

Summarised inspection findings

Camphill School Aberdeen

21 May 2024

Key contextual information

Camphill School Aberdeen was previously known as Camphill Rudolf Steiner School. The school is an independent, all through, integrated school comprising of nursery, primary and secondary departments. The school roll is 51 with 20 children at primary stages across three classes and 31 young people at secondary stages across four classes. Until 2017, the school catered only for children and young people with additional support needs. Mainstream children now attend the school. Almost all children at primary stages are mainstream. All young people at secondary stages have additional support needs. The headteacher has been in post for eight years.

Camphill School Aberdeen nursery class was inspected by the Care Inspectorate within the past 18 months, therefore, the proprietor and headteacher had the option to include the nursery class as part of this inspection. We have agreed with the proprietor and school that the nursery class is not part of this inspection.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

satisfactory

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Most children and young people are motivated, enthusiastic and engage well in their learning. Almost all children and young people benefit from supportive relationships with staff and with each other. Staff are sensitive to learners' individual needs. As a result, almost all children and young people display positive behaviour. A few children and young people disengage from part of their learning or from activities altogether. This disengagement is often linked to their additional support needs. Almost all staff support children and young people appropriately to reengage or to participate in alternative activities. A few mainstream children disengage during lessons. This is as a result of activities that are not always matched to their needs and include too much adult-led teaching. Staff report that a few children and young people display serious disruptive behaviour at times. These behaviours are related to learners' additional support needs.
- All children and young people with additional support needs have positive behaviour support plans. Staff identify within these plans strategies to reduce disruptive behaviours that help them to support learners. The headteacher has recently implemented approaches to recording, monitoring and tracking incidents of physical and verbal aggression and disengagement. She is beginning to use this information to identify support and interventions for specific children and young people.
- Teachers plan lessons appropriately to take account of the strengths and needs of learners. Almost all teachers use topics well to help children and young people use literacy and numeracy skills across a range of contexts. Teachers should improve how they help children and young people understand what they are learning and how they know if they have achieved

success. There is scope for children and young people to be more involved in planning learning.

- Staff have a good understanding about the range of abilities and additional support needs of children and young people. In a few lessons, teachers need to take better account of these abilities and needs as they deliver learning and teaching. In a minority of lessons, the pace of learning is too slow. Children and young people would benefit from a brisker pace of learning that ensures they are appropriately challenged throughout the activity. In a few lessons, teachers have an over reliance on worksheets. Senior leaders and staff should also review the length of the school day to ensure that it is in line with similar schools. Current start and finish times, together with the length of the lunch period, results in less time for learning and teaching than in many other schools.
- Overall, attendance in the school is good. A few children or young people are not attending school or attending part time. A few children and young people do not maintain consistently good levels of attendance. Senior leaders should work closely with children, young people, their families and other agencies to improve their attendance. For those children and young people who are unable to attend school, staff should consider how they can provide learning activities in other environments.
- Children and young people have valuable opportunities to participate in outdoor learning activities across the extensive school campus. For example, children and young people participate in activities such as woodwork, donkey walking and gardening. They are developing important skills and knowledge, including a good understanding about sustainability. Staff should now maximise these activities and interesting contexts to develop children and young people's learning in literacy and numeracy.
- Staff use a range of approaches to support children and young people's communication as part of their learning. A few staff use sign effectively to help children and young people communicate. A few children and young people have communication books that include pictures to support their communication. Staff should work with other specialists to develop further communication approaches for children and young people. Learners would benefit from individualised communication approaches and devices that are used consistently by all staff.
- Children and young people have some opportunities to work together in pairs and groups. There is scope for children and young people to work more collaboratively. The way in which staff organise classrooms provides limited opportunities for children to discuss learning or work in groups. Senior leaders and staff, in collaboration with children and young people, should review the layout of learning spaces. They should implement a range of teaching approaches that include more opportunities for children to learn collaboratively. Children at early stages of primary do not have opportunities to engage in planned, play-based learning. Teachers should now use national guidance to develop their understanding of play and implement more opportunities for children to learn through play.
- Staff use appropriate planning approaches, depending on the stage and additional support needs of children and young people. Individualised educational plans are detailed and specify planned learning in all areas of the curriculum using Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) experiences and outcomes. These plans are reviewed regularly by staff, in collaboration with the headteacher. Staff provide useful information as to how children and young people have progressed in their learning and next steps. 'My One Plan' is an effective approach for detailing information about children and young people with additional support needs. These plans provide important information about learners' health and wellbeing needs and include behaviour support plans and risk assessments. All children and young people have personal

outcomes detailed within these plans. Learners work towards achieving these personal outcomes to improve specific aspects of their health and wellbeing. Staff need to ensure that children and young people's personal outcomes are more measurable. This will allow staff to track effectively children and young people's progress and support future planning.

- Teachers use observations of learning, questioning and examples of work to assess learners' progress. Learning logs include photographs and staff statements to provide evidence of pupil participation in activities. Staff should now improve statements in learning logs to ensure they provide clear information as to the skills and learning that have been achieved by children and young people. Staff should continue to work together and with other schools to develop approaches to moderation and ensure there is a shared understanding of assessment standards. They should make better use of national Benchmarks to support their assessments.
- The headteacher is at the early stages of developing tracking and monitoring approaches to determine the progress and attainment of children and young people. This is beginning to support staff to identify progress and attainment. The headteacher and staff should now continue to use this information to ensure that all children and young people are attaining and achieving as well as possible.

