

Summarised inspection findings

Maben House

SEED No: 5980445

26 June 2018

Key contextual information

Maben House is a small independent service, which offers residential care and education for primary-aged children who have additional support needs such as social, emotional and behavioural needs or autism. Children attending the school have significant gaps in their learning prior to starting at Maben House. At the time of the inspection there were four children in the school, with one learner in transition to the secondary part of the service at Closeburn.

1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement

good

This indicator defines rigorous self-evaluation as a responsibility of all stakeholders. It highlights the importance of partnership approaches to self-evaluation and continuous improvement. It emphasises the need for strong leadership and robust analysis of a range of intelligence and data as essential features of effective continuous self-improvement. A key factor in this indicator is demonstrating the impact of self-evaluation in relation to outcomes for all learners. Their active participation in self-evaluation is therefore essential. The themes are:

- Collaborative approaches to self-evaluation
- Analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data
- Ensuring impact on learners' successes and achievements

- A key strength of the school, ably led by the headteacher, is its outward and forward looking approaches to school improvement. The headteacher shares good practice with other schools, seeks out opportunities to learn from others and encourages all staff to be reflective about their work. She is part of a leadership network which is improving the school's ability to look forwards, learn from others, and impact positively on children's attainment and achievement. The process of accreditation with the National Autistic Society is enhancing the school's self-evaluation approaches. The School Advisory Group has been effective in providing the senior leadership team with appropriate support and challenge, which is impacting positively on whole school developments. The inclusion of a parent on this group will enhance its role and build on existing parental engagement.
- All staff understand the importance of self-evaluation for self-improvement and engage effectively in the process. They are involved both formally and informally in evaluating and reflecting on practice leading to improvements in outcomes for children. As part of the school's quality assurance programme, regular observation of learning by the leadership team and effective use of professional learning opportunities is supporting continuous improvement. As a result, the school has introduced a number of new learning and teaching approaches, such as the use of effective digital technology to support the teaching of literacy. They are also developing a nurture base and providing training for staff to support the delivery of this approach. The school is also introducing play to enhance children's learning experiences. For example, dressing up and role-play activities and sensory activities such as playing with sand, are supporting children to engage in their learning and make good progress.
- Parents are encouraged through a wide range of appropriate methods, such as newsletters, regular emails, parent nights and children's reviews, to contribute to the school's self-evaluation. Questionnaires are also used to collate views. Staff also communicate informally on a regular basis with a range of partners. The school is aware of the need to

involve partners more systematically in self-evaluation as recommended by national guidance.

- Pupil participation is a strong feature of self-evaluation. The pupil council is effective in contributing to improvements within the school. For example by sharing their ideas to improve the outdoor learning space, such as the introduction of a small pond. All children are also supported to identify their own learning targets and to evaluate their success as learners.
- Structured opportunities for all staff to review the school improvement plan (SIP) are ensuring that the school focuses on key areas for development in a systematic fashion. The use of How Good Is Our School? (4th edition) is providing a formal framework to structure self-evaluation and identify next steps for improvement.
- Daily monitoring of children's levels of participation, attendance and behaviour is enabling staff to be more responsive to the needs of individual learners. The principal teacher, with support from the headteacher, has established a more rigorous approach to tracking and monitoring children's progress in learning. She has developed a useful electronic tracking system to support improved monitoring of children's progress. The national benchmarks together with Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes are providing more robust evidence of how children are progressing. Moderation of standards has been a key area for improvement. Commendably this has been progressed by looking at practice in local mainstream schools. The school is aware of the need to streamline their tracking and monitoring systems to ensure a clearer picture of attainment and achievement over time.

2.1: Safeguarding

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. At the time of the inspection, there were no identified areas for development.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- Attainment in literacy and numeracy
- Attainment over time
- Overall quality of learners' achievement
- Equity for all learners

Attainment over time

- Taking into account the context of the school, all children are making good progress from prior levels of attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- Using evidence gathered from a variety of evaluative activities, HM Inspectors are confident that the data provided by the school accurately illustrates that children are making good progress. The focus on monitoring and tracking in the past two years has led to improvements in how children's progress is tracked. The principal teacher is providing strong leadership in developing effective moderation activities both internally and with other local primary schools. As a result, teachers have increased their confidence in making professional judgements about children's progress. They are starting to use benchmarks effectively to inform their judgements.
- All staff have a very good understanding of individual children's learning needs. Teachers' plans include detailed differentiation and useful strategies to meet individual learners' needs. Progress is tracked closely in these plans as well as in a variety of other ways, including monitoring and tracking files and records of learning conversations. An electronic spreadsheet provides a useful overview of children's attainment over time. Children's attendance, engagement and behaviour is also tracked separately and almost all show significant improvements from their previous school placements. We have asked the school to review their different methods of tracking progress in line with national guidance to reduce bureaucracy.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, most children are making very good progress from their prior levels of attainment in listening and talking, and reading, and good progress in writing.

