

Millgate School

18a Scott Street, Leicester, LE2 6DW

Inspection dates 25–26 February 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Strong leadership and good management from the executive headteacher and head of school are successfully driving school improvement.
- The federation with Keyham Lodge School has enabled governors, staff and students to work together to bring about marked improvements since the last inspection.
- Teaching is good. Lessons are interesting and engaging.
- Students achieve well. Staff make good use of information about how well students are doing to plan their next steps in learning.
- Students enjoy coming to school and they make good progress in all aspects of their development.
- Behaviour is good; students are polite towards each other and staff. Students feel safe and stay safe because of the attention given to health and safety.
- The school effectively supports students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, preparing them well for life in modern Britain.
- The seamless 24-hour curriculum enables students to thrive educationally, emotionally and socially.
- The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Feedback to students does not always allow them to understand the next steps of their learning.
- Residential student's safety is adequate.
- The governing body does not check systematically on all of the school's work.
- Students who access the 'intervention hub' do not get enough access to the expertise of specialist teachers.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was an integrated inspection of the day school and residential provision.
- Inspectors observed twelve lessons, five of which were jointly observed with members of the senior leadership team. Several learning walks took place to gather further evidence about the quality of teaching and student achievement.
- Inspectors visited students in the residential provision before and after the school day. Inspectors held formal and informal discussions with students throughout the inspection.
- The executive headteacher and head of school were integral members of the process and inspectors had several meetings with them.
- Inspectors held meetings with members of the senior leadership team, the head of care (who is also the designated safeguarding person), members of teaching and support staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, a parent governor, the school nurse, the site manager and the local authority school improvement officer.
- There were too few responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to give any information. However, inspectors took into account of the school's own surveys of the views of parents.
- Inspectors examined the school's self-evaluation document, improvement plans, documents regarding the monitoring of teaching, safeguarding documents, policies, governing body reports, information about students' progress, behaviour and attendance records and reports of staff performance.
- Inspectors looked at students' work in all lessons and conducted a joint work scrutiny with senior leaders.

Inspection team

Phil Harrison, Lead inspector

Associate Inspector

Michelle Moss

Social Care Inspector

Rosemary Barnfield

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Millgate is a community residential special school for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. All students on the roll of the school have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school has a residential unit, which is open from Sunday to Thursday.
- The majority of students are eligible for the pupil premium, which is above the national average. This is additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is below average.
- The majority of students have had a disrupted education before entering Millgate. Many students have been excluded from their previous schools.
- Since November 2011 Millgate has been part of a federation with Keyham Lodge School, another special school in Leicester City. The schools share one executive headteacher and one governing body.
- Millgate is run on a day-to-day basis by a head of school who has been in this post since early 2013.
- Since the last integrated inspection of the school in 2013, there has been a significant reorganisation of staffing. Several staff are new to the school or new to their posts.
- The school has been part of the Building Schools for the Future initiative and this work is now almost complete.
- The school uses alternative providers and off-site provision for appropriate courses. These are: Triple Skills; Axlr8; Gaz Autos and Markfield alpaca farm.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that all feedback to students is precise, timely and contains the necessary information students require to improve their progress.
- Ensure students in the 'intervention hub' have enough access to specialist teachers' expertise so that the progress of these students consistently matches the good progress made by other students.
- Ensure the governing body make systematic checks on all aspects of the school's work.
- Improve further the residential provision by ensuring that:
 - health information recorded in students' care plans always includes information on immunisations, developmental tests and examinations
 - physical intervention records always show details of the medical checks and opportunities to talk about the incident that students are offered
 - records about staff qualifications and recruitment are clear and accurately reflect day to day practice.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher and head of school, supported by senior leaders and governors, set a clear vision for the school which is shared by governors, staff and students. Staff feel supported and valued, while being continually challenged to improve teaching and raise achievement. The head of school continually inspires staff and students to achieve their very best.
- Effective leadership has led to better teaching, as shown by the good progress that students now typically make over time. Teachers and leaders make best use of links within the federation and beyond, including three teaching school alliances and the local education improvement partnership. The local authority has an accurate view about the strengths of the school and has made a good contribution towards the improvements made since the last inspection. Millgate staff are working in partnership to design and implement a preferred approach to assessment following the removal of National Curriculum levels.
- Leaders take the time to listen and respond to the views of students. The head of school credits student opinion as a key driver of school improvement over the last two years. The school council have contributed to decisions over the prefect system, the design of new school uniform and the appointment of staff.
- The senior leadership team is vigilant in checking and monitoring the quality of teaching in order to promote improvement. Leaders have an accurate knowledge of strengths and weaknesses throughout the school. They have taken effective action to address any underperformance in teaching through setting robust targets for teachers. Leaders hold teachers to account for the progress of their students, with pay increases closely related to the effectiveness of teaching.
- Leaders at all levels have been determined in their efforts to ensure that all students make good progress, and continually take steps to remedy any underachievement by students. Regular meetings of key staff enable the school to act quickly with extra guidance and support, for example to improve attendance.
- A recently appointed senior leader has undertaken a review of pupil premium spending to ensure that it is effective in raising the achievement of disadvantaged students. As a result, the school has improved the way in which it tracks the outcomes of the specific support it provides with this funding.
- The range of subjects on offer is good. There is a sensible balance between academic and work-related learning that meets the needs of all students. Leaders regularly review the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of the student population. Recent changes to the teaching of mathematics demonstrates the swift action leaders are prepared to take in order to ensure students access more in-depth learning of mathematical concepts.
- Students appreciate the wide programme of additional academic, cultural and sporting activities that are on offer after the end of the school day. These opportunities successfully promote attendance and student achievement.
- The school utilises alternative providers and off-site provision well to promote the engagement of students in areas of learning that are of most interest to them. Robust systems are in place to monitor students' attendance, progress and behaviour. The school has positive relationships with the alternative providers and staff from Millgate are either present with students or make regular visits.
- The pastoral care of students is a strength. The school is sensitive to each individual's needs when offering support and challenge to them. Students described to inspectors how much they appreciated the help given to them in lessons, alongside the information, advice and guidance they receive about post-school opportunities and future careers.
- Opportunities to broaden students' perspectives and to promote equal opportunities are fully utilised. This includes visits to places of interest, such as: Turkish cafes, the local Cenotaph and the Houses of Parliament. Such activities give students an excellent grounding for life in multi-cultural and multi-faith

