

**Standards and Quality Report 2024 - 2025**

**About our school**

New Struan School is an independent day and residential school located in Alloa for pupils between the ages of 5 and 19. We cater for autistic pupils with different communication, social understanding and sensory experiences. We currently have 10 pupils from 5 different local authorities. Our average attendance rate over the year is 90%. 45.5% of our pupil population are working at Pre-Early level for Literacy and Numeracy.

Our vision is to enable our pupils to become included, confident learners in the community. We know that young autistic people can be successful learners, and we strive to provide the structured and supportive environment which enables them to reach their full potential.

New Struan School is part of Scotland's national autism charity, Scottish Autism which enables autistic people to lead happy, healthy and fulfilling lives.

**School Improvement Priorities 2024 to 2025**

- Developing our use of technology to safely optimise communication and learning within the school
- Developing our pedagogical approaches to learning and teaching to deliver the highest quality experiences within curriculum offering and senior phase pathways
- Collaborating with our families, school community and partners to develop and deliver a suite of inclusive Family Learning opportunities

**What has gone well?**

**Priority 1:**

- We have developed a new but effective partnership with 'Call Scotland' to support and assist our introduction and integration of Assistive Technology (Go Talks, TD Snap, and I pads) across the school. This has significantly enhanced the YP's ability to express themselves and engage in inclusive learning. Following a collaborative project, all our classroom assistants shared their experience and practice demonstrating their commitment to reducing barriers for our non-verbal

YP. This has led to increased skill and confidence from the staff team, greater engagement and reduced anxiety from YP as they can express their views and feelings as well as being motivated and curious to learn new skills for learning or communication.

- It came to our attention that many of our children are using different social media platforms such as Tik Tok /Discord/WhatsApp and Snapchat particularly. While we recognise some of these platforms are great for socialising and can provide a creative outlet for our YP, it can also have some harmful effects. A questionnaire was issued to both staff and parents on 'Cyber Resilience and Internet Safety' to establish their knowledge and understanding of the dangers of the internet and establish future training needs. From the feedback it was decided that Scottish Autism would invest further in a bespoke Filtering and Monitoring package for New Struan. We also produced a Responsible User Personal Technology Policy, which was sent to all parents explaining our Internet safety rational, parental agreement and consequences for misuse/disruption.
- The school staff have participated in a comprehensive Online Safety training course from NSPCC to ensure our staff feel knowledgeable and equipped to support the safety and wellbeing of our YP.

#### Priority 2:

- Analysis of our progress data shows that 80% of YP are meeting or exceeding their planned targets for literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.
- This year, our YP have achieved 17 National 1 and 2 units; 4 Short Course ASDAN awards at level 3 / 4 SCQF and 6 Youth Scotland Hi5 awards. One of our pupils has also achieved our first ever Saltire Award for her contribution to volunteering in the community.
- Our curriculum courses have been further developed to meet the ever-changing needs of our client group. We have delivered a greater number of ASDAN qualifications from Early level to level 4. We have also introduced the Saltire Award for the first time with three of our YP being awarded a Saltire Award in recognition of their volunteering.
- 3-year progression planning has increased the YP receiving a more appropriate progression pathway. The class teachers are now providing a more appropriate level of pace and challenge. Increased accreditations being offered have allowed YP to progress in a greater range of qualifications. This has also helped some of our senior YP gain access to link college placements and access Further Education after leaving school.
- Teachers making links with external colleges and local authority schools to forge curriculum links to ensure our YP have the best possible chance to progress to levels where we do not currently have subject specialism.
- Class teachers have been involved with national moderation activities, providing greater awareness of quality and standard of learning/evidenced to be produced. Increased confidence as it was recognised our evidence portfolios are above national standard level.
- Moderation activities for the whole school team are now routine and fully embedded. Whole school moderation activities have deepened the understanding of our Levels of Engagement and the shared standard to which they should be applied. All staff are using the terminology more consistently when reporting progress being made even at the smallest level.
- We have developed a Play Rationale to help everyone understand what the school is trying to achieve through its curriculum and pedagogy. This has been shared with our staff and families.

