

# Millgate School

Millgate School, 18 Scott Street, LEICESTER, LE2 6DW

## Inspection dates

03/02/2016 to 05/02/2016

## The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

**Outstanding** **1**

The quality of care and support

Outstanding 1

How well children and young people are protected

Outstanding 1

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Outstanding 1

## Summary of key findings

### The residential provision is outstanding because

#### The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- This school's residential provision positively affects children and young people's lives in many ways, particularly their emotional well-being, behaviour, safety and self-esteem.
- Children and young people make excellent progress in all areas of their development.
- The particularly strong emphasis on emotional well-being ensures that children and young people can develop empathy and form a positive self-view.
- Children and young people receive excellent care from highly committed, skilled and passionate staff. This helps to build their confidence and self-esteem.
- Children and young people take part in a range of stimulating activities that would not normally be available to them. They learn new skills, develop their talents and experience success. This supports them to be aspirational and ambitious.
- The safeguarding ethos is excellent. Staff are vigilant in ensuring the safety of young people. Children and young people are encouraged to take responsibility for their own safety where appropriate. They are able to take proportionate and carefully assessed risks so that their learning is optimised. This is particularly strong in ensuring that pupils can work towards independence.
- Children and young people, and their families, receive a very high level of support and say that this helps to keep their family together. The work in this area is so good that it is worthy of sharing with others.

- Managers lead the staff team very effectively. They are inspirational and highly creative.
- Managers and staff positively influence other professionals to make a difference to the children and young people's lives, including aspects outside of the school environment.

### **Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools**

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- ensure that sanctions and physical interventions are recorded in detail.

## Information about this inspection

This inspection was announced on the morning of the first day. The residential provision, which is on the same premises was inspected. Group and individual discussions took place with young people. In addition, staff at every level, leaders and managers, parents and governors were spoken to. There was no comments from parents on parent view but parents played an intrinsic part in the inspection by coming in to see the inspector and speaking on the telephone. The school's policies, and children and young people's records were scrutinised. The inspector shared a meal with children and young people and engaged in discussions with pupils during the early morning and evening, when boarders were in residence.

## Inspection team

Caroline Brailsford

Lead social care inspector

# **Full Report**

## **Information about this school**

Millgate School is a maintained residential special school run by Leicester City Council. It caters for 65 boys with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties aged between 11 and 16. The school has a residential facility which is currently operating for five nights a week, term time only, and can accommodate up to 10 students. There are also facilities within the residence for students to attend an extended day provision. The residential accommodation is situated on the first floor of the school. The school is in a residential area on the outskirts of the city.

## Inspection Judgements

**The overall experiences and progress of children and young people**

**Outstanding**

There are exceptionally positive relationships between boarding staff and pupils. Staff speak very highly of children and young people who soon learn to feel valued for their attributes, whatever their behaviour or background. This quickly improves their self-esteem. Comments from children and young people about the staff include, 'staff are wicked', and, 'they have helped me so much'. There is a strong ethos of trust and respect between staff and children and young people. Children and young people also learn to trust and respect each other. For some, this is extremely positive because they make healthy friendships for the first time. One parent said, 'they have done a tremendous job'. Another commented that, 'he loves it, he absolutely loves residence'.

The school has extremely robust arrangements for safeguarding children and young people. Children and young people quickly learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they soon learn how better to regulate their own behaviour so they are more accepted in their community. One parent said, 'they have made him calmer and kept him off the streets'. Particularly good working relationships with other agencies and parents ensure that the work in this area also impacts on children and young people when they are not in school.

Children and young people make extremely good progress at the school. Education outcomes are clearly improved for those children and young people who access the residence. The school gathers this information, and statistics are readily available to all staff, so that pupil progress can be celebrated and further improved.

The residential provision is very well organised and run for the benefit of children and young people. Children and young people feel very proud to be at this school. They take particular pride in the progress they make in developing improved social skills and better behaviour. Children and young people's comments include, 'I love it', and 'it's outstanding'. Children and young people were also proud that their school came second out of 600 schools in a recent 'school of the year' completion. The head teacher made sure that children and young people attended the event so that they were recognised for their achievements. This is a reflection of the inclusive ethos of this school.

**The quality of care and support**

**Outstanding**

Children and young people experience an extremely high quality of care at all times during their stay. Staff know them exceptionally well and meet their needs very effectively. Staff work hard to understand the reasons for more challenging behaviour and try to find the root cause of the problem. Children and young people's characteristics and personality are always cherished and well respected. Staff understand

the need to unpick how the child or young person feels about their own issues. They make sure that they do not feel guilty about their more difficult behaviour, and that their personality is celebrated regardless.

