

Eden School

C/O Family Care Group Ltd, 60 School Lane, Preston, Lancashire PR5 6QE

Inspection dates

26–27 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Insufficient evidence

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and staff are guided by the genuine belief that every pupil deserves a chance 'to be the best they can be'.
- Leaders and staff work with a passion to ensure that pupils feel safe and secure enough to learn.
- Pupils make strong progress from their starting points. The positive relationships that they have with staff and the good-quality teaching and learning that they enjoy ensure that pupils make rapid progress.
- Pupils' attendance is significantly better than at their previous schools, and has been key to their swift educational success.
- The proprietor and other leaders ensured that the independent school standards were met by the end of the inspection. The school website had not been maintained.
- The management committee is supportive and makes an important contribution to school life.
- Leaders and teachers use assessment information well.
- Parents and carers cannot thank staff enough for giving their children 'hope for the future'.
- Pupils are supported exceptionally well. Their personal, social, emotional, behavioural and mental health needs are expertly met.
- Pupils benefit from a personalised and engaging curriculum. Teachers employ a very flexible approach to learning that suits pupils and promotes their interests and enjoyment.
- Promoting pupils' personal development and welfare is a vital part of the work of the school. This is outstanding. Trusting relationships help pupils to develop their self-confidence and begin to feel positive about their future.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils typically conduct themselves extremely well around school. Where difficulties arise, staff are adept at calming the situation quickly.
- Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have a good subject knowledge and use questioning adeptly. Planning in mathematics and reading is not always as precise as it could be.
- Pupils have gaps in their reading ability. Adults do not utilise sufficient strategies to support pupils to build their reading skills and so access their learning further.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and the associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment, by ensuring that teachers:
 - refine their planning in mathematics and reading, to address gaps in pupils' learning in these subjects more systematically
 - develop strategies to support pupils to build their reading skills and so access their learning further.
- Improve leadership and management, by ensuring that the school's website is maintained and kept up to date.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The proprietor, leaders and staff have established a school that is making a positive difference to pupils' lives. As a result, Eden School is a good place to learn. Together with the whole staff team, leaders have created somewhere that welcomes vulnerable pupils and works successfully to reduce their barriers to learning.
- The proprietor, management committee and senior leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards (ISS) are met. However, in the first instance, aspects of part 6 of the ISS were not met, particularly in relation to the school's website. Leaders quickly made sure that this standard was fully compliant by the end of the inspection.
- Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. Firm, supportive boundaries help pupils to feel secure enough to learn, begin to experience educational success and start to build their self-confidence.
- The school actively promotes equality and diversity. Despite pupils' complex needs, they are encouraged to engender the school values of kindness, honesty, trust and teamwork. Every opportunity is taken to 'catch' and celebrate pupils demonstrating these qualities. This helps pupils to become compassionate, respectful and tolerant.
- The leadership team is dedicated and focused. Leaders accurately identify the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Their reflective, proactive approach is evident in a detailed school development plan. This outlines precisely how leaders will address those areas that need further attention. Leaders have developed effective systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school has developed an effective system to assess pupils' attainment and progress. It provides leaders with an in-depth knowledge of pupils' skills and learning gaps in academic areas and also those related to attitudes to learning and personal and emotional development. The system is used effectively to assess each individual pupil's needs, set challenging targets and plan a personalised curriculum for each pupil. The information gathered allows leaders to analyse pupils' progress regularly.
- The school offers a personalised curriculum. It is designed around each individual pupil to capture their interest and 'hook' them into their learning. Pupils benefit from the opportunity to study a wide range of subjects. These include English, mathematics, science, history, geography and creativity. There are also subjects related to developing pupils' personal, social and emotional health and well-being. The curriculum is flexible and adaptive to the needs of pupils on any given day, or over time.
- The school offers a good enrichment curriculum. However, the complexity of pupils' needs makes it very difficult for them to engage easily in trips and visits. It might take many weeks for a pupil to feel confident enough to enjoy these wider experiences. Teachers take every opportunity to support pupils. Pupils have overcome their anxieties enough to enjoy swimming and going to the park, which would previously have been impossible for some of them. These opportunities make a significant contribution to the development of pupils' self-esteem.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is threaded through the school's activities. Pupils learn about, and where possible participate in, activities within the local

and wider community. They absorb British values, such as tolerance, respecting differences and the rule of law.

