

# Eaton Hall Specialist Academy

Eaton Hall School, Pettus Road, NORWICH, NR4 7BU

<b>Inspection dates</b>	04/03/2013 to 06/03/2013	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Outcomes for residential pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of residential provision and care	Outstanding	1
Residential pupils' safety	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management of the residential provision	Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings

### The residential provision is outstanding because

- Residential Pupils make excellent progress in their personal and social development during their time at the school. They develop a range of new skills, improved self-esteem and self-confidence and make huge strides in their emotional maturity and emotional literacy. This is developed through excellent role modelling, both by staff and older pupils; a range of stimulating and stretching activities being organised and pupils feeling safe and secure in their placements.
- Health and safety and the welfare of pupils is given extremely high priority across the provision. A range of policies and health and safety checks helps protect pupils from the possibility of injury or harm on the school site. Robust vetting of new staff and systems in place to manage visitors to the site ensures the safety of pupils against the possibility of harm or abuse from staff or adult visitors to the school. Pupils' health and welfare are extremely well supported and the arrangements for the administration of medication are a particular strength. A balanced, nutritious diet, regular participation in physical activities, excellent facilities for supporting young people who are unwell and strong links with external health professionals further support young people's health and well-being. This ensures young people's physical, emotional and psychological needs are well met at all times.
- Young people benefit from a well decorated, bright, warm and very well maintained living environment. Staff are focused, enthusiastic and committed to providing the highest quality of care and a positive, meaningful and highly beneficial residential experience to young people. Young people say they enjoy staying at the school and are happy and safe while here. They particularly appreciate the amount of new opportunities and activities they are given the opportunity to participate in. These fully support the provision of a 24 hour curriculum as activities observed include cooking, reading, board games related to anger management issues and swimming, bowling and football.
- There is a strong, joined up approach to the leadership and management of the

residential provision. It is clearly given a high priority within the school and the vision and ethos of the service is translated into practice. Staff supervision has increased since the last inspection. Training remains a high priority and is regularly refreshed ensuring staff have the necessary skills, abilities and knowledge to provide a consistent service in a safe manner.

### **Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools**

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools

## Information about this inspection

The school was contacted on the morning of the first day of inspection. An indicative timetable was sent through and this was completed by the school by the time of the inspector's arrival. This included all areas as had been discussed with the headteacher that morning and was set out over the three-day period of the inspection.

Inspection activities carried out included: talking with pupils, joining the school council meeting, discussions with senior staff and other members of the care staff team, observation of mealtimes, joining in evening activities, observing the routines for the administration of medication, a tour of all residential provision, case file tracking and observing morning routines.

## Inspection team

Stephen Halliley

Lead social care inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

Eaton Hall Specialist Academy is a day and residential special school 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.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- ensure fire alarm checks are carried out at the intervals stipulated in the school's policy and procedure.
- consider implementing a system to record who was involved in fire drills to ensure all staff take part in a fire drill at least annually.
- consider relating new policies to national minimum standards, school improvement plan and other relevant documents and that these policies are signed off by staff when they have read them.

## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for residential pupils

### Outstanding

Pupils have very relaxed, mutually respectful relationships with staff and there is a clear respect for each other's differences. Extremely high levels of positive role modelling, guidance and support from skilled and experience staff ensure pupils make exceptional progress in both their social and emotional development. Staff have very high expectations of pupils in terms of behaviour, their community involvement, both within school and outside, and their capabilities to achieve. As a result pupils are positively engaged in both the residential community and the wider community. Social skills are highly developed in terms of manners, communal meal times and general interaction in a range of different settings. Emotional stability, resilience and literacy are clearly evidenced. This is shown through positive interaction with visitors, ability to hold appropriate conversations without distraction and a marked ability to distance themselves from the inappropriate behaviours of their peers.

The development of self care and life skills is given a high priority by this service. As residential pupils are able to benefit from this service from an early age the range of targets they are set is extremely wide. Skills young people develop through individual support plans range from tying shoe laces through to cooking, menu planning, shopping, keeping rooms tidy and using public transport. These skills are clearly evidenced in young peoples files so success is recognised and rewarded. Pupils are very aware of the school's system of increased privileges and work continuously to try and gain higher reward or independence. Many of these targets are transferred into home life to ensure the learning process is continual and provide a good basis for pupils to move on in their lives when they leave the school.

