

OptionsAutism

STATEMENT

of

PURPOSE

A Guide to Residential Care and Education

Options Maben



for
Parents/Carers and Professionals

2025

Welcome

We believe every child is an individual and that every child is deserving of the opportunity to thrive in an environment that is respectful of their needs and their challenges.

Welcome to Options Maben

At Maben House we care for children and young people with a range of needs, many of whom are care-experienced. In beautiful rural settings we offer small, therapeutic groups in the homes and schools. Our staff are trained in trauma informed practice and are experienced in best practice for supporting young people with autism and a range of additional support needs.

We provide a nurturing and therapeutic environment where all young people are encouraged and supported to feel safe, secure and thus settled to learn, grow and develop. Our ethos is underpinned by trauma informed practice.

We can support children and young people from age 5 to 21 and offer both 39- and 52-week placements. The education and care teams offer an integrated service, with our care team providing support in both the home and school settings, which promotes strong relationships between the staff teams and consistency of support.

Our team receive robust ongoing training to ensure we are up-to-date with the latest in best practice.

Our vision is to create a happy, safe, nurturing environment, which supports children to become settled to learn and to develop to their full potential.

If you would like to hear more about our schools, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Grace Little - Head of Care

"I have worked across numerous roles here for over 15 years. I love my role and work within a team of dedicated staff at Maben House where we all strive to deliver outstanding support and care for all our young people."

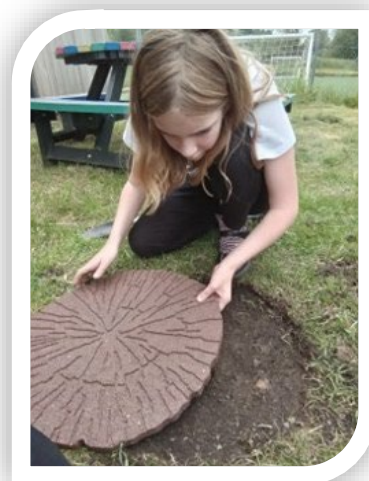
Nicola McDonald - Head of Education

"It is my privilege to work with our young people and the teams around them. I am passionate about supporting our young learners to achieve their fullest potential and to build the foundations of better outcomes for each of them."

Clinical Team at Options Maben

At Holistic Childcare & Education, we operate a robust, networked clinical model. Our on-site Educational Psychologist is complemented by our large central clinical team—Occupational Therapy (OT), Speech & Language Therapy (SALT) and Clinical Psychology—who provide consultation, advice and assessment. We work closely with local NHS partners, and pupils are added to the Looked After Children (LAC) health register on admission for regular health reviews. The LAC team also supports onward referrals (e.g., Neurodevelopmental Assessment Services, NDAS). Our practice is consistently person-centred and trauma-informed.

A range of multi-disciplinary assessments may take place once the individual transitions into our services, allowing us to develop clinical plans, contribute to positive behaviour support plans, create communication profiles, 'sensory world' documents and so on. Our recommendations can also include plans for adapting the environments in which the individual spends their day with the education and care teams.



The Scottish Promise



The Scottish Promise is a commitment to the young people of Scotland who are in care, a commitment to ensure they feel loved, safe and respected. We uphold the principles outlined in The Promise, ensuring that every child receives nurturing, respectful, and responsive care. The most recent update of The Promise emphasises the importance of listening to children's voices, providing stability, and ensuring that all practices are rooted in kindness and compassion, which aligns perfectly with our holistic approach.

Maben House



Maben House is purpose-built with a separate specialist primary and early secondary education facility adjacent to the main house which offers an individually tailored full time programme. Maben House Care Home is registered for up to ten young people aged 5 to 16 on admission. Young people at Maben House enjoy ensuite rooms with comfortable and well-furnished common areas. The location of the home allows for our young people to have plenty of outdoor space and experience the pleasure of a walk down the lane to see sheep, cows and alpacas.



Set in an idyllic location on the outskirts of Lochmaben, Maben House offers an excellent homely environment for a young person to feel safe and cared for.