Emotional well-being is seen as extremely important. Through excellent pastoral planning, staff all understand how to support children and young people to grow in self-esteem. A lot of work has gone into emotional literacy. As a result, children and young people develop a depth of understanding of their own feelings and those of others. Children and young people have visited a 'street art' exhibition, have visited care homes, and have been shown how other people might feel in difficult circumstances, for example through illness and poverty. Children and young people have also been involved with homeless charities and have prepared food parcels for them. This has ensured that individual targets about empathy and emotional intelligence are well met.

Health needs are also well met. There is an ethos of exercise and healthy eating. The menu is extensive and the children and young people decide on their foods. Staff assist them and talk about the benefits of healthy eating to make sure that they make positive and informed choices. One young person said that the food is, 'on point'.

During their stay, children and young people experience a wide range of new activities. Children and young people say, 'it's fun and exciting'. Staff help them to identify what they enjoy and help them to explore their interests. There is an ethos of individuality and creativity from staff at every level. Staff inspire children and young people to get involved in activities that they will be able to enjoy in their future. For example, some young people have been involved in music, cookery and film making. This has helped them to recognise their talents. To showcase work, recent films made by young people have been shown at 'The Millgate Oscars' ceremony. A theatre was hired and awards were given for particular areas such as best special effects. During the inspection, children and young people were giving a presentation at another theatre about what they have learned through music.

There appears to be no end to the staff's creativity. They consider that no idea is impossible. Staff are working with young people on a researched list of '50 things to do before you are eleven and three quarters'. One item on this list is 'see a big fish'. During the inspection there was an impromptu trip see a whale that had been washed up on a beach. This gave children and young people a memorable experience. It also teaches them that they can 'seize the moment'.

The behavioural incentive scheme is highly effective. The children and young people start on silver award, work up to gold, then to prefect status. This is seen by children and young people to be positive. The students see that they can gain a lot from watching and learning from a prefect's behaviour. Where a child or young person is struggling to move through the scheme, there is always a plan so that they are clear about how they can do this. A parent commented that, 'he has learnt that he doesn't

have to be angry, he can talk and listen'. As a result, children and young people make exceptionally good progress with their behaviour. In addition, there are also armchairs in the middle of the hall and children and young people can earn the right to sit in these during assemblies. The children and young people were proud to tell the inspector about their positive experiences sitting in the chair. The improved behaviour impacts positively on the students' lives outside of the school. This is because they have better family relationships, are better accepted in their community, and are safer because their behaviour is no longer high risk. Young people are also more able to access their education successfully because of improved behaviour. Consequently, their attendance and attainment is higher. This is life changing for children and young people who have been excluded from school in the past.

Children and young people acquire new skills as a direct result of staying in residence. Age appropriate activities ensure that they are able to increase their independence skills in a safe environment. One parent reflected on their son's improved independence skills saying, 'I have nothing but praise for the school, school have done so much its miraculous'. Children and young people are as well prepared as they can be for their transition to adult services.

There are very strong working relationships with parents and carers who feel that support to them is excellent. There are several examples of extremely high levels of support at the child or young person's own home. As a result, the school helps to keep families together. Parents and carers reflected very positively about this work saying 'when you have difficulties in the family, you have somewhere to go', and, 'without Millgate things would have broken down'. The school is also instrumental in working with other professionals to secure any improvements needed in their wider life, so that opportunities for progress are maximised.

New admissions are only accepted if the child or young person wants to come to stay in residence. Their targets are made clear from the beginning and all children and young people who access residence really do enjoy it and want to be there. They say, 'it's fun', 'exiting', and, 'perfect'. Staff know that they can help children and young people to make excellent progress and actively persuade young people and parents to access the facility because they know that they can make a positive difference to their self-esteem.

## **How well children and young people are protected**

**Outstanding**

Safety is an absolute priority. Staff know the vulnerabilities of individuals and good planning reduces risk. Risk reduction is creative and staff make sure that they look at the full range of potential hazards. Staff speak to the child or young person about safety and encourage them to take responsibility for keeping safe. Because children and young people are completely involved, they understand about how they can be safer both in the school and in the community.

Children and young people report a strong sense of safety and say that there is no bullying at the school. They say that they feel safe because there are always enough staff on duty. Good use is made of specialist resources to educate children and young people on bullying, including cyber bullying and e-safety issues.

Staff support children and young people extremely well with particularly sensitive subjects like sexual feelings and emerging sexuality. Parents speak highly of work in this area. They say that their children learn about such issues well because they are always encouraged to discuss any problems or concerns with staff.