- The school does not receive any pupil premium funding nor additional funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, all pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan for autism spectrum disorder, pathological demand avoidance and additional sensory needs. The lead for the provision for pupils with SEND has been very effective in identifying meaningful targets for pupils from their EHC plan. These are reviewed regularly.

Governance

- Governance is provided through a management committee. It shares with leaders a whole-hearted commitment to improving pupils' social, emotional and academic outcomes.
- The management committee uses its experience and expertise to good effect, providing appropriate challenge to leaders. Members of the management committee know the school well and have a good understanding of the school's effectiveness. They have clear plans to develop the school further. They make an active contribution to the life of the school.
- The management committee supports the headteacher in holding staff to account and investing in staff development and training.
- The management committee fulfils its responsibilities conscientiously. Members were quick to make adjustments to the school website to ensure that all the ISS were met.
- The management committee is diligent in carrying out its responsibilities to safeguard pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding policies and procedures are compliant and fit for purpose. Leaders demonstrate a high degree of expertise and knowledge of all matters relating to safeguarding and welfare.
- Safeguarding is a high priority in the school. Leaders have ensured that pupils benefit from a safe and secure environment, by promoting the message that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Leaders maintain detailed safeguarding records. Staff, senior leaders, the management committee and the designated company director for safeguarding undertake regular and appropriate training. This includes training related to keeping pupils safe from radicalisation and extremism. The school's safeguarding policy is made available to parents and carers on request. It is also available on the school's website.
- The school's pastoral support is strong. Senior leaders, liaising with parents, coordinate every aspect of the care that is offered to vulnerable pupils.
- Leaders are very aware of the high level of vulnerability of the pupils in their care. Leaders are persistent in cases where the school is concerned for a pupil's welfare. Good relationships with other agencies and with parents ensure that pupils are kept safe and

