



Education  
Scotland  
Foghlam Alba



**The Scottish Centre for  
Children with Motor  
Impairments  
Cumbernauld  
20 September 2016**

Education Scotland inspect schools in order to let parents<sup>1</sup> and young people know whether their school<sup>2</sup> provides a good education. Inspectors also discuss with staff how they can improve the quality of education.

At the beginning of the inspection, we ask the headteacher/senior managers and staff about the strengths of the school, what needs to improve, and how they know. We use the information they give us to help us plan what we are going to look at. During the inspection, we go into classes and join other activities in which young people are involved. We also gather the views of young people, parents, staff and members of the local community. We find their views very helpful and use them together with the other information we have collected to arrive at our view of the quality of education.

This report tells you what we found during the inspection and the quality of education in the school. We describe how well young people are doing, how good the service is at helping them to learn and how well it cares for them. We comment on how well staff, parents and young people work together and how they go about improving the school. We also comment on how well the school works with other groups in the community, including services which support young people. Finally, we focus on how well the school is led and how staff help the school achieve its aims.

If you would like to learn more about our inspection of the school, please visit [www.educationscotland.gov.uk](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk). Here you can find analyses of questionnaire returns from young people, parents and staff, and details about young people's examination performance. We will not provide questionnaire analyses where the numbers of returns are so small that they could identify individuals.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers, residential care staff and carers who are relatives or friends.

<sup>2</sup> The term 'school' includes the nursery class or classes where appropriate.

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### **1. The school**

The Scottish Centre for Children with Motor Impairments (SCCMI) is a grant-aided school situated in Cumbernauld. The SCCMI offers nursery and primary education for children who have complex neurological impairments and a range of medical and communication difficulties. The roll at the time of the inspection was nine children in the primary and none in the nursery. Teachers, early years practitioners, therapists and support workers work in a co-professional and collaborative way to provide an integrated approach to assessment, learning, and teaching. The SCCMI also offers an access to education programme and an early intervention programme. Attendance was high taking account of children's medical conditions. There have been no exclusions.

## **2. Key strengths of the centre**

- Happy, motivated, engaged children who benefit from the rich communication environment.
- The high-quality collaborative and integrated teamwork to assessing and meeting children's complex needs.
- Highly skilled staff who ensure that children can learn and achieve in a nurturing and safe environment.
- The outstanding support for families.
- The leadership of the senior management team in driving improvements.

## **3. How well do children learn and achieve?**

Children in the Scottish Centre for Children with Motor Impairments are learning and achieving very well. Almost all children are eager to take part in the wide range of activities which staff plan for them, especially those involving their senses, such as during the 'bear hunt' story. They are highly motivated by and respond well to the frequent and very well-judged use of praise and encouragement. A strong feature of learning is the way children are supported to make decisions, express their preferences, and are encouraged to do as much as they can for themselves. Children work with staff and their families to raise funds for local and international charities. For example, they are supporting the Starflower learning centre in Thailand by sending gifts and equipment, and exchanging video messages with each other. Staff make very good use of the sensory garden, outside play areas and the local community to enhance children's learning. We have asked the SCCMI to increase opportunities for children to learn in the community and alongside children in other local schools.

Children are making very good progress and achieve well across a wide range of areas and activities. They are improving their physical wellbeing and gaining confidence by taking part in challenging activities in the hydrotherapy pool, on the rebound trampoline, and riding their adapted bikes around the centre and garden. They are supported to take on responsibilities such as feeding the fish, doing the school register and by being a member of the pupil council. Children can also showcase their work and achieve success at the annual sports day and Christmas show. Children's many achievements are recognised and celebrated as they happen, in displays, at school assemblies and in the home-school diaries that go home to parents. The SCCMI recognises the need to extend opportunities for children's achievements to be accredited.

Across the SCCMI, children are making very good progress in their literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing with almost all achieving their learning and therapy targets. Children listen and communicate very well in a variety of ways, including the use of on-body signing, symbols, and technology such as eye gaze. They enjoy working in pairs on simple numeracy games using their switches. Children are supported to explore natural everyday objects and materials of different colour, size and texture to develop their early mathematical concepts. The trusting relationships children have with staff contribute greatly to their development of resilience and emotional wellbeing. For example, they work very well together and value the friendships they have with each other. All children respond well to the daily care routines and including learning to brush their teeth through the "Childsmile" programme.

