

Summarised inspection findings

Stanmore House School

1 September 2026

Key contextual information

Stanmore House School is a grant-aided additional support needs school located in the town of Lanark, South Lanarkshire. The school is currently supporting nine young people ranging from S1 to S6. The young people who attend the school have complex communication, sensory, learning and health needs. There are two classes. Young people attend either a broad general education (BGE) class or a senior phase class, as appropriate to their stage. Young people are placed at Stanmore House School through an individualised placement agreement involving the young person's education authority.

Stanmore House School's leadership team comprises of the headteacher, principal teacher and the care team leader. Three teachers (2 fte) are employed at Stanmore House School as well as care practitioners (10.8 fte) and a team of allied health professionals (AHPs). The AHP team includes a lead physiotherapist, a lead speech and language therapist (0.8 fte), a lead dietician (0.2 fte), an occupational therapist and therapy assistants (2.6 fte).

Stanmore House School's facilities comprise of classrooms, an interactive sensory room, salon room, library, nurture room, therapy room and music room. There is also an information and communications technology (ICT) suite, a rebound therapy room and a hydrotherapy pool.

2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

very good

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

- Senior leaders and staff create a highly welcoming, inclusive and respectful learning environment. The school values are embedded and consistently reflected in the very warm and caring relationships between staff and young people. Senior leaders, teachers, care practitioners and AHPs provide cohesive support to ensure that all young people access individualised learning. Young people's experiences are matched very well to their needs. As a result, almost all young people are highly motivated and engage very well in their learning.
- Staff ensure that all young people experience a nurturing school culture firmly centred on children's rights. Staff make sure that rights-based learning is prominent throughout the school. Young people regularly learn about children's rights through monthly assemblies and rights-based learning activities. Staff plan meaningful and relevant experiences relating to children's rights. For example, young people collaborated recently with peers from a local primary school to develop sensory story creation skills. Children and young people have developed their understanding of inclusive education for all through their involvement in the project.
- Staff's approaches to developing young people's communication skills are a major strength. Staff encourage young people very well to make regular choices, share their views and take responsibility in their learning. All young people use very well their preferred communication methods to choose tasks during lessons. Young people use a range of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) methods such as eye pointing, signed communication, choice boards and high-technology AAC devices. Young people develop and apply very well their communication skills across the school day. For example, a few young people tell staff what they would like to eat during snack times using an electronic talking aid. The speech and language therapist and therapy assistants regularly support and observe young people's communication during the school day. They use their observations very effectively to inform staff of young people's progress and next steps. Staff work closely with families and residential care staff. This ensures that they develop a shared understanding of each young person's communication needs. As a result, young people use very well their communication skills at home and in school to share their experiences, thoughts and opinions.
- The quality of learning and teaching across the school is very effective. In almost all lessons, teachers' instructions are clear. As a result, young people understand the purpose of their learning. Teachers plan creatively learning activities that are active and match young people's interests very well. Staff observe young people closely. They very skilfully adapt activities and experiences to make sure that young people remain engaged in learning. Staff use a range of

approaches in almost all lessons, including one-to-one teaching, station activities and group tasks. In almost all lessons, teachers consistently revisit young people's individualised educational programmes (IEPs) and skills targets. All teachers provide clear plenaries and check-ins at the end of lessons to summarise young people's learning.