that their welfare needs are met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers and support staff share leaders' ambitions and belief in the power of education to transform lives.
- Adults work hard to build strong relationships with pupils and ensure that barriers are broken down. They use these relationships well to build pupils' trust, self-esteem and self-confidence. This all helps to develop their academic learning. Pupils' attitudes to learning are typically good.
- Teachers and support staff provide pupils with well-prepared and motivating activities that are predominantly 'pupil-led'. Teachers use good-quality, age-appropriate resources that are often linked to a pupil's interests. Teachers often use inventive ways of engaging pupils, such as through quizzes and setting challenges for them.
- There are high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Learning is approached in a highly flexible and adaptive way. Adults have in mind what learning they would like a pupil to acquire and will then subtly build these into activities during the day. For example, the teacher indirectly explains the meaning and gives examples of similes and alliteration to the teaching assistant. Later in the day, pupils spontaneously use these concepts while drawing on the concrete paving stones in the garden.
- Teachers' and support staff's subject knowledge is good. Teachers use questioning adeptly to give the right amount of challenge at the right time. They do this without putting too much pressure on a pupil, to avoid increasing their anxiety levels. Equally, teachers are quick to realise when a pupil is interested in what they are learning. They take this opportunity to ask more probing questions, to encourage pupils to think more deeply about their learning.
- The development of pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills is a priority. This is evident from the strong progress seen in pupils' books, particularly in writing. However, there are times when gaps in pupils' learning in mathematics and reading are not addressed. This is because, unlike with writing, this is not planned for in a systematic way.
- Pupils have gaps in their reading ability. They are often very particular about what they will and will not read, and sometimes refusing to read at all. Leaders have purchased new resources to encourage pupils to read and cultivate a love of reading. However, they have not identified the strategies to support pupils in building and developing their reading skills.
- Pupils said that they like learning now, even though they still find some things very difficult. Parents commented that it is 'amazing' to see their children enjoying school. From refusing to attend school, their children are now saying that they 'wished they could come every day'.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Both have been crucial to the success of the school. Teachers and other adults have a thorough knowledge of pupils and build strong relationships with them. This contributes to the extremely safe and nurturing atmosphere in which pupils rebuild their confidence. In this eminently trusting environment, pupils begin to develop their resilience to cope with day-to-day life.
- Staff are highly skilled at developing positive relationships with pupils, many of whom have faced, and continue to face, enormous anxieties and great personal challenges. Many of the pupils have presented with very challenging behaviours in their previous schools. Despite this, staff have worked adeptly and with deep understanding to help pupils to settle into the school quickly and begin to 'turn them around'.
- Pupils are warmly welcomed by staff at the start of each day. Adults model respectful and caring behaviour in the way that they engage with pupils. Adults exercise great patience and understanding. As a result, pupils feel relaxed and more able to cope; they begin to enjoy school life.
- Pupils are offered a personalised personal, social and emotional curriculum based on their individual needs. The curriculum is flexible and adapts to pupils' complex and changing needs. It sensitively breaks down pupils' complex anxieties and fears. There is a clear focus on giving pupils alternative behaviours and strategies to cope with life and learning. Leaders monitor changes and improvements through personal targets, in order to assess pupils' growing resilience.
- Staff actively promote discussions about differences among people and lifestyles. Staff also encourage conversations about current events, particularly those that affect pupils. Despite pupils' complex needs, they respond with interest and enthusiasm.
- Records show that there have been no incidents of bullying in school. Leaders said that if it did occur, it would be dealt with immediately.
- Parents and carers who spoke with the inspector felt that the school had made an immeasurable difference to their children. Parents commented that the work of the school had been 'life changing' for their children and also for them. The comment, 'Eden has unlocked my child's potential and given my child back their life,' was a typical sentiment from parents.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Considering the difficulties that pupils have in managing their behaviour, pupils conduct themselves extremely well around school. The school is typically a calm, orderly place, where pupils feel protected and able to learn.
- Movement around the school is managed carefully and sensitively by adults. This means that there are limited opportunities for negative situations to arise. At the same time, adults are mindful of giving pupils their own space.
- Staff consistently promote high expectations of behaviour, to which pupils respond well.

Pupils quickly pick up the skills and strategies to begin to self-regulate their behaviour.

- On the occasions when a pupil is in crisis, staff skilfully deal with the incident, helping pupils to calm down and re-join their activity. However, pupils are left in no doubt of behaviours that are unacceptable. They are taught ways to make better choices the next time.
- Leaders have ensured that staff are well trained and supported to establish a safe learning environment in which pupils conform to high standards of behaviour. Pupils value the support that they receive from staff, and appreciate their measured and caring approach.
- Behaviour logs are well maintained. They are analysed regularly by senior leaders and the management committee.
- Pupils who attend Eden have had extremely poor attendance for much of their previous school careers. Their attendance is now excellent and above the national averages for mainstream schools. Leaders promote the importance of regular attendance for pupils' learning and future educational opportunities. Pupils' excellent attendance has played an important part in their educational success. Leaders have effective systems for monitoring attendance and absence.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils make strong and substantial progress from their starting points. They join the school with progress and attainment considerably below those of their peers. This is often because they have had years of disrupted education, severe anxiety and a profound sense of disengagement from the school system. Their attitudes to learning, attendance and academic achievement all improve rapidly due to the work of Eden staff. Pupils are making outstanding progress from their starting points.
- Leaders assess pupils when they join the school to establish a complete baseline picture of their starting points. Pupils are then set very specific goals around developing a positive attitude to learning and for their personal, social and emotional development. An initial English or mathematics goal is also set.
- Leaders use a comprehensive assessment system that is effective in capturing the individual progress of pupils in a range of areas. It allows leaders to keep a regular check on pupils, to ensure that they make sufficient progress against their targets. Pupils often exceed the ambitious targets that have been set. Their targets are reviewed very regularly. In response to the rapid progress that pupils make, new targets are set for them.
- Pupils make strong progress in those areas that were barriers to learning in their previous schools. Pupils arrive at the school overwhelmed with anxieties and sensory difficulties. Often, they are unable to interact, sit still or hold a pen. Within a few weeks, pupils make considerable gains in their confidence and emotional development. They begin to find strategies to cope with their fears. This has enabled them to be more positive about school, learning and their future.
- In English and mathematics, with starting points well below what would be expected for their age, pupils are catching up in their learning. This is because: they attend school regularly; they have built strong, trusting relationships with adults; they engage and

