

Eaton Hall Specialist Academy

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

Inspection dates	26/02/2015	
Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Outcomes for residential pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of residential provision and care	Outstanding	1
Residential pupils' safety	Good	2
Leadership and management of the residential provision	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is good because

- Residential pupils are at the centre of all practice and make outstanding progress during their time at the school. They are consistently supported by an enthusiastic and well-trained care staff team that has key responsibilities for developing young people's positive outcomes.
- The residential pupils are happy at this school and feel safe. They enjoy a wide range of activities and have access to an independent adult and consistent staff who they can raise worries or concerns with in the knowledge they are taken seriously.
- Thorough care planning leads to residential pupils being aware of developmental targets that they can achieve. Continuous development and achievement has become key to young people's lives in residence.
- Good safeguarding processes are in place that support the welfare of residential pupils. Staff are skilled in decreasing challenging behaviours.
- Leaders and managers ensure residential care is organised efficiently and effectively with a focus on meeting the diverse and complex needs of each young person. The quality of relationships between young people and staff is excellent

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

This inspection was announced in the morning, and a social care inspector arrived at the school in the afternoon of the same day. An additional inspector came to the school on the third day of the inspection. All residential accommodation areas were visited on the main school site. Inspection activities included meeting young people, eating meals with young people, observing evening activities, meeting the head teacher and head of care, meeting a group of residential staff, meeting staff with designated responsibilities, considering the responses from the Ofsted surveys received and sampling documentation relating to the safety and welfare of pupils.

Inspection team

Andrew Hewston

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 a residential provision. The school currently provides places for 54 boys with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The residential facilities are available for up to 31 pupils although it is used for differing periods from one up to four nights. The school has developed a flexible approach to residence, offering placements based on pupils needs.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Clarify the use of restraint within the differing school and residential environments.
- Ensure behaviour management records are completed in line with school procedures.
- Ensure records regarding safeguarding are consistently clear, showing outcomes achieved.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for residential pupils

Outstanding

Outcomes for residential pupils are outstanding. Residential staff develop solid, meaningful relationships with them and often, their families. The excellent support provided by staff is recognised by all. For example, one parent stated about staff: 'They are tireless with making sure our son is happy and achieving and you can't argue with that.'

Residential pupils state that they enjoy being in residence and that they have developed during the time they have been at the school. One stated that 'being in residence has made me think about my behaviour and try to get on better with other people, even my parents.' Further comments from residential pupils include that they feel they have 'developed in confidence' and also 'feel that staff really care for us.'

Staff work well to decrease levels of challenging behaviours. There has been a decrease in the level of physical interventions following specific initiatives. Staff use differing techniques to decrease anxieties that residence can cause. Effective assessment systems highlight the personal development that pupils achieve through their residential placements.

Residential pupils enjoy a wide range of enriching experiences both on-site and in the local community. Well resourced residential areas promote differing activities as well as increasing expectations that young people develop personal skills, to live within a communal area and respect the rights and privacy of others.

The open and inclusive atmosphere of the school ensures residential pupils have a strong voice in all areas of school life. A number of opportunities are available for young people to express their views to staff, such as through daily informal conversations or focused individual sessions. In addition, the school council provides a more formal process for issues or ideas to be raised. These avenues enable young people to contribute to decision making as seen in their input into menu planning and the décor of the environment

The changing demographic of residential placements has led to younger pupils experiencing residence while older pupils enhance independence skills within a separate residential block. Transition arrangements are fully supported by staff whose dedicated role is to help both residential pupils and their families leave the school and move to placements that best meet the needs of the child. Parents state that the staff have been 'excellent' at helping them to find a new school for their child.

Quality of residential provision and care

Outstanding

The quality of the residential provision is outstanding. The support offered to residential pupils is extremely supportive and nurturing, placing their individual needs as a paramount concern. Staff ensure induction for new residential pupils is tailored to their needs with a well-planned assessment and introduction, so that they feel comfortable and happy in the residential environment. Excellent levels of communication are maintained across the school, which ensures information is shared easily between education and care staff. Such an approach leads to residential pupils receiving consistent support, care and guidance in all areas of school life. This consistency is further supported by many staff having dual roles within both the school and residential environments.

A wide range of purposeful, enjoyable activities are a key feature of the provision. Residential pupils participate in activities that they have a voice in choosing and thoroughly enjoy. Through these activities pupils develop their ability to integrate into the local community and increase their

self-esteem and self-confidence. Activities are assessed by staff and then adjusted to improve on aspects if required. The out of school curriculum contributes positively to outcomes for residential pupils. Pupil's comments regarding activities include, 'some of the things we do are awesome' and 'it's great to be able to play with your mates each night that you are here.'

Planning for residential pupils is thorough. It starts from the pre-admission assessment and develops through regular meetings with designated care and teaching staff, overseen by a case co-ordinator. Residential pupil's development is core to their time at the school and this is measured through target setting. Pupils are involved with the development of these targets and work towards them to achieve in areas such as individualised behaviour management, social interactions and developing self-help skills. This continuous process of reviewing targets and progress enables staff to identify areas where residential pupils require more support, whilst highlighting their achievements and providing further opportunities for personal development.

Residential pupils have access to robust health services and information. The school has very good links with local doctor's surgeries, with staff being suitably trained in first aid and the giving of medication. A staff member with dedicated time for health has a high awareness of differing needs of the residential pupils. They are well trained and committed to ensuring that young people are fit and well to achieve in school. Well considered systems ensure that medication is accurately recorded and administered. Healthy living is encouraged and this is provided not only by ensuring young people have access to health care, but by encouraging exercise and a healthy diet. All individual dietary needs are catered for with specialised menus and young people saying they enjoy the meals. The emotional needs of young people are met very well. The school has an established team, which ensures young people receive intervention programmes when they need them.

An independent visitor is available for residential pupils to talk to if they have any concerns. A survey since the last inspection highlighted some young people being concerned about bullying behaviour. The school undertook a comprehensive review of such behaviours including the promotion of the visitor's role, as well as reiterating other support services available and behavioural expectations. No residential pupils raised concerns regarding bullying during the inspection.

Residential pupils enjoy comfortable and well looked after accommodation areas. All pupils have their own rooms and are proud of personal touches that they have added to their notice boards, including work completed at school, posters and certificates. One parent stated that 'the residential areas are excellent....with loads for kids to do, it means they can play with their friends or spend time on their own in their rooms.'

Residential pupils' safety

Good

The arrangements for the safety of residential pupils are good. Clear policies and procedures that reflect the levels of vulnerabilities of residential pupils, together with up-to-date training, fully support staff to provide good safeguarding measures. This results in a staff team who have the confidence to deal with problems as they arise. The lead for residence is the deputy head and is suitably qualified and experienced, as is the designated child protection lead officer for the school. He is supported by other staff who also have experience and training to fulfil their roles.

A tiered concerns system is in place to ensure that all pupils regarded as especially vulnerable are highlighted and additional support examined where possible. Where safeguarding concerns have been raised they are assessed through discussions with safeguarding professionals and referrals made where necessary. Records do not consistently show the work that has been completed by the school to support the welfare of children. The school has strong links with the local authority designated officer and shares information effectively to protect pupils. Representatives from the

school attend reviews and strategy meetings to further support pupil's welfare.

Safety procedures are in place to decrease levels of residential pupils going missing from the school. There is an appropriate policy and procedure in place which reflects the locally agreed police protocol should such events happen.

Expectations of appropriate behaviour are clear and consistent, providing residential pupils with a supportive and safe environment. Consequently, the standard of behaviour is high. Pupils have positive relationships with each other and enjoy being with their friends. Older boarders are role models, earning respect and admiration from younger boarders and staff for demonstrating tolerance, responsibility and appropriate social skills. Different systems to promote positive behaviours are used, with residential pupils being able to discuss 'earnies' that they have achieved and what they may spend them on for subsequent rewards. Staff are highly skilled in diffusing potentially difficult situations and receive training in behaviour management. Some clarity is required within the school's policy regarding the difference between permissible restraint within school and residence. All incidents of physical intervention are thoroughly recorded although some recordings within the main log were not made within the expected timescales.

An extensive recruitment process ensures that all prospective members of staff have the correct background checks carried out before they work at the school. All school pupils are therefore cared for by adults deemed suitable to work with children.

Fire precautions and fire equipment are checked and fire drills are held regularly. All residential pupils are aware of fire safety and evacuation procedures. Risk assessments are in place, audited, updated and endorsed by senior members of staff. These risk assessments include environmental checks as well as on-site and off-site activities. Strategies to manage risk and to support residential pupils are known and used. The school has comprehensive systems in place to ensure the safety of all residential pupils is maintained to a high standard.

Leadership and management of the residential provision Outstanding

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The ethos of the school promotes and nurtures a culture of mutual respect. Care practice demonstrates a clear determination to support residential pupils to be the best they can be. The executive head teacher is supported by a committed and experienced management team. Her direct leadership provides a robust oversight and a clear vision for the future of the school as a whole. The residential provision is an integral component of life at the school.

Significant staffing changes had occurred prior to the last inspection. Staff have now settled into their roles and developed a strong awareness of their differing responsibilities and how these support both the rest of the staff team and the residential pupils. New staff have brought an enthusiasm and fresh approach to the differing challenges that the young people may raise within residence.

In addition to new initiatives, the deputy head regularly monitors the residential provision, ensuring the service continues to provide high standards of care. Monitoring reports by an external visitor every half term provide a valuable contribution to oversight of the service to maintain high standards. There are consistently high expectations to provide an exceptional residential experience to benefit young people and enhance their future lives. The residential provision is a priority area within the school's development plan ensuring the service is constantly moving forward to meet the needs of boarders effectively. Managers have addressed areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection, again demonstrating a commitment to high standards.

No formal complaints have been made in relation to the residential provision since the last inspection. Parents report excellent communication and support from boarding staff. One parent commented that, 'the staff keep us informed of all the important things that are going on, this helps us to work with the school.'

The staffing levels are high and meet the challenging needs residential pupils have. All staff receive supervision on a regular basis. This promotes the continuing professional learning of staff and feeds into their annual appraisals. All residential staff have either completed or almost finished the Children's Workforce Development Council training, with the expectation that they will then move towards further learning to enhance the care given to the young people. Staff state that they are well supported and that senior staff are always available if they need to talk about aspects of their role.

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	
Number of boarders on roll	
Gender of boarders	
Age range of boarders	
Headteacher	Miss Valerie Theresa Moore
Date of previous boarding inspection	27/01/2014
Telephone number	01603 457480
Email address	office@eatonhall.norfolk.sch.uk

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