- All staff use digital technologies effectively to enrich young people's learning. For example, young people use talking scales very well to weigh ingredients during sensory cooking classes. They use switches to operate small kitchen appliances, such as food mixers. Most young people access educational online games alongside using switches. Staff use music and digital displays very effectively to support positive interactions, transitions, engagement and enjoyment. All young people access digital experiences regularly as part of their interdisciplinary learning. Staff use these experiences very well to develop young people's independence.
- All staff recognise the importance of play in supporting learning, wellbeing, communication and engagement. They adopt effective child- and adult-led play-based approaches within classes. For example, young people in the BGE learn about children's rights from birth by taking care of baby dolls. As a next step, staff should ensure that they more fully embed planned child-led and adult-led play experiences. This will help promote curiosity and social interaction for all young people.
- All young people display positive and safe behaviours. Staff create and review positive relationship plans to support young people and minimise distressed behaviours. Staff know young people very well and provide caring and attentive support when young people show signs of dysregulation or discomfort. As a result, young people's immediate needs are met well and disruption to learning is minimised.
- Staff have embedded assessment approaches very well across the school. Senior leaders, teachers, care practitioners and AHPs work very well together to assess effectively young people's progress. Staff assess skills development; personal targets set in IEPs and progress in learning across the curriculum. As a result of these robust assessment processes, staff have a clear understanding of young people's progress. They use this information very well to plan well-considered next steps and make sure that young people maximise their progress.
- Staff have adopted highly effective internal moderation approaches. Teachers, senior leaders, care practitioners and AHPs meet twice termly to reflect on the progress that each individual young person makes. They use their professional expertise very well to assess each young person's progress collaboratively. For example, the speech and language therapist contributes to assessing communication targets. At these attainment meetings, staff ensure that their judgements are based on robust evidence. They record their discussions and the expected impact in a school template. In the senior phase, staff's professional judgements are supported by the verification process for National Qualifications. As planned, senior leaders should continue to strengthen moderation in the BGE by developing further links with partner schools.
- Staff use a strong planning framework consistently well to plan effectively over different timescales. They link the curriculum framework to interdisciplinary learning topics. The curriculum framework is highly relevant to the needs of young people and focuses on communication, skills, responding to the environment, and health and wellbeing. Teachers use forward plans very effectively to identify the skills, national milestones or qualifications that inform individual learning outcomes. Senior leaders provide valuable written feedback on the quality of forward plans. Teachers use this feedback to make sure that plans are clear and

provide sufficient detail. Teachers use forward plans effectively to organise weekly and daily learning activities. They reference young people's individual skills and personal targets at the start of each learning activity. As a result, all staff have a strong shared understanding of the individual skills and personal targets that young people work towards.

- Staff across multi-disciplinary teams create well-integrated plans that meet young people's care, education and health needs effectively. Senior leaders, teachers, care practitioners and AHPs meet twice termly to develop detailed IEPs. AHPs use therapy plans to help identify individual needs. Teachers and care practitioners use this information to plan educational and care targets. As a result, staff co-create robust plans to meet the holistic needs of young people.
- Staff have established a detailed self-evaluation calendar that provides a robust structure for tracking and monitoring young people's progress. Staff track very well the skills that young people develop using a skills tracker. In the BGE, all young people have a detailed profile which records progress termly against the national milestones and the continuum of engagement. Staff track very well young people in the senior phase using a school system that shows progress over time. Staff monitor effectively individual young people's progress as they move through the BGE and into the senior phase. Staff's robust tracking of skills and curricular progress is supporting them to provide clear evidence of young people's overall progress. Staff use this data well to inform planning of young people's next steps in learning.
- Senior leaders use well-embedded procedures to report to parents on young people's progress. Staff share IEP updates at annual review meetings. Staff provide regular newsletters which highlight the work undertaken by young people including detailed information on interdisciplinary learning projects and wider achievements. Staff use 'termly snapshots' to showcase a young person's learning week. These communication approaches provide valuable insights for parents and enhance home-school relationships.

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 and young people. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school, the executive team and the Board of Trustees.

3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

very good

This indicator focuses on the school's success in achieving the best possible outcomes for all learners. Success is measured in attainment across all areas of the curriculum and through the school's ability to demonstrate learners' achievements in relation to skills and attributes. Continuous improvement or sustained high standards over time is a key feature of this indicator. The themes are:

- attainment in literacy and numeracy
- attainment over time
- overall quality of learners' achievement
- equity for all learners

Attainment in literacy and numeracy

- Almost all young people make very good progress in literacy and English and numeracy and mathematics. Most young people work at foundation milestones level and a few at pre-early milestones level. All young people require significant levels of additional support with their learning.

