



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



School Name: Northwood Community Primary School

School Address: Roughwood Drive
Northwood
Kirkby
L33 8XD

Head/Principal: Sarah Murphy

IQM Lead: Carrie Hyland

Assessment Date (s): 22nd Nov & 23rd Nov 22

Assessor: Louise McCallion

Sources of Evidence:

- Discussions with a range of stakeholders
- Learning Walks
- Observation of assembly
- Observation of a staff briefing
- Work scrutiny
- Lunch with children
- Observation of children at play
- A vast range of paperwork including policies, staff handbook, planning, School Improvement Plan, CPD records, data overviews and much more
- Website
- Prospectus
- Social media
- Prospectus

Meetings Held with:

- Pupils
- Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher (Inclusion Lead)
- Chair of Governors
- External partner
- Teachers
- PSHE team lead
- Intervention staff
- Parents
- Senior Leaders/Team Leaders
- SENCo and Assistant SENCo



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Overall Evaluation

Northwood Community Primary School is a larger than average primary school in the heart of the local community. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above the national average. It is a diverse school - two form entry mainstream plus a Language Hub (LHUB) and a Designated Special Provision (DSP) that is currently oversubscribed. Pupils at Northwood are offered a fully inclusive, but personalised learning experience whether they are in the mainstream or the DSP.

At Northwood, Inclusion is ingrained in all that they do. During the two days I spent there, as part of this vibrant school community, everyone's commitment to meeting the needs of the pupils was obvious. All stakeholders spoke passionately about the supportive, caring, nature of the school. This is a true community school with inclusion at its heart.

The school building and grounds are spectacular. The school opened in 2011 after an amalgamation of 2 single form entry primaries and a special school. Since then, continued investment has meant that the building has changed and evolved in line with the needs of its pupils. The Headteacher is constantly seeking ways to further enhance the learning environments both structurally and aesthetically. There is an impressive 'sunken trampoline' under the floor in the hall - making it a truly multi-purpose area - shifting from assembly hall to Rebound Therapy space. There are several specialist sensory areas that have been created and classrooms are continually adapted to meet the needs of the current cohort. The development of the outdoor areas to include sensory play equipment, forest school and other creative spaces has led to the school achieving the outdoor play and learning (OPAL) award. One of their current projects is the development of the 'NESST' (home to the impressive, dedicated Pastoral team) plans include therapy rooms and a safe space for pupils who need support for their emotional well-being. Frequently, practitioners from other schools and agencies visit for inspiration of how they can develop their establishments.

In discussion with many staff members, partners, parents, and pupils it was evident that all feel valued, cared for and supported. There is a true feeling of collaboration and teamwork - with everyone contributing to the values and strategic vision of the school and at the heart of it all is the shared goal of meeting the children's diverse needs and breaking down barriers to learning.

The school has a strong and creative leadership team who are passionate about inclusion. Every decision that leaders make is considered of how the children will benefit. Leaders clearly know the children well, and school improvement planning responds and evolves around their needs. There is a strong commitment to supporting staff development and providing high-quality CPD. The staffing structure is well developed and carefully planned to support inclusion - for example having both a Deputy Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for inclusion.



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From speaking with external partners and the Chair of Governors it was evident that the school is highly regarded in the field of inclusion. Their highly successful DSP is over subscribed. Parents want their children to go there and, as one described, will *“fight to get them in.”* One pupil described the school as *“a lovely place because we can get help from our teachers, and they really care about us.”* Another described the teachers as *“very kind, they help us a lot.”* The parent group I spoke with were passionate about the support that the school provides, not only for the pupils but for the parents and families. One described how *“they will solve any problems – both in and out of school – if you are having an issue, you can call and the staff will help you.”* Another parent talked about staff being *“amazing!”* and described emotionally how her son had *“come on in leaps and bounds since coming there, he’s gone from not communicating at all to communicating using pointing, signing etc.”*

The curriculum has been carefully designed to meet the diverse needs of the children. There is a commitment to providing wider opportunities for the pupils both in school and in the local community and beyond. During a meeting with senior and curriculum leaders, I heard how the curriculum is adapted to ensure that all pupils can participate to the best of their ability. Teaching Assistants (TA) provide additional adult support where needed, pupils are offered alternative methods of recording and subject leads have all researched and provided subject specific guidance to teaching staff about reducing barriers to learning. The teaching and learning are quality assured through a rigorous monitoring cycle that is transparent – everyone knows what the focus of monitoring is and when it will take place.

