



Education  
Scotland  
Foghlam Alba



care  
inspectorate



**The New School  
Butterstone  
Dunkeld  
1 December 2015**

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**

The New School Butterstone is an independent school situated near Dunkeld in Perth and Kinross. It provides education and care for young people aged from 11 to 18 years who have additional support needs relating to social and emotional difficulties and autism. The roll was 23 when the inspection was carried out in September 2015. Young people's attendance was in line with the national average in 2014/2015. Two young people had a coordinated support plan.

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

- High standards of attainment, especially in English.
- The high quality learning experiences provided by staff in both care and education.
- The strong sense of community and the close, trusting relationships between all staff and young people.
- Examples of teaching that are of an exceptionally high standard.
- The leadership of the senior managers in moving the school forward in a period of change.

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

Young people are making very good progress with their academic studies and their personal and social development. They enjoy being at school and benefit from the strong, trusting relationships they have with care and teaching staff. Staff use nurturing approaches very well to help young people to feel secure and to enable them to learn effectively. Young people have a healthy diet and many opportunities for physical activities. They are respected by staff and by their peers. Young people take on responsibilities in lessons, across the school and in the wider community. Teaching staff have established positive and supportive learning environments for young people. The young people with autism respond very well to simple, clear, concrete language and well-constructed routines. In lessons, young people are motivated, on task and collaborate well with teaching and other staff. They enjoy learning in class, in the local environment and in the evening through the activities devised by teaching and care staff. Young people have very good opportunities to make a contribution to the school through expressing themselves in the daily lunchtime meetings with staff, in the school council, and in the food committee and eco groups.

They discuss their progress in the frequent meetings with their key worker and in tutor groups and record their achievements in a 'Showcase' document.

The school is very good at recognising and celebrating young peoples' achievements. At the lunchtime meeting and assemblies, staff award young people certificates for their achievements. They reward improvements in behaviour, for tolerating different experiences, persevering and for showing positive attitudes. These awards are valued by young people. Young people have many opportunities to achieve in a wide range of areas. They have been particularly successful in developing their personal and social skills through the Duke of Edinburgh's award. Last session, nine young people achieved the Bronze award, two achieved Silver and one achieved the Gold award. Young people achieve well in the many evening physical and sporting activities, such as football, netball, table tennis, fitness suite training, yoga and biking. They also enjoy craft work, computing and other leisure activities. Young people make a contribution to the wider community through their work in a charity shop and in the local community garden. They are developing communication, team working and problem solving skills in their residential experiences at outdoor centres. Young people are proud of the many awards they have gained at The New School as they do not have a record of success in their earlier main stream schools.

Across the school, almost all young people are making very good progress in improving their literacy skills. A significant number are making exceptional progress, and have achieved A passes at National 5 in English. In numeracy, most young people are making steady progress. They benefit from numeracy being firmly embedded in learning and teaching, especially in information and communications technology (ICT) and science. Young people achieve very well in health and wellbeing related programmes within Duke of Edinburgh's awards and Skills for Work sport and recreation awards at National 4. Commendably, the fitness instructor tracks young people's progress towards agreed personal targets across a range of sport and recreation activities. Young people know about safe, hygienic

practices in food handling and preparation. They can explain what constitutes a healthy diet and are supported to make healthy food choices. Overall, young people achieve a very good range of course awards from SQA, ASDAN, LAMDA (London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art), John Muir and other awarding bodies. They are presented for a range of SQA awards from National 2 to Higher depending on their ability in particular subjects. Most achieve four or more SQA National course awards. Young people attain particularly well in English, biology, computing science and geography. In ASDAN, young people have achieved many short course awards in a wide range of subjects. A number also gained gold, silver and bronze course awards.

