

Egerton House School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Egerton House School is a special, mixed day school, catering for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. It has no religious affiliation. It occupies one floor of a building owned by the proprietor in Rochdale. The school is registered for pupils aged from 11 to 16 years of age and currently has six pupils on roll whose ethnic backgrounds are British Asian, African, Caribbean and White British. The pupils are all looked after by their local authority and accommodated in care homes owned by the proprietor. They have a history of disrupted educational experiences, including poor attendance in their previous educational settings. Three pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The school's aims are to be a stepping stone into community education, by providing an educational experience which caters for pupils' needs and celebrates their achievement, whatever their abilities. The school opened in 2010 and this is the school's first inspection.

Evaluation of the school

Egerton House School provides a good quality of education and meets its aims. It meets all of the regulations for its continued registration as an independent school. The good curriculum is wide ranging and is carefully adjusted to meet the educational needs of each pupil. Teaching and assessment are good and pupils make good progress in their personal and academic development. Their progress is supported by effective procedures to promote good behaviour and improve their attitudes to learning. The school makes good provision for pupils' welfare, health, safety and their safeguarding.

Quality of education

The school's curriculum is good. The curriculum policy is based on the required areas of learning, with a strong emphasis on offering a personalised approach. Schemes of work are based on the National Curriculum. Personal, learning and thinking skills are appropriately incorporated into the curriculum and assessed on a regular basis. The broad curriculum includes the core subjects of English, mathematics and science as well as art, food technology and physical education. Information and communication technology (ICT) is taught over the year and also embedded in subjects. Religious education and humanities are taught to all pupils in Key Stage 3 and to some in Key

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

Stage 4. The structure of subjects offered is suitable for the age range of the pupils. There are a range of carefully selected vocational courses, including hair and beauty and horticulture. In addition, the curriculum includes good careers guidance and personal, social, and health education (PSHE); some pupils learn a modern foreign language. Pupils have a choice in selecting vocational options and some attend a local college for one day a week. A programme of enrichment activities takes place and includes drama and singing for all pupils together. Careers education is carefully planned in conjunction with the Connexions service. A good personal development course includes a range of topics such as aspects of citizenship, managing money and parental awareness, leading to opportunities for accreditation.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good overall. The majority of lessons seen were good, especially those in English, art, and food technology. In an English lesson, pupils developed an awareness of the use of allegory in the novel being studied with a carefully focused discussion and questioning led by the teacher. A practical approach in art and in food technology involved pupils in active learning and engaged them effectively. The food technology lesson also made good links with aspects of numeracy such as weighing accurately and making a profit. A number of lessons make use of ICT for word-processing and accessing relevant internet sites to support the work being undertaken, such as in exploring aspects of healthy eating. Work is well matched to pupils' needs; for example, some pupils were completing multiplications at entry level in mathematics, while others were studying AS-level topics such as surds and algebraic manipulation. In science much of the work is based on worksheets and there are more limited opportunities for experimental work, partly because of limited resources.

Teachers have mostly good lesson plans, based on a carefully structured template devised in the school. This model encourages teachers to use a range of teaching methods, as well as planning for cross-curricular links. Lessons generally include the sharing of lesson objectives and intended outcomes, a 'starter activity', the main focus of the lesson and later on a plenary session. Teachers are strongly encouraged to be self-critical and to evaluate their own lessons. The overall quality of lesson planning is monitored by the school, but there are no formal checks on the range of approaches to teaching used over time. In a few lessons, teachers' planning includes too little detail on what the pupils are expected to learn and how it will build on work undertaken in previous lessons. Pupils show good attitudes to learning and concentrate well in most lessons, especially those with a practical focus or where a variety of tasks are set to maintain their engagement in lessons.

Work in pupils' files is marked regularly and sometimes targets for improvement are set. Teachers are aware of pupils' prior attainment and the information gathered is based on the school's own good systems of baseline testing and assessment. Teachers make use of this assessment information to plan lessons to meet the needs of pupils. They also routinely gather information about pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons which is very well disseminated among staff. The school has well-organised individual education plans to meet the requirements of pupils' statements of special educational needs and specific individual targets are included

and reviewed regularly. The good curricular and teaching provision ensures pupils make good progress and enables them to achieve success in GCSE examinations and, if desired, to go on to further education.

In 2011, all the previous Year 11 pupils went on to a college course, and some pupils in Year 10 achieved GCSE passes at grades A* to C. All pupils achieve some form of external accreditation for their efforts through entry level tests. These outcomes are a considerable achievement for pupils whose previous education has often been severely disrupted; one local authority officer reported the 'huge achievement' for one pupil in the care of that council, in a questionnaire return. Most pupils were also positive in their questionnaire returns about the extent of their own progress and the way the school prepares them for adult life, including for independent living.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as is their behaviour. Most pupils said that they enjoyed coming to school, and some have improved their attendance markedly, including some who have a record of almost full attendance in the first half of the autumn term. Attendance is monitored closely in every session and lateness or non-attendance is quickly followed up by the school's pastoral officer. This information is also disseminated quickly to all staff so they can adjust their lesson plans as necessary. Any occasional instances of challenging behaviour or lack of engagement in lessons are dealt with calmly and sensitively by teachers. There is a suitable procedure in place to record sanctions imposed for both minor incidents and more major issues that are referred to as critical incidents.