There truly is a sense that the children’s needs are viewed holistically, and potential barriers to learning are identified swiftly and acted upon. The inspirational Headteacher has invested heavily in staffing and CPD to support the wide range of needs in the school. Quality free school meals are offered to every single pupil – regardless of entitlement. The pastoral team has been expanded and are able to offer a range of support to both pupils and families. Support is responsive - if a pupil is upset coming in for example - the team are on hand to support them to regulate and become ready for learning. There is a huge commitment to supporting wider needs of the pupils and families. Northwood’s core values of Teamwork, Kindness, Respect, Happiness and Honesty really do shine through their work.

I have assessed that the school fully meets the requirements and standards required for the Inclusive School Award. Having discussed the option of applying for Centre of Excellence status, they expressed a keen interest to pursue this, and I would fully endorse this.

Assessor: Louise McCallion

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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 Joe McCann MBA NPQH
 Director of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd



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Element 1 - The Inclusion Values of the School

Strengths:

At Northwood, inclusion is an essential element of their ethos and culture. Leaders have invested heavily to ensure that the building, staffing, equipment and resources enable the school to realise their vision and commitment to inclusion. The school is dedicated to supporting the wider needs of pupils and their families – it provides a highly valued support network for families, offering services such as high-quality, free school meals to all pupils regardless of entitlement, weekly SEND surgery, SEND forums and parent/ carer workshops. Parents speak highly of the school and the staff and are grateful for the support they receive. Key staff are a constant visible presence to parents and carers at morning drop off and afternoon collection. They have an ‘open door’ policy and Parents expressed that nothing is too much trouble, requests and concerns are quickly actioned. They operate a policy of early intervention where barriers to learning are identified early and addressed.

As a team they focus on identifying barriers and finding solutions to deliver inclusive education for all. Staff share skills and expertise and are a source of support for each other if needed. There is a clear focus on curriculum development to ensure that all learners’ needs are met, alongside significant pastoral and well-being support. The school’s approach to inclusion is a ‘holistic’ one. There is no ‘one size fits all’ here due to the diverse nature of the cohort. Northwood CP is a school where all children are valued and given the best possible academic, social and emotional support regardless of their individual needs or circumstances. There are a wide range of opportunities available to the children beyond the curriculum – visits to Spain, Westminster, forest school, Shakespeare North to mention just a few. These opportunities enable the children to develop a range of knowledge and skills to prepare them for a full and rich adult life – as well as giving them opportunities that they may not otherwise be able to experience.

Both mainstream and DSP/LHUB pupils have access to a range of therapeutic approaches including sensory integration therapy, rebound therapy, Ali and the therapy dogs – Pippa, Stella and Elsa. They have trained ELSA and Thrive practitioners and are still striving to further develop their resources and environment to support the pupils’ well-being.

Next Steps:

- Academisation – carrying out due diligence to ensure that a MAT with inclusion values at its heart and central to its ethos and strategic planning.
- Parent training – sensory processing and Shine Therapy.
- Develop forums to support the needs and education of parents (SEND Surgery, EAL and SEND forums)
- Thrive assessments to be carried out across school by Thrive Practitioners.