There have been no episodes of young people going missing since the last inspection. This is extremely significant given the needs of the children and young people and their previous history or risk taking behaviours. Young people say they really like coming to residence so it is unlikely that they would jeopardise their placement by putting themselves at risk. They know that what they learn in residence helps them to be safer.

Behaviour management is excellent. Patterns and trends of behavioural incidents are always well considered by managers. Each behavioural incident, including restraint, is analysed and staff are held accountable for their actions. They are quick to identify potential improvements to their practice. The head teacher is particularly good at debriefing children and young people, listening to their views, and identifying strategies to prevent future incidents. This helps children and young people to learn and be safer. Children and young people said that, 'they only hold you if they really have to' and that, 'they care about you 100%'.

Leaders, managers and governors make it their business to ensure that safeguarding matters are extremely well monitored. The head teacher is challenged on all matters of safety in the school by an effective governing body, making him accountable. Where there have been safeguarding incidents, these are responded to in a transparent manner, so that appropriate external agencies can investigate and make informed decisions.

Recruitment is well managed by staff who are appropriately trained in safe recruitment practices. Staff responsible work over and above local authority requirements. For example, they are looking at an improvement where all staff, including agency staff, are signed up to the disclosure and barring update scheme.

The school is a safe place for young people staff and visitors. There is a high regard for health and safety, the security of the building, and fire safety systems. Children and young people are able to readily recite what they should do in the event of a fire, ensuring their safe evacuation should a fire occur.



Leaders are extremely good at managing a residential school of this nature because they fully understand the needs of the children and young people, and genuinely want them to do well in their life. The head teacher is particularly creative and aspirational. He regularly goes the extra mile to help a child or young person. For example, taking them to football matches and transporting them to their next placement to ensure that the placement ending is positive. His thoughtful approach extends to every area of children and young people's lives. For example and he has been instrumental in ensuring that he has raised an awareness in the school about how difficult Christmas can be for some young people. He has also had an article published in a national newspaper raising the wider public's awareness of this issue.

Children and young people's views are always at the centre of the work in the school. There is a highly effective school council where new ideas are discussed. Children and young people are always listened to, and empowered to make improvements, giving them confidence in speaking out for themselves in the future.

Staff feel that they are effectively managed and that there is always a momentum of improvement. They say that the head teacher is, 'amazing', and, 'has transformed the school'. His enthusiasm inspires and motivates staff.

Records kept by the home reflect the high levels of support that children and young people receive. Documents such as the statement of boarding principles take every opportunity to use very positive language about the young people. For example, the document states that, 'we will work tirelessly to provide the best possible care for our treasured young people'. This positive ethos is fully reflected in practice.

There have been no complaints about the school since the last inspection. Parents, carers, and the children and young people all confirm that they know how to make a formal complaint. The fact that there are no complaints is testament to the very good relationships fostered by staff and managers. Issues can be ironed out quickly and easily.

Training is of a high quality. Children and young people at this setting have complex and changing needs so training is bespoke and very much focused around young people's specific needs. For example, the school has commissioned a company specialising in behaviour management to support practice.

All shortfalls from the last inspection have been addressed. Records are now kept of any medical assistance needed after a physical intervention, details of immunisations are now held, and the school register has been improved to contain all the information as required by the standards. In addition, there are procedures in place which staff

understand about missing young people and searches of belongings. The governing body now have clearer responsibilities for overseeing residence. These improvements demonstrate the schools capacity for continued improvement.

## What inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools: the inspection framework*.

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A school where the experiences and progress of children and young people consistently exceeds the standard of good and results in sustained progress and achievement. The outcomes achieved by children and young people are outstanding and the impact the boarding/residential provision has had in supporting this progress and achieving these outcomes is clearly evidenced.
Good	A school providing effective services which exceed minimum requirements. Children and young people are protected and cared for and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.
Requires improvement	A school where there are no serious or widespread failures that result in children and young people's welfare not being safeguarded or promoted. However, the overall outcomes, experiences and progress of children and young people are not yet good.
Inadequate	A school where there are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded or if their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120362
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC006452
<b>DfE registration number</b>	856/7215

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Residential Special School
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	54
<b>Gender of boarders</b>	Mixed
<b>Age range of boarders</b>	11 to 16
<b>Head Teacher</b>	Mr Mark Oldman
<b>Executive Head Teacher</b>	Mr Chris Bruce
<b>Date of previous boarding inspection</b>	24/02/2015
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 2704922
<b>Email address</b>	cbruce@millgate.leicester.sch.uk

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