

Sallygate School

Kingsdown Road, St Margarets at Cliffe, Dover, Kent, CT15 6AZ

Inspection dates	12–13 February 2013	
Overall effectiveness	Adequate	3
Pupils' achievement	Adequate	3
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Adequate	3
Quality of teaching	Adequate	3
Quality of curriculum	Adequate	3
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Good	2
Leadership and management	Adequate	3

Summary of key findings

This school is adequate because

- The new leaders of the school have had a positive impact in addressing the large number of regulations failed at the last inspection but there is still some way to go before the school can be judged good.
- The quality of teaching and of students' achievement is adequate but is not yet good. The new leaders have introduced thorough checks on the quality of teaching and the ideas for improvement arising from this are beginning to have a positive effect on students' achievement.
- The curriculum, while adequate, is still under development to make it more relevant to the students.
- Students' behaviour has already developed positively in the short time that the new leadership has been in post but there is still room for improvement.

The school has the following strengths.

- The provision for students' welfare, health and safety is good. Students settle well into the school after a period of interruption in their schooling. Students feel safe and secure. They respond well to individual staff and their expectations.
- Most of the staff are new to the school and have made a very positive start.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school requires improvement and must take action to meet schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half a day's notice.
- The inspector observed nine lessons taught by four different teachers, looked at students' work, and held meetings with the proprietor, staff and groups of students.
- The school's documentation was examined, including schemes of work, teachers' planning, records of students' progress, monitoring reports of teaching and learning and staff training records. The school's compliance with the regulations for independent schools was checked.
- The views of students, parents and carers were taken into account. Responses to the Ofsted questionnaires from all staff were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Jill Bainton Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Sallygate School is a day special school for students with complex behavioural, social and emotional difficulties which opened in December 2011. The school is located in a quiet road in the village of St Margaret's at Cliffe, approximately four miles from Dover. It is housed in most of what was formerly the village school, with the remainder of the property serving as the local library. The accommodation is a single-storey building. The school's proprietor is Channels and Choices, a company that manages six residences in Kent. The school does not use alternative provision.
- All of the students on the school roll are looked after children and all live in residential accommodation run by the company. The school aims to 'provide opportunities for students to achieve their optimal academic and personal potential'.
- There are currently 15 students on roll, with eight boys and seven girls. All but one of them are of secondary-school age and 11 of them have a statement of special educational needs. None of the students is disabled.
- A new headteacher, deputy headteacher and several teaching and support staff have taken up their posts at the beginning of this term.
- An unannounced emergency inspection was made on 2 July 2012 when the school did not meet a large number of regulations. The school submitted an action plan, which was judged to be satisfactory in November 2012.
- This is the school's first full inspection which also addresses a request from the Department for Education to check the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the emergency inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and assessment by:
 - ensuring that all teachers make better use of information about students' progress to plan work which meets all students' needs, especially the less able and more able
 - making sure that staff are suitably trained in the teaching of writing skills
 - encouraging students to learn to work more on their own
 - completing and implementing the school's development plan, making sure that it focuses sharply on ways to improve students' progress and attainment.
- Further develop the curriculum by creating detailed plans to meet the specific needs of the students.
- The school must meet the following independent school standards.
 - Provide suitable changing accommodation and showers for students aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education (paragraph 23A(1)(c)).
 - Provide suitable accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of students (paragraph 23B(1)(a)).
 - Provide suitable accommodation for the short-term care of sick and injured students, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility (paragraph 23B(1)(b)).

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Adequate

Students' achievement is adequate which is an improvement following the appointment of the new leaders. It is not yet good because there is still a need to improve both students' progress and their attainment. Compared to the last inspection, there is now much better evidence in students' work showing the progress that has been made. The majority of students, including those with special educational needs and the large number with a statement of special educational needs, have made adequate progress over time from their low starting points. Some have made better progress, particularly in developing their skills in literacy and numeracy although their writing skills are still only adequate. The standards the students achieve generally remain below average because of the fact that their ability on entry to the school is low and adequate rather than good progress is not sufficient to attain higher standards. Nevertheless, students' exercise books and other pieces of work since the beginning of this term show that they are now doing work which builds more carefully on the skills they already have. Thus there is now a reasonable possibility of them achieving reasonable grades in GCSE and other appropriate national qualifications.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Adequate

Students' behaviour is adequate. It is not yet good because there are still instances of poor behaviour. Progress has been made in reducing the number of incidents of poor behaviour since the last inspection and the arrival of the new leaders. Staff now help students to manage their anger or anti-social behaviour more effectively. The new management has improved the school's reward system which students now think is helpful as it encourages them to manage their behaviour better and to work harder in lessons. In the short time it has been operating, this system has had a beneficial effect on students' attitudes and behaviour. There is generally a calm atmosphere in classrooms and around the school. This is having a positive impact on the students' progress because they are more settled in lessons, are working harder and behaving better. The students confirm that they feel safe at school and their attendance is good. There is evidence that as a result of these improvements in attitudes, behaviour and attendance, students are making better progress in their personal development.

The provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is adequate and the school has good plans to improve it. Students' self-confidence and self-esteem are growing as they realise that their views are listened to. A student council has met and it is having an impact. For example, students have voiced their desire to change the uniform. Students are becoming more respectful towards others due to the positive staff role models. They have well-planned weekly personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) lessons, which help to contribute to their knowledge of their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony. The new curriculum is beginning to enable students to gain a fuller understanding of modern democratic British society through a suitably planned programme.