enjoy learning; and they benefit from good-quality teaching and learning.

- The school's assessment information and evidence in pupils' books confirm the rapid and sustained progress that pupils are making in a short period. For example, younger pupils struggled to hold a pen and write a single word at the beginning of the spring term. They are now able to write detailed descriptions about the skills and powers of Pokémon characters.
- All pupils are identified with SEND and have an EHC plan. Pupils benefit from personalised support and provision. These pupils make exceptional progress from their starting points.
- At the time of the inspection, there were no key stage 4 pupils attending the school. However, in the recent past, older pupils have benefited from bespoke careers guidance and personalised work with pupils. This helps to prepare them for their next stage in education. Pupils are encouraged to be ambitious and to explore their aspirations. Leaders have successfully linked aspects of the curriculum to appropriate awards and accreditation.

School details

Unique reference number	143531
DfE registration number	895/6003
Inspection number	10103125

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	6 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Proprietor	Family Care Associates Limited
Chair	Phil Williamson
Headteacher	Sarah Earing
Annual fees (day pupils)	£34,515
Telephone number	01939 220791
Website	www.family-care.co.uk
Email address	jen.lamidey@family-care.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 July 2018

Information about this school

- The school is a small independent special school situated near Macclesfield.
- The school is registered to admit up to eight pupils with SEND, from age six to 16 years.
- The school was first registered in February 2017. The school's first independent standard inspection was in July 2018. At this time, no pupils had been admitted to the school.
- All pupils have a high level of need. This might relate to their cognitive and learning needs, behavioural, emotional and social development needs, and/or their communication, interaction and sensory needs. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school aims to match the national curriculum in the education offered, wherever appropriate, for individual pupils. In addition, the school provides a therapeutic approach, which aims to identify and respond to pupils' wider needs.
- The proprietor is Family Care Associates Limited, which also provides residential care and

fostering services.

- Eden School's headteacher is also the headteacher of Access School, Family Care Group's other school, which is in Shropshire. The two schools are roughly 50 miles apart. A lead teacher and teaching assistant are based full time at Eden School.
- The school has no plans to use any alternative providers. However, as with other aspects of the curriculum, any use of such provision will be determined in response to pupils' specific needs.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning around the school. She also observed pupils' behaviour in school and assessed the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The inspector looked at the work in pupils' books.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, lead teacher and teaching assistant.
- The inspector spoke with the proprietor on the telephone. She met with the group operations director and the chair of the school's management committee.
- The inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority SEND department.
- The inspector spoke informally with pupils around school and discussed, where possible, their opinions about the school and their learning.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire. However, the lead inspector met with staff during the inspection to gain their views.
- There were three responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View. The inspector also met with three parents or carers.
- School policies and other documents were examined to check compliance with the independent school standards and to provide other inspection evidence. These included: minutes from management committee meetings; information on pupils' progress; the school's evaluation of its own performance; and its development plan. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Sue Eastwood, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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