

# Millgate School

18a Scott Street, Leicester, LE2 6DW

## Inspection dates

27–28 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Overall effectiveness of the residential experience		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching is not yet good. In some lessons there is too much emphasis on completing activities from published schemes and worksheets rather than on learning.
- Achievement is not good enough over time, despite some recent rapid improvements. A few teachers do not expect enough of students nor plan work that takes account of their targets or prior achievements.
- Teachers do not always check on students' understanding sufficiently, for example through probing questions.
- Students' progress in writing is more variable than in reading and mathematics because they do not write at length.
- Marking rarely tells students what they now need to do to improve their work or how this relates to their targets.
- Attendance, although it has improved considerably, is still too low.
- Instabilities in staffing and the changes in the school's organisation mean that not all subjects are taught as well and in the depth as they should be.

### The school has the following strengths

- Good support from the local authority and governing body has helped the new leadership transform the climate for learning, so that behaviour is now good and teaching, achievement and attendance are improving.
- Progress is good in mathematics because of the consistently good teaching in this subject and the opportunities provided in other subjects such as design and technology to apply numeracy skills.
- The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools. The residential unit is good in all aspects. Students who attend the extended day activities make faster progress than others in their reading and mathematics, in their attendance and in the ways they manage their own behaviour.
- Governors are knowledgeable. They check carefully on how the teaching and the achievement of students entitled to the pupil premium are improving.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons, over half of which were joint observations with senior leaders. They also made short visits to other lessons, assemblies and to activities at the end of the day and in the residence.
- The inspection team held meetings and discussions with students, governors, local authority advisers, the school’s senior leaders, including those for the residence and with other staff. They looked at students’ work and discussed it with them.
- Although there were too few responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to be recorded, inspectors spoke directly with and received written testimonies from parents and carers. They considered the school’s own evidence of parents’ views and took account of 31 questionnaires from staff.
- The inspection team observed the school and residence’s work and looked at a number of documents including: the information that is kept on students’ progress, the school’s planning for improvement, safeguarding and health and safety documentation and the ways in which the school checks on its performance.

## Inspection team

Susan Lewis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Rosemary Barnfield

Additional Inspector

Joanne Vyas

Social Care Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Millgate is a community residential special school for boys with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD). All students have a statement of special educational needs for these difficulties but an increasing proportion have additional learning needs such as attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, autistic spectrum disorders and dyslexia.
- A very high proportion of students, almost three quarters, are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, looked-after children and students from service families.
- The proportion that is from minority ethnic groups has increased significantly since the last inspection and is now above average.
- The large majority of students have had disrupted schooling before entering Millgate, often because of being excluded from their previous placements or because of very poor attendance. Students who continue to find it hard to come to school are supported by the school through an outreach service to support their re-engagement with education.
- In November 2011 Millgate became part of a federation with Keyham Lodge School, a special school for students with SEBD in the City of Leicester. The two schools share a governing body and an executive head teacher who was appointed in September 2012, although he was acting executive head teacher prior to this.
- At the time of this inspection further reorganisation of both schools was taking place. Several posts within Millgate were not filled because of this and were covered by temporary staff. Other posts such as some subject leaders were still to be recruited.
- The school is part of the Building Schools for the Future initiative and building work is underway. A new purpose built school will be completed by September 2013.
- The school has a small residential unit. A maximum of six students stay for up to four nights per week. Twelve students attend the extended day provision until about 6.30pm, for up to four nights a week.
- Only about a third of students arrive in Year 7, most arrive at any point in their secondary school career, including in Year 11.
- The school has a 'high challenge' unit for up to six students aged 15 or 16 years, several have recently returned from residential placements outside of the local authority to attend this. It provides one-to-one support and teaching for these students.
- The school uses a number of alternative providers for certificated courses in car and motorcycle maintenance, hairdressing and construction, as well as college-linked courses.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it promotes consistently good or better learning by making sure that:
  - teachers' questioning involves students in lessons and checks on their understanding
  - teachers' marking is consistent and gives students clear guidance as to how they can improve their work and achieve even higher levels
  - teachers use information from assessments to plan challenging work and targets for each students whatever their starting point
  - there is a clear role for support staff in all sections of lessons, so that they play an active part in enhancing student learning and progress
- Make sure all subjects are taught in sufficient depth and that key skills such as extended writing are planned for across the curriculum by seeing that:

- curriculum leaders are in place to monitor and develop subjects
- there is clear leadership of English across the school.
- Improve further the residential provision by making sure that:
  - reports written by governors regarding visits to the residential provision reflect the activities carried out, such as comments on records viewed and discussions with students
  - the objectives and learning outcomes of activities provided in the extended-day provision are clearly identified and relevant
  - records kept of interviews clearly show that any gaps in employment for short-listed candidates have been explored.
- Continue to improve attendance so that it is as good as or close to that expected for students of secondary school age.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Students enter the school with low and often very low achievement usually because of their disrupted schooling and poor attendance. This is particularly so in speaking and listening, literacy and mathematical skills.
- Achievement and progress are improving because of improvements in teaching, in the management of behaviour and in the range of qualifications available for students to take. However, over time too many students do not achieve expected levels from their starting points, because of poor attendance and/or because the teaching has not enabled them to learn sufficiently.
- Very few students have achieved the higher levels in GCSE in the past. However this year a significant minority are on target to do this in English, mathematics, geography and design technology. Students are pleased with their improved progress and say they know they would not have achieved so much if they had not 'come to this school'.
- Progress in reading and mathematics is better than for writing because these are better taught and more opportunities are provided in other subjects to apply these skills. Individual reading support and support in the residence and extended day also support these. One student was proud to say, 'I couldn't read before I came here but now I am enjoying it; it makes me feel great.'
- The pupil premium has been used well to improve achievement through, for example, providing additional courses and qualifications such as in land management and vehicle maintenance and repair. Strong one-to-one support in reading and mathematics or visits to students in homes are also accelerating progress and getting these students in the right frame of mind for learning. The school's own data shows that the gap between these students and others is narrowing, particularly where they attend the extended day activities. For example, on average, students made well over a year's gain in their reading levels in less than a term following the introduction of specific reading support.
- Students with special educational needs achieve at least as well as others at the school and often better because the school is quick to put support into place for them such as the Champion reading group, or personalised learning plans.
- All groups, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, achieve similarly and have made better progress over the last year because of improved behaviour and attendance and closer tailoring of support to students' interest and needs. Rigorous and frequent checking by senior leaders on every student's progress means that any slowing of progress is now quickly picked up and additional support put into place.
- Students in the high challenge unit and those who arrive after Year 7 benefit from the intensive individual support provided for them following a thorough initial assessment of their needs. Some who have found attending regularly very difficult have improved their attendance dramatically and will take a number of GCSEs this year, despite having been in the school for only a short time.
- Alternative provision is used well to engage students and support their progress; careful matching of students and providers mean that students value these placements and almost all

successfully gain the qualifications such as a Certificate in Motor Vehicle Maintenance. The introduction of outdoor education and the extensive range of residential experiences and visits promote students' spiritual social moral and cultural development well.

### **The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- Teaching has not been good enough over time for students to achieve well. Some teachers use a limited range of teaching styles, often relying too heavily on worksheets or talking too much themselves instead of probing to find out what students know and understand.
- In the best lessons, students are inspired to learn, think and work things out for themselves, for example, when students used the characteristics of shapes to work out which one their teacher was thinking of. The ensuing game not only reinforced student's knowledge of the properties of shapes but also enabled progress in their ability to use information and communicate it effectively. Other staff had been briefed and understood exactly what students were meant to learn and their role in this.
- In a lesson on sexual behaviour the support staff contribution helped students to reflect carefully on the impact of some behaviours not only on themselves but on others. Every minute was used for learning and expectations of behaviour were very high.
- Weaker teaching is dull and often lacks pace and urgency. Teachers often do not explain to students what they will learn and do not link this to students' targets. Opportunities for developing students' literacy and numeracy skills are missed. Sometimes support staff have no clear role and simply sit listening for significant parts of lessons.
- Students are very clear as to why they learn more in some lessons than others, saying for example how much they learn in design and technology because the teacher designs tasks that require them to use their thinking, literacy and mathematical skills.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- These are good in the residence and good in and around the classrooms. Although some students still find it hard to attend school regularly, most have very positive attitudes to school and to their teachers.
- Students make considerable strides in their ability to manage their behaviour and in their attitudes to others, because the climate for learning is a more positive one. There has been a dramatic reduction in fixed-term exclusions over the last year, so that incidents mostly relate to new entrants as they settle into the school. The new behaviour, rewards and sanctions policy is working well and is consistently applied. Students understand and value the gold, silver and bronze awards.
- Students are clear that bullying is rare and if it does happen it will be dealt with fairly. They have a good understanding of different forms of bullying and what to do if they occur. Parents agree that the school keeps their children very safe. They are particularly pleased with the improvements in their children's behaviour.
- Students are usually highly respectful of staff, although occasionally they know they let themselves down. They feel they are being given real help to manage their behaviour and to stay calm. Staff are skilled at establishing positive relationships with students. Strong pastoral

systems including careful supervision systems and good use of humour mean that students say they know that staff 'really care' and 'want us to do our best.'