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Element 2 - Leadership and Management and Accountability

Strengths:

Northwood has a strong and creative leadership team in place. The Headteacher strives to ensure that inclusion is at the heart of everything that they do. The inclusion agenda has a high priority in all aspects of school life. Evidence of this is prolific throughout the school and evident in the staffing structure - with both a Deputy Headteacher and an Assistant headteacher dedicated to Inclusion. The staffing structure is clearly designed to ensure that the strategic priorities and needs of the children can be met. The Headteacher ensures that the staffing structure responds and evolves according to the strategic priorities of the school.

Leaders value each other and the rest of the team. This was evident in several discussions and meetings with staff at all levels. There is a clear commitment to high quality CPD with a number of staff members currently undertaking CPD at masters' level including NASENCO and NPQH. In discussions with teachers, they described how they feel supported to do what they feel is best for the children. Staff well-being is also given high regard, warm and welcoming staffroom, random acts of kindness, empathy for staff with children for example allowing them time to engage with events in their own children's school. The staff I met with described feeling valued and that they work together to support each other. They have a staff change and wellbeing group that brings suggestions to SLT. Staff have been provided with a well-being day to use as they wish.

The senior leadership team is made up of nine members in a variety of roles across the school, this helps to ensure that the interests of the whole school are represented. During my visit I was able to observe a key stage briefing led by the assistant headteacher for inclusion - briefings take place weekly for the different teams and key stages. This was attended by TAs and HLTAs as well as teachers thus ensuring that all feel valued and part of the team as well as ensuring effective communication. All staff present were given an opportunity to contribute to the discussion demonstrating that all views are valued.

In discussion with subject leaders, it was clear that there is a heavy investment to ensure in that the staff have dedicated time for curriculum development and improvement. The school have appointed a team of HLTAs who can provide high quality leadership time with minimal disruption to pupils and learning. There are rigorous structures in place for quality assurance processes. Teachers and TAs are part of the performance appraisal cycle. Targets are linked to whole school priorities as well as one that is personal to the member of staff. They have invested in a programme called Blue Sky to coordinate performance management objectives.

Next Steps:

- Development of the NESST therapy rooms.
- Embed external moderation for key areas of learning.
- Develop peer review for DSP in line with LA plans and training.



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Element 3 - Curriculum – Structure, Pupil Engagement and Adaption

Strengths:

Northwood adopt a creative approach to the curriculum which is bespoke to the needs of each cohort and befitting with the context of the school. In discussion with teachers, it was made clear that they don't buy into one set scheme "*one size doesn't fit all here because the children are so unique and diverse*". The teaching staff described how they choose from a wide range of resources and schemes and "*Northwood it!*". The curriculum responds to the needs and context of the community their children live in.

The school's 5 values – happiness, respect, honesty, teamwork and kindness guide their decisions about the curriculum. The teachers spoke passionately about their commitment to embedding learning using strategies to develop deep, secure understanding. They follow the 'No Problem' approach to mastery teaching in maths which assists pupils to develop deep, secure understanding. They apply Kagan Collaborative Learning Strategies across the curriculum to ensure that all pupils can participate and engage in learning experiences in a safe way that instils confidence. The Northwood 6 R's – a character-based approach – helps to instil character and attitudes to learning. Responsible Ron, Responsive Rhea, Resilient Rob, Resourceful Ray, Reflective Rita and Respectful Rafa were designed collaboratively with pupils and staff. Reading has a high priority – they use Read Write Inc (RWI) for early readers and continue to develop reading through the Power of Reading texts that link through subjects, so knowledge and skills are remembered and consistently applied. They foster writers who love the art of writing – providing opportunities to write for real audiences and purposes wherever possible – for example they have recently written to King Charles III and are eagerly awaiting his response! During the learning walks and in my interactions with pupils around school it was clear that they are 'loving' their time at Northwood – they presented as engaged and animated learners.

