

Clowndoctors deliver smiles and laughter to the children and young people who need them most. Six days a week, we visit hospitals, hospices, and schools for learners with additional support needs, right across Scotland. Behind the Clowndoctors programme is the charity, Hearts & Minds. www.heartsminds.org.uk

Clowndoctors in the Classroom can help children and young people in school by:

- Increasing engagement
- Improving communication
- Improving participation
- Improving mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Increasing confidence and self-esteem
- Reducing anxiety
- Improving social interactions with others, in particular their peers in school

Get in touch!

To find out how we can help the children in your care, please email us at info@heartsminds.org.uk or call us on **0131 229 4037**



Hearts & Minds
Improving lives one **smile** at a time

Follow us on social media for latest news



Hearts & Minds is a Registered Scottish Charity No. SC027040
Lower Ground, 4 Castle Terrace, Edinburgh, EH1 2DP | 0131 229 4037

Photographers: Eoin Carey, Delphine Porcé, Kellman Greig-Kicks

Clowndoctors in the classroom

Delivering smiles and
laughter across Scotland
and a lot more besides...



Clowndoctors
Delivering **smiles & laughter**

Have you seen a bright yellow coat and a small red nose recently?

Clowndoctors in the Classroom visit children and young people in Special Educational Needs Schools. We wear a bright yellow coat and a red nose, always visit in pairs and are therapeutic clowns. What this means is that a unique visit from us can have a therapeutic effect, impacting on mental health and wellbeing, self-regulation and helping pupils engage in learning. We follow a timetable that we agree with schools at the beginning of each term – allowing for flexibility as we are aware that situations can change with little warning. Each visit is made on the same day of the week so that staff and young people know when to expect us.

Professional performers with specialist training

Each Clowndoctor is a professional performer with specialist training in clowning, music, and improvisation, and in clowning with young people with additional support needs within school environments. The Clowndoctors are also trained in some medical vocabulary, the pathologies we might encounter and hygiene procedures.

Relationships and referrals

We work in close collaboration with staff in the school. In fact, good clown-staff relations help to ensure the success of the Clowndoctors programme. At the beginning of each term or block, teachers let us know which children we will be seeing over the term and tell us the reasons why we will be seeing them. We then work closely with all the staff in the school, working towards the desired outcomes set for each child or class. Being with children and young people in schools over a long period helps build a good, long-lasting relationship with the Clowndoctors which can be beneficial for learners, both as part of the Curriculum for Excellence and pupils individual targets.



“I feel the pupils are really benefiting from the sessions and we are seeing some lovely levels of engagement and interaction from our lovely class. I come away with a tear in my eye every week from your sessions.” Teacher, Fairview School



A ‘made to measure’ approach

Each interaction is ‘made to measure’ and improvised. Empathy, authenticity, and playfulness sit at the heart of our approach and while visits might involve music, singing, magic, puppetry, slapstick, or imaginative play, we always put the child’s needs first. We focus on the desired outcomes for each learner and provide a tailor-made visit – as individual as the children we visit. We can work with small groups (up to eight in a class) or individuals.

Communication and feedback

Before changing into costume at the start of each visit, we check in with the appropriate staff to see which children are in school that day and how they are. We record the successes or developments of each interaction and provide feedback and helpful information on each child’s wellbeing, based on their responses to us. All referral documents and details are treated in the strictest confidence and our Clowndoctors sign a confidentiality agreement.

It is important to be direct. If the Clowndoctors’ presence is ever inappropriate (for example, in a medical emergency) please just let us know. Each school will be assigned a Unit Lead who is responsible for liaising with staff to make sure that everything is running smoothly. This is the ideal opportunity for detailed feedback, questions and to discuss any specific issues.