Our Young People Can Expect

To have a key-worker who will work with the whole team to oversee a responsive and reflective care plan designed to ensure they are supported effectively in all aspects of their life

Support with relationships in their peer group involving the use of a range of resources such as packs from Barnardo's, the NSPCC and RSHP programmes

Support to engage in local activities thus promoting social interactions with peer groups and encouraging self-identified hobbies

To be empowered to be responsible and make informed decisions through person-centred practices. Our children and young people are involved in creating their own Daily Care Plans with identified targets around the SHANARRI Indicators (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible) and Care Standards focusing on SMART targets



Safeguarding



Safeguarding and child protection is our highest priority and at the forefront of everything we do at Maben. A proactive, comprehensive, approach across education and care is in place to ensure safeguarding and child protection are embedded in all decisions, planning, policy and day-to-day operations and activities.

Our practice is underpinned by the core requirements in the [National Guidance for Child Protection \(2021\)](#), [Getting it Right for Every Child \(GIRFEC\)](#) and the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#) and the [UNCRC \(Incorporation\) \(Scotland\) Bill](#).

We are committed to providing the highest standards in relation to the safeguarding of the children and young people entrusted to our care.

All Outcomes First Group employees working directly or indirectly with children must ensure that:

- Children and young people feel safe and that they are listened to
- They create an environment and culture in which children and young people feel valued
- The best interests of the child are always considered and acted upon
- Safer recruitment procedures are rigorously followed (please refer to the Outcomes First Group Safer Recruitment Policy for further details)
- They understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping children and young people safe through ongoing learning, development and supervision
- They are vigilant in monitoring possible signs of abuse including for those children and young people who have complex learning difficulties or specific communication needs, who may be particularly vulnerable
- They maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here'
- They follow the appropriate procedures that are in place for sharing safeguarding concerns and that these are shared with relevant professionals in a timely manner
- They understand and implement local safeguarding procedures as set out in local authority arrangements
- Children and young people have opportunity to learn about appropriate relationships with adults and recognise unacceptable behaviour by adults
- They are aware that children can abuse other children (i.e., child-on-child abuse)
- There is a zero-tolerance approach to harassment, violence, abuse, inappropriate behaviour and bullying of any kind are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

Admissions

We're more than happy to consider admission requests directly from parents and carers. Options Autism and the wider Outcomes First Group have a range of schools and services, we can support you in identifying the most appropriate provision for your child.

If you prefer, or would like to learn more about, a specific service we would like to hear from you.

When you get in touch we will start with a discussion with one of our Senior Leadership Team. During this call we will describe our service and learn more about your child's needs.

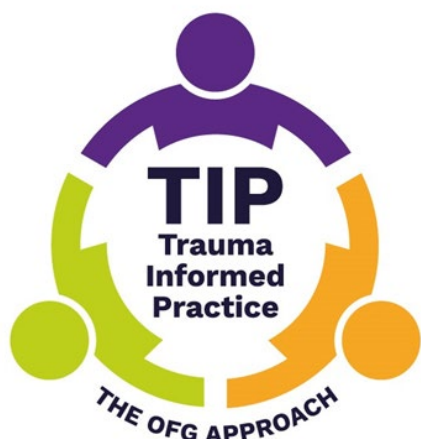
If we feel we may be an appropriate provision for your child, we will invite you to visit. This will allow you to experience the school environment, meet some of our children, young people and staff. If we are not a suitable provision, we will provide support through signposting to alternative services which are more appropriate for the additional support needs of your child.

Following your visit, if you feel that we are the right school for your child we will provide you with a next steps pack. Contained in the pack is information which details the process for Parental Placement Requests, links to the advice centre, Enquire, who can detail your child's rights including information about how to ask for support. Information about several advocacy groups who can offer you support. We will also signpost to legal support, directing you to specialist in Child Education and Disability Legislation.

The school's multi-disciplinary team will be actively involved in the referral and admissions process. They will pull together all the assessment information which will be used by staff upon a young person's arrival and subsequent care plan and individual education plan.

Families and carers are invited and welcome to visit the service at any point throughout the referral process.