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

The school's curriculum is good. It focuses on meeting the needs of each individual young person in a nurturing and supportive environment. Young people's programmes of work benefit from high levels of personalisation which match their skills and aspirations. These well thought out programmes of study lead to strong attainment outcomes. Staff regularly review and update the curriculum to make it relevant for young people and enable them to gain awards for their achievements. They provide good opportunities for young people to apply their knowledge and skills in different contexts. In drama productions they rehearse scripts, create costumes, design sets and perform plays in the local community. The curriculum is well supported by partner agencies who visit the school on a regular basis to provide valuable breadth, depth and relevance to the opportunities available for young people. Young people also benefit from the regular input of a local church minister. Most classes in the senior phase benefit from well-balanced programmes which include opportunities for individual choice of subjects and good opportunities to apply literacy and numeracy skills. In the residence young people take part in a range of activities. They are offered choices and encouraged to make suggestions on what they would like to do.

Young people benefit from carefully considered, well-supported transitions to learning or work beyond school. Staff involve young people well and share information very effectively among young people, their parents and partners. These transition programmes lead to positive destinations being secured for many young people.

Staff are very effective at meeting the learning needs of young people. They plan activities well and take particular account of young people's own interests to help them to learn. Young people benefit from a range of individual and small group learning activities. The pace of learning is good and tasks are appropriately challenging for learners. Staff make very good use of the school's facilities and the natural environment. The school has clear processes for identifying young people's needs on entry to the school. Through the key worker and tutor meetings and morning handover meetings, staff monitor closely young people's progress and personal needs. Staff work well with external agencies and local authority staff to evaluate learners' needs. They have effective links with a local doctor, dentist and pharmacist to support and educate young people on a variety of health and wellbeing initiatives. Support for learning assistants provide very effective individual support to young people in care and education. The speech and language therapist provides a good range of therapy and support for individuals and groups of students. The school reviews young people's progress very well involving parents, young people and other agencies as appropriate.

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

The recently appointed senior leaders in care and education are providing very effective leadership for the school. Their open and direct approach to improving the school is appreciated by staff, parents, young people and other stakeholders. The head of school is improving arrangements for self-evaluation and the head of care is improving supervisions of care staff and providing clearer direction for staff to improve the consistency of care. Other staff in care and education are taking steps to improve the school's effectiveness. For

example, staff have shared their expertise by providing training in literacy, health and wellbeing and outdoor education. The school has appropriate approaches to evaluating its work including seeking placing authorities' views on care and education and young people's views on their learning experiences. The parent council carries out surveys of parents' views. The head of school and head of education observe lessons and provide feedback to teachers. Teachers also observe their colleagues at work and together they discuss learning and teaching. The school has revised its professional review and development procedures for teachers and a programme for formal supervision of care staff is now in place. Senior leaders have taken important steps to improve the quality of young people's learning experiences but it is too early to see a significant impact.

## **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 teaching 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 visit(s).



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

- Continue to develop the curriculum to ensure that young people's entitlements are met.
- Develop more consistent approaches to supporting young people's progress across care and education.
- Fully embed self-evaluation to ensure that continuous improvement takes place in care and education.

At the last inspection the Care Inspectorate made one requirement. It was:

It is a requirement that the Provider ensures that children and young people's health, wellbeing and care needs are clearly identified, and the way these needs will be met are outlined in detail. From doing this staff should have clear plans for meeting individual young people's needs. The Provider must demonstrate to the Care Inspectorate how they have achieved this.

The requirement has been continued as little progress was evident in this area.

At the last inspection the Care Inspectorate made one recommendation. It was:

The Management should improve frequency of supervision in order to support staff in their work and identify development needs.

At this inspection the service demonstrated improvement and this recommendation has been met.

From a complaint investigation concluded on 18 September 2015 the Care inspectorate made one requirement. It was:

Young people using the service should experience quality care and support through the accurate recording and quality assurance of all incidents. In order to achieve this the service must:

- Review their Incident Report Form to ensure that it is of a quality standard.
- Provide training to all staff on effective record keeping in relation to completing Incident Reports.

At this inspection the service has demonstrated improvement and this requirement has been met.

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 The New School Butterstone.

<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>good</b>

**HM Inspector:** Terry Carr **Care Inspector:** Sandra Wright  
1 December 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/NewSchoolButterstoneThePerthandKinross.asp>.

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