Listening and talking

- At the early level, children are beginning to listen well and are learning to respect the views of others. Older children are able to take turns, answer their teacher's questions and interact socially. The nurturing approach across the school is helping children to reflect and talk about their learning and to apply their listening skills across the curriculum. Older children are encouraged to make presentations to an audience and are beginning to gain confidence in public speaking. For example, by making presentations to parents and staff about what they have learned and enjoyed at school.

Reading

- Given children's prior interrupted learning experiences, they are making very good progress in their reading. Younger children are learning letter names, how to blend to make three

letter words and extending their sight vocabulary well. A few children are able to blend four letter words. Greater fluency in reading will help to improve comprehension and the use of alliteration, syllable segmentation and phoneme deletion activities will improve decoding further. Across the school, children are encouraged to read different genre and to choose what they want to read. Older children are practising their reading skills by reading longer texts, from different genre, and media such as texts presented electronically. They are also developing their skills of analysis and evaluation in reading, as well as reading to obtain a variety of information for different purposes. Almost all children can answer literal questions about a text, and a few can answer complex inferential questions.

Writing

- Younger children are learning to form letters, to copy common words and write their name. The majority of younger children can spell consonant-vowel-consonant words, write short sentences from dictation and use appropriate punctuation such as capital letters and full stops. Older children are increasingly able to produce their own texts and are beginning to write for different purposes. Their understanding and use of grammar such as nouns, adjectives and verbs is improving. The school is aware of the need to encourage children to write more extended pieces of text.

Attainment in numeracy and mathematics

- All children are making good progress from their prior levels of attainment in numeracy and mathematics, particularly in number, money and measure. Staff make very good use of digital technology and active learning strategies to engage the children and support them effectively to apply numeracy skills to the real world.

Number, money and measure

- Children working within early level are developing their confidence in recognising number names and numerals and can use a number line to perform simple addition and subtraction. They can identify coins up to the value of £2 and enjoy role plays in the shop. Using an analogue and digital clock, they are able to recognise o'clock and half past the hour. Older children are able to use a range of strategies to solve addition and subtraction problems with up to at least three digit whole numbers. A few are developing their understanding of fractions and decimals and can use correct notation. They can make reasonable estimations of length, weight, area and capacity and can calculate the perimeter of shapes.

Shape, position and movement

- Younger children are able to compare and describe lengths of common objects. They can recognise basic 2D shapes and can use the language of position and direction. Older children can illustrate lines of symmetry and use a protractor to draw different acute and obtuse angles. They are able to follow directions using compass points and identify coordinates on a grid. A few can recognise that a radius is half of a diameter.

Information Handling

- Overall, evidence for this organiser is less strong due to the main focus on developing children's basic number work. In early level, children are able to apply their counting skills to collect and organise objects. Older children are learning to sort and interpret data using a Venn diagram and pictogram, and can create a block graph. As children continue to develop their confidence, staff should give a greater focus to developing their understanding of information handling.

Overall quality of learners' achievement

- The school provides a range of useful opportunities for achievement which is shared and celebrated in a variety of ways, including children making presentations at end of year celebrations. Children raise money for Children in Need and Red Nose Day and bring in food for the Harvest Festival, which they donate to the local food bank. This is helping to develop children's confidence, personal and social skills and their understanding of citizenship. School council meetings provide children with good opportunities to develop their sense of responsibility. Using the 'You said, We did' approach supports children to understand that their voice is being heard and is making a genuine difference.
- Achievements, including activities outwith school, are tracked and accredited where possible. The school should now help children to understand the important skills for learning, life and work, which they are developing as a result of their participation in achievement activities.

Equity for all learners

- Staff have a very good understanding of the individual needs of children and of the disadvantages which they face. They know that all children have significant gaps in their learning when they arrive at Maben House and have effective systems in place to promote equity. Improving literacy and numeracy is a key feature of the school's work. Staff also recognise the central importance of improving learners' engagement and wellbeing to address these gaps. As a result all children make significant progress, particularly in their personal and social development and engagement in learning. The school provides very effective support for children during transitions.

