

Eaton Hall Specialist Academy

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

Inspection dates	27/01/2014 to 29/01/2014	
Overall effectiveness	Outstanding	1
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 greatly enjoy the experience of staying in school. There is a very high level of mutual respect between pupils and between pupils and staff. All residential pupils are fully aware they have different needs and they are fully accepting of these. Self-esteem and self-confidence are greatly improved as are many life skills, the most notable of which is the huge progress pupils make in their reading levels. An excellent quality of care is provided by a very dedicated and committed staff team.
- Pupils are kept safe by a wide range of policies and procedures being on place and staff being fully aware of these. All pupils say they feel very safe in the school and parents and social workers support this assertion.
- The residential aspect of the school is extremely well organised, well managed and effective. There has been clear progress made since the last inspection in a number of areas including medication and health care policies, evidencing staff awareness of policy updates and ensuring all staff have taken part in a fire drill.
- A new management structure in the residential provision has strengthened this aspect of the service and new staff have quickly developed positive relationships with pupils through consistent guidance and support from more senior colleagues.
- All residential pupils, parents and social workers spoken to were extremely positive about the school and the impact it has had on their child's life. They view the provision and the staff very highly and are full of nothing but praise for the achievements pupils have made since arriving at the school.

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 were contacted at 9.00am on the first day of inspection and the duration and initial plans for inspection discussed with the Executive Head teacher. The inspection took place within three ours of this initial contact. Inspection activity included discussions with groups of young people, residential staff, the headteacher and parents and social workers of residential pupils. A full tour of the premises was undertaken with young people, meals were taken with the residential group and after school activities were observed. Documents checked include risk assessments, personal education plans, sanction and restraint records, missing from care records and policies and procedures in place within the school.

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 situated a short distance away in a residential area. This is not currently in use as there are no residential pupils currently in years 10 and 11. The school currently provides places for 51 boys with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, 19 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?

- Consider implementing a system to include staff debriefs with restraint records and to have records signed by all staff involved as a true and accurate record of the incident.
- Test all fire alarm call points at the beginning of each half term to ensure they are in full working order before pupils return to school.
- Ensure all pupils are aware of the availability of an independent listener and how they can contact her.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outstanding

Outcomes for boarders are outstanding.

Residential pupil's social development and social interactions have improved greatly since arriving at this school. One parent comments that her son has now 'got very good manners when he comes home and he is happy and content and polite.' This comment is reflected in the polite, thoughtful manner of all residential pupils towards each other, staff and visitors. Residential pupils enjoy close, relaxed and mutually respectful relationships with staff and it is clear these relationships are valued by everyone. Pupils are confident to speak their mind and raise any concerns with staff confident that they will be listened to and responded to appropriately. Relationships between residential pupils are extremely good and they are supportive and understanding of individual behaviours and needs. Pupils and staff clearly model appropriate, positive behaviours and interactions at all times. This supports new pupils to settle quickly knowing that unacceptable behaviours will be challenged in order to reinforce the clear expectation of positive behaviour.

Residential pupils are continuously encouraged to have high aspirations for their futures. Staff have very high expectations of young people; increasing the number of nights spent at home during the week, reading age appropriate books by age 13 and that they all have the ability to reintegrate back into mainstream education. Each of these goals is supported through individual plans with reading given a high priority on a daily basis. Pupils are proud of the progress they make and their ever improving levels of self-confidence and self-esteem are evident as they read aloud in front of peers, staff and visitors. Residential pupils sit on the school council, take part in regular meetings in the unit and are key to the daily planning of evening activities. This ensures young people are actively involved in the whole school community and feel safe to express themselves openly. Social skills are well-developed and ever improving through regular involvement in a range of community based activities. This supports the development of understanding of how to behave and manage in a range of social settings. Emotional resilience, stability and maturity are evident not only through reading sessions but in the open engagement of visitors in discussions and playing board games.

All residential pupils say they are happy and feel safe in the school and that they enjoy the boarding experience. Comments made by pupils include 'If we come here because we're really naughty they will help us sort out our behaviour issues' and 'Since this is a special school staff know what to do if you are unhappy better than they do in mainstream.' This shows residential pupils feel well looked after and that they realise the progress they are making as a result of attending this school. Young people take part in a wide range of activities both on site and in the local community. These include football, board games, game consoles, swimming, rock climbing and cinema trips. Larger activities are also offered at weekends and as residential trips. These include going to the zoo, visiting the dinosaur park, camping and sailing. This allows young people to experience a wide range of social interactions, to learn and develop new skills and to stretch themselves by taking part in challenges they may not otherwise experience.

