

Eaton Hall School, Norwich

Inspection report

Unique reference number	121263
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	380195
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2012
Lead inspector	Kathy Hooper

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection of boarding provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	10–16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	44
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roy Kerrison
Headteacher	Valerie Moore
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2008
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Social care unique reference number	SC038324
Social care inspector	Deirdra Keating

Age group	10–16
Inspection date(s)	1–2 February 2012
Inspection number	380195



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Introduction

Inspection team

Kathy Hooper

Additional inspector

Deirdra Keating

Social care inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Ten lessons were seen. These were taught by eight teachers, over a period of five hours. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and observed the school's activities. They looked at pupils' work, heard them read, and analysed the school's data on their progress. They examined the school's monitoring records and minutes of meetings. One questionnaire from a parent, 43 from staff and 23 from pupils were analysed.

Information about the school

This smaller than average school has specialist special school status. It admits boys aged nine to 16 years, who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs, and a higher than average proportion is known to be eligible for free school meals. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with very few from minority ethnic groups. It is a lead school for the 14 to 16 years Foundation Learning programme for the central area of Norfolk, and supports a number of local schools. It has achieved Healthy Schools Status, Artsmark, Eco Schools, Sportsmark, Investors in People, Team Teach Gold, and Norfolk Steps in positive management of behaviour. The school has residential facilities for 27 pupils. Key Stage 2 and 3 pupils are housed in purpose built accommodation attached to the school building. Older pupils use a converted Victorian house off-site but nearby, where they have independence training.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school.
- Pupils achieve outstandingly well in all key stages. Although they arrive with low levels of literacy and numeracy, they make exceptionally rapid progress in both their academic development and their behaviour.
- Parents and carers are delighted by the speed with which both learning and the behaviour of their sons improve.
- All pupils leave with recognised qualifications in English, mathematics and science, and a very wide range of academic and vocational awards. All go on to further education at the end of Year 11.
- Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally well promoted and their personal development is outstanding. This is because pupils are supported through an exceptionally rich curriculum, which pervades the school and the residential setting. It is also due to the school’s excellent ethos of high expectations and the value it places on individual achievement.
- Teaching is outstanding because pupils are skilfully engaged by relevant and imaginative experiences. Occasionally, teachers miss opportunities to support and extend pupils’ literacy skills.
- Pupils’ behaviour and safety are outstanding and safeguarding procedures are exceedingly robust.
- The senior management team is relentless in its ambitious quest for higher standards, and is ably supported by school and residential staff. Governors competently hold the school to account.
- Pupils’ residential experience is outstanding. Strong and focused leadership and management have ensured exceptionally good links between school and

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residential staff. A highly consistent approach to pupils' education and care enables them to thrive academically, socially, emotionally and behaviourally.

- Residential staff are deployed to ensure that the safety and well-being of individual pupils is at the centre of all the school's work. However, not all residential staff receive regular appraisal of their work.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure a consistent approach to the development of pupils' literacy in all subjects.
- Ensure that all residential staff have regular appraisal/supervision to provide support and advice for their role.

Main report**Achievement of pupils**

Outstanding achievement is confirmed by pupils and summed up in a comment from a parent, 'My son has been at this school for 10 months. The change in [his] behaviour, confidence, and self-esteem has been massive.' A significant number of younger pupils make good enough progress in their learning and behaviour to be re-integrated back into mainstream schools. Key Stage 3 pupils achieve a wide range of accredited awards to ensure their transition on to the next stage of their education. All Key Stage 4 pupils leave with a qualification in English, mathematics and science and a considerable number of other qualifications. Each pupil is supported according to his needs and abilities to achieve his potential. There is no significant difference in the progress of different groups of pupils and numbers in each are small. The majority of pupils make exceptional progress because staff help them to adopt very positive attitudes to learning. The vast majority of pupils acknowledge that they learn a lot in school. In a Year 8 design and technology lesson, pupils worked highly productively in pairs using information and communication technology to make an animation film. They rapidly learned how to use the software and displayed high levels of social skills as they worked very collaboratively on the task.

Pupils read books regularly and many read for enjoyment. In lessons, such as English, where information and communication technology is used, higher attaining pupils write fluently and vividly. However, their writing in lessons across the curriculum is sometimes brief, poorly constructed and difficult to read. Pupils' progress is limited in occasional lessons where pupils' weak literacy is not supported and extended by the teacher.

Targets for attainment are regularly shared between pupils, school and residential staff. Pupils often make very rapid progress in their reading because the residential staff share books with them each day. All pupils spend time in the residential setting on entry to the school. This allows the staff to work with pupils, families and outside

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agencies in order to address individual needs. Boarders acquire many valuable life skills including shopping, budgeting, cooking, washing, ironing, using public transport and managing time. This prepares them very well for transition to the next stage of education and their adult lives.

Quality of teaching

Pupils are frequently fascinated by their learning; this is because teachers plan highly relevant activities and exciting lessons which make them think, help them solve problems and develop curiosity. The vast majority of pupils say that teaching is good. Parents and carers are very grateful to the school for their sons' progress. Learning is extended and reinforced through a wide range of trips and visits outside school. Residential staff make a significant impact on learning because of the high quality support they give to pupils when they do their homework. Teachers and support staff, including teaching assistants and residential staff, have high levels of skill in behaviour management. They work seamlessly and consistently, demonstrating excellent understanding of each pupil's needs. Their calm encouragement is rewarded by pupils' high levels of perseverance, and respect for staff and their peers.

From Year 9, pupils are entered for accredited courses. This reinforces the pupils' perception of the relevance of their learning. Lessons make excellent contributions to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. There was real buzz of excitement and wonder in a science lesson when glucose was burned to demonstrate an irreversible reaction. Pupils are helped to understand how to do the task as well as what to do, ensuring success. Literacy skills are well taught in Key Stage 2 lessons, including the systematic use of letters and sounds. In a geography lesson, all Year 6 pupils understood how the coastline changes due to erosion. They had a good understanding of specialist vocabulary because the teacher used resources to support their pronunciation and spelling, gave a practical demonstration, and showed video clips to reinforce and explain the process. Literacy is not as consistently reinforced, however, in later key stages.

Pupils' progress is regularly assessed and levels are agreed between teachers. Data is used effectively to monitor pupils' progress. In the best lessons, progress data and previous learning are used to design highly individual activities and measurable outcomes to match precisely each pupil's needs and abilities.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils enter the school with a history of failure and low self-esteem and this is often demonstrated in their behaviour. Incidents of poor behaviour, following a pupil's admission, rapidly decline. In the residential setting they develop very constructive relationships with all staff. Extremely consistent systems for ensuring good behaviour are well understood by pupils and linked to achievement and rewards across the school and residential settings. All members of the school understand the school's high expectations. Although pupils are extremely critical of the behaviour of their peers that is less than perfect, the majority agree that it is good in their lessons. The

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improved behaviour of pupils is captured in a comment from a Year 9 boy who said, that the school 'makes you want to get up in the mornings'. At class and annual report meetings, parents frequently express pleasure in the improvement in their sons' improved conduct. In a meeting of the whole school, there was a strong feeling of community and support for each other. Pupils accepted their achievements proudly and their peers enthusiastically applauded their successes.

Pupils report that any bullying, including that via the internet or connected with pupils' ethnic background, is very well addressed, for example, through circle time and personal, social emotional and health education lessons. Pupils say that they feel exceptionally safe in school. Physical interventions are managed safely and reported appropriately. Opportunities for pupils to record their feelings and reflect on these incidents promote their personal development very well. Pupils find staff approachable and reliable. Sanctions and rewards are perceived as fair, and the 'earnie' reward scheme is well used and very effective. As a result, pupils make considerable strides in their personal development and their attitudes to learning. This is equally as strong in the residence as it is in school. Pupils become very confident and resilient individuals, as their self-esteem rises. They learn to be cooperative, helpful, polite and respectful.

Pupils are very well involved in local events, including those in the wider community. Their experiences help them to value and accept differences as well as understand society's expectations of behaviour in public places. Pupils take pride in helping visitors, staff and one another and have a real understanding about how to keep themselves safe. A Year 7 pupil spontaneously provided the visitor with a set of goggles during a science lesson where an experiment was taking place. Year 9 pupils demonstrated high-level social skills when they expertly cooked and served an excellent meal to visitors.

