



**Moore House
Academy
Dunkeld**

HMIe Progress Report

March 2023

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Introduction

Since the visit made by HMIe in November 2021 to Moore House Academy, Butterstone (now Moore House Academy, Dunkeld), the school has continued to take forward an agenda of continuous improvement which is evident in the [School Improvement Plans](#) (2021 - 22 and 2022 - 2023); [Standards & Quality Report](#) (2022), National Autistic Society (NAS) Accreditation visit and report (see Appendix 1)

The school is now part of The Jane Moore Trust which has charitable status. This development further augments the very good progress the school has made in enhancing curriculum and learning experiences in that it will enable the school to capitalise on funding and expertise to further enhance the development of the 4 capacities for all children and young people equipping them to move on to positive post school destinations.

The school has also established a clearer definition of its cohort - children and young people with neuro-divergent needs aged 11 - 18 years. Currently we are in the process of extending our age range to 5 - 18 years.

Leadership

- A highly skilled Senior Leadership Team is now in place following a structural reorganisation of staffing which has progressed the development of a positive and cohesive campus ethos and culture. A considerable amount of work is and has been undertaken in creating a highly competent team who support children and young people across the school day and beyond. Examples include - Google chat, members of the residence team supporting children & young people in school, coherent bespoke planning, activities in the community to build skills and resilience, combined staff development/training/professional learning (including Dyadic Developmental Practice (DDP) and Safe Crisis Management (SCM)). The Senior Leadership Team meets on a regular basis to discuss strategic and operational plans and progress.
- We have recently gained the status as an ADHD Friendly School. We are continually improving the environment as well as our learning and teaching practices to support all of our neurodivergent children & young people in order that they fulfil their aspirations.

- The Senior Leadership Team continues to transform the ethos, culture and expectations of the school by building a skilled staff team which has enabled the delivery of bespoke learning pathways for the young people as well as the development of robust systems and processes.
- Staff are actively encouraged to undertake leadership roles in a number of areas - curriculum, Learning and Teaching, Quality Assurance, widening social and community experiences, supporting young people into positive destinations at College/University/Volunteer Work Placements.
- The school continues to develop, enhance and widen the workforce skillset in order to ensure children and young people attain appropriate qualifications and celebrate their successes

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Senior Phase Attainment Data

National level	2019- 2020	2020- 2021	2021 - 2022
National 2	22	13	4
National 3	3	25	11
National 4	14	16	54
National 5	6	4	1
Higher	2	2	2
Advanced Higher	0	0	1

- Partnerships with a range of stakeholders - Parents/Carers, Local Authorities. Voluntary Organisations, Colleges/Universities continue to grow and flourish.
- Link to school video - <https://youtu.be/qkp87sKSqb0>
- Board membership also continues to grow and widen representing a relevant breadth of skills and experiences such as education, business and residential/outreach services which has enhanced accountability, forward planning and governance
- Board members undertake regular discussion with senior leaders and quality assurance visits across the school.

- [Children & Young People](#) Questionnaire Data

Child Protection/Safeguarding

- All staff undertake annual training at the appropriate level of responsibility.
- Head of Education and Depute are both DCPL's.
- A considerable amount of work has been undertaken in ensuring staff at all levels of the organisation understand their roles and responsibilities in line with the Moore House Group Policy. This has proven to be highly effective and can be evidenced when handling a variety of situations and cases which have arisen across the school year.
- The Head of Education is an active member of the Perth and Kinross Independent CP Committee and the Moore House Group CP Committee.
- Members of the School Board have undertaken Quality Assurance Audits specifically focusing on reporting, paperwork, storage of CP records.
- Children and Young People feel safe and talk to trusted adults in the organisation.
- All children & young people have a dedicated Key Teacher who provides focused wellbeing and education support

Learning/Teaching

- The school's maxim of **Aspiration, Achievement, Attainment** epitomises the cultural change towards learning and success that has taken place over the last two sessions. The school had its first young person transition to university in August 2022.
- The school has developed very successful partnerships with a range of Colleges and Third Sector organisations to ensure 100% success in post school transitions.

Positive Destination Data

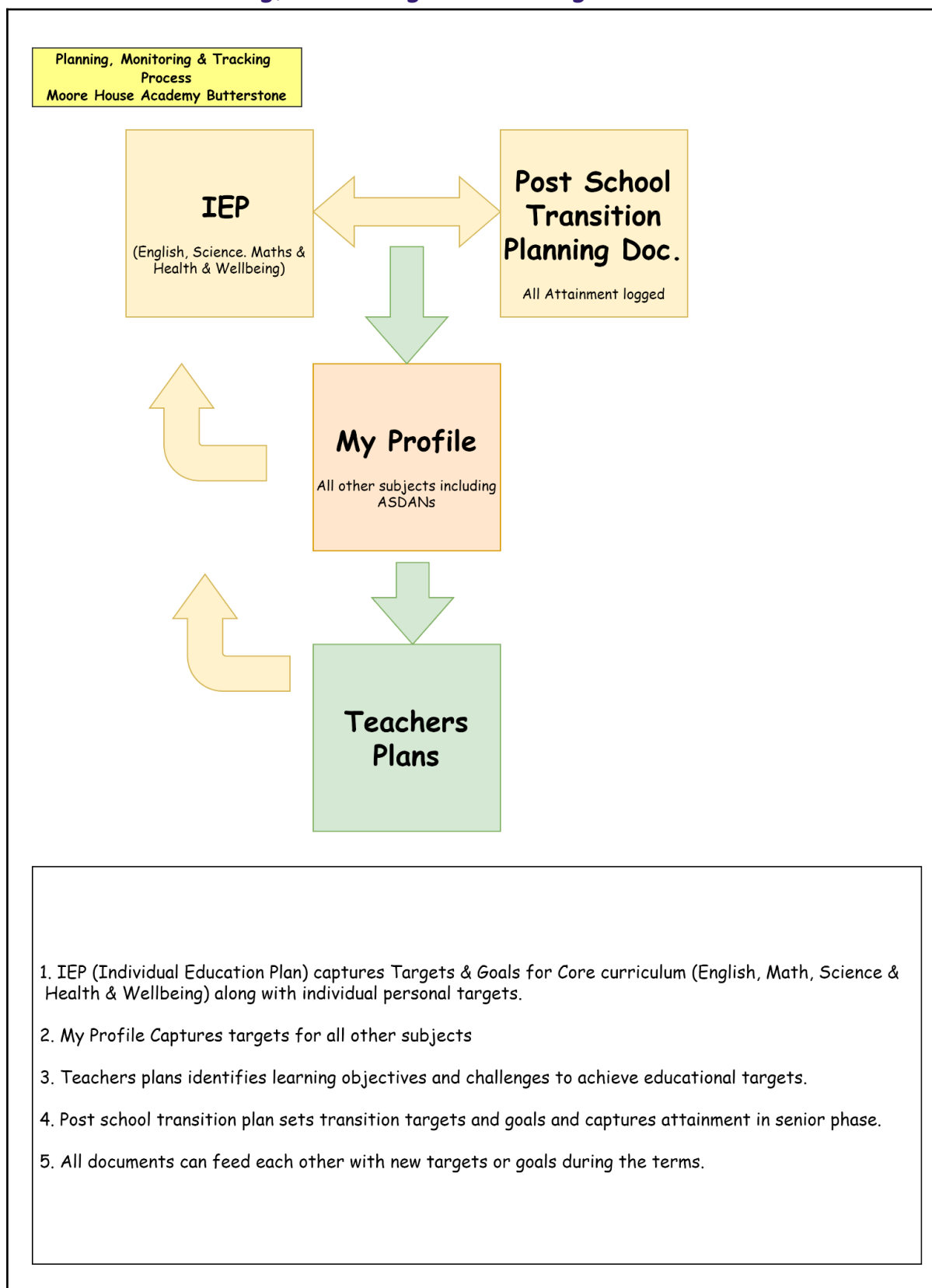
Academic Year	Number of Leavers	Number in Positive Destinations (at point of leaving):
2019 - 2020	1	100%
2020- 2021	5	100%
2021 - 2022	4	100%

Positive destinations: SRUC, Elmwood; Perth UHI; Prince's Trust, Individual Adult Services Programme; Abertay University

"Post School Transition Plan is impressive"
PKC SW Team (2021)

- The school provides bespoke curriculum pathways which are founded on the principles of breadth, depth, coherence and choice. At all times the voice of the child/young person is central to decisions being made.
- Teacher planning is more robust and details learning goals, strategies, supports and success criteria. Teachers' plans are regularly discussed with DHT - highlighting progress and next steps. Teachers monitor and report progress.