2.4 Personalised Support: theme 2 Targeted Support

- Children's needs are assessed well and appropriate tasks, activities and resources identified to meet their needs. A range of assessment information is available to help plan learning effectively. Tracking and monitoring of learning experiences and outcomes and 'I can' success criteria is helping to inform children's next steps in learning. Through the use of learning conversations, children write their own targets and evaluate their performance. This is leading to a greater understanding of what they are learning and how well they are achieving.
- Across the school, there is an appropriate balance between meeting children's social and emotional needs and developing their formal learning across the curriculum. This is achieved through the use of proportionate and timely support. Staff know children very well and are agile and flexible in responding to children's needs. They take very good account of children's specific needs and have a very good understanding of, for example the impact of communication difficulties such as autism spectrum disorder on learning. They are adept at building on children's responses to learning tasks and activities and changing their approach when necessary. The effective use of digital technology is improving children's engagement in learning and meeting needs better. Teaching assistants provide invaluable support to children and work well with teachers to plan and deliver learning.
- Staff are well informed about the legislative requirements for meeting children's needs and guidance for Getting it Right for Every Child. Individualised educational support plans (IEPs) are used well to identify learning targets across the curriculum, and in the areas of self-help and social and emotional development. Children who require a Child's Plan have them regularly reviewed, with appropriate multi-agency, parental and children's involvement. The wellbeing indicators are used well to structure planning. Almost all children successfully achieve their learning targets identified in IEPs and their Child's Plan.
- Parents feel that they have very good opportunities to comment on their children's learning through regular email communication, newsletters, parent nights, and formal reviews of IEPs and care plans.
- Partners are kept well informed about children's needs and are effectively included in planning next steps for children. Very positive relationships with a range of partners such as the third sector, educational psychology, and social work are impacting positively on both targeted and universal support.
- Children are very well supported during transitions. They are helped to form positive relationships with staff and peers in receiving schools. Key information about children's learning and progress is shared appropriately with staff. This ensures that teachers can plan learning, which takes account of children's needs and personal interests from the outset.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion: theme 1 Wellbeing

- All staff have a very good knowledge of each individual child and fully understand the central importance of wellbeing to improving attainment and achievement. They are adaptable and flexible, and highly committed to working in partnership with others to create a nurturing environment, which supports all children to achieve very good health and wellbeing outcomes. There is a strong commitment to creating positive relationships, based on unconditional positive regard for children. This helps children to feel safe, included and respected which helps them to re-engage in learning. As a result, all children say they enjoy learning at Maben House, their attendance is very good and there are no exclusions.
- The school has a good range of planned opportunities for children to learn about age-appropriate aspects of their health. Younger children have regular emotional check-ins throughout the school day. This is helping them to regulate their emotions and manage behaviour better. Professional development in the teaching of sexual health and relationships is building staff capacity to support children's age-appropriate learning in this area. The school works in partnership with the NSPCC in the delivery of a 'Stay Safe' course, aimed at supporting children with additional support needs. This supports children to develop important life skills and to make safe and healthy choices in their relationships with others.
- As well as physical education classes, the Let's Move programme, developed in conjunction with occupational therapists, animal yoga and Let's Dance are supporting children to be active. Outdoor learning has been a focus for the school in the past year, in partnership with Crawick Multiverse. This provides valuable opportunities for children to engage in team building exercises and personal challenges, which develop their confidence and resilience. As planned, the school should build on this by further developing the extensive school grounds to provide more opportunities for children to learn outdoors.
- Ensuring children are active participants in discussions and decisions is a strong feature of the school's work. Children are treated with dignity and respect and their views are listened to and acted upon. This helps children to develop self-confidence and to have respect for themselves, for others and for the community. The school should consider linking this aspect of their work to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91% – 99%
Most	75% – 90%
Majority	50% – 74%
Minority/Less than half	15 – 49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.

Education Scotland

Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston EH54 6GA

T +44 (0)131 244 4330
E enquiries@educationscotland.gsi.gov.uk

www.education.gov.scot

© Crown Copyright, 2018

You may re-use this information (excluding images and logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence providing that it is reproduced accurately and not in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Education Scotland copyright and the document title specified.

To view this licence, visit <http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence> or e-mail: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.