Residential pupils' health is overseen by a dedicated member of staff with lead responsibility for health and medication. She has extremely good links with parents allowing detailed health care plans to be put in place where required. By implementing these plans residential staff ensure pupils' physical health and well-being are very well supported at all times. Pupils develop a clear understanding of healthy living and some talk openly about healthy eating plans, which they have been fully involved in developing. The school recognise the ever increasing complex needs of residential pupils and have developed a strong liaison with the local authority's therapeutic services, the ADHD nurse and child and adolescent mental health team. This ensures resident

pupil's emotional and psychological health needs are also very well met.

Residential pupils are supported to develop life skills and personal care skills from the time they arrive at the school. They are also driven to increase the time they spend at home in the week through risk reduction and behaviour management plans. This has been so successful there are currently no residential pupils above year 9 as they are all now attending as day pupils. There have also been seven students who have re-integrated to mainstream school since the last inspection. These are the ultimate outcomes the school and pupils strive to achieve and is huge progress from starting points for these children.

Quality of residential provision and care

Outstanding

The quality of the residential provision is outstanding.

Staff employed in the school place the well-being of residential pupils at the very heart of their practice. Young people say 'I love it here it's the best school ever and is much better than home'. Parents say 'my son is in such good hands that all his needs are absolutely being met, physically and emotionally' and 'This is without doubt the right placement for him and I am so grateful he is getting the help he needs.'

There is a clear induction process for new pupils which ensures they are sensitively introduced to both the classroom and residential environments. This allows the school to obtain clear information about young people's behaviours, academic abilities, relationships and health care before they come to the school. This allows for initial health, behaviour management plans and risk assessments to be put in place, which are reviewed and updated regularly. There are very strong links between the residential and educational staff supported by a cross over of roles during the school day. This ensures all relevant information is shared, that young people receive a very consistent approach to their care and behaviour and that young people know they can approach any member of staff if they need to talk. Together with the very high level of staff understanding of young people's targets, individual needs and unique traits this ensures young people are afforded an extremely high level of personalised care. One social worker described her view of this as being 'really really impressed with the placement and the nurturing, caring environment my young person is living in and the work they are doing to support his development is amazing.'

Residential pupils are very happy and relaxed in the school and are clear that bullying is not an issue. Sometimes hurtful things may be said but pupils report that staff address this immediately and the behaviours are not repeated. Residential pupils are aware of how they can contact outside agencies such as Ofsted or Childline for support. There is also an independent listener available for pupils though not all of them are fully aware of the availability of this service.

The residential accommodation is well designed, warmly decorated and very well maintained. Each young person has their own room and they have individualised their rooms with posters, pictures and even their own bedding. There is ample room for private study and each room has a lockable cabinet to ensure pupils are able to keep their personal possessions safe. All communal areas are spacious and airy and have been decorated with some input from the residential pupils. This ensures young people benefit from a warm, homely environment where social workers say 'children love the residential experience with really nurturing and supportive staff'.

Residential pupils eat three meals a day in the dining hall and have supper prepared in the kitchens within the residential units. All food preparation areas are extremely clean and catering staff all hold appropriate qualifications. Food is plentiful and provides a very varied, balanced and healthy diet for young people. Pupils are very actively involved in putting their ideas for the menu to the head chef and these are regularly incorporated in the menu offered.

Pupil's health needs are given a very high priority and the procedures for the administration of medication are particularly strong. There are clear procedures and policies in place and the staff with the lead responsibility for medication is qualified to train staff in the administration of medication and first aid. This ensures that, even when she is not on site, there is an adequate number of trained and qualified staff on duty at all times to manage the health needs of young people. Physical well-being is supported by active participation in a wide range of physical activities and all young people report they are in good health. Off site activities promote a sense of community awareness and involvement while games promote an understanding of team work, develop coordination and further improve social skills.

Residential pupils' safety

Outstanding

The residential pupil's safety is outstanding.

Residential pupil's safety is supported by a range of detailed, regularly updated and informative policies and procedures. Health and safety policies fully comply with current legislation and all policy updates and reviews are shared with staff through a number of systems to ensure all staff are aware of any changes made. Pupils are able to talk through the emergency evacuation procedures in detail and have taken part in a number of fire drills. This ensures they would be able to respond appropriately should there be a fire in the school. All fire alarm points are regularly tested during term time. A system of checking all fire call points at the start of each half term to ensure they are working when pupils return to school would strengthen this system.

Safeguarding policies and procedures are clear and all lead designated child protection officers are very aware of their responsibilities in this regard. This includes when referrals need to be made to outside agencies such as children's services. Records show staff are very aware of issues outside the school and have appropriately raised concerns around some pupils. There has been one internal investigation carried out since the last inspection, following a complaint being received. This investigation was very thorough, shared with appropriate child protection agencies and found staff had acted appropriately and fully in accordance with training, policies and procedures. This oversight and awareness of young people concerns, open approach to issues raised and regular training of staff ensure young people are appropriately safeguarded.