Flow chart of Planning, Monitoring and Tracking



- Leadership for Learning includes daily and weekly tracking of attendance and engagement. This is shared with parents/carers and placing authorities on a weekly basis.
- All processes include a strong input from children and young people and their voices are central.

"Moore House Academy is my safe place. The staff understand me and I know I can speak to them when things are not going well for me. I really enjoy our outdoor learning and I have learned so much using digital technology. I am beginning to believe I can go to college when I leave Dunkeld and gain even more qualifications"

MHA, Dunkeld young person (2021)

- Health and Wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do at MHA, Dunkeld. At the end of last session a Health and Wellbeing Hub was developed which is proving to be very popular with the children and young people. It is used for whole school assemblies, learner of the Week celebrations as well as other whole school activities. Our staff work hard to foster excellent relationships with our children and young people throughout the school and develop a unique understanding of each individual and their strengths and needs.
- The school has been complimented on the wide range of approaches it takes in providing learning opportunities indoors and outdoors - sensory breaks are built into the pedagogy.
- All of the above is supported by the ongoing relocation and development of learning spaces across the campus. Children and young people now have access to a health and wellbeing hub where they can have time out, celebrate success and 'hang out' with their peers. This space also enabled the hosting of the STV Children's Appeal.
- The campus is actively seeking funding to develop and enhance active learning spaces/ opportunities for children and young people to enjoy/experience/ grow and learn. This will further the work already in place for the daily 10.
- Throughout and across the campus there are ample examples of staff working together to create an entitlement/ skills led curriculum.

- Staff have all undertaken a workshop on learning and teaching practice. The workshop focused on learning aims, goals and objectives.
- Following the NAS support visit/report staff undertook a workshop on AiFL strategies/clarity of learning objectives/questioning and plenary sessions.

Partnerships

- Building respectful and trustful partnerships with parents continues as a key strength of the campus. As well as individual relationships, parents/carers are consulted on key aspects of planning. There is also a parents forum who meet on a regular basis with senior leaders and board members

"My son is enjoying it so much. Everyone (teachers) is excellent"
CYP Parent (2021)

Link to parents endorsement: <https://youtu.be/uJyzh9OXoI4> video

- [Parents](#) Questionnaire data
- The school has effective partnership with a number of Local Authorities - UK wide. The Senior Leadership Team liaises with staff at a range of levels and services to ensure the health and wellbeing, learning progress and positive destinations.
- The school is making very good progress in working with the local community - organisations, service providers, businesses and work placements.
- Working with college personnel in school/college partnerships is a particular strength of the school.
- The campus enjoys good working partnerships with Education Scotland, SQA, Care Commission, Skills Development Scotland, a number of volunteering agencies and the wider Moore House Group.
- The campus continues to build on working with local agencies to support children, young people and families/carers.

In Conclusion

The school continues to grow and expand in terms of learners' voices at the centre and amenities provided, support and challenge for staff, children and young people.

Quality Assurance and up to date research underpins the work of the campus as well as the wider Moore House Group.

Appendix 1

National Autistic Society Accreditation Visit Report



RECORD OF CONTACT – On-Site Support

Service: Moore House Academy - Butterstone
Status: Working Towards Accreditation
Key Contact: Tracey Ford-McNicol (Head Teacher)
Date of contact: 03/11/2022
Consultant: Stephen Pyott

Agenda	
Service information	X
Discussion on the process of accreditation	X
Consideration of support documentation	X
Observations	X
Next Steps	X

Discussion

Service information:

Moore House Academy: Butterstone, is located in a rural environment near Dunkeld, Perthshire. The school provides small group specialist day and residential care and education, including therapeutic support, for children and young people aged 11 to 18 years, whose high levels of anxiety and social communication impede their emotional development and prevent success in learning. Many of the young people who attend the school have a diagnosis of autism.