Supporting Behaviour



Many of our young people come to us having experienced trauma, attachment difficulties, low self-esteem and they struggle with separation and loss. We know that these young people need a nurturing and therapeutic environment to ensure they feel safe and cared for.

All our staff are trained in Trauma informed practice, good practice for supporting children and young people with ASD and other needs. Under this approach we ensure our children and young people have fair and consistent boundaries and routines and where they struggle we use a PACE model to support them. We have an unconditional positive regard for all our young people and understand that we must look at their behaviour through a trauma informed lens.

Our approach in promoting positive relationships and positive choices in behaviour is about being positive and having an awareness of each young person's own triggers and most appropriate strategies to support.

Our staff are trained in the use of CPI as a means of verbal intervention and physical intervention if necessary. We aim to reduce and eliminate the need to use physical intervention wherever possible, it is always only a last resort.

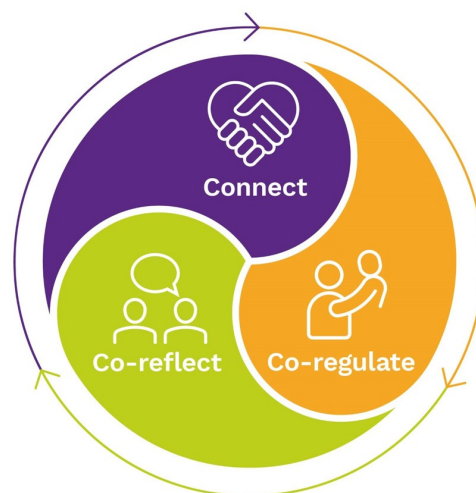
All our young people have their own plan and risk assessment to ensure the best support and clear guidelines in managing any distressed behaviour.

We will work closely with the local authorities and families to ensure they are included in all aspects of their child's placement with us, and we hope they feel their views are valued and listened to.

Therapeutic Support

Our clinical team works collaboratively to support both the staff and the young people. Together, they engage with our children and young people, observing and building meaningful relationships. The team provides one-to-one therapy when appropriate and collaborates through reflective practice to ensure that we deliver the highest quality of support at all times.

We have training from the Crisis Prevention institute that allows us to support young people in their moments of crisis and dysregulation. This allows us to hold a young person safely if necessary. This would always be a last resort after all other de-escalation strategies have been tried. It is a strategy that will be employed only to keep everyone safe.



Education

The curriculum aims to provide children with rich experiences which will meet their complex additional support needs and comply fully with the expectations of Curriculum for Excellence, aligned with the requirements of GIRFEC (now at the core of the Children and Young People's Act).

Maben House is a through school which can accommodate children from upper primary to lower secondary. We work with the curriculum for Excellence and aim to cover all aspects of the broad general education. Maben house is located in a beautiful rural setting, it is a wonderful location for learning as well as exploring the outdoors.

To achieve the incremental progress defined in Building the Curriculum 3, the children and young people attending will be offered a range of experiences which will provide them with personalised, group and whole class opportunities for new learning, consolidation and challenge. At the core will be the children's wellbeing, literacy and numeracy and the collegiate commitment of all staff across the organisation to foster that learning. Children will have a clear voice in determining their learning journeys. The experiences will be tailored to the needs of the children and young people and will reflect the principles of curriculum design in Curriculum for Excellence.



Health

Maben House works closely with social workers, relevant health professionals and families to make sure we have an accurate picture of the health needs of the young people in our care.

Within Dumfries and Galloway, we work closely with the LAC Health Team and will refer each young person on admission to their service. They will benefit from a full Health Assessment and be offered a treatment plan which the team around the child will assist with

Young people will be registered with a local GP, Dentist and Optician and will have access to a psychotherapist and OT and SALT if needed.

Young people will be supported to

- Have a healthy, balanced diet.
- Take part in regular exercise.
- Attend all health appointments.
- Have access to sexual health information when appropriate.

We have beautiful grounds where we can enjoy outdoor activities and exercises. We have a multigym in the house to engage young people in exercising, all our young people have access to local leisure facilities and lots of equipment to support activity games and activities.

