



SEAMAB SCHOOL



STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT

AUGUST 2010



Background

Seamab School offers day or residential service for up to 52 weeks per year for primary aged children with significant social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The school supports 15 residential children and one day pupil and offers a highly personalised family-type living environment in three bungalows which are situated about two miles from the school. Seamab School has a long and excellent history of meeting the needs of the most vulnerable boys and girls aged 5 – 12 years. It does this within a nurturing and therapeutic environment.

The education provided at Seamab is personalised to take account of the different learning needs of each child. The curriculum is firmly based on a *Curriculum for Excellence* and ensures all children are equipped with core skills of literacy and numeracy whilst also motivating disengaged learners through cross-curricular themes, often practical and experiential.

Care and education staff work together closely to ensure a seamless experience for children across 24 hours. A key strength of Seamab has been its ability to work so effectively with children that many successfully re-integrate into their own community, including to their local mainstream school.

A key aim is to provide a safe and enriching environment, where each child is valued and supported to become a successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen and an effective contributor to society.

During session 2009-10 staff included:

- Principal
- Depute Principal who has responsibility for care
- Head of Education
- 36 FTE care staff, including 1 senior team leader and 2 team leaders and 3 residential social workers, 3 senior care staff and 7 night care staff
- 4 teachers and 4 classroom assistants, art tutor, movement co-ordinator, pool supervisor, support co-ordinator
- Cook and domestic staff; 2 administrative staff; facilities manager and bursar

The school has a very active Board of Governors. The Principal works closely with the Chair of the Board and along with other senior staff provides detailed reports to the Board.

The school works very effectively in partnership with parents and families. Positive remarks made by parents in the annual audit questionnaires are highlighted later in this report.

The school educates and cares for children from ten local authorities. Placing authorities regularly praise the school for the quality of its service. Their remarks are also reported later.

The PURPOSE of Seamab is to improve the equality of life, now and in the future, of children who have severe social, emotional or behavioural difficulties by providing an integrated, individualized programme of cater, education and therapy which will enable children to develop close, secure and positive attachments.

To achieve its purpose Seamab pursues the following AIMS
Each child will form a close, secure and positive attachment to a member of staff and her/his educational, social and emotional development will be supported through the delivery of a range of activities based on a child-centred and individualised approach.
Seamab will provide a safe, positive, caring, therapeutic and nurturing environment where children are able to develop positive relationships with staff and peers and where they are encouraged to express, try, and explore in order to develop as confident and motivated individuals.
Seamab will develop positive, joint working arrangements with parents and carers; local authorities; schools; voluntary organisations and other agencies in order to promote a co-ordinated approach to service delivery in meeting the needs of children and families.
Each child, where appropriate, will move on to live in a family and to attend local educational provision.
Seamab will build its capacity and sustainability and will develop services in response to the needs of the children.
In all of its work, Seamab adheres to the following PRINCIPLES
The best interests of the child are paramount.
Each person, staff and pupils, must be treated fairly and with respect.
Each child must feel safe and secure.
Each child must have a close, secure, positive attachment to an adult.
Each child is an individual: differences must be respected.
We listen: each child must be involved in decisions about her/him.
Each child must have a familiar adult available to her/him at all times.

This report demonstrates the degree to which these aims have been fulfilled. It also shows the capacity the school has for continuous and further improvement.



Seamab's children learn to swim in the school's pool. They also compete in the school's annual swimming gala.



Challenges and Successes

What have our young people achieved during 2009-2010?

Seamab never stands still. Senior managers work closely with staff to respond to the changing needs of the children and are alert to different ways in which they can meet these.

Many children arrive in Seamab unable to play co-operatively. Staff are skilled in knowing how to make strong and meaningful relationships with the children and in helping them to feel safe and therefore more confident and able to interact with other children. Knowing what is important in each child's life, and knowing about her or his previous trauma, enables key staff to form a meaningful attachment with each child and thus allow them to develop and to learn.

As each child's sense of trust in adults grows, they become able to share attention and to ask for help when they need it. Staff help children to overcome their fear of reading and promote enjoyment by taking the children to the local libraries and reading them bed time stories. Children's

writing is also improving and they enjoy thinking up their contributions to the school's 'CMabazine'!

The 'Get-Set-Go' programme continues to support children who have a general lack of co-ordination this is frequently a problem with children who have severe attachment issues. The members of staff have undertaken training with NHS Forth Valley and are supported by an Occupational Therapist. They assess motor difficulties and deliver specific programmes which help children gain fine and gross motor skills and become more confident in movement and physical skills. They become better organised, gain a sense of self esteem, become calmer and are better able to deal with stressful situations. Their ability to learn in the classroom is greatly enhanced.



The youth club which is run by the support co-ordinator, classroom assistants and care staff, is well attended on Friday afternoons.

The football team continues to provide very good opportunities for team work and improved physical skills. They never win any matches but don't seem to mind!

A 'Seamab's Got Talent' show gave all the children the chance to shine in their own particular way.