There is a very strong emphasis on developing and enhancing pupils' social skills, including through the course on personal development. Social skills are also developed by other activities such as planning a Remembrance Day service for all adults in the building. The reading of poems and a two-minute silence aids pupils' spiritual development. Opportunities for promoting spiritual development are taken up in subjects such as English and art, as well as in religious education. Pupils' moral development is a central concern of all staff as is seen in their vigilant approach to pupils' attitudes, language and behaviour.

There is a school council where school issues are discussed. Action points are created and implemented thus enabling pupils to play a role in making improvements to the school. Pupils support charities and organise events to raise funds including, for example, a Christmas fair and 'Jeans4Genes'. There are regular events planned each half term to promote pupils' cultural development and links have been established with the local community, for example, there was a visit to Chinatown in Manchester at the time of the Chinese New Year.

There are occasional visits to theatres and the cinema, which are usually planned in conjunction with the care homes where the pupils reside. Pupils learn about public services and institutions such as the police and have also visited the historic town

hall in Rochdale, including the Mayor's parlour, which then led to a display of some of its history in the school.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The quality of the provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good, with all the required policies and procedures in place. Very good supervision is apparent, for example at break times, which ensures a safe environment is created and maintained and where a range of opportunities for pupils to develop their personal skills is offered. They bring their own lunches from home and are strongly encouraged to ensure that they contain healthy foods. Healthy living is studied in PSHE, as is evident from the good displays in the school. Pupils participate in physical education on a weekly basis at a local gymnasium which further supports the development of a healthy lifestyle. Drug and alcohol abuse are discussed in the PSHE programme.

Systematic risk assessments are undertaken for educational visits, such as to farms or for sporting activities. There is a carefully devised child protection policy. All staff have undergone the required safeguarding training and the designated child protection officers are trained as required at a higher inter-agency level. The anti-bullying policy refers to types of bullying, including cyber-bullying, and takes internet safety seriously. There is a suitable first aid policy with designated first aiders; all staff have taken a basic course in first aid. Admissions and attendance registers are kept in line with statutory requirements. The school has carefully devised plans to meet the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school carries out all the required checks on the suitability of staff and other adults, including the proprietor. All the required information is logged on the single central register as required.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The school is located on the lower level of a building which also houses offices of the proprietor of the school. There is a secure entrance and a pleasant outside area for pupils to use which includes both grassed and hard surfaced areas. There are sufficient classrooms of a suitable size for all subjects taught, including an ICT suite and an art studio, as well as a small science laboratory. There are suitable facilities for hair and beauty, and food technology. The facilities are suitable to ensure safe and effective learning. There is a hall where pupils can meet and eat their lunches. There are sufficient washrooms, including one for the disabled and a suitable medical room for pupils who are unwell.

Provision of information

The school has an attractive brochure and supporting documentation, which meet the regulations. Regular reports are produced which include detailed information on pupils' progress in each subject studied, as well as details about other aspects such as attendance and the pupils' attitudes to learning. Parents, carers and others are pleased with the school as is evident in their questionnaire returns which were all positive. The returns from local authorities were positive and noted that the school was very professional in its approach. One carer commented that 'communication with staff is brilliant'.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school has a complaints policy which is in line with regulations.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').³

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development.

- Undertake checks on lesson planning to ensure a suitable variety of teaching and learning approaches are used across the curriculum.
- Enhance the resources for science to enable a greater range of experimental work to be undertaken.

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Special school for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties		
Date school opened	October 2010		
Age range of pupils	11-16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 4	Girls: 2	Total: 6
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 2	Girls: 1	Total: 3
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 4	Girls: 2	Total: 6
Annual fees (day pupils)	£24,700		
Address of school	Wardle Road Wardle Rochdale Lancashire OL12 9EN		
Telephone number	01706 630022		
Email address	shelliebarcroft@meadowscare.co.uk		
Headteacher	Ms Shellie Barcroft		
Proprietor	Meadows Care		

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



24 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Egerton House School, Rochdale, OL12 9EN

As you will know, I visited your school recently to look at the education you receive. I spoke to some of you as well as the staff. Many of you also filled in a questionnaire, as did some of your parents and carers, and this was very helpful. You will be pleased to hear that the quality of education at the school is good and helps you to make good progress in your studies and in your personal and social skills in a safe and secure environment.

Staff care for you very well, treating you fairly and with respect, as you acknowledged in your questionnaire returns. Most of you come to school regularly and some of you have managed to come virtually every day so far this term, apart from medical appointments. Your behaviour is mainly good, and you usually get on well with each other and your teachers. Occasionally you plan events together such as a Remembrance Day service.

You learn English, mathematics and science and many of you also enjoy art. You have the opportunity to make option choices in Years 10 and 11. The school plans lessons and a timetable carefully to meet each of your individual needs and requests.

I have suggested a few improvements to make the school even better. While the teaching you receive is good and teachers use a range of teaching approaches, the school could monitor how often different ways of learning are encouraged in lessons. I have also suggested that, with better resources, you could undertake more experimental work in science.

Yours sincerely

Ramesh Kapadia
Lead Inspector