#### **4. How well does the centre support children to develop and learn?**

The SCCMI has excellent systems for identifying children's strengths and the difficulties they face. Teaching, support and therapy staff collaborate to draw up very detailed profiles based on highly effective assessments of children's physical, medical and communication

needs. For example, specialist speech and language therapists produce very informative eating and drinking profiles. This outstanding teamwork enables all staff to plan together how to best support children and their families. Personal learning plans and weekly 'child at the centre' meetings allow staff to share information about individual children and plan responses as needs change. Overall, the teams provide relevant, very well-matched learning and therapy activities to help children make progress in their learning and development. The SCCMI provides parents and partners with informative reports of exceptional quality on their children's progress and achievement, including those who attend the access to education and early intervention programmes. Parents feel welcome in the SCCMI and commented very positively on the support to them and their children.

The curriculum is based on the identified needs, abilities and interests of the children. It takes very good account of the need to develop their communication skills and promote health and wellbeing. Children's literacy and numeracy skills are being promoted effectively across the curriculum. The planning and resources for physical education are outstanding. All children benefit greatly from well-planned challenging physical activities and therapies in both individual and group settings. Staff now need to review the range of learning activities in place to support children's health and wellbeing as they move through the school. Staff plan a range of interesting topics to help children make links across learning. There is a need to develop this approach further to make sure that children make the best progress they can across the broad general education. There is also scope to involve local partners more in developing and delivering the curriculum. The SCCMI has very good arrangements for working with partners and other establishments when children join the school or other services. Staff also work in collaboration with a range of partners to help children move on successfully from the SCCMI.

## **5. How well does the centre improve the quality of its work?**

Continuous improvement is central to the SCCMI's vision and direction. The management team and staff frequently reflect on their work and how this impacts on children's learning and development. They have developed highly integrated and inclusive processes for self-evaluation which are leading to improvements. As a result, staff have a very good understanding of what is working well and what needs to be improved. All staff have very good opportunities to continue to develop their professional knowledge and skills. This is very evident in the quality of specialised support provided to children with their eating and drinking, communication, movement and mobility. Staff would benefit from visits to other establishments to share good practice. The SCCMI should build on its very good arrangements for observing and monitoring the quality of learning and teaching to develop a more integrated and collaborative approach across teams. There are very good approaches for tracking children's progress in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Staff are currently improving how they track children's progress across all aspects of their learning. As they continue to develop these arrangements, staff should ensure that they remain effective and manageable over time. The Chief Executive Officer has a very clear vision for the future of the SCCMI and has successfully steered it through a period of considerable change. He is very well supported by a team of very experienced and highly skilled senior staff who fulfil their roles very well. Together they have successfully improved children's learning experiences, achievements, and wellbeing.

## **6. What happens next?**

We are satisfied with the overall quality of provision. We are confident that the SCCMI's self-evaluation processes are leading to improvements. As a result, we will make no further visits in connection with this inspection. The Board of Directors will inform parents about the SCCMI's progress as part of the Board of Director's arrangements for reporting to parents on the quality of the SCCMI.

We have agreed the following areas for improvement with the SCCMI and Board of Directors.

- Continue to develop the curriculum in line with national guidance.
- Further develop peer observations of learning across teams to share practice and further improve outcomes for children.

Quality indicators help schools, education authorities/board of governors and inspectors to judge what is good and what needs to be improved in the work of the school. You can find these quality indicators in the HMIE publication *How good is our school?*.

Here are the evaluations for The Scottish Centre for Children with Motor Impairments.

|                                    |                  |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Improvements in performance</b> | <b>very good</b> |
| <b>Learners' experiences</b>       | <b>very good</b> |
| <b>Meeting learning needs</b>      | <b>very good</b> |

|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| <b>The curriculum</b>                      | <b>good</b>      |
| <b>Improvement through self-evaluation</b> | <b>very good</b> |

**Managing Inspector:** Olwynne Clark  
20 September 2016

When we write reports, we use the following word scale so that our readers can see clearly what our judgments mean.

|                |       |   |
|----------------|-------|---|
| excellent      | means | outstanding, sector leading                         |
| very good      | means | major strengths                                     |
| good           | means | important strengths with some areas for improvement |
| satisfactory   | means | strengths just outweigh weaknesses                  |
| weak           | means | important weaknesses                                |
| unsatisfactory | means | major weaknesses                                    |

Additional inspection evidence, such as details of the quality indicator evaluations, for your school can be found on the Education Scotland website at

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/inspectionandreview/reports/school/primsec/CraighalbertScottishCentreforChildrenwithMotorImpairmentsNorthLanarkshire.asp>.

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