Positive, socially acceptable behaviour is very much the expectation and the norm within this setting. Young people are respectful of each other's choices and privacy and they know their views, feelings and thoughts are important to and valued by staff. There is a strong residential voice on the school council and their views are also sought through suggestion boxes, sessions with their personal tutors and in general discussion. Pupils are clear that their views are listened to and this helps them develop a feeling of self worth and of being valued as an individual by the adults around them. Residential pupils are very happy in the school and clearly say that they are. They participate fully in a range of activities which helps strengthen skills they already have and develop a range of new skills which they are able to put to good use and continue to improve.

Residential pupil's health is given a very high priority and strong links and clear information sharing with parents and health professionals helps support this. There is exceptionally good practice in the administration of medication and a designated room for pupils who are unwell equipped with its own bathroom facilities. Pupil's healthy lifestyles are supported by a varied and nutritious diet being made available and their participation in a range of physically demanding activities. Strong links with specialist services ensure that any areas of emotional or psychological health which may require additional support can be fully addressed.

Residential pupils move to the off site building as they become more established within the school. The skills they have developed in the main provision together with those they develop in this annex support their return to living at home and attending school on a daily basis. The improvement in behaviour of a number of young people while being at this school has led to serious consideration and planning for potential returns to mainstream education. The development of life skills, emotional maturity and vastly improved self-esteem together with an ability to self-modulate behaviour ensures pupils are fully prepared to move on to the next stage of their lives.

## **Quality of residential provision and care**

**Outstanding**

The residential provision and care provided to pupils are of the highest standard. Staff working with young people are experienced, knowledgeable, dedicated and committed to providing the highest standard of care. The well-being of pupils and ensuring their needs are met are unfailingly placed at the heart of their practice.

A consistent approach to the introduction of new pupils ensures a sensitive, thoughtful induction process is followed. Central to this is a heightened awareness of how change may impact on the already established group so sufficient information is gained about new pupils to ensure they are right for the service before this process commences. The strong links between pastoral and academic staff have been improved by care staff supporting individual young people in class when required. Alongside the handover of information, which highlights any concerns staff may need to be aware of, this helps ensure a consistent approach to young people and supports the provision of a 24 hour curriculum.

Academic learning is very well supported through the residential experience. This includes support with homework and reading, cooking and learning about other cultures and celebrations through mealtimes and producing associated displays about such things as the Olympics, Burns Night and Chinese New Year.

## **Residential pupils' safety**

**Outstanding**

This school gives a very high priority to ensuring the safety of all pupils. The principal care manager is the designated safeguarding lead but he is supported by a number of other highly trained and experienced staff. He has a clear understanding of when safeguarding issues may need to be referred to outside agencies such as children's social care teams. All staff are well trained in safeguarding procedures and this is updated regularly. Staff practice is further informed by a range of detailed, informative and recently updated policies and procedures. All staff are fully aware of their responsibilities in respect to safeguarding. This ensures issues relating to young people are addressed swiftly, appropriately and completely. The school gives a safeguarding leaflet to all visitors stressing the importance of safeguarding young people and inviting them to talk to designated staff if they have any concerns about the safety of young people during their visit. This open and honest approach ensures visitors feel able to raise any concerns and makes it clear to all how high a priority the safety and well-being of pupils is in this school.

The school operates a very diligent recruitment process which involves numerous checks on staff to ensure they do not pose a potential risk to young people with whom they will be working. Senior staff and a number of trustees have undertaken 'Safer recruitment' training and the headteacher ensures these procedures and guidelines are followed for every staff appointment. Young people are further protected from the possibility of harm from adults working on site as staff adhere to a clear policy on the accompaniment of visitors to prevent any possibility of unsupervised access to young people.

Residential pupils report that they feel safe at the school. They are able to identify a number of staff to whom they would be able to go if they felt they had concerns they needed to raise. Thorough risk assessments are carried out on activities to minimise any potential risk as fully as possible. This allows pupils to participate in challenging and exciting activities while taking managed risk appropriate to their age and understanding. Unsupervised off-site time is gained through ongoing positive behaviour and is seen by pupils as a privilege to be earned. They are fully aware that this also depends upon them being able to look after themselves appropriately while off site. Pupils are further protected from the risk of potential harm or accident by a range of health and safety checks which are regularly carried out. However there were some

inconsistencies in the frequency of fire alarm checks which could potentially increase the risk to young people. Fire drills are carried out regularly and these include placing 'simulated fires' at strategic points to ensure staff and pupils would be able to respond should particular exits be blocked. Consideration should be given to developing a record of staff involved in fire drills to ensure all staff have taken part annually and that their awareness of procedures remains current.