Their commitment to the arts and the wider curriculum is commendable – a music specialist is employed to provide a wide variety of opportunities for children to experience live music and local/international culture. A local artist was commissioned to create some amazing artwork around school. The curriculum is responsive and reflects the main issues of the day – locally, nationally and internationally. The school has accessed sponsorship through ERASMUS to take staff and pupils to Spain and have been successful in their application again. By providing their pupils a vast array of experiences beyond the curriculum they are giving children opportunities to unlock hidden skills and talents.

Pupils in DSP have a bespoke curriculum linked directly to the outcomes in their EHCPs, they also have a focus on functional skills – preparation for adulthood – they have experienced trips out in the local community including a visit to the local supermarket to learn about finances and produce. The school are a centre of excellence for Financial Education, this is integrated across their wider curriculum to ensure that their pupils understand about finances and making future choices to support them to fully take part in society.



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In terms of adaptations – the physical structures and learning environment is continually adapted and evolving. Teachers plan adaptations in lessons bespoke to their cohort. Additional support for learners is planned well and takes many forms. Pupils have access to a range of high-quality ICT devices and resources to record and present learning in a variety of ways. Curriculum leaders have developed inclusion statements for their subjects which lays out a blueprint of best inclusive practice in each area.

Next Steps:

- Subject leads to incorporate awareness of SEND more fully into subject rationales and statements and in their scrutiny and QA activities.
- Monitor impact and development of DSP curriculum and adaptations.
- Incorporate more pupil voice to shape the development of the curriculum.



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Element 4 - Teaching and Learning – Learning Environment, Planning Resources, Pedagogy

Strengths:

The staff pride themselves in assisting pupils to develop deep, secure understanding. Their creative and bespoke approaches allow pupils to study at a pace that enables the formulation of a robust understanding of central ideas; key concepts; key bodies of knowledge and fundamental skills. Using mastery approaches, they spend time deepening children's knowledge and understanding as opposed to skimming through content. They abide by the maxim 'less is more' with the aim that all units of learning have a high impact on pupils' development and that pupils have securely embedded knowledge and skills. Every child is given the right to succeed. Pupils are supported to master fundamental concepts in subjects. They are provided with opportunities to revisit, reflect and apply so that knowledge and skills are truly embedded.

The learning environment at Northwood is 'breath-taking'. Both indoors and outdoors, the vibrant learning areas fully reflect the needs of the children. Throughout the mainstream and DSP, adaptations to the environment are made as necessary. Specialist sensory areas have been created throughout the DSP to meet the sensory needs of the children to get them ready to learn. These areas are accessed at various times of the day by children from across the school who have sensory diets or identified needs. A specialist Sensory Integration and Processing Lead Teacher supports staff in identifying these needs. Children's learning is 'showcased' around the school and a range of achievements are celebrated.

Classrooms are adapted to meet the needs of the current cohort as no two classes are ever the same and this includes the deployment of TAs to support the less able and challenge the most able. Technology is in abundance with children having access to an iPad as part of a class set or their own individual. Pupils with specific needs are provided with specialist resources as needed.

During discussions, staff spoke highly of the SLT's commitment to CPD, they are given access to high quality training, a precise log of training and training needs is kept using the BlueSky system which ensures training and development is linked to the school SIP priorities. ECTs are well supported with links to support networks, mentoring and training. Key networks include, The Kirkby Collaborative, Special Heads Network, SENCO forum, SIL safeguarding training, SIL subject lead briefings, and their Maths Hub partner. They also use their own 'inhouse' talents, such as their specialist Language Hub teachers, to support effective teaching and learning.

Within the DSP and LHUB a new curriculum approach is being developed, centred around bespoke SALT and EHCP targets, with a focus on functional skills, sensory development/support and communication and language. They have engaged the support of an OT to help to develop individual sensory diets for children and wider sensory support across the entire phase.



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Next Steps:

- Lead practitioner role to be further developed.
- Embed the DSP curriculum approach – seeking support from partners in the special sector.
- Literacy lead to audit diversity in the resources used to support reading and writing.
- SENCO to support SEND peer review across the whole school.



