calls in private. Lockable storage is provided for students' personal possessions both in school and the boarding provision. Information regarding the complaints procedure is provided to parents and students. Students know how to complain and feel that their views are listened to. No complaints have been received by the school since the last inspection and no complaints have been received by Ofsted.

The school supports and manages the behaviour of students well. Students are given clear expectations regarding behaviour and there is a consistent approach provided by the staff team. Relationships between the staff team and the students are excellent and there is constant praise for positive behaviour. The 'privilege' scheme works well and rewards and achievements are publicly recognised. All staff receive training in managing behaviour which includes the use of physical intervention as a last resort. Incidents are well recorded and a central log is maintained of those requiring a physical intervention. The views of the student involved are always included in the records completed after each incident. There are clear monitoring arrangements in place and a review of all those requiring a physical intervention. Any sanctions imposed are recorded and monitored.

The school takes health and safety issues seriously. The site is secure and safe due to the health and safety checks that are routinely carried out. Regular fire drills take place as well as checks of the system. Annual gas safety checks, as well as checks of the portable electrical appliances, also take place. Risk assessments are carried out and regularly reviewed.

Students are safeguarded by sound recruitment practices which ensure all staff are thoroughly vetted and checked prior to starting work at the school. However, the school has not ensured that there is direct contact by the school with each referee to verify references, which does not promote best practice and full compliance with the national minimum standards.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

All members of staff work together very effectively to encourage the students' development and achievement in all areas of their lives. A number of staff work across both the education and the residential parts of the school and this works well

to ensure a holistic approach. Communication is strong, with regular meetings held such as the 'liaison meetings' for the personal and education tutors to discuss students' progress and the daily handover meetings. The students' daily diaries are written on computer and allow both education and care staff to make entries on the same form.

The school has a '24-curriculum' and there is significant input from the care setting covering a range of social and independent living skills. This is particularly the case for Kett house which is off the main school site.

The students have opportunities to take part in an varied and extensive range of activities both on and off the school site. There is a structured programme of activities for the evening that includes cooking, bowling, arts and crafts, sports, swimming and wall climbing. A few students stay at weekends and activities are arranged according to their interests, for example a trip to the cinema. Individual interests are also encouraged, such as attending dance and karate classes locally. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place for activities to ensure that they are safely managed.

Students receive excellent levels of support from a wide range of individuals at the school. All boarders have both a personal tutor as well as an education tutor who meet with them on a regular basis. The student wellbeing programme provides additional support and there are a range of external professionals and therapists who support the work of the school. There is also an independent listener whom students can contact. All students spoken to said that they feel very well supported at the school and that there are people they can talk to.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Students' views are actively sought and they are encouraged to make decisions about their lives and influence the way the school is run. The school council meets on a regular basis and there are other forums, such as the tutor meetings and the student well being group, where students are encouraged to give their views. Students say that they feel that the school listens to them and that changes are made as a result. Students have been actively involved in the process of rebuilding of the residential units on the main site and are designing a mural to go on a wall at Kett house. Students are also routinely involved in the interviewing of new staff to the school.

The school has excellent processes for handling admissions. Home visits are made as well as visits to the school and comprehensive information regarding prospective students is obtained before admission.

Student's needs are assessed and regularly reviewed. The student files are maintained to a high standard and are monitored by senior members of staff. Each student has an individual support programme in place as well as an individual

education programme. The student takes an active part in the setting up and the running of these programmes. The liaison meetings between the education and the personal tutor are recorded well, and each file contains relevant information regarding health and contact with family.

The staff maintain regular contact with parents and work to build positive relationships. Personal tutors maintain regular contact with parents and home visits and meetings routinely take place. Since the last inspection the school has achieved the 'Investors in Family' award and are planning to further develop its involvement with parents which may include parenting courses in the future. Students are encouraged to maintain contact with parents and can make and receive telephone calls in private.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is outstanding.

The boarding accommodation at the school is of a high standard and is well suited to the needs of the students. Since the last inspection, the three residential units on the main school site have been rebuilt. This has been a major project which has resulted in residential units which are of outstanding quality and design. The students have been fully involved in the project and are proud of the results. All have single bedrooms with high quality furnishings. Each unit has a kitchen as well as wide corridors and a spacious lounge.

Kett house is situated in a residential area a mile or so from the main school site. It has domestic style accommodation and provides opportunities for students to enhance their independence skills. This accommodation was refurbished two years ago and is also of high quality. The students enjoy the homely feel and the opportunities to cook some of their own meals.

There are excellent links with the local community, including 'the Junction' which provides courses for students from other schools within the area. Some school staff are involved in running these courses and enable the students at Eaton Hall School to mix with their peers from other schools.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

There is strong and effective leadership and management of the school and of boarding. There is a clear commitment to continued development and improvement for students. Students are looked after by very experienced, well trained and competent staff who understand their needs well.

The school has a comprehensive statement of boarding principles and practice which provides clear information about the school. New students are given a guide to the school which is informative and easy to understand.



There are good staffing levels in the residential units at all times during the day and at night. The school does not use agency staff and has a consistent and stable staff team. This consistency and the low turnover of staff provides the students with high levels of stability. There are strong and positive relationships between the staff and the students. The care staff have weekly team meetings and receive regular formal supervision from senior members of staff. Staff feel well supported in their roles. There is a well established induction programme which ensures that new staff are well prepared for their role and regular monitoring of their work as personal tutors.

There are excellent training opportunities provided to staff to support them in their work. Staff development is encouraged. In addition to the annual refresher courses in areas such as behaviour management and child protection, staff can apply to go on external courses and there is training in national vocational qualifications.

There are effective systems in place for the monitoring of students' welfare and the operation of the residential provision. All the senior leadership team are actively involved in the monitoring of boarding and there is regular monitoring of key records. The governing body receive regular reports regarding the residential provision and external monitoring is undertaken by the local authority on a half termly basis. These reports now comment on all the areas required.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Each student receives highly individualised care which is tailored to meet their needs. Students are encouraged to widen their understanding and needs of others and to be members of the local community. The 'Junction' project enables students to mix with others and there are visits to places of cultural and religious interest. The school takes part in a number of fund raising events and recently raised a large amount of money for Red Nose Day.

## **What must be done to secure future improvement?**

### **Compliance with national minimum standards**

The school meets all the national minimum standards, with the exception of any listed below. To ensure that the school meets the national minimum standards the school needs to...

- ensure that the school's system for recruiting staff includes direct contact by the school with each referee to verify the reference (NMS 27.2)