

Summarised inspection findings

Greenleaf House School

Kilmaurs

24 March 2020

Key contextual information

Greenleaf House School is an independent residential special school located in Kilmaurs, East Ayrshire. It was registered as an independent school in August 2019. Greenleaf House School is registered to teach children and young people of primary and secondary school age (8 to 18 years). There have been significant staffing changes and periods of staff absence in recent months. At the time of inspection, the school roll is two. A senior management team provides governance to the headteacher and school.

1.3 Leadership and management of staff

weak

This indicator highlights the importance of sound governance and fair and proper recruitment and selection of staff. It focuses on accountability, responsibility and shared values as important features of building and sustaining a highly-professional staff team. Effective empowerment of staff and partners with due regard to wellbeing and positive relationships is a key feature of a successful professional team.

- governance framework
- building and sustaining a professional staff team
- staff wellbeing and pastoral support

- The headteacher is in regular contact with the proprietor and the senior management team (SMT). They have regular discussions over the school estate and business planning for potential new educational sites. To take this further, the school now requires to put in place sound governance arrangements to provide support and challenge to the headteacher. This will ensure that the school has better systems to scrutinise the quality of learning and teaching, learners' engagement, the curriculum on offer and the culture and ethos in place at the school. There are currently no designated roles and responsibilities amongst the SMT to support effectively the governance of the school. The SMT needs to outline clear lines of accountability for the school's performance to ensure positive educational outcomes for children and young people. The current lack of accountability is a contributory factor to the poor quality learning environment in place, the lack of a purposeful curriculum and the low expectations of what children and young people are able to achieve.
- Staff absence, coupled with a quick turnover of teaching and non-teaching staff, has limited the school's ability to build and sustain a professional team. The school has a recruitment policy in place and has actively sought to appoint qualified teaching and non-teaching staff. However, staff retention has been a major issue at the school. The school has an induction policy and programme in place, which provides useful information for new and temporary staff. However, new staff do not always receive a full induction period in line with the policy. This needs to be rectified. In particular, new staff need to understand clearly all safeguarding information and procedures at the school. Once there is a period of stability in staffing at the school, the headteacher needs to introduce and take forward professional review and development and support staff to engage in professional learning activities. The headteacher needs to work closely alongside teaching staff in ensuring the school develops the curriculum and learning environment. Senior staff also need to model high quality teaching and introduce ways to effectively assess, track and monitor children's and young people's progress with their learning.
- There is a welcoming and caring culture across the school, underpinned by positive relationships. Led by the headteacher, the school now needs to monitor the wellbeing needs of

staff and offer better pastoral support. Staff need to be empowered and motivated to make decisions, to be innovative and to contribute to continuous school improvement.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

unsatisfactory

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

- All staff appreciate the importance of establishing positive relationships with children and young people. They work hard to show respect to children and young people and provide them with opportunities to design their own learning. However, there are major weaknesses in the quality of learning experiences. Tasks and activities are not suitably challenging, nor matched to the needs of learners. Staff need to improve their range of teaching approaches to help motivate and engage children and young people in their learning. Children and young people articulate their ambitions, but do not have confidence that they will receive the support required to fulfil these. They do not fully understand the purpose, or value of, their learning experiences.
- Learning and teaching approaches are not fully reflective of the school's aims. The learning environments, and most resources, are not fit for purpose. Teachers are unable to deliver an appropriate range of curriculum activities. As a result, almost all learning and teaching approaches to raise attainment and achievement are inadequate. Digital technologies are not a feature within the school. Therefore, children and young people have very few opportunities to access digital technologies to enhance their learning. The school needs to improve approaches to promote learners' engagement through well-planned learning and teaching activities. This includes significantly improving the learning environment and the resources available for learning and teaching.
- The school has not yet established assessment protocols for children and young people who transition to the school. They now need to fully embed and use assessments to plan effectively for future learning and teaching. The school is at the earliest stages of planning assessment approaches to provide reliable evidence that demonstrates learners are making progress. The school needs to improve staff's confidence in making accurate professional judgements of children's and young people's progress. The use of National Benchmarks, and opportunities to moderate children's and young people's work, would aid this process. This will support staff to identify any gaps in children's and young people's learning and plan effective interventions to ensure learners receive appropriate support.
- All staff consider potential barriers to learning for the children and young people in the school. Staff should now build upon this through improving how they plan to meet the needs of all learners across all areas of the curriculum. The school needs to develop systems to plan, track and monitor children's and young people's progress effectively.