Leadership and management

Strong and determined leadership from the headteacher and deputy headteacher have ensured continuous improvement of both school and residential provision. The governing body is a significant force within the school. It has been instrumental in developing the school as a centre of good practice.

Regular staff training and supportive monitoring of teaching have helped to improve pupils' learning in lessons. The initiatives adopted to link the residential care to the work of the school are paying significant dividends in terms of pupils' progress. The leadership and management of the residential provision are outstanding. The multi-disciplinary staff team are well-qualified, effectively supported in their professional development, and well-focused on pupils' progress. Individual expertise and strengths are recognised and deployed thoughtfully. There is a structure for appraising and supporting the work of staff and daily communication is good. Nevertheless, staff do not have appraisal sessions as regularly as they should.

The curriculum outstandingly supports pupils' all round development. The school has

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developed vocational facilities and courses that are accessed by local schools, allowing pupils to mix socially and experience an increasingly wide range of activities.

The impact of the school and residence working so closely together means that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is exceptionally well developed. Visits locally and abroad provide excellent opportunities for pupils to appreciate other cultures and ways of life. Excellent monitoring and reflection on pupils' achievements ensure that the changing needs of individual pupils are promptly addressed giving them the very best chance to succeed. Individual rights and responsibilities are central to the school's work, allowing each pupil an equal opportunity to thrive. Safeguarding procedures are extremely robust, highly effective and embedded thoroughly throughout the school. The school has excellent capacity to improve.

Residential provision

The residential experience that pupils receive is outstanding. All national minimum standards are met.

Pupils make extremely good progress in the residential setting in their academic and personal development, and they are happy at the school. Parents’ satisfaction with the provision is summarised in the comment, ‘I am extremely pleased with the boarding provision and its abilities to assist and develop my son’. Feedback from placing authorities is also highly positive. Pupils say that staff are fun, and speak with animation about lessons and evening activities.

The quality of provision and care is outstanding. Pupils benefit from constructive and positive relationships with staff who provide strong role models. Staff support pupils’ learning as well as their personal development exceptionally well. Catering arrangements provide for all individual requirements, including birthdays. Pupils learn to eat well-balanced meals and snacks, and speak confidently about the wide range of different foods they have tried at school. Pupils are proud of how their manners have improved since being at the school. Accommodation is of an exceptional standard. It provides a comfortable, clean and spacious environment while respecting pupils’ privacy and personal space.

Partnerships with parents promote regular communication and support pupils’ unique and changing needs. Parents are at ease in the residential setting and are made welcome.

National minimum standards

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

These are the grades for the residential provision

Overall effectiveness of the residential experience	1
Outcomes for residential pupils	1
Quality of residential provision and care	1
Residential pupils’ safety	1
Leadership and management of the residential provision	1

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons, and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.

3 February 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Eaton Hall School, Norwich, NR4 7BU

Thank you so much for making us very welcome when we visited your school this week. You are a credit to your school. We found your school to be outstanding because you are making outstanding progress and you are learning to become well-mannered and thoughtful young men. You achieve well and gain a wide range of certificates for your efforts and application. Many of you are rightly proud of your progress and grateful to the staff for their care and support.

We very much enjoyed visiting your lessons, looking at your work, talking to you about the school, and hearing you read. We were impressed by your enjoyment of books. You apply yourself well to your learning, especially when the lessons are exciting and you understand what you are doing and why. However, not all teachers help you to develop your literacy skills.

We were extremely impressed by your behaviour. You support each other well to keep the environment safe and calm. We could see very clearly why you enjoy coming to school.

All the very good aspects of your school are because it is so well led and managed. All the adults, in school and residential setting, are highly committed to helping you to develop as well as possible.

In order to make your school and residential experience even better, we have asked the staff to:

- make sure that they help you to develop your literacy in every lesson
- ensure that residential staff are supported regularly to help them improve their work.

You can help them by telling them politely when you do not understand and making sure that you do your best work in each lesson.

Yours sincerely

Kathy Hooper
Lead inspector

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