Staff work within the underpinning philosophy of Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP), thus promoting our nurturing ethos and the development of strong relationships in order to gain the trust of each child or young person. There is a strong focus on health and wellbeing and work with partners to help build resilience in the young people.

All teachers are fully qualified and registered with the GTCS and are supported by teaching assistants as necessary. There are flexible and creative learning opportunities within carefully planned personalised learning pathways that are rooted in the framework of *Curriculum for Excellence*. There is full entitlement within the BGE curriculum utilising the potential of interdisciplinary learning for many young people. In addition, the sensory curriculum supports the needs of young people with significant and complex needs. Young people at the Senior Phase are supported to achieve National level qualifications at an appropriate level that can include Highers and Advanced Highers. Work experience and links with colleges and universities have been established. The care and education staff plan, and work, together closely for the young people who live in the residential homes to ensure consistency across the 24-hour curriculum.

Staff report that regular self-evaluation at all levels helps to disseminate good practice as well as to respond quickly to any identified issues.

The provision was inspected by Education Scotland in March 2020. Learning, Teaching and Assessment was graded as Weak.

A follow up Education Scotland inspection visit was undertaken on 1st March 2022 with the following statement being made: "We recognise that the school needs some more time to implement fully its priorities for improvement. We have asked Moore House Group to provide us with further information about the school's progress within one year of the publication of this letter".

The provision was registered with NAS Autism Accreditation in April 2021.

It was reported that significant work has been undertaken to further develop working practices within the school and to address the findings within the Education Scotland inspections. Understandably, COVID-19 has impacted on progress, but it is clear that there are high aspirations in place and clear plans for the ongoing development of the provision.

Upon opening in 2019, the school inherited a number of staff from the school that had previously operated on this site. Over time significant changes have been made to the staff team and only a minority of staff from the previous school provision now remain.

An environment walk, undertaken during this visit, evidenced a number of significant, and beneficial, changes to the fabric, layout, and organisation of the setting from that provided previously. Young people now reside in houses that are separate from the school building. These houses have been adapted well according to individually assessed needs and provide a high standard of accommodation. Careful consideration has been given, for example, to potential sensory sensitivities as well as opportunities for young people to individualise the settings according to their preferences.

It was described that the school has established important relationships with both Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy consultants. Careful assessment of individual needs has been undertaken and ongoing assessment processes have been developed.

Discussion on the process of accreditation:

A discussion about the Autism Accreditation process was undertaken confirming the steps that need to be followed to enable an assessment of provision to be undertaken. Details were also provided about the potential outcomes from an assessment.

Consideration of support documentation:

It is considered that assessment processes and support documentation provide robust and relevant information regarding the needs and abilities of young people. Careful consideration has been given to the development of documentation that provides a rounded picture of the individual and that enables strengths, abilities and aspirations to be considered alongside needs and potential challenges.

Initial assessments are undertaken by staff to clarify the abilities and needs of each individual. From this baseline, the school begins to develop a comprehensive record that follows the young person throughout their placement. Within 4 weeks of admission, an initial person-centred Team Around the Child planning meeting is held. This involves the young person, their parent/carer, representatives from the placing authority and other relevant professionals. Individual curriculum and care plans are agreed clarifying teaching, learning and care objectives.

Education documents, including a Pen Picture, My Profile, IEP, Support Wheel, Post School Transition Plan, Pre-Admission Transition In Plan, etc., are relevant and detailed. They provide appropriate assessment information as well as SMART targets for development. There is good reference to autism, as appropriate to the individual, and good assessment of progress and achievement over time, including reference to key life skills development as well as academic success.

Care documents are equally robust with clear processes in place for the gathering and sharing of information. This includes clear assessment and reporting processes. The eight Scottish Government wellbeing indicators of Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, and Included (SHANARRI) are utilised. Risk Assessment processes are particularly robust and well considered. Care Plans contain relevant key information based upon these careful assessments and provide a useful framework for staff.