1.5 Management of resources to promote equity:

Theme 2: Management of resources and environment for learning

- Urgent action is required to improve the school estate, to provide a learning environment that can meet the learning needs of children and young people attending the school. The current learning environment is not fit for purpose. Prior to registration, the school had identified two classroom areas. However, one of these spaces can no longer be used. The school accommodation has the potential for breakout areas and there is ample outdoor space. As yet, no action has been taken to develop these areas to support the learning environment.
- The school needs to identify resources to enhance learning experiences and support and challenge children and young people at all levels of their learning.

2.1 Safeguarding

- 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 proprietors.

2.2 Curriculum

unsatisfactory

This indicator highlights the importance of placing the needs of learners at the centre of curriculum design and development. The structure and delivery of the curriculum should take good account of local and national circumstances. The curriculum is the totality of learning experiences across the four contexts as delivered by the school and its partners. An effective curriculum results in strong outcomes for all learners.

- rationale and design
- development of the curriculum
- learning pathways
- skills for learning, life and work

- The curriculum aims and rationale are set out clearly in the school's curriculum policy. The school week is of an appropriate length. The school aims to follow Curriculum for Excellence national guidance. The curriculum policy states that children will study a broad general education. At the senior phase, the policy states that the school will offer qualifications in mathematics, English, science, computing, administration, modern languages, art and a range of wider awards. However, the curriculum being delivered does not reflect the school's policy. The day-to-day curriculum is poorly structured and lessons lack cohesion and progression. The school needs to prioritise improving the curriculum as a matter of urgency.
- The school is not yet delivering Curriculum for Excellence entitlements in line with its policy. The pace of curriculum development has been too slow. Staff need to create a shared strategy for the development and assessment of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing and ensure progression and achievement across the other areas of the curriculum. Teachers are not yet planning effectively using the experiences and outcomes. There is a need for clear progression routes and pathways for learners across the broad general education and senior phase. This will support teachers to plan courses and programmes that more effectively meet the evolving learning needs of children and young people. Teachers need to develop a better understanding of Curriculum for Excellence levels and be able to identify next steps in children's and young people's learning effectively.
- The school environment is not conducive to the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum that offers breadth, depth, challenge and application in learning. Staff need to increase their expectations and aspirations of what children and young people can achieve. The school needs to continue to develop links with colleges, partners, voluntary organisations and local businesses to help create a network of stakeholders who can contribute to the curriculum. This will offer children and young people increased personalisation and choice and the ability to build skills for learning, life and work within meaningful contexts. The school needs to continue to be proactive in making such links with partners, both in and beyond the local area.

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

weak

This indicator focuses on the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements. The themes are:

- wellbeing
- fulfilment of statutory duties
- inclusion and equality

- The school's approaches to ensuring the wellbeing of children and young people, and developing positive relationships across the school, are positive, overall. Children and young people share that they feel safe and respected. Although children and young people are not fully aware of the wellbeing indicators, they are able to demonstrate improvements in their wellbeing through forming safe and valued relationships with school staff. There are no recorded incidents of bullying, no significant incidents within the school and no recorded exclusions. School staff work closely with care staff to promote good patterns of attendance. However, children's and young people's attendance and timekeeping needs to improve. All staff need to work closely to ensure they maintain high expectations of children and young people and consistently promote positive behaviour across the school.
- The school has not yet developed a coherent personal social health education programme that helps children and young people to understand equality and diversity. The school should work to identify a suitable community resource or environment to provide learners with regular, high quality physical education.
- The school needs to work closely with children and young people, in partnership with care staff, to promote healthy eating habits. Staff should consider how to provide an inspiring, nutritious and healthy snack and lunch menu can encourage learners to make good food choices. Positively, the school helps young people access smoking cessation. This has supported young people to cut back on cigarettes or stop smoking altogether. This intervention has also had a positive impact on reducing smoking interruptions for learners across the school day.
- Improved outcomes for all children and young people are not yet evident across the school. All children and young people are care experienced and have identified additional support needs. They are making limited progress in their learning. As a result, children and young people may face reduced opportunities to access a range of potential future educational opportunities. The school needs to improve ongoing assessment and planning to ensure all learners benefit from high quality, outcome focused and individualised education programmes. This will better support them overcome their barriers to learning.
- School policies clearly outline appropriate approaches to inclusion and equality. Staff are ambitious for all children and young people to succeed and achieve. The impact of this results in children and young people being involved in conversations about learning activities and possible destinations. The school has formed good partnerships with children's rights officers and other appropriate partners to ensure planning accounts for children's and young peoples' views, rights and responsibilities. The school are actively improving partnerships with a wider range of partners, such as Skills Development Scotland, to provide suitable, well-planned positive destinations for all young people.

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.