Medication

We adhere to the Outcomes First Group policy for the management of medication, which sets out arrangements for storing, dispensing and recording medication and has been created in line with relevant national legislation. Please ask for more information.

Key Team

On admission each young person will be allocated a Key-worker, Co-worker and a Key Teacher. These roles involve taking lead responsibility for general parental tasks such as ensuring that health matters are satisfactorily dealt with, suitable clothing is purchased, and contact is maintained with important people. The key-worker will also have primary responsibility for assisting young people to maintain cultural and social networks.

Individual work may also include counselling, life story work, special interest activities and projects, communication skills training and risk assessments. Individual work can offer valuable opportunities for young people to achieve and should, in turn promote self-esteem and confidence.

Meet the Team



Hi, I am **Grace Little, Head of Care**. I have worked across numerous roles here for over 15 years. Through continuous workplace training and stepping outside comfort zone on occasion I was offered the role of Registered Manager in 2018, the rest so to speak is history. I love the role and work within a team of dedicated staff at Maben where we all strive to deliver outstanding support and care to all our young people. I look forward to sharing our journey in the future with you.

Hi, I am **Nicola McDonald, Head Teacher**. It is my privilege to work with the young people and the whole team here, I am passionate about supporting our young learners to achieve their fullest potential and to build the foundations of better outcomes for each of them. I believe the key to achieve this goal is to place relationships at the centre of everything we do. I am committed to maintaining positive, effective relationships with the entire school community, from pupils to parents, carers and education professionals – relationships which are key to ensuring our pupils receive the very best education and go on to lead happy, fulfilling lives.



Quality Assurance

Outcomes First Group provides an independent visitor to each home, they visit once a month working on a particular theme, (while ensuring every visit that children and young people are appropriately safeguarded) they will appraise the work of the home, speak to the young people and outside professionals where appropriate. They compile reports of their visits every month.

Maben is inspected regularly by the Care Inspectorate and the reports are available online. Here are some comments from a recent inspection.

We are 'VERY GOOD' in supporting children and young people's rights and wellbeing (Jan 2023)

Staff had succeeded in establishing positive relationships with the young people.

Young people were fully supported in successfully engaging in activities of interest to them.

Young people were succeeding in the education arrangements for them.

The staff team had a very good understanding of the young people's needs.

'The team at Maben House have a great insight into my young person's needs and they collaborate with professionals to ensure they are meeting all of their needs.

The core of their interventions are therapeutic and trauma-informed.

My young person is progressing well... and is being supported with their emotional literacy.

We are delighted at the standard of care being provided'

Argyll & Bute Local Authority 2024

What do our young people say

Some comments from our young people

"I get lots of one-to-one support, it is a more nurturing environment than other places"

Policies and Additional Information

Outcomes First Group owns and operates many different services and has a set of common policies and procedures which apply to all settings. Copies of most of policies are freely available on our website or can be supplied on request.

Proprietor

Maben House

Maben House School is operated by Options Autism and is owned by Acorn Care and Education Ltd, a subsidiary company of Outcomes First Group (proprietary body). The Chairperson of the proprietary body is Richard Power (COO). Maben House School has its own dedicated management team. Oversight of school management is provided by the Regional Director for Options Autism, responsible to the Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer.

Key decisions are referred to the Outcomes First Group's Board of Directors.



In addition, the group extends its robust governance through local governing committees, a national education performance board and an independent Safeguarding and Quality Committee with three independent members.

