



Education
Scotland
Foghlam Alba



care
inspectorate



**Stanmore House School
Lanark
30 April 2013**

Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate (Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland) inspect schools in order to let parents¹ and young people know whether their school² provides a good education. Inspectors also discuss with staff how they can improve the quality of care and education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the senior managers and staff about the strengths of the school, what needs to improve, and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan what we are going to look at. During the inspection, we go into classes, the residences and join other activities in which young people are involved. We also gather the views of young people, parents, social workers, staff and members of the local community. We find their views very helpful and use them together with the other information we have collected to arrive at our view of the quality of care and education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of care and education in the school. We describe how well young people are doing, how good the service is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and young people work together and how they go about improving the school. We also comment on how well the school works with other groups in the community, including services which support young people. Finally, we focus on how well the school is led and how staff help the school achieve its aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the school, please visit www.educationscotland.gov.uk. Here you can find analyses of questionnaire returns from young people, parents and staff, and details about young people's examination performance. We will not provide questionnaire analyses where the numbers of returns are so small that they could identify individuals.

¹ Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers, residential care staff and carers who are relatives or friends.

² The term 'school' includes the nursery class or classes where appropriate.

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1. The school

Stanmore House School is a grant-aided, residential special school owned and managed by Capability Scotland. It provides care and education for children and young people aged from five to 18 years with complex additional support needs arising from learning, physical, communication and health care needs. At the time of the inspection the school roll was 19, seven of whom were resident. Eleven pupils had coordinated support plans. Given children and young people's complex and multiple needs, attendance at school was high.

2. Particular strengths of the school

- Active involvement of children and young people in their education and care.
- The quality of teamwork among residential care staff, the allied health team, teaching and support staff to meeting the complex needs of all children and young people.
- The development and adaptation of the curriculum to meet the complex learning needs of children and young people.
- Positive and trusting relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school.
- The leadership team's ability to bring about significant improvement to the school.

3. How well do children and young people learn and achieve?

Children and young people have positive relationships with teaching, residential, allied health professionals and support staff. They respond very well to the high expectations of all staff to improve their learning and development. Children and young people enjoy and are motivated by the wide range of learning experiences in class, in the residences, in the local community and in a range of outings. They particularly like the familiar songs at the beginning of each day and the variety of sensory experiences provided by staff. Highly skilled classroom assistants and classroom care assistants provide strong support to ensure that children and young people are actively involved in lessons for most of the time. Staff are skilled at interpreting children's gestures and eye movements. A very good feature of learning is the way children and young people make choices, express their preferences and contribute in lessons. Teachers could further involve children and young people in their learning by more consistently sharing the learning aims of lessons with them.

Children and young people achieve well in school and in the residences. They take part in numerous activities which have broadened their experiences and these achievements have been recognised and recorded by the school. Achievements include improving physical movements and posture; sustaining activities for extended periods of time; responding well to new outdoor experiences, such as in a visit to a farm; and participating well in class, school and community activities, such as singing with a band and taking part in the local Lanimer celebrations. Children's and young people's achievements are celebrated in class, in the residences and at assemblies. These achievements are also shared with parents and carers in the regular bulletins and at annual reviews. Achievements are accredited through the Award Scheme Development Accreditation Network (ASDAN). Young people have achieved success in the New Horizons, Transition Challenge and Towards Independence ASDAN programmes.

Children and young people are making very good progress in all aspects of their development and learning. Many have gained Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) awards. A number of the young people in the post-16 unit have gained Supported Units at Access 1 level. The number of awards gained by each young person ranges from four to eight and includes literacy, numeracy, personal development and life skills. Over the past three years, there has been an increase in the total number of SQA awards. Learners achieve relevant and appropriate targets in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. At all stages, children and young people are making very good progress from their prior levels of attainment in literacy. Across the school, children and young people are making very good progress and developing their skills and understanding of numeracy concepts. They are developing an understanding of size, quantity, number, money and time. A few can count objects and carry out addition and subtraction with small numbers. Their knowledge of shape is not as well developed. Children and young people are making very good progress with all aspects of their health and wellbeing taking full account of their difficulties.

4. How well does the school support children and young people to develop and learn?

Stanmore House School is extremely effective in supporting children and young people to develop and learn. The well-planned curriculum is designed to help children become independent, have positive health and wellbeing and develop communication skills. Across the school, staff have made very good progress in implementing Curriculum for Excellence. They have started to track children's and young people's progress through the curriculum, but the approach adopted needs further development. Staff provide challenging and enjoyable activities to help children and young people to learn. At all stages, staff have identified a range of enjoyable and relevant topics, such as 'Scotland', to help children make links across their learning. The curriculum for the senior phase has recently been improved to provide young people with more challenging and relevant opportunities to build up skills for learning, life and work. The school works very well with a range of partners to support young people in school and help them progress beyond school.

The school has excellent systems for identifying children's and young people's strengths and the difficulties they face. Teaching staff work very effectively with care staff and the allied health team to plan how best to support children and their families. In all classes, teachers take very good account of individual learning needs and they provide very good individual attention. They also make very effective use of a range of up-to-date technology to facilitate communication and learning. For example, learners respond very well to the introduction of eye gaze technology to practise numeracy skills. Children benefit greatly from many opportunities to develop their personal interests through activities like horse-riding and outings into the community, including in the evenings and at weekends with care staff. Classroom assistants and care staff provide very good support for individual children across the school day and beyond. Parents think very highly of the school and work very closely in partnership with staff.

5. How well does the school improve the quality of its work?

The school has an impressive record of improving the care and education it provides for its children and young people. The executive headteacher has outstanding leadership skills. Along with the head of school, she has harnessed the strengths of staff to bring about significant improvements over the past three years. To maintain continuous improvement, the school has a very good range of systematic procedures to ensure the quality of its work. The headteacher observes lessons and provides accurate and helpful feedback to staff. The progress and achievements of children and young people are tracked. The views of learners, parents and all staff are sought on the quality of provision. The views of the school's placing authorities are not yet sampled systematically. Accurate and authoritative reports are prepared on the quality of education and care. These are used to good effect when planning improvements. Good practice is shared by teachers and classroom assistants observing their colleagues in lessons. Multi-disciplinary teams work very well to develop the curriculum and new programmes of work. Staff receive very good opportunities to develop further their professional knowledge and skills.

6. What happens next?

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the school's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further evaluative visits in connection with this inspection. During the inspection, we identified aspects of innovative practice which we would like to explore further in order to share the practice with others. As a result we will work with the school and Board of Governors in order to record and share more widely the innovative practice. We will ask the school, in discussion with the Board of Governors, to let parents know the outcome of the innovative practice visits.

We have agreed the following area for improvement with the school and Board of Governors.

- Develop further the approach to tracking children and young people's progress through the curriculum.

Quality indicators help schools, boards of governors and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the school. You can find these quality indicators in the HMIE publication *How good is our school?*.

Here are the evaluations for Stanmore House School.

Improvements in performance	very good
Learners' experiences	very good
Meeting learning needs	excellent

We also evaluated the following aspects of the work of the school.

The curriculum	very good
Improvement through self-evaluation	very good

HM Inspector:
Terry Carr
30 April 2013

Care Inspector:
Lynne Thow

When we write reports, we use the following word scale so that our readers can see clearly what our judgments mean.

excellent	means	outstanding, sector leading
very good	means	major strengths
good	means	important strengths with some areas for improvement
satisfactory	means	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	means	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	means	major weaknesses

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/StammoreHouseSchoolSouthLanarkshire.asp>

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