- Outdoor physical education and a very strong personal, social and health education programme, and activities such as residential visits, land management and charity work all develop students social and personal awareness very well and contribute to their strong spiritual moral social and cultural development.
- Attendance has been very low but is now improving rapidly because of the good systems that the school has put into place to follow up any absences and the strengthening of teaching and the topics. Students say they want to come more because 'school is more interesting' and they know they 'are making progress'.
- The alternative provisions and the residential unit both make strong contributions to students' behaviour and safety. Students feel very trusted to be able to attend off-site provision and take great pride in travelling independently. They are very happy in the residence.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Leadership and management requires improvement because the school's middle management structures are not yet in place, partly linked to the reorganisation and the failure to recruit suitable candidates. Leaders and the governing body have identified a new and highly relevant leadership structure for both federation schools to strengthen leadership further.
- The executive headteacher and the new head of school have worked hard to lay firm foundations for improvement in almost all aspects of the school's work. They and governors know the school extremely well and have already taken major strides to improve it, using review findings well to plan their actions. This is already paying off and, despite the many upheavals, staff morale is high. They say they are proud to work at the school and with the new 'vibrancy' it has.
- Effective management of performance has improved teaching through rigorous setting and checking of targets and links to training and to salary progression. Leaders have drawn off the federation partner and other local authority partners well to help teaching to improve. New systems and detailed monitoring of the implementation of policies mean that behaviour is now good and contributes to learning rather than impeding it.
- Good mechanisms have been put into place to check on students' achievements and progress towards targets. These are used well for whole-school target setting and review.
- Subjects and topics have been made much more relevant to students' needs and the residential and alternative provisions support this well. However, there is still some work to be done in seeing that all subjects are taught in interesting ways so that students are even more inspired to attend. The school draws well on other schools and partner agencies and the local community to strengthen what it offers. All these and a wealth of enrichment activities support students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- Leadership of the residential unit is good. The leadership team has introduced good self-evaluation systems which are starting to drive forward improvement further. These mean a good quality service is offered to students in residence.



- The school and residence work well together and with families, reaching out to those whose children find it hard to come into school and providing teaching and support at home. The management of the admission of students to the 'high challenge unit' has been achieved well. Students say the school will do 'whatever it takes' to help them towards a chosen career.
- All the required safeguarding procedures are in place and carefully followed. Effective partnerships with other agencies secure the well-being of students who are most vulnerable and those with disabilities and special educational needs.
- The Chair of the Governing Body regularly visits the residence to monitor and quality assure the residential provision and students can express any concerns they may have to him. His reports provide a good picture of life in 'the flat' and offer challenge to secure improvement. However, they do not include all the activities carried out such as the discussions held with students and comments on which documents and records have been viewed.

■ **The governance of the school:**

The governing body is new but highly committed to Millgate and brings an extensive range of skills to the school. Governors are very clear as to their responsibilities and already have a good understanding of the schools' strengths and next steps. They monitor carefully how teaching is improved through the management of performance, including its relationship to pay progression. They know what the school is doing to reward good teaching and to tackle any underperformance. They also know how the pupil premium is being used to raise the achievement of those eligible for it. They are already asking challenging questions of the leadership team such as about information regarding student achievements and attendance and are well set up to take their role further.

<b>Outcomes for residential pupils</b>	<b>are good</b>
<b>Quality of residential provision and care</b>	<b>is good</b>
<b>Residential pupils' safety</b>	<b>is good</b>
<b>Leadership and management of the residential provision</b>	<b>is good</b>

- Students are very positive about their stay in 'the flat' and how it helps them to be better prepared for school. The activities in the evening provide an educational as well as fun element such as cookery, art, music, army cadets, games and sports, although staff do not always plan them with clear objectives that they share with students.
- Students build strong relationships with staff and each other in residence. These support their behaviour and personal and social development well. Staff know and understand the students well and students say they feel listened to and valued. Staff build strong relationships with students' families, visiting them to help with parenting skills and to help secure a consistent approach between school and home. Parents are positive about the quality of care their sons receive. A parent who is also a parent governor said, 'It's like a family unit' and, 'I feel listened to and consulted with by the school by doing this role.'
- Students' health is promoted well. Staff help students to understand about healthy lifestyles. They are encouraged to eat a healthy diet and expand the foods they will eat. Students have access to mental health services and other healthcare professionals such as a school nurse. Those students who take medication have this regularly reviewed to ensure its effectiveness. Trained staff follow safe and secure medication procedures when administering medication.
- Students' achievements are celebrated and good behaviour rewarded. Students fully understand the rewards scheme. This all helps students to improve and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Staff know the triggers which may cause anxiety or distress to individual students



and are quick able to manage any situations effectively. Physical intervention is rarely used due to the relaxed structure within 'the flat' and the skills of the staff in successfully de-escalating situations.

- Students say they feel safe. They are protected by appropriate safety checks on new staff. However, systems are not robust as gaps in employment are not explored during the interview process. Staff are qualified, competent and caring and very enthusiastic about their work.

## What inspection judgements mean

<b>School</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

<b>Residential provision</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120362
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC006452
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicester
<b>Inspection number</b>	405921

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection of residential provision 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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	63
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	12
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Ingleby
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Bruce (Executive Headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 2704922
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