- Training in Froebel, Play and Intensive interaction for all staff, followed up with evaluation of understanding and opportunity to share how this has been further developed across the school, acknowledging the good practice and alignment that is already evident.
- To further our skills curriculum, we now have created personal 50 Things at New Struan record books for the YP to capture progress in '50 Things' across the 3 contexts of home, school and community. Achievement of a skill recognises each YP's journey toward their own definition of success- validating their effort and reinforcing equitable opportunities for all.
- YP are benefiting from responsive planning, there is greater engagement and progress being made as the staff are more confident to allow the YP to lead on certain aspects of their learning.
- There is increased evidence of RSHP being taught across our classes in a meaningful but proactive way. Our team have engaged in training and partnership working with NHS to develop their knowledge and skillset in this area to ensure all our YP access their entitlement.
- Teachers commenting that they are now hearing the CRA using the terms 'responsive and intentional' learning during team debriefs at the end of the day.
- Staff are responsive when YP completes work quicker and then provides additional challenges or the same work within a different context.
- Learning walks have elevated the understanding of standard, and practice expected by senior management. They have come to be valued by teachers and Classroom Assistants now, reinforcing and sharing good practice as well as creating more open and comfortable professional reflection and dialogue across the school.
- More quality statements and language that demonstrates an understanding of the value of the experience and the progress being made.
- Individual class teams are exploring and experimenting with planning formats that help outline and deliver the planned learning intentions by all involved in the educational experience of the YP.

### Priority 3:

- Through consultation with pupils, parents and staff, we identified six UNCRC articles that are the most meaningful and relevant to our school context. This inclusive process empowers our whole school community and ensures ownership of rights-based work. Our chosen rights are displayed through an interactive and accessible 'RRS rainbow' installation in the school entrance. We have refined and ensured that our Rights Respecting language has permeated through all our correspondence to parents and partners. In June we were awarded SILVER Rights Respecting School. This award from UNCRC recognises that 'Children's rights are learned understood and lived' and for the enormous work done by the whole school team over the last three years. Following the accreditation we were encouraged to offer an ambassadorial role to support other ASN schools to share our excellent practice.
- Four of our families took part in our Accreditation for the above award (Rights Respecting School Silver Award). Their positive views and reflection of how we have embedded RRS and the impact on their children definitely contributed to our successful achievement of this prestigious award.
- This year we collaborated with our families and consulted them on topics, mode of delivery and timings to develop our suite of Family Learning sessions and ensure they are responsive to identified needs. We have organised and delivered 2 inclusive family learning opportunities for parents; one on Our Curriculum and one on Sexual Development in partnership with our Sexual Health link at Forth Valley NHS. These sessions have been recorded so that they can be accessed by

our families to suit individual circumstances (working hours, distant locations). From the success of these learning opportunities this year, we plan to continue to build on our progress and deliver further sessions next academic year.

- School prize giving format has been altered and is now online, this has ensured our parents can be part of the prize giving at the end of each term to not only witness their own child's success but share in the success of all the YP.
- As we continued to review and refine our 50 Things at Struan, we wanted to further recognise and celebrate our YP transferring their skills at home. We have a monthly focus that is shared with our families, and they have the opportunity to share description/photos of YP participating and achieving skills at home.
- We have extended our partnership with 'Mindroom' to provide advocacy involvement for all our YP and their families. An advocacy worker attends the school once a month to observe, talk to YP and staff to understand what is supporting YP and what may need to be considered further to ensure our YP rights are always upheld. Mindroom have delivered training on the role of instructed and non-instructed advocacy and what this involvement can offer. Our provision is responsive to the needs of families and links have been fostered to continue this support for families even after the YP leave NSS.
- The school understands that it has a role to play in sharing and promoting best Autism practice within wider educational sector. Together with our partners we share skills, knowledge and experience and take part in joint professional learning opportunities within our organisation and out with. This year 4 of our staff presented at our Annual Staff Conference and led workshops on Rights Based Approaches; Intensive Interaction and Creative Potential. We relaunched our Educational Network afternoon with attendance of 20 colleagues from other establishments to discuss and learn about supporting distress.

### **Challenges and emerging priorities**

Our YP benefit from a wide-ranging staff team and curriculum input. There lies a challenge ensuring that all involved in facilitating the learning and teaching are clear on learning intentions and are confident at articulating and capturing their progress more accurately. We need consistency in quality, evaluative feedback to ensure *all* progress is captured and tracked. This constantly needs to be revisited as new staff come into the school, so we are all working from same understanding and standard.

Through our context for learning planners, teachers are now planning literacy and numeracy across learning in a more considered manner to record how literacy and numeracy is developed across the school. We would now like to further interrogate our application of BSquared to provide an even greater analysis and reporting of progress and identification of next steps to inform improvement. Raising attainment and achievement will always be a key priority for improvement, to respond to the ever-changing needs of our YP.

From the whole school training that has been delivered this year, we can now harness the increased awareness and knowledge the staff have of the Froebel principles and Play pedagogy by further developing our practical skillset and confidence across all our play areas. We want to be able to identify and accurately report on the associated skills being developed and achieved.

We recognise that we have made good progress across this year with an increased range of appropriate accreditations, and we want to build on this to provide further qualifications that align with the changing profile of our YP. This year we have been able to deliver National 5 level Maths and English coursework due to the partnership

with SQA and subject specialists from the YP's local authority. We now need to develop and deliver more pre-early level accreditations that meet the needs of most of our pupil population.

Three YP presented with significant dysregulation over an extended period. We engaged a multi-agency approach to bespoke assessment and developed informed stress reduction strategies. Unfortunately, high levels of risk were unable to be sustained in the school environment. This had a significant impact on our essential low arousal environment. Following this, there was a period of recovery required to restore the stability in staffing, collective wellbeing and progression with our learning and teaching endeavours. Other challenges influencing the coherence of our operations have included:

- Absence of HT across the year
- Managing change exercise with regards the number of FTE Classroom Assistants
- Higher collective number of YP transitioning than previous years; this year 10 of our YP leave us as a natural end point of Education
- The length of time it takes to transfer across health boards to ensure pupil's medical and health needs are being reviewed timelessly/without delay
- Ever changing client group requires evaluation of our environment, curriculum, pedagogy and accreditations

In response to the complex and critical nature of the referrals we are currently receiving, we acknowledge we need to review of our Assessment and Admissions process to develop a robust approach to ensure suitability of placement and a comprehensive needs analysis, involving external and internal partners. This will provide the YP with the best possible transition into New Struan and takes into consideration the specific needs of the individual and also the needs of our current population.

We continue to explore creative ways of partnering with relevant health services e.g. Occupational Therapy, to provide support and assessment required by our YP to ensure they can maintain a successful, inclusive educational placement.

#### **Draft 2025/26 Priorities:**

- 1. Enhancing coherence and progression in skills across the curriculum experiences. This will ensure an aspirational shared understanding of what high quality purposeful teaching and learning looks like.**
- 2. Strengthen the application and analysis of all tracking data available to robustly recognise, accredit, and reflect learner progress and wellbeing. Enabling targeted next steps through effective family and partnership collaboration, with the overarching aim of improving outcomes for all young people.**

Quality Indicator	Inspection Evaluation August 2019	2022 - 2023	2023- 2024	2024-2025
1.3 Leadership of change	Good	Good	Good	Good
2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion	Good	Good	Good	Very Good
3.2 Raising attainment and achievement	Satisfactory	Good	Good	Good