Attainment in literacy and English

- Almost all young people make very good progress from prior levels of attainment in literacy and English. Almost all young people make excellent progress in reading.

Listening and talking

- Almost all young people make very good progress in developing their communication skills. Staff support young people very well to extend and enhance their communication skills using a range of personalised communication approaches. Young people use very well AAC devices such as high-technology devices, switches, sign-based communication systems, eye pointing and symbols. Young people express likes and dislikes and respond to simple questions using their preferred communication mode.

Reading

- Young people benefit from outstanding approaches to developing reading skills. The school's work in developing reading has been formally recognised through an accreditation programme. Young people take part in very well-considered experiences which make reading meaningful. Young people use the school library very well to access books and storytelling resources.
- Staff have created very strong partnerships to develop a reading culture within the school and to promote improved access in the local community. For example, young people take part in reading challenges in local libraries. Through partnership with the school, local libraries have created sensory story bags and resources to be much more sensory aware. Young people take part in visits with an associated local primary school. Together, children and young people share sensory stories such as the Gingerbread Man which include the use of touch and sight puppets, smell and other sensory stimuli. Young people develop positive social relationships through these highly inclusive experiences. Young people access immersive storytelling at a local museum. They have helped create five sensory stories that capture the main characters

of the museum's display. Staff and partners in the museum have linked these stories to the national milestones curriculum.

- Almost all young people make excellent progress in developing their reading skills. Staff have delivered valuable training to parents and care staff on reading skills and provide sensory story bags to promote reading beyond the school day. Young people engage actively in sensory stories. They use visuals to make choices regarding preferred familiar stories. Staff should share more widely their approaches to developing reading skills with other schools.

Writing

- Almost all young people make very good progress in developing their emergent writing skills. Young people use their motor skills to make marks during sensory stories. They use different sensory materials to explore creatively materials and objects. They use their fine motor skills to hold and stabilise and grasp and release chosen objects. Staff should continue to develop their already well-embedded creative approach to encourage young people to develop their emerging writing skills. For example, by supporting a few young people to produce specific mark making such as scribbles.

Senior phase

- In the senior phase, all young people make very good progress in communication. All young people attain qualifications at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level one, while a few gain qualifications at SCQF level two. They have gained suitable qualifications in creating texts, listening and responding to texts and recognising character in fiction. Young people use their communication skills to make sure that their voice is heard. For example, young people contribute to annual review meetings and have recently delivered a presentation related to a rights accreditation programme.

Attainment in Numeracy

- Almost all young people make very good progress from prior levels of attainment in numeracy.

Number, money and measure

- Young people develop their awareness and experience of number through interdisciplinary learning tasks. For example, most young people count from one to five during javelin throwing activities and when counting musical beats during music and movement sessions. All young people regularly access visual timetables to develop their understanding of the sequence and structure of each day. Each morning, they explore key parts of the day. All young people experience measurement and weight during practical activities, such as sensory baking lessons. Young people explore money through activities such as shopping in the community or during role play sessions. Staff should continue to develop young people's real-life experiences to promote functional numeracy skills.

Shape, position and movement

- All young people working at the foundation milestones level explore shape through touch and sensory play. Young people respond well to positional language, for example "*move forward*", "*behind*" and "*next to*" during movement and dance lessons. Staff weave movement into the curriculum for all learners, for example during sensory circuits, rebound therapy and when following routes around the school. Young people now need to explore and handle a wider range of two-dimensional shapes.

Information handling

- Almost all young people communicate information well. They use now and next boards, and visual timetables to understand transitions within the school day. Almost all young people use communication choice boards and symbols to express their needs and preferences. They explore and sort objects by shape, size and colour with support as required. Young people take part in simple class surveys, for example during plenary check-ins. Almost all young people create charts to display information they have gathered. Staff should support a few young people to develop further their skills in matching objects, pictures and symbols.