2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- 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. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the proprietor that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

satisfactory

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 in literacy and numeracy

- Overall, most children and young people make satisfactory progress in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics. A minority of children and young people could be making more progress. A few young people are making good progress through their senior phase.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Overall, the majority of children and young people make satisfactory progress in literacy and English. Across all levels, children and young people need more opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills across genres that are matched better to their needs, age and stage. Almost all young people with additional support needs are making good progress through their senior phase and achieve appropriate National Qualifications in literacy and English.

Listening and talking

- Most children and young people communicate appropriately across a range of different settings and environments. In a minority of classes, children and young people share their learning well at the end of topics through presentations or performing plays to peers, staff and families. Learners feel a sense of achievement around this aspect of their learning. Children and young people across the school would benefit from more opportunities to work together to help them to become more confident in discussions. Staff, in collaboration with specialists, need to provide a few children and young people with better access to communication devices. This will help improve children and young people's ability to make choices and provide their views.

Reading

- Most children and young people at early level select texts of interest and read for pleasure. This is deepening children's knowledge of topics. When read to by an adult, children show enthusiasm for stories and recall accurately sequences of events or the main ideas. At first and second levels, the majority of children and young people are reading well for enjoyment. They accurately recount class stories through sharing the main ideas and are confident when reading aloud. A few learners at first and second levels have potential to accelerate their reading further. Teachers should provide them with more suitably challenging texts. The majority of learners make appropriate use of the school library and use books to research and read for information within topic work.

Writing

- Most children and young people are developing well their early level writing skills. They are developing their fine motor skills through handwork experiences and mark making opportunities. The majority of children and young people are writing well in their topic lessons. They write to explain flow charts and label diagrams such as describing the process of sheep

to cloth. Learners at all levels require more opportunities to write creatively. A few children and young people would benefit from using digital technology to improve their writing skills.

Numeracy and mathematics

- Overall, most children and young people make satisfactory progress in numeracy and mathematics. A minority of children and young people could be making more progress. Almost all children and young people perform strongest in number and money. Most children and young people with additional support needs make good progress in the practical application of number and money, relevant to their stage of development.

Number, money and measure

- The majority of children and young people at early level use number and money well in practical contexts. Children and young people correctly add and subtract within 20 using practical materials and apply this appropriately to real life situations. They identify the correct coins to make purchases. A few children and young people read clock faces to tell the time. Most children and young people have an awareness of the sequence of events across the school day. They accurately use symbols to predict what activities they will be undertaking as the day progresses. The majority of children and young people now need to develop their use of measure further across a wider range of contexts. Children and young people working at first level use the four basic operations to solve problems. Children and young people use appropriately the language of measure to estimate length of familiar objects. Children and young people need to develop further their understanding of fractions and sharing equally. Children and young people at second level have a strong understanding of decimals and rounding to the nearest whole number. They now need to develop their understanding of units of measure and how to apply their knowledge of measure to estimate the length of an object. Across all levels, children need more experience of how to work out the area of simple shapes. A few young people with additional support needs are making good progress through their senior phase and achieve appropriate National Qualification units and full awards for their stage, predominantly in application of mathematics.

Shape, position and movement

- Most children and young people at early level identify accurately a square, circle and triangle. They are developing well their understanding of the properties of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. Children working toward first and second levels need to develop further their knowledge of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects. They identify correctly common shapes. They need support to describe the properties of shapes and in using the correct terminology to describe them. They are not yet confident when working with angles.

Information handling

- Children and young people at early level use their knowledge of size, colour and shape to sort familiar items. They use symbols or other information to share choices and make decisions about what they will do. For example, when baking, children and young people will use symbols to show how they plan to use ingredients to make food. Children and young people working toward first level understand how to use tally marks appropriately to record the number of objects as they count. They are not yet confident in other ways of collecting and organising information. Children working towards second level are developing well their awareness of probability and chance.

Attainment over time

- Overall, the majority of children and young people make satisfactory progress across all curriculum areas. A minority of children and young people make good progress, particularly in technologies and music. The majority of children and young people with additional support

needs make good progress across most areas of the curriculum over time. Since 2022, young people progress well in their senior phase. They gain a number of relevant National Qualifications units across National 1, 2, 3 and 4. A few young people achieved National 5 unit awards in practical application of numeracy and are now working well towards gaining National 5 full awards in numeracy.

- Senior leaders should continue with plans to develop tracking systems to identify trends in the progress made year on year by cohorts of children. Senior leaders presented data for children with no identified additional support needs for all areas of the curriculum. This data is not accurate enough. Most children who are recorded as not yet achieving early level or recently achieved early level have exceeded this and are nearing achievement of first level. Senior leaders need to work with teachers to develop a reliable and robust understanding of how well children and young people are progressing within a level in line with national standards.
- Most young people sustain placements at college as part of their blended education with school. Other young people progress to adult learning on a nearby campus that takes account of their needs and skills well. This is resulting in almost all young people moving to relevant, meaningful and positive post school destinations.

Overall quality of learners' achievements

- Children and young people achieve well across a range of activities. They are recognised by staff for their individual skills. These include artwork, furniture making, building positive relationships, participation in sports and their engagement in learning. Children and young people are developing well skills related to growing, planting, sustainability and caring for animals. Children and young people have been successful in receiving accreditation for a sixth time for their work in promoting and sustaining an eco-friendly school.

Equity for all learners

- The majority of children and young people experience significant barriers to learning as a result of a range and complexity of additional support needs. Across the school community, children, staff and visitors ensure almost all children and young people experience an inclusive school ethos. There is a need for a minority of children to have more opportunities to make decisions and choices about their learning.
- Senior leaders need to demonstrate clearly the impact the work of the school is having on reducing the poverty related attainment gap. In doing so, they should continue with plans to develop effective tracking and monitoring systems. These should demonstrate how well children and young people are progressing in learning and how they are reducing attainment gaps.

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.