

CAMPHILL SCHOOL ABERDEEN

GUIDING VISION STATEMENT – FEBRUARY 2009

The Camphill School, a part of the international Camphill Movement, aims to create a community in which vulnerable children and adults, many with learning disabilities, can live, learn and work with others in healthy social relationships based on mutual care and respect. The foundation of our work is an acknowledgment of the spiritual uniqueness of each human being, regardless of differences such as disability or religious or racial background. This is also expressed in anthroposophy, developed by Rudolf Steiner. Our approach integrates education, care, crafts and therapy to create a holistic response to the needs of individuals. A particular feature of our community life is the cultivation of social integration through the celebration of personal anniversaries, seasonal activities and festivals.

The primary task of the School is the care and education of children and young people with additional learning and support needs. Believing that each person's needs are unique we aim to formulate responses and approaches which are highly individualised such as one-person learning programmes/lessons, learning in the outdoors, etc.

As a community that recognises the need for self-development to help others effectively, our work reflects innovation in educational, social and therapeutic practice. We fully support the management and enhancement of the Curative Education degree programme in partnership with the University of Aberdeen as this significantly contributes to our continuing academic and professional development. We are committed to an engagement with wider society, thereby promoting our work and facilitating a mutually beneficial flow of information and learning.

Creating a community where children, young adults and co-workers feel a sense of belonging, support and growth is very important to us and we endeavour to live and work together in ways which promote this aspiration. Fundamental to our approach is the recognition of the strengths and abilities of each member of our school community. We are committed to treating everyone with respect and dignity and to enabling them to discover their potential. We work towards a future where people with additional learning and support needs are fully included in society.

The School is governed by a Council of Management (The Council) which holds legal responsibility. The Council delegates responsibility for day-to-day management to a co-worker group known as Co-ordinators, who liaise with the Camphill Meeting. The Co-ordinators delegate the business of the School to Task Groups, each of which normally has one or more Co-ordinator(s) as a member. The Co-ordinators also act as a direct line of communication to the Council. Our commitment is to management based on consensus, collaboration, accountability, self-regulation, and the delegation of responsibilities to groups and individuals.

We seek to develop a living and working community based on equality of rights and opportunities, collaboration, freedom, and empowering, trusting and respectful relationships.

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Whilst we are physically located across three estates, we operate as one School and strive to create a unity of purpose and collegiate working whilst acknowledging the rights of each estate, within the boundaries of this Guiding Vision Statement and other agreements, to develop its own community identity, culture, and practice.

We are committed to caring for the land, strive to value the environment and use, where possible and practical, sustainable resources. We integrate this philosophy and practice into the daily life of the School, creating learning opportunities to support and enhance a healthy lifestyle such as land work, gardening, etc.

Whilst maintaining our ideals and working methods we remain open to new opportunities to contribute to the care and education of children and young people with additional learning and support needs and seek to understand and respond to the wishes and preferences of carers and relevant authorities. This may entail adjustments to care and education models as adopted by the wider society, for example, a greater 'day pupil' provision and developments beyond our current physical and task boundaries.

This Guiding Vision Statement has been formulated by the Development Plan Reference Group following extensive consultation. Our commitment is to review it annually through similar open and extended dialogue processes.

The Development Plan Reference Group is: Elena Chepelina, Christian Winkelmann, Vincent D'Agostino, Bernhard Menzinger, Jennifer Gordon and Paul Henderson.

03 February 2009