Chair of Proprietary Body: Richard Power

Registered Office: Atria, Spa Road, Bolton, BL1 4AG

Telephone number: 01204 522667

Registered Numbers:

Closeburn Care – SC2003010884

Closeburn School – 5980348

Maben Care – CS2003010819

Maben School – 5980445



the promise
scotland

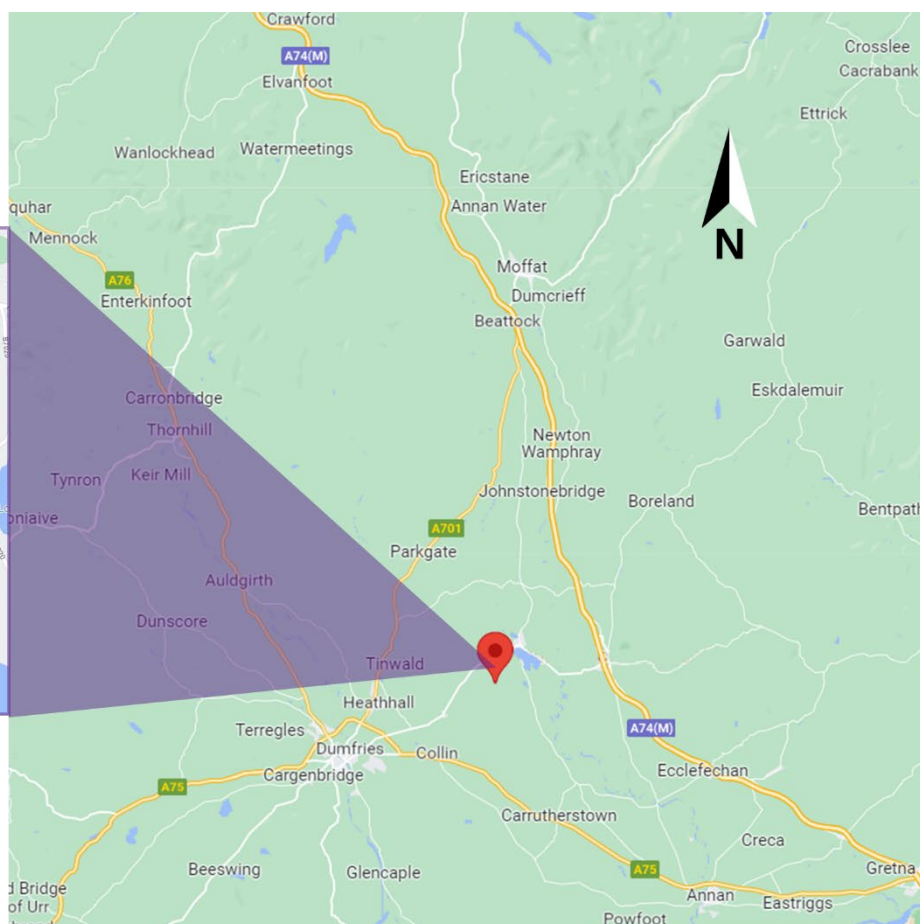
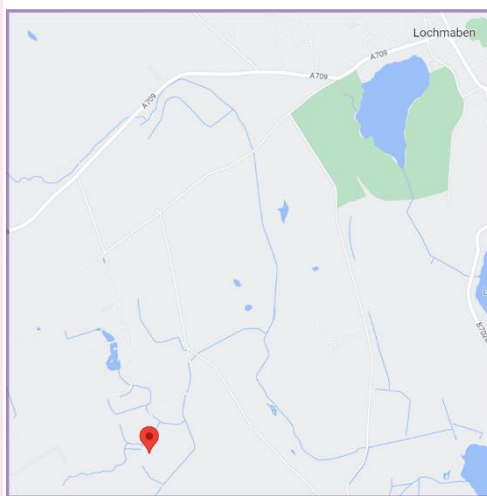
Contact & Find Us

Web: www.holisticchildcare.co.uk

Email: office@closeburnhouse.co.uk

Tel: 01848 331352

MABEN HOUSE



CAR

1.5 miles from A709 Torthorwald – Lochmaben

Note: the school is hard to find via Sat Nav.

Decimal Degrees coordinates: 55.10971051137895, -3.466234233402159

Google Maps location: 4G5M+QH, Lockerbie DG11 1RW

RAIL

Nearest railway station: Lockerbie

BUS

The school is difficult to access by bus, involving a 1.7m walk along country roads (no footpath) and we would not recommend arriving this way.

Nearest bus stop: Hunter House or Blackrig Farm, A709

Services: 81, 381 Lockerbie – Dumfries