A full range of risk assessments is in place for individual young people and for all activities undertaken by the school. These look closely at known behaviours and risk factors which may impact on young people. They also suggest strategies which allow for the reduction of the risk while allowing residential pupils to participate fully in a range of age appropriate activities. Activities deemed to be of greater risk are assessed through an on-line system linked to the local authority and checked by staff who have received specific training in risk assessment. The school also check risk assessments from activities providers and whether they hold a teaching outside the classroom award. This thoroughness ensures risk, are reduced to satisfactory levels before activities are undertaken.

All residential pupils say they feel safe in the school and this is further substantiated by parents and social workers. This allows pupils to feel relaxed, focus on their education and developing social skills and not be concerned they will be bullied or harassed.

Restraint is only used where absolutely necessary to support young people in managing their behaviour. The complaint above has led to a review of the restraint recording procedures which are already of a high standard. The new forms will clearly differentiate between the duration of the incident, the duration of the restraint and whether any contingent touch was used to support young people calming. Pupils are very clear staff talk to them following any restraint and these are clearly recorded. Staff debriefs are not currently as clearly recorded though it is clear they are

taking place.

There have been very few incidents of residential pupils leaving the school without permission since the last inspection. There are very clear policies and procedures in place detailing the roles and responsibilities of staff should this occur. This is designed to facilitate the prompt and safe return of pupils to the school. There is also a detailed protocol in place with the local police to ensure clear joined up working and information sharing.

Senior managers have very clear guidance in place for staff recruitment and fully adhere to safer recruiting protocols. Young people are also involved in the interview process and their views are very important to ensure the right staff are appointed to work with them safely and sensitively. There are no concerns about the recruitment process or the checks in place for overseas staff or families of staff who live on site.

Leadership and management of the residential provision Outstanding

Leadership and management of the residential provision is outstanding.

The management of this aspect of the school has been strengthened by recent appointments. The former head of care is now a deputy head teacher with responsibility for the care provision. This ensures a very clear residential input at senior management level. The new head of care is also supported by a deputy head of care which is a new position since the last inspection. This ensures an additional level of management oversight is available and very robust planning to cover if the head of care is absent from work.

The residential provision is an integral part of the school and all residential pupils board four nights a week when they first come to the school. This slowly reduces over time and currently almost half of the pupils on roll board for some part of the week. The aims of the residential provision are very clearly set out in the statement of boarding principles and practice. Routines, structures and boundaries are very well known by all residential pupils ensuring this runs smoothly and efficiently, pupils feel safe and secure and gain the full benefit of the residential experience.

There are high numbers of staff on duty at all times to supervise residential pupils and this ensures the needs of individuals and the group as a whole are met as fully as possible. The deputy head teacher (care) supervises the head of care who, together with her deputy, then supervise care staff. Staff comment that 'We get regular supervision each half term and we know our concerns are going to be dealt with' and 'support and guidance from managers is unfailingly available. Those who have been in post for some time have had an appraisal of their boarding practice and feel this is beneficial in reviewing their practice and setting stretching, yet realistic, targets for the year ahead. All new staff undertake the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction standards workbook and then move on to a relevant level 3 qualification once their employment has been confirmed. Staff work across both the academic and pastoral remits throughout the day, which enhances their knowledge and understanding of residential pupils in line with providing a 24 hour curriculum. This also ensures staff promote equality and diversity as they treat each pupil as an individual with a full and well-rounded understanding of individual needs.

A full review of the residential provision was recently carried out. This shows clearly the benefit of young people residing at the school and many of these benefits have been commented on by parents and social workers. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated and all staff are aware of these through a thorough system of e-mails and team meetings. Updates are signed either electronically or on hard copy to evidence that staff have made themselves aware

of and fully understood any changes which have been made. The quality of care provided is regularly monitored using internal processes and this feeds into the reviews carried out by the head of care. An external visitor also visits the school each half term and prepares a thorough report on the care being provided which supplements the internal processes.

The school has acted on the three areas identified at the last inspection as possible areas for improvement. These include having a matrix to show that all staff have been involved in a fire drill, ensuring all fire alarm tests take place as scheduled and that staff sign updates to policies, procedures and children's plans.

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

Unique reference number	139099
Social care unique reference number	SC038324
DfE registration number	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.

Type of school	Residential Specialist Academy
Number of boarders on roll	19
Gender of boarders	Boys
Age range of boarders	8 to 14
Headteacher	Miss Valerie Theresa Moore
Date of previous boarding inspection	04/03/2013
Telephone number	01603 457480
Email address	office@eatonhall.norfolk.sch.uk

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