Senior phase

- In the senior phase, all young people are making very good progress in developing their number skills. All young people attain qualifications at SCQF level one. They have gained qualifications in number skills units, for example measurement of weight and handling money. As a result, young people are exploring number in meaningful contexts, such as during cookery lessons and in play-based activities.

Attainment over time

- Young people at the school have very high attendance rates. According to the school's data, the average attendance rate for the current session is 97%. This is well above the national average for the sector. Currently, no young people have an attendance rate below 90%. AHPs communicate very well with health consultants to ensure that a few young people have been supported very well to return to school promptly following surgery. AHPs and staff plan effectively to mitigate risks and support young people's rehabilitation.
- Almost all young people in the BGE make very good progress over time. Almost all young people build very well their emergent literacy and numeracy skills and show strong progress as they move through the BGE.
- In the senior phase, all young people make very good progress. All young people attain qualifications at SCQF level one. A few young people gain qualifications at SCQF level two. In the last five years, young people have gained an increasing number of qualifications in a wider range of curricular areas. In session 2020/21, young people gained eight qualifications in five curricular areas. By session 2024/25, this increased to 55 qualifications in 13 curricular areas. Staff have established a robust qualification framework that aligns closely to the skills framework and the school's wider achievement programme. As a result, young people in the senior phase experience a progressive curricular pathway that enables them to improve very well their communication, wellbeing and skills development.

Quality of learners' achievements

- Staff have developed a robust and progressive achievement framework. This framework complements very well young people's planned learning in the BGE and senior phase and supports the delivery of personal targets. AHPs work cohesively with teachers and care practitioners to ensure programmes meet young people's health and wellbeing needs. As a result of this effective working, young people enjoy accessible activities and residential experiences which contribute towards accredited awards. All young people in the senior phase have recently gained a gold youth achievement award. The qualification provider recognises staff's expertise in developing a relevant, meaningful programme and are highlighting this work as a creative example of effective practice. All young people in the BGE achieve accredited awards at a suitable level. They participate in valuable and enriching experiences

that improve their communication skills, wellbeing and ability to interact in less familiar contexts.

- All young people take part in celebrations that recognise their contribution to the local community. Almost all young people are creating a dance video, which will be showcased at the upcoming annual Lanark Lanimer Day celebrations. Young people contributed very well to fundraising for the event by taking part in the 'Lap the Loch for Lanimer' event. This year, a few young people will take on a lead role in Lanimer Day, for example as a flower bearer. Through these activities, all young people contribute positively to their local community.

Equity for all learners

- Senior leaders and staff have a very solid understanding of the additional support needs and socio-economic context of all young people including care experienced learners. Staff deliver a range of workshops to parents and to the residential care staff. These workshops promote holistic approaches for all learners for example on effective communication and creating sensory stories. Families and care staff value these inputs highly.
- Staff plan and review young people's transitions effectively. They involve stakeholders fully and consider very well their views. Staff use the information they gather to develop robust transition plans. As a result, young people who join Stanmore House settle quickly and engage promptly in learning. All young people in the senior phase, access a link course at a local college over two years. In the last three years, all school leavers have moved on to positive, sustained destinations.

Practice worth sharing more widely

Within Stanmore House School, there is outstanding practice that should be shared to support other schools.

The development of reading

The headteacher and principal teacher have supported staff to develop very strong approaches to promoting reading skills.

Staff have created very strong community-based partnerships, including with local schools, libraries and museums. Together, they have collaborated to promote the use of sensory materials and resources in the community. These inclusive approaches benefit young people who can use these materials and resources to access sensory stories in the community.

Staff have supported very well families and care staff to enhance their knowledge of sensory approaches by providing training, advice and resources.

Approaches to promoting achievement

Staff have collaborated very well to build an achievement framework that complements the BGE and senior phase curricula, personal targets and skills development. Staff plan very effectively to ensure that health and care needs are considered fully when creating programmes.

Young people benefit from a progressive framework as they move from the BGE into the senior phase. As a result, all young people in the senior phase achieve accreditation at a high level and extend their skills in a range of contexts.

Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard HMIE 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.

On behalf of the Office of His Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland