

Inspection of Eaton Hall Specialist Academy

Pettus Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR4 7BU

Inspection dates: 6 and 8 June 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people in the residential provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils who attend Eaton Hall have a fresh opportunity to start again. Pupils have often experienced difficult starts to their education. Many have spent significant times out of school. Eaton Hall provides a supportive and secure environment. Pupils are safe. They know that staff will not give up on them. This enables them to thrive both socially and academically.

Pupils benefit from staff who model respectful relationships and manage pupils' behaviour skilfully. Rules and routines are clear. When needed, pupils receive help and nurture to manage their emotions. As a result, learning is not disrupted, and pupils engage very positively in their activities.

Pupils' daily experiences include many opportunities to build their self-esteem and confidence. Pupils receive a personalised approach because staff know them well. Each pupil has a tailored programme of well-considered therapeutic support. This is highly effective in developing pupils' resilience in learning. It helps them to achieve well.

Pupils know that leaders want them to be the best they can be. All pupils attend lunchtime clubs and activities. These promote pupils' interests and talents very effectively. For example, pupils' use of the woodland area quickly builds their skills to work together during practical activities.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Pupils start at Eaton Hall with significant gaps in their education. Leaders have carefully considered what pupils need to learn to help re-engage them into learning. Leaders' subject plans are ambitious and identify what pupils need to learn. In a few subjects, plans are not as precise as they need to be. The information identifies what pupils do rather than what they learn. It does not break down learning into small enough steps. This means that where pupils' gaps are greater, it takes longer for pupils to secure their understanding. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. In most subjects, staff explain new learning well. They revisit important knowledge so that pupils remember this overtime.

Leaders make effective use of pupils' education health and care (EHC) plans to build a bespoke provision for each pupil. Support for pupils' social and emotional development is woven through leaders' curriculum plans. Pupils make very strong progress in their learning behaviours and interactions with others. From low starting points, pupils become ready to learn. Skilled staff and well-structured therapy programmes make highly effective contributions to this work.

Learning to read is important at this school. Some pupils who are at an early stage of reading receive phonics teaching. All staff who teach phonics apply a consistent approach. Pupils use their phonics to tackle unfamiliar words to become more confident in their reading. Texts are carefully selected to expose pupils to a range of

reading content. Some pupils are reluctant to read. Adults are persistent in their encouragement to share texts with pupils and promote a love of reading.

Staff show high levels of patience with every pupil. They model their high expectations. For example, during lunchtimes adults eat alongside pupils and demonstrate the art of polite conversation and good manners. Consequences and rewards are applied consistently. Over time, pupils' behaviour improves significantly so that they enjoy learning and spending time with each other and staff.

The curriculum provides rich experiences which promote pupils' personal development exceptionally well. Weekly enhancement activities are planned carefully. They help equip pupils with the important life skills. Pupils experience everyday routines. For example, pupils use public transport to visit the local area. Pupils learn about sensitive topics and how to keep themselves safe online. Residential camps provide pupils with greater confidence and independence. Pupils take part in a well-designed careers education programme. There are opportunities to gain vocational and life-skill qualifications. These help to equip pupils effectively for their life beyond school.

The trust provides governance for the school. They have a sound knowledge of the school's work. They use this to challenge and hold school leaders to account.

Staff are proud to work at Eaton Hall. They appreciate working as a team and are well supported whether at the school or in the residency. The overall experiences and progress of pupils in the residential provision are good.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils at Eaton Hall are particularly vulnerable. Leaders ensure that safeguarding is an important priority for all staff. Regular sharing of information and training are used effectively. This ensures that staff understand any concerns about pupils' safety and welfare. Leaders have established effective systems for recording and monitoring the safeguarding of pupils. These are used well by staff. This ensures leaders identify any actions quickly that are needed to keep pupils safe. Leaders work tenaciously with external partners to address concerns in a timely manner.

Leaders' checks on the suitability of adults working at the school are thorough.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the curriculum does not outline the precise steps that pupils need to learn to securely build their knowledge over time. This means that pupils do not achieve exceptionally well. Leaders need to strengthen the curriculum in

all subjects so that plans include the specific knowledge that pupils need to learn. Additionally, this will help teachers to identify and then address pupils' knowledge gaps so that all pupils learn successfully.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	139099
Social care unique reference number	SC038324
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10268188
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	55
Number of boarders on roll	19
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anne Gibson
Headteacher	Peter Lambert
Website	www.eatonhallacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 and 26 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- In July 2022, the school moved to a different trust. It is now a member of the Broad Horizons Educational Multi-Academy Trust.
- All pupils who attend Eaton Hall have an education, health and care plan for social, emotional and mental health needs.
- All pupils will spend a period of time at the residential provision during their time at Eaton Hall Specialist Academy.
- The current headteacher took up his post in September 2022. An assistant headteacher of the primary phase joined the school in January 2023. A senior designated safeguarding leader was appointed in March 2023.
- The school makes use of six unregistered alternative providers for therapeutic care and for vocational qualifications.

- The school meets requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 11 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- School leaders and the trust are in the processes of rescinding the upper end of the age range for boys attending the school. This means pupils will only remain at the school until the end of Year 11.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- The inspection visit was carried out at the same time as the inspection of the school's residential provision. The two inspection teams arrived at the same time at the beginning of the day but left separately at the end of each inspection visit. Inspectors carried out some inspection activities and held some meetings with leaders jointly with the inspector of the residential provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors met with the trustees, including the chair of trustees, the director of education and the director of inclusion.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, reviewed curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of work. The lead inspector listened to pupils reading aloud to a member of staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's single central record of recruitment checks. Inspectors spoke to leaders and staff about the training they have provided and received, alongside their understanding of safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at the start of the school day, during lessons and throughout the day as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and minutes of governance. Inspectors also looked at records for individual pupils, including education, health and care plans.
- There were no parent responses on Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors made several calls to parents to discuss their views about the school. Inspectors evaluated the 22 responses made on Ofsted's staff survey and the four responses from Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Steve Mellors, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Wendy Varney

His Majesty's Inspector

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