



Education  
Scotland  
Foghlam Alba



**Northview House  
Kilbarchan  
Renfrewshire  
13 January 2015**

Education Scotland inspect schools in order to let parents<sup>1</sup> and young people know whether their school<sup>2</sup> 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 headteacher 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 and join other activities in which young people are involved. We also gather the views of young people, parents, 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](http://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.

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

<sup>2</sup> The term 'school' includes the nursery class or classes where appropriate.

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### **1. The school**

Northview House School is an independent school which serves children and young people throughout Scotland. The roll was 35 when the inspection was carried out in November 2014. Young people's attendance was well above the national average. One young person had a coordinated support plan.

## **2. Key strengths of the school**

- The combined impact of care, therapeutic support and education provided by staff which improves the wellbeing and attainment of children and young people.
- The quality of therapeutic support provided by the psychological team which plays a critical role in helping young people to cope with the trauma they have suffered.
- The positive impact of outdoor education on young people in providing enjoyable learning experiences and promoting healthy, active lifestyles.
- The strong nurturing ethos which permeates all aspects of children's and young people's experiences.
- The clarity and direction of leadership provided by the senior management team.

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

The school is very successful in helping children and young people to reengage with education and achieve. Young people are calm and ready to start lessons each day largely as a result of the excellent relationships and care provided by the residential care staff. They accompany young people from the houses to school each day and provide support and encouragement to them throughout the day. Children and young people have trusting deep, relationships with the senior managers, teaching staff, the team of psychologists and residential care staff. They collaborate well with teachers and each other in lessons and as a result they learn effectively throughout the day. Children and young people feel safe in school and are respected by all staff. They are responsible and usually manage their behaviour well. Children and young people are developing their skills as learners. The very good approach to personal learning planning, especially at primary, was helping children and young people to reflect

on their learning and become more aware of what they need to do to improve their progress.

Children and young people are improving their personal and social skills by taking part and achieving success in a variety of well-conceived activities. The wide ranging outdoor education programme provides many challenging and enjoyable activities for all young people to develop resilience and gain skills and awards. For example, a significant number gained awards for mountain biking, swimming and horse riding. Children and young people regularly help to organise and raise funds for a number of charities. Through these activities they are learning about the plight of others and developing citizenship skills. The annual Christmas show provides good opportunities for children and young people to develop their self-confidence and skills in the performing arts. Young people gained awards and certificates from a number of organisations. There are opportunities for the school to accredit more of children's and young people's achievements.

Children and young people made strong gains in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Most had gaps in their learning when they joined the school as a result of a disrupted education. Teachers identify skilfully these gaps and provide appropriate programmes and support. As a result, children and young people make significant progress in reading and the other language skills. They are developing robust skills with number and money through applying their knowledge and skills in real situations such as working out profit when raising money for 'Children in Need'. Young people are able to recognise and express their emotions both in individual sessions and in groups and are becoming more skilled at managing their emotions. At each stage, children and young people have an awareness of appropriate sexual relationships and keeping themselves safe. All young people develop useful information and communications technology (ICT) skills which help them to learn in school and when they leave. Young people achieve a rounded package of SQA awards in the senior phase. This generally includes literacy, numeracy, physical education, hospitality, a social subject, art and design and

computing by the end of S4. In S5/S6 a few young people pursue courses at Higher level or take part in more vocational courses with local colleges or other partners.

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

Staff are skilled at identifying children's and young people's learning needs and putting in place appropriate programmes and support. The team of psychologists play a key role in assessing young people when they join the school. They assess learning and social and emotional needs through a detailed and comprehensive range of assessments. These assessments are shared well with teaching and residential care staff. Staff are very good at planning to meet children's and young people's needs. They provide comprehensive personal learning plans and behaviour management plans, which are shared well with the young people. Staff across the school communicate well with each other about young people's needs and make adjustments to plans in the light of young people's progress. The psychologists deliver a range of therapies which help the children and young people to adjust to the trauma they have suffered prior to joining the school. In lessons, teachers and teaching assistants provide a good range of tasks, activities and resources which are well suited to the needs of each pupil. When required, the school also draws upon a range of allied health professionals to provide additional specialist support to children and young people.

Across care and education, staff provide a wide range of appropriate and enjoyable experiences for children and young people. Teachers have planned a sound broad general education from P1 to S3. Commendably, staff promote health and wellbeing across both care and education. They focus on developing skills for learning, life and work. The outdoor education and residential experiences offered to all children and young people enrich and extend the work of the classroom. Courses in secondary are based on the experiences and outcomes from the second to the fourth level. Young people are able

to choose from a range of course options in S3. The design of the senior phase from S4 to S6 is based on young people studying up to six national qualifications or course awards. In S5/S6, young people are offered opportunities for work experience and studying at college along with national qualifications. The design of the senior phase enables young people to gain qualifications over different time periods to meet their learning needs. The curriculum includes 'master classes' which give children opportunities for personal achievement in a diverse range of topics. Teachers have planned interesting units of study in both primary and secondary which exploit local history and help pupils to learn from different disciplines and see connections between different areas of learning.

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

Leadership in the school is very good. The head of education and psychology has an exceptionally clear vision for the school and provides clear direction to staff. She is assisted ably by two deputy headteachers, a principal teacher and a head of care. All senior staff are highly skilled at dealing with the young people. Together they ensure that the school and residences have a strong nurturing ethos and programmes of work are well matched to the needs of children and young people. The school has well-established processes to monitor its performance and continuously improve its work. Children, young people, staff and other stakeholders regularly provide feedback on the work of the school. Senior managers regularly check the quality of learning and teaching by observing lessons and discussing work with teaching staff. This process needs to be further developed to enhance the quality of learning across the school. The key findings from self-evaluation activities are used by senior managers to produce a well-focused improvement plan. This is helping the school to continuously improve its performance.

## 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 visits in connection with this inspection. The school will inform the lead officer for special schools about its progress on improving the quality of its work.

We have agreed the following areas for improvement with the school.

- Continue to refine and develop the curriculum in line with the increased national expectations.
- Further develop lesson observation procedures with a view to further improving learning and teaching.



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 Northview House.

<b>Improvements in performance</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Learners' experiences</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Meeting learning needs</b>	<b>very good</b>

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

<b>The curriculum</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Improvement through self-evaluation</b>	<b>very good</b>

Terry Carr  
**HM Inspector**  
13 January 2015

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/NorthviewHouseRenfrewshire.asp>.

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