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Element 5 – Assessment

Strengths

In line with their 'holistic' approach to teaching and learning, a variety of forms of assessment are used to improve outcomes at NCPS. Judgements are made about pupils learning through on-going dialogue, observation and interactions to provide sound judgements about pupil progress and inform day to day teaching and learning. On-going assessment allows teachers to identify which pupils are reaching or exceeding age-related expectations or those who may be falling behind.

Teachers use a range of tools to assess their pupils, however the SLT believe strongly that their teachers know their pupils best and are accurate judges of their progress. While looking at pupils' books during my visit, it was clear that feedback is provided so that children know what they have achieved and their next steps to secure further progress. Progression documents are used to measure against National Curriculum expectations and, for pupils who need a more bespoke approach, such as those in DSP or working below NC expectations FLiC is used to enable staff to measure progress from individual baselines or develop bespoke objectives.

Children use self and peer assessment in all subject areas where appropriate, which supports the children to be active participants in their own learning. Children are given opportunities to recognise their successes and identify how to improve further.

Summative assessment is used, as required, for statutory purposes as well as termly to track progress against National Curriculum expectations. However, teachers provide a teacher assessment alongside any tests carried out. This enables teachers to ensure accurate assessment of pupils who may not achieve test results.

Progress is monitored in a variety of ways taking into consideration test data as well as knowledge and understanding of the children's achievements on a day-to-day basis. Termly pupil progress meetings enable teachers to engage in detailed dialogue about the progress of individual pupils in their class with SLT, enabling them to identify those pupils who are falling behind and any potential barriers to learning. These meetings also allow teachers to reflect on any issues at whole class and group level as well as individual needs.

At Northwood, assessment isn't just about measuring progress in learning. Social and emotional development is given a high priority. Thrive assessments are to be carried out on the whole school and this will R.A.G. rate the pupils enabling the pastoral team to identify pupils needing support who may otherwise have gone unnoticed. This support will be tailored to the needs of the child – utilising the skills of the ELSA and THRIVE trained practitioners to provide high quality interventions.

Pupils, for example those in DSP, with specialist programmes such as speech and language or sensory needs are assessed against their individual targets by expert practitioners thus ensuring that their provision is always up to date and targeted.



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Next Steps:

- To continue to embed assessment in DSP and extend to the mainstream pupils with EHCPs.
- To continue to develop Pupil Progress Meetings (PPMs) to ensure that they are timely and result in a positive impact for pupils.
- To complete THRIVE assessments for whole school SEMH/well-being.



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Element 6 - Behaviour, Attitudes to Learning and Personal Development

Strengths:

Northwood's commitment to building positive relationships and implementing nurture principles is tangible. From the onset of my visit, I felt that I was immersed into the 'family.' The team at Northwood strive to ensure that children are happy, safe, self-reflective, respectful and compassionate towards those around them. Respect is central to their vision for the school. This is evident as you move around the school interacting with members of the school community. The pupils I met were animated, respectful and clearly proud to be a Northwood pupil.

During assembly with the Headteacher, the children listened intently and contributed valuable discussion. They were keen and enthusiastic to give responses. This was emulated during my learning walks where classes, groups and individuals demonstrated positive attitudes to learning. I thoroughly enjoyed my discussions with pupils who spoke with passion about their love for Northwood and its staff.

Where pupils require additional support to understand their behaviours and emotional responses, there is always a member of staff on-hand. The pastoral team provide a range of targeted support for pupils requiring additional SEMH support. Through their Emotional Regulation Policy, developed in consultation with an educational psychologist, children are taught the key skills of self-awareness, regulation and how to repair harm and restore relationships. I observed a session with the Headteacher who was supporting some pupils to reflect on their behaviour. Restorative scripts were used to enable them to see what they could have done differently and how they could adapt their behaviour in the future. Children are supported to understand their behaviour responses in a positive way.