Observations:

It was considered that the following things could be developed further:

- Introductions and plenary could be utilised further to help to explain the purpose of sessions, to consider intended outcomes and targets, to review previous learning, and to review and evaluate successes.
- A visual reminder of intended learning outcomes/goals/targets would be useful.
- In some sessions, for example the Student Council meeting, visual supports could have been utilised further.
- Some settings have issues with potentially uncomfortable noise levels. This includes noisy wooden floors and echo in some of the larger spaces. Carpets, rugs or lino might be useful as would the introduction of soft furnishings, curtains, or other noise dampening solutions.
- Lighting in some areas could be challenging for some. Try to provide natural light with the option of window blinds to regulate levels of brightness and glare. Also try to provide dimmable lights where possible.
- Some rooms were noticeably warm or cold. This could be distracting and/or uncomfortable for some.
- In a few sessions, turn-taking could have been utilised further with everyone being provided with an opportunity to take part rather than relying on volunteers for answers/comments.
- When agreeing next steps, or when allocating responsibilities for future sessions, it would be useful to compile a written record of the agreements made.
- During lunch times it might be useful to consider providing a visual representation of the menu options. Further opportunities to make choices and/or partake in tasks relating to the setting up/tidying away of the lunch room might also be useful.
- Some rooms are cluttered and there are potentially distracting items on show. It would be useful to store items that are not needed during a particular session away.
- On rare occasions staff asked questions in a confusing way leaving students confused about what was actually required. Care should be taken to ensure that questions are carefully considered.
- Some instructions were overly long and complicated. Either shorter instructions would have helped or visual cues such as worksheets/lists would have been useful.
- Further opportunities for young people to work collaboratively would have been useful.
- Be careful to ensure that areas around the whiteboard are clear from potentially distracting information.

It was considered that the following things worked well:

- Support and planning documentation provided clear and useful information for staff and contained appropriate group and individual goals/targets.
- Sessions were well organised and required resources had been sourced prior to the start of sessions.
- There were noticeably many opportunities for social discussion.
- Reward/recognition systems were in place. For example, Learner of the Week, etc.
- During lunch time it was good to see staff eating alongside young people. This has many benefits including the modelling of expected behaviour and opportunities for social conversation.
- During lunch time young people were expected to tidy away.
- Lunch clubs provide motivating and rewarding activities based upon individual preferences.
- Countdowns were used to good effect in some sessions to signal the upcoming transition to another activity.
- Worksheets and books were used well by some teachers to provide visual support for allocated tasks.

- Interactive Whiteboards were used well as a motivating teaching resource by some teachers. In the best examples, staff made use of individual interests when using videos and pictures on the whiteboard.
- Tasks were allocated well to individuals encouraging them to problem solve and make decisions. This including the finding of required resources at the beginning of sessions and the tidying away of items at the end.
- Classrooms are well laid out with areas for individual task completion and areas for group work.
- Some staff worked with students to consider the content of future sessions. These discussions worked well, helping young people to feel fully involved in their learning.
- In some rooms careful consideration has been given to how information should be displayed. In the best examples, display was particularly meaningful. Successes and achievements were recognised and celebrated. Care should be taken to ensure that rooms don't become over stimulating/distracting for those with particular sensory sensitivities.
- Good consideration has been given to the availability of sensory stimulating/calming resources within rooms. Several young people were observed to use headphones to cut out background noise, others accessed sensory toys to support them to stim, twiddle, or flap when they became anxious, sensory resources were provided for young people to use between tasks to help them to refocus, etc. Movement breaks and time out opportunities were also viewed as positive self-regulation opportunities.
- Records of progress were clear.

Next Steps:

It is considered that very good progress has been made since the Education Scotland inspection visit of 2020. The school is still young, and is at the early stages of embedding practices. There is a clear vision for future development and assessment processes and support documentation are robust.

There is good developing evidence of young people achieving good levels of success and in taking very positive steps towards their future goals.

It is suggested that the provision may wish to collect further evidence of success over the next 12 months before considering an Autism Accreditation assessment. This time will allow additional evidence to be collected about individual student progress and success. It will also enable further developments to be made relating to the Autism Accreditation self-evaluation process. Time is often needed to demonstrate that changes are fully embedded into daily practice and that evidence is available regarding the impact of the changes that have been made. Additionally, positive progress evidenced by external statutory inspectorates would be beneficial.

Signed: Stephen Pyott

Date: 14/11/2022