modern Britain.

- The school promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. They learn to be caring and responsible young people through activities such as visits to local residential homes for older people and 'empathy group' visits to respite centres for the terminally ill.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has steadfastly supported the executive headteacher and head of school in their drive to improve the school rapidly. This has been most evident in their effective contribution to the reorganisation of staffing across the federation. The improved staffing structure and quality of staff now employed has been a pivotal factor in improving teaching and speeding up students' progress. The governing body meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding students and national minimum care standards are all met.
 - Governors visit the school to attend assemblies, undertake learning walks, observe leadership team meetings and scrutinise achievement data. The governing body now has a more precise focus on students' achievement due to better school self-evaluation and improvement planning.
 - Governors have accurately identified that they are not systematically checking on all aspects of the school's work so that they have all the information they need to drive improvements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. This is due to the positive values and attitudes that the dynamic senior leaders generate. Students generally conduct themselves well in lessons, during lunchtimes and break times, and while in the residential and alternative provisions.
- There is a close link between the length of time students have spent at Millgate and their improved attitudes towards all aspects of their learning. This was evident in the high levels of motivation displayed by Year 11 students who have been at Millgate for the previous four years. One student told inspectors, 'Before I came here I used to get angry all the time but now I can control it.'
- Students report that improved teaching has led to improved behaviour. One student stated that behaviour and teaching has improved 'massively' since the head of school started work at Millgate two years ago.
- Attendance has improved significantly over the last year due to the dedication and tenacity of school staff in following up any absence of students who attend Millgate or the alternative providers. As a result of students choosing to stay in the on-site residential provision their attendance improves markedly.
- Exclusions have significantly reduced over the last two years due to the improved quality of the school. Students want to be at the school; the provision caters for their needs, teaching is better and behaviour management is much improved. There is clear evidence that the school's effort to promote high standards has had a positive impact on student's improved behaviour over time.
- Students generally respond well to staff instructions and requests due to strong relationships built upon trust. Staff know students exceptionally well.
- Students have a good awareness of bullying but report that this rarely occurs at school. Students say that they have faith in the staff to deal with any issues regarding bullying if they occurred.
- Students present their work in books and files well, demonstrating that they take pride in their work.
- Staff are highly skilled in deploying techniques such as de-escalation and redirection. By utilising these skills highly effectively, physical intervention is a last resort and rarely required. This approach helps students move forward in developing skills that enable them to self-regulate their behaviour. When physical intervention is necessary, records are mainly comprehensive. Very occasionally gaps exist in the recording of the offer of medical advice made to students and the opportunity offered to talk to staff

afterwards. This absence of recorded detail means that it is not easy to monitor whether students have received the right advice and support post-restraint.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Students feel safe and stay safe through meticulous attention given to students' health and safety by staff on a day to day basis.
- Appropriate risk assessments and fire precautions are in place. All procedures for ensuring the school site is safe are thoughtfully considered and well implemented. Daily contact between Millgate staff and the alternative providers ensures any issues of student's attendance and safety are swiftly addressed.
- All students spoken to said that they had a trusted adult within the school to talk to should they have any concerns, including about safety. This was the same in both the day school and in the residential and alternative provisions.
- All national minimum care standards are met. A rigorous approach is taken to the safe administration of medication. E-safety and attending to any potential bullying is thorough and gives students increased protection, especially around risks associated with social media. Millgate has productive partnerships with appropriate agencies which promotes the safety of the students well.
- Clear procedures are followed for child protection. On occasion, recording does not match the rigour of day-to-day practices. For example, recording in relation to staff qualifications and recruitment checks.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching over time in most subjects is good. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to support their students' learning effectively. Most lessons are taught by subject specialists. Lessons are engaging, often practical and contain a focus on developing the students' language and communication skills.
- Teachers generally plan their lessons well and ensure that students can and do learn effectively. Students understand their work because adults use good questioning and ensure that each lesson follows on from the next. In all lessons, staff make sure that students know what they are learning and why.
- A significant improvement since the inspection in February 2013 is teachers' use of other adults who support learning. Well trained and highly appreciated for the work they do, these staff provide good support to students to promote learning and emotional and personal development.
- The teaching of reading is good and leads to students making good progress. Several reading initiatives at Millgate promote this aspect of learning well. One such initiative rewards the students when they are 'caught' by staff reading outside of lessons. One younger student reported that his reading had improved 'massively' since he joined the school in September. Staff encourage students to read widely and enjoy books; recently purchased electronic reading devices are successfully helping to promote this.
- Teachers make regular checks to ensure that they know exactly how well students are doing. They use their ongoing checks to change and modify their lessons to ensure that students make good progress. The introduction of 'student flight paths' has helped to increase the level of expectation for student progress.
- Work is regularly marked in all subjects. Occasionally teachers do not provide feedback that enables students to learn as rapidly as they might.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The achievement of students is now good because the quality of teaching has been rapidly improving. Leaders have tackled historic underperformance of staff. Improvements in teaching, behaviour management and leadership have allowed progress to accelerate sharply since the start of the academic

year.

- Evidence in school confirms that the progress of current students in key subjects is good despite published data not supporting this view. Students arrive at Millgate at various points throughout their secondary education, often having missed significant periods of learning prior to their arrival. Accurate assessments are made of their attainment when they start. Aspirational targets are set for their future achievement and regular checks made to keep them on track for success.
- The school offers a good range of external accreditations and qualifications. It does not enter students early for examinations.
- No distinct group of students are underperforming. Children looked after by the local authority and disadvantaged students achieve in line with their peers, as do minority ethnic students. The school is effective at using additional funding to close any gaps in students' learning.
- The school identifies the more-able students and learning activities are appropriately adapted to meet those student's needs. In the final year at Millgate, these students become part of the 'stretch and challenge' programme which speeds-up their progress further.
- The school prepares students well for the next stage of their education, employment or training. Leaders are very successful at ensuring that students' have access to meaningful opportunities after leaving the school. Staff provide support to students after they have left by having regular timetabled meetings with them and providing access to further training opportunities. This is a considerable strength of the school.
- Students who access the 'intervention hub' do not achieve as consistently well as other students. This is because they do not have as much input from subject specialist teachers.

Outcomes for residential pupils	are good
Quality of residential provision and care	is good
Residential pupils' safety	is adequate
Leadership and management of the residential provision	are good

- The seamless 24-hour curriculum enables students to thrive educationally, emotionally and socially. There is not a day that goes by where students do not have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities that strengthens their skills, interests, knowledge and enhances their physical well-being.
- Students grow in confidence and independence as a result of their opportunity to stay for either an extended day or overnight. Students make their own decisions to stay and in some cases this can be for up to four nights a week.
- Students using the residential provision are excellent ambassadors for the school, describing their experience at the flat as 'brilliant'. Students comment about liking the fact that the flat was busy straight after the school day and then they had 'time to chill' with friends later in the evening
- The quality of staff teamwork is exceptional. This means that every student is able to receive high quality care from dedicated and enthusiastic staff who always put them as their main priority. This is complemented by excellent inter-agency work which supports the well-being of students.
- The rapport between staff and students is second-to-none. This includes being full of warmth, respect and sincerity. This is further strengthened by the comments made by students that described the staff as 'caring', 'really nice', and 'great'.
- Care staff are supported to gain new skills through attending training. The deployment of staff is child-focused and gives students an excellent continuity of care from people they trust and respect. The qualifications of care staff have not been formally matched to the competences of a level three diploma in working with children and young people in order to confirm and record that care staff have the appropriate competencies.
- There are excellent lines of communication with parents to ensure they are fully involved in every step in their child's development. This includes regular home visits.
- Care staff make effective use of information gathered by teaching staff to set realistic learning targets that enable students to develop their learning further through using residential provision.
- All the care needs of students are recognised, including students' linguistic and cultural needs. In most cases, there is systematic checking on individual student's progress which is regularly scrutinised through individualised care planning. Occasionally there are gaps in the recording of details of immunisations, developmental tests and medical examinations. Physical intervention records do not always include details of the medical checks and opportunities to talk students have been offered afterwards.
- Residential students' safety is adequate. This is because, whilst policies and procedures cover most aspects of care and welfare, they do not include children going missing from care and undertaking searches of students' belongings though these things have never occurred. A register to capture admission and discharges is maintained to show when students choose to stay at the residential provision. Although informative, the register does not always include all key information.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
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>

Residential provision		
Grade	Judgement	Description
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

Unique reference number	120362
Social care unique reference number	SC006452
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	453614

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.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	51
Number of boarders on roll	10
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shaun Whittingham
Headteacher	Chris Bruce (Executive Head) Mark Oldman (Head of School)
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2013
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