



Education  
Scotland  
Foghlam Alba



care  
inspectorate



**Daldorch House School  
Catrine  
7 September 2016**

Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate (Social Care and Social Work Improvement 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/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 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**

Daldorch House is an independent residential special school which is managed by the National Autistic Society. It is located in Catrine, East Ayrshire. It offers care and education to young people aged eight to 21 with autism. The roll at the time of the inspection was 24 with 23 in residence. Attendance was well above the national average.

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

- The positive relationships between staff and young people which creates a caring and inclusive ethos.
- The personalisation of learning to support young people to achieve across education and care.
- Partnerships with allied health professionals in meeting the sensory and communication needs of young people.
- The attractive outdoor environment that supports learning.

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

Young people have positive and trusting relationships with staff across the school. This helps them to feel safe and secure and overcome their anxieties about the world around them. In most classes, young people are appropriately engaged in learning activities. Almost all of them benefit from regular physical activities including swimming, football and the daily Meadow Mile. This is helping them to develop their physical fitness, and balance and coordination. Staff now need to help young people understand the skills they are developing and what they have to do to achieve success. Almost all young people have opportunities to learn in stimulating activity areas. In particular, the use of the outdoor environment helps them to make positive choices and develop their social skills. Young people benefit from frequent opportunities to learn in the community, for example, practicing their skills in using money when shopping. A few young people are taking part in enterprise activities including growing and selling their own produce. School staff need to consistently engage and motivate young people by providing high-quality learning experiences to actively explore their local environment. A few learners are developing leadership skills on the pupil council. All young people have the opportunity to make decisions and contribute to the life of the school through, for example, visual questionnaires and choice boards.

Overall most young people are learning and achieving appropriately. Almost all young people are achieving their individual literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing targets. Most young people are making progress with their communication and literacy skills. They have opportunities to read for information and for pleasure both in the school and when in the community. A few young people enjoy sensory stories being read to them. They use their developing numeracy skills in real-life situations in the cafes and supermarket, and as part of their fitness routines in the gym. All young people are encouraged to develop their independence skills both in personal hygiene routines and when ordering and choosing their snack or lunch. Young people from across the school participate in fundraising activities for a range of charities. These enterprising skills are

developing their understanding of the needs of others. Almost all young people take part in assemblies that celebrate their successes. The majority of young people are achieving success in a range of National Qualifications. The school should consider ways to extend opportunities for young people to achieve further qualifications and awards.

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

Overall the school provides good support for young people. Most teachers and educators provide tasks and resources that are well matched to the learning needs of individual young people. They assess the sensory and communication needs of the young people effectively. Staff should now plan more active, well-paced and challenging activities including the use of digital technology. Young people are supported by individual programmes and the use of appropriate communication aids. All staff should ensure that they use these communication supports consistently across both education and care. Specialist staff work together well to identify and meet the needs of young people. Strong partnership working with allied health professionals is helping meet the sensory and communication needs of young people. All young people have Individualised Educational Programmes (IEPs) with targets set to address their autism specific and wider learning needs. These targets are shared effectively across care and education. Young people's progress is reviewed regularly by this wider education team.

The school's vision is to provide a curriculum that will support young people into adulthood. The 'extended day' initiative is planned to provide continuity of learning across education and care. Staff are becoming more confident in using experiences and outcomes when planning individual learning across the broad general education. Most young people take part in activities in, for example, science and recycling that are helping them to make links in their learning. Young people are supported by learning opportunities that extend into the

residencies and wider community. Staff provide motivational learning activities such as taking part in the after school football league. They should now focus more on developing essential skills to help build greater independence for young people. Young people are able to select different curricular options in the senior phase. They are benefiting from more opportunities for personalisation and choice. The school should continue to develop its senior phase curriculum offering more practical and life skill programmes that can be certificated using National Qualifications. The school should monitor and evaluate the changes made to the curriculum to ensure they better meet young people's learning needs.

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

The Principal is working well to deliver school improvements. She is ably supported by her senior leadership team. Collectively, they have established a clear vision for the school. Staff have put in place a range of activities to evaluate the work of the school. They work successfully as a team and are beginning to reflect on the quality of their work to ensure that outcomes for young people are improving. All staff benefit from the opportunities to improve their own professional learning and to contribute to school improvement. The school should now develop opportunities for joint professional learning with other establishments. The senior managers have adopted a range of systems to evaluate the day-to-day work of the school, including, observing classroom activities, reflective conversations and monitoring young people's progress. These approaches should be further developed to ensure that all staff are contributing to self-evaluation activities and that next steps for improvement are appropriate and effective.

## 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 Board of Governors will inform parents about the school's progress as part of the Board of Governor's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of the schools.

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

- Continue to develop opportunities to accredit young people's attainment and achievement.
- Provide more opportunities for young people to engage in active learning to increase their motivation and engagement.
- Continue to develop the curriculum in line with national guidance.

Quality indicators help schools, education authorities/board 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 Daldorch House School.

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

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

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

**Managing Inspector:**  
Jacqueline Burnett

**Care Inspector:**  
Chris Barratt

7 September 2016

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/DaldorchHouseSchoolEastAyrshire.asp>.

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