Quality of teaching

Adequate

The quality of teaching is adequate. It is not yet good because it is not yet fully adjusted to the needs of all students. Nevertheless, there has been considerable improvement since the last inspection leading to students' better learning and achievement. Teachers and support staff work closely as a team. Together, they plan and teach lessons that are enabling most students to re-engage with learning and gain new knowledge and skills. Students' statements of special

educational needs are generally recognised sufficiently in the planning, as are the needs of students without statements. However, on a few occasions observed, teaching was not linked closely enough to the needs of both the less and the more able. In some instances teachers do not provide students with sufficient opportunity to work on their own and some students have become too accustomed to having too much individual attention to support them.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy is more effective than at the time of the last inspection. Students' reading is given a high priority and some read well. They are encouraged to engage in discussions in class, which helps to promote their speaking and listening skills. The school knows that it needs to improve students' writing skills with more training for staff.

The use of assessment procedures is at an early stage. Staff are assessing students' standards of work in English, mathematics and science using National Curriculum levels. This information is beginning to be used more regularly in lesson planning. Staff are good at providing feedback to the students on how well they are doing. This takes a variety of forms, such as spoken praise and the helpful marking of their work, and provides them with guidance on how to improve. The quality of marking of students' work is much improved with written comments made by teachers that are helpful and refer clearly to targets.

Resources have been increased and are used well to support learning. Students' work is displayed well in the classrooms, celebrating their individual achievements. Students confirm that the new staff have already made a big difference to improving their learning in class. They say that lessons are now more interesting and, as a result, their attitudes to learning have improved.

Quality of curriculum

Adequate

The curriculum is adequate. It has improved considerably since the school was last inspected. It is not yet good because it still needs finer tuning to meet fully the different learning needs of all students.

The school offers an appropriate range of subjects for the age, ability and the different special educational needs of the students, which, in general, meet the requirement to teach all the areas of learning. There is also a suitable curriculum policy and an overall scheme of work for each subject taught which is based on National Curriculum guidance. However, there is not yet sufficient selection and adaptation of content within subjects to ensure that students' different needs are met. Although there are well-considered, medium-term plans for the current school year, it is the short-term and daily plans which lack the necessary refinement to ensure that the needs of all students are met.

Personal, social, health and citizenship education is given a high priority with a well-devised policy and weekly planned lessons. This subject is well adjusted to the students' different needs. The older students have the opportunity to take a range of appropriate examinations leading to recognised qualifications. Careers advice has improved and the school now has good links with local colleges where students take additional courses, such as performing arts and sports theory. The good extra-curricular opportunities are closely linked to the provision in the residential accommodation, where a wide range of activities is provided. Visits outside school are planned and some students recently visited the local Spitfire Museum in connection with their history studies.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety

Good

The provision for the students' welfare, health and safety is good and is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. There are good staff recruitment procedures in place. The proprietor has correctly checked the suitability of staff and others to work with children and the information is held on the required single central register of staff appointments. The designated

person responsible for safeguarding has been trained to the required level as have all the other staff. The school has devised and implemented the required range of policies, which meet the latest guidance, and these include those for child protection, anti-bullying, behaviour and health and safety. Students report that there is no bullying but staff are now very clear on how to deal with it should it arise. Risk assessments are properly undertaken and the findings correctly recorded and acted upon when appropriate. Procedures to prevent fire are fully implemented. All the necessary safety checks are regularly undertaken including those for electrical equipment. There are suitable risk assessments which ensure the safety of students on off-site visits. Students are very well supervised on and off site. The admission and attendance registers now meet the regulations.

Leadership and management

Adequate

Leadership and management are adequate. Leaders have already made many much-needed changes at the school. The quality of provision has improved since the last inspection but the improvements are not yet well established which is why leadership and management are not yet good.

The proprietor and school managers have an increasingly accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and its overall provision and performance. Leaders are clearer about what needs to be done to raise standards. They are devising a school development plan to guide them through further essential changes and to provide a stronger basis for self-evaluation.

The proprietor has ensured the appointment of new, effective staff. Although the new staff have only been in post for a few weeks, their impact is already evident in the improvements made, especially to the quality of teaching and learning. The curriculum has been revised and is being further developed. A system for making checks on the quality of teaching and learning has begun. There are now regular documented staff meetings to consider ways in which to improve the school, which focus on teaching, assessment, the recording of students' progress and identifying the main priorities for improvement.

The proprietor has also demonstrated a strong commitment to the school through significant efforts to improve the school's facilities. There are suitable plans to create a suitable medical room and to provide showering facilities. Parents and carers are provided with all the required information about the school and are aware of the complaints procedure, which meets requirements. Local authorities, parents and carers receive regular information about the progress of their children.

The school has made adequate progress since the last inspection with some aspects where progress is good. In consequence, it has made adequate progress in implementing its action plan following the last inspection. The proprietors have now ensured that almost all the regulations have been met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	137795
Inspection number	397702
DfE registration number	886/ 6137

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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	Day special
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	8–16 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	15
Proprietor	Channels and Choices
Chair	Ross Barnett
Headteacher	Elizabeth Cornish
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2012
Annual fees (day pupils)	£20,900
Telephone number	01304 852872
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