Young people go missing from this school very infrequently. There are clear policies and procedures in place for staff to follow should this occur and all staff are fully aware of these. There is also a protocol for reporting young people missing which was devised in conjunction with the local police. This ensures that young people who do go missing are responded to in a consistent and appropriate manner. Positive behaviour is promoted at all times and is extremely well role modelled by both staff and established pupils. One young person said 'there is an expectation of a very high standard of behaviour' and that this is recognised and rewarded. Poor behaviour is appropriately and consistently challenged in a low key non-confrontational manner though physical management of young people is used as a last resort. Instances of this are clearly and thoroughly recorded including a very detailed discussion with young people about the need for restraint and to look at different ways of managing their feelings and behaviour in the future. This helps ensure young people develop a clear understanding of socially acceptable behaviour and are able to respond appropriately in different social settings through utilising the skills they have learned to self-regulate their behaviours.

### **Leadership and management of the residential provision Outstanding**

The aims, ethos and expectations of the residential provision are well known throughout the school and these are very clearly translated into practice. All pupils have a full week of residential stay when they come to the school. This ensures they are very familiar with routines, structures and boundaries and can begin to develop relationships with peers and staff from a very early point. After this individual packages are put in place with a view to pupils attending daily from Year 9 onwards wherever possible. This ensures a package which meets the need of the pupil and their family and allows for a great deal of consideration to be given to the potential impact of new residents or new residential groups.

There have been no complaints received since the last inspection. The school is however open to comment from parents, carers, other professionals and visitors and make a clear point of this, ensuring anyone who visits is aware they can approach managers with concerns and, indeed, are encouraged to do so. The school also makes a very strong point of listening to pupils' views and ensuring these are considered and acted upon. This is provided for through suggestion boxes, discussion with staff, input to decoration of units and residential pupils being well represented on the school council.

The residential provision is managed effectively and efficiently with a clear management structure in place. This ensures that staff receive good levels of supervision and professional development opportunities. The ongoing training ensures staff are able to work with pupils in a consistent, safe and professional manner. Residential pupils benefit greatly from a consistent, resourceful, dedicated and well established staff team which provides a range of role models, life experiences and knowledge. They ensure that residential routines and structures are well known to all pupils and that these are well maintained. Annual appraisals support the ongoing professional development of the staff team who have gained, or are currently registered to study, appropriate professional qualifications.

The impact of the residential experience on pupils is monitored both internally and externally. This is used to drive improvements to the service and a clear development/improvement plan is in place. In addition to this process, policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated. Currently all policies are being revisited following the school's transition to academy status at the

end of last year. This has also meant the addition and introduction of some new policies. It would be beneficial for staff if new policies were related for example to national minimum standards and school improvement plan as this would support their understanding of the rationale for the policy. Staff signing to say they have read and understood the policies would also serve to tighten lines of professional accountability and ensure consistency of approach where major changes may have occurred. Discussion to implement a new staff rota has been ongoing for some time. This will mean a significant change to rota patterns and has now been agreed and will be implemented in the coming months. It is testament to the professional approach of the care team and their dedication to young people that this uncertainty has not detracted from the outstanding quality of care they provide young people.

Individual needs are fully recognised by staff. These inform care plans, daily plans and individual support plans for young people. All pupils are given the opportunity to be involved in putting these plans together and are involved in their annual reviews with appropriate support from staff and their parents. Residential staff have good communication with parents and other professionals involved with young people. This ensures a consistent approach to their care and that individual support plans and targets can be implemented at home to support the progress being made while staying at school.



## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of care that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of care it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of care has serious weaknesses.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139099
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC038324
<b>DfE registration number</b>	926/7015

This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

<b>Type of school</b>	
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	
<b>Gender of boarders</b>	
<b>Age range of boarders</b>	
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Valerie Theresa Moore
<b>Date of previous boarding inspection</b>	31/01/2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01603 457480
<b>Email address</b>	office@eatonhall.norfolk.sch.uk

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