Class Charts is used to award green points for positive behaviour and the children were delighted when they received them! Reflection points are also logged enabling staff to monitor for patterns and potential flash points causing negative behaviours. This information is also shared with parents who have access to the system, so they are fully aware of their achievements. Respect is at the centre of all interactions at NCPS!

Next Steps:

- To continue to embed the emotional regulation approaches.
- To film and release digital content explaining their behavioural approach to parents/carers.
- To offer training to parents re Class Charts.



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Element 7 - Parents, Carers, Guardians

Strengths:

The team at NCPS are proud of the effective relationships they have built with parents and carers. They operate a genuine 'open door' policy where parents can have the opportunity to speak to staff at the earliest opportunity if they have issues to deal with. During my discussions with parents, it was evident that they are truly grateful for the support the school gives to both their children and them. I met with a wide range of parents, from both DSP and mainstream. They couldn't speak highly enough of the support offered by the school. One parent described how: *"they try to solve any problems, both in school or out of school. If you are having any issue, you can call and the staff will help you. You're not left on your own."* another parent explained how the school had "pushed the Local Authority" to get their child's EHCP sorted out.

The school offer a wide range of opportunities for parents to come into school for support and training. The parents spoke animatedly about the Friday Coffee Mornings where they've had opportunities to learn Indian Head Massage and make crystals - they are currently completing a mental health course. One parent stated that *"the staff feel like family, they love every child like their own."* Their SEND surgery runs weekly where parents can book in to ask any questions or get help with referrals and form filling for example. The school arranges for key speakers to forums and meetings to disseminate key information to empower their parents and carers. Staff signpost parents to a range of support services in the community such as Knowsley Parent Carer Voice.

The highly trained pastoral team provides pastoral support and responds to parents' needs through early help assessments, TAF meetings and other support mechanisms. The team have supported some families through some significant and harrowing issues. The school communicates well with parents using a range of methods: See Saw, Class Charts, Text message and social media. They also carry out regular surveys to get feedback from parents and share the findings with them.

Next Steps:

- To develop an effective PTA.
- To offer parents training around Class Charts and Provision Mapping.
- To develop work on Inclusive Families further.



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Element 8 - Links with Local, Wider and Global Community

Strengths:

Northwood are a truly 'outward' facing school. During my 2 days with them I learned of several initiatives and events that the school are involved in locally, nationally and internationally. The school works hard to promote awareness of the local, national and global community. They take every opportunity within their curriculum and beyond to highlight key issues of local and global concern, for example engaging in black history month, following the exploits of Tim Peake or building awareness of the war in Ukraine. Their curriculum is enriched using a variety of stimulating texts that promote awareness of wider and global issues, such as, "Little People, Big Dreams," resources.

I learnt of several partnerships with a range of local, national and global agencies to develop staff and support the needs of the children, families and community. For example, LFC Foundation, Morrisons, Northwood Together, School Improvement Liverpool, Knowsley LA, Maths Hubs, MATs, CLPE in London, Erasmus/Turing, Singapore Maths International Teacher Exchange Programme, The UK Parliament and MPs.

There have been several visiting speakers to motivate and inspire the school community such as Sam Quek, a renowned archaeologist and a Paralympian Table Tennis player.

Leaders have established an EAL forum to support the needs of families from around the globe, as their EAL population increases, and to ensure the curriculum and school is as open and supportive as possible.

I learned about the school's links with Spain and the funding received from ERASMUS which enabled a group of staff and pupils to visit their partnership school there. This funding has been secured again for a further visit. The school participate in a range of performances and events – including a recent show at RSC North.

The wide range of enrichment and wider opportunities for the pupils is providing pupils with valuable cultural capital and aspirations that will encourage them to aim high during their time at Northwood and beyond.

Next Steps:

- To continue to create opportunities for local, national and global interactions.
- To continue to develop the EAL Forum and use the platform to ask parents/carers to come into school and talk about their home countries.
- To continue to ensure there is diverse representation in books we use and the children read.