

The New Eccles Hall School

Eccles Hall School, Eccles, NORWICH, NR16 2NZ

Inspection dates

23/10/2014

Context of the inspection

This inspection was undertaken at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan.

A welfare inspection of the residential provision took place between 11 and 13 March 2014. A further full welfare inspection took place between 17 and 19 June 2014.

This progress monitoring inspection reviewed the action plan provided by the school in response to shortfalls against the National Minimum Standards (NMS) identified in the March 2014 inspection. The progress monitoring inspection also reviewed two further shortfalls against the NMS identified at the welfare inspection in June 2014. This inspection was undertaken with an inspector from the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI).

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

Standard 5: Residential Accommodation

The welfare inspection in June 2014 identified shortfalls in the physical environment of the boarding accommodation. There were broken tiles on a windowsill in one of the bedrooms, the carpets were worn and stained and the furniture in some areas was old and worn.

Since the inspection in June 2014, the management team have addressed the issue of broken tiles on the windowsill. There are plans in place to refurbish a shower room in the senior boys' dormitory and to refurnish the main boarding accommodation. However, the carpets are stained and worn; there is a hole in the floor in a shower room in the main boarding accommodation and no plans in place to address these issues. While managers have made some progress towards improvements to the boarding accommodation, other issues remain and so this standard remains unmet.

Standard 11: Child Protection

The welfare inspection in March 2014 identified significant shortfalls in managing, recording and reporting safeguarding concerns. The management team planned to address the shortfalls by implementing same day meetings between designated safeguarding staff when concerns arise. They proposed to initiate immediate safeguarding referrals and to maintain clear chronologies of the action taken.

The welfare inspection in June 2014 identified that managers had implemented the planned actions. The improvements were significant; safeguarding concerns were referred in a timely manner and actions clearly recorded. However, the progress monitoring inspection identified that a recent safeguarding concern was not referred to the Local Area Designated Officer within the 24-hour time frame set out in the school's safeguarding policy. Lack of immediate referral has the

potential to compromise further investigation. On this occasion, student safety was not compromised. However, reporting staff did not accurately implement the school's procedures.

There has been a potential concern regarding e-safety. The records do not sufficiently demonstrate that staff took robust action to fully investigate this concern.

There has been progress in the way managers respond to, report and record safeguarding concerns. However, due to the shortfalls identified during the progress monitoring inspection, this standard remains unmet.

Standard 13: Leadership and Management and Standard 20: Monitoring by Independent Visitors
The welfare inspections in March and June 2014 found that the school did not have a system in place to monitor the quality of the residential provision. Additionally, there was no annual review of the review of the operation and resourcing of the school's welfare provision for boarders.

The management team planned to implement visits and reports by the school director to review and evaluate the boarding accommodation and quality of care. The head teacher planned to complete an annual review of the school and the boarding provision.

The school director has commenced half-termly visits in July 2014. He has a system in place to review incidents, leisure opportunities, complaints, behaviour management and the physical environment. The visits consider boarders' views and areas they would like improved. The reporting produces actions for boarding staff that are likely to lead to development of the boarding provision.

The head teacher has implemented an annual review of the school and the boarding provision. As a result, these standards are met.

Standard 15: Staff Deployment and Supervision of Children
The welfare inspection in June 2014 identified an occasion where staff had not followed the school's policy on students who go missing.

The management team have discussed this issue with the boarding staff and made clear the expectations. Records of the action staff have taken in subsequent incidents reflect that they have followed the organisational procedure to assure boarders' safety. This standard is met.

Standard 19: Staff Supervision, Training and Support
The welfare inspections in March and June 2014 found that boarding staff did not hold relevant qualifications in residential or boarding practice. Additionally, managers were not providing regular supervision or performance management for boarding staff.

The management team planned to enrol boarding staff on suitable certificated courses and to implement termly reviews of practice.

The boarding manager has enrolled all staff to undertake suitable boarding qualifications. The boarding manager has initiated termly reviews of performance for each of the boarding staff. This supports good managerial oversight and gives boarding staff the opportunity to continue their professional development and growth. As a result, this standard is met.

National minimum standards

The school must meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools.

- Accommodation is appropriately lit, heated and ventilated, cleaned and maintained,

and reasonable adjustments are made to provide adequate accessible accommodation for any children with restricted mobility. The accommodation contains suitable specialist facilities to support children whose disabilities require them. (NMS 5.4)

- The school ensures that: arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (as referenced in 'Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards'). (NMS 11)

Inspection team

Louisa Bayley

Lead social care inspector

Information about this school

New Eccles Hall School is an independent residential special school situated in the Norfolk countryside between Norwich and Thetford. The school accepts children of mixed ability, some with specific learning difficulties for whom special education facilities are available.

The school accepts day pupils from the age of four to eighteen years. Residential accommodation is offered to pupils aged eight years and above. The school has three separate boarding houses within the grounds. Junior boys are accommodated in the main hall, senior boys in the main school area and girls are accommodated in the converted stable block behind the main hall. There is also a sixth form boarding house behind the hall. There are currently 40 boarders who are accommodated on a weekly or full boarding basis.

The residential provision was last inspected in June 2014.

School details

Unique reference number	121229
Social care unique reference number	SC027660
DfE registration number	926/6041

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.

The inspection was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

Type of school	Independent Residential Special School
Number of boarders on roll	41
Gender of boarders	Mixed
Age range of boarders	8 to 18
Headteacher	Mr R Allard
Date of previous boarding inspection	17/06/2014
Telephone number	01953 887217
Email address	headmaster@neweccleshall.com

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