Several children have successfully undertaken their cycling proficiency tests and are keen to use their bicycles around the bungalows and beyond. They enjoy their cycle trips with Sally.

All children continue to be involved in Eco activities and are aware of the need to re-cycle and save energy. They also constructed bird boxes with Vane Farm. Seamab has achieved a silver eco award and is working towards a green award, which will give the school a flag and flag-pole!

As always, Seamab's children enjoyed a range of holidays which provided a range of new experiences and opportunities to practise real life skills. Their time away also improved their relationships with each other as well as with staff members.

All children also enjoyed their Halloween party, Christmas Fayre, Burns lunch (complete with bag-piper), Easter egg hunt, Sports day and the school BBQ.

Pursuing Quality

Seamab aims to provide the highest quality of education and care for all of its children and knows that the only way to achieve this is to have a rigorous approach to quality assurance. Through robust self-evaluation the school identifies and rectifies weaknesses and builds on strengths and so continues to improve. Significant improvements made during this session are reported later.

Seamab is inspected every four years by the Care Commission together with HMIE. A written report is published and a follow-up inspection takes place after which a final report is published. As well this, Care Commission officers inspect the quality of care twice a year – one of these inspections being unannounced – again, written reports are published. Seamab takes full account of all these reports as part of its annual audit.

The 2009 HMIE/CC follow through report was extremely positive and can be



read in full by following this link.

Care Commission Inspections undertaken this year resulted in very good



evaluations and can be accessed at this link using the service number: CS2003009787.

In addition, Seamab uses a wide range of internal evaluation to ensure that the needs of children are met effectively. This includes formal monitoring of practice, scrutiny of plans and reports and supervision of staff. Seamab has a strong commitment to training its staff. For example, there are three recently qualified social workers and currently four more in training: almost all staff have accessed training in attachment theory with Dan Hughes' at level 1 and others have level 2. The school's movement co-ordinator and two members of care staff attended relevant NHS Forth Valley training 'Get set, Go!', led by physio-therapists and occupational therapists. Seamab works closely with the SIRCC to support staff through HNC and SVQ 3.

Seamab uses questionnaires and other means, including Children's rights officers and Who Cares? Scotland workers to consult with children, parents and families, staff and placing authorities to determine their views on important aspects of the service. The questionnaires responses were very positive.

The information gathered from these combined sources is collated and evaluated to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the school. It is also used to identify the priorities which will inform the improvement plan for the following session. This plan ensures a continuing commitment to closely integrated working across all aspects of the service.

The team of senior managers, together with the Chair of the Board, play key roles in monitoring the overall quality of the school.

What do people think of Seamab?

Our children like:

'Everything!

that x is my key worker; playing football; computer time; being able to play; the staff like a and b and c and d and e and f!!!'

Our parents say:

'I believe that x has come on leaps and bounds since he's been at Seamab. His behaviour has improved dramatically. I thank Seamab for taking care and helping my son.'

Our placing officers (psychologists, social workers) say:

'I have been involved with Seamab for 4 years. During this time staff have been committed to sustaining a multi-agency approach to ensure looked after children's needs are always to the fore. This placement has been highly positive.'

'(Although Seamab is far away from this child's home) Seamab's staff have worked effectively to overcome this through attending meetings in the boy's own town and having planning in place for parental work.'

'This has been an excellent placement with very high standards which have met the needs of the child.'

Others such as a reviewing officer, a tutor for social work degree students, and a Chair of a Children's Panel also made very positive comments about the progress of specific children, the school's informative reports and the very good level of communication.

What have we done better this year?

During the annual audit staff agreed the following areas of practice as being their most improved:

- Implementation of the integrated assessment of children's needs which has resulted in fuller reports going to Hearings, LAC reviews etc
- Improved communication and relationships between care and education staff
- Improved development of the theoretical knowledge of teachers and key workers

And successful outcomes included:

Two children very successfully moved on from Seamab with the result that:

- The social worker of one of the children praised Seamab's professional input to and support of the child in the transition period
- The social worker of the other promised future referrals based on the quality of Seamab's work.

We all work together to ensure our children do succeed



So what do we still want to improve?

As a result of our audit of quality in June, we have agreed the following key priorities for improvement across care and education in session 2010 to 2011.

- Support teachers to plan for the range of expressive arts within their themes
- Designate a co-ordinator and team to take forward Health promoting schools including training on providing information to children about sexual health and substance misuse
- Continue to use themed weeks as a focus for learning across 24 hours and link them to Curriculum for Excellence outcomes and experiences
- Consider how to provide opportunities to develop future leaders in education and care
- Timetable meetings with the parent participation group (which includes police and children) to promote mutual understanding

Further details of our priorities for improvement are in Seamab's Integrated Improvement plan and can be made available on request from the Principal.



We continue to work with our children to make them successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors, responsible citizens





The Principal and staff of Seamab will continue to make excellent provision for children during 2010-2011.