



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



School Name Northwood Community Primary School
Roughwood Drive
Northwood
Kirkby
L33 8XD

Head/Principal Ms Sarah Murphy

IQM Lead Ms Carrie Hyland

Date of Review 29th November 2023

Assessor Ms Siona Robson

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group All-Inclusive

Ambassador Ms Sarah Linari

Next Meeting 20th March 2024

Meeting Focus

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Spring 2023	1 st March 2023	Yes
Summer 2023	15 th June 2023	Yes
Autumn 2023	17 th October 2023	Yes

Evidence

Discussions with:

- Meeting with Governor.
- Meeting with parent.
- Meeting with pupils.
- Meeting with teaching assistants and support staff.
- Meeting with teaching staff.
- Meeting with senior management team.

Additional activities:

- Learning walk including alternative provision and outside spaces.
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) record.
- Reflection process.
- Learning walk documentation.
- Adaptive and inclusive teaching document.
- Curriculum inclusion statements.



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The Impact of the Cluster Group

1st March 2023 - Christ the King Environment for learning

Northwood Community Primary School returned with a renewed sense of the need to ensure their learning environment was uniform in terms of displays and school branding. The school evaluated its learning environment and now has a consistent display board policy to calm learning spaces, thus avoiding overstimulation.

15th June 2023 - Woodchurch Outdoor learning through the school farm

The school came back with a sense of how to develop its forest school and outdoor learning environment to enrich children's learning and experiences. It crystalised thinking regarding the forest school and outdoor provision. As a result, they contacted Lancashire Wildlife Trust and this influenced the current forest school provision. It also influenced Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) spaces.

17th October 2023 - Whitefield Inclusive culture

Northwood Community Primary School learned how to develop Year 5 and Year 6 classrooms to ensure they fully subscribed to trauma-informed practice. The school has introduced Thrive and is now exploring funding through an Amazon partnership to get funding to redesign Year 5 and 6 classrooms using a trauma-informed approach.



Summary of Targets from 2021-2022

Target 1:

Improve pupils' behaviour and attitude towards learning by embedding clear routines and structures that support them to regulate their emotions whilst also improving their Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and ensuring they are fully included and able to access all learning.

Staff have had comprehensive training on the behaviour policy and a new emotional regulation policy. The latter is written to be bespoke to the school, its staff, the needs of the pupils and with a clear understanding of the local community context. The school sought expert advice from an Education Psychologist. Staff were keen to explain that it is not a 'one size fits all' policy. Staff know the children well and they emphasised that the policy can be adapted and tailored to meet the needs of the child. Staff have had training on reflective and restorative practice. A teaching member of staff told me, "we are all able to feed into the behaviour policy, it is informed by practice and written for our children to ensure consistency". Staff told me that the policy is focused on the understanding that behaviour is a form of communication. Staff are expected to respond calmly and positively, focusing on a child's qualities to build self-esteem and self-worth. Attendance continues to be a challenge for the school. Every day 13 families are supported by senior staff who drive a minibus around the community picking up pupils at risk or currently classed as persistently absent.

Two members of staff are Team Teach trainers and do in-house and outreach training. All staff in the school have benefited from Team Teach training. Staff speak confidently of the strategies they now use to de-escalate situations and how, if they need it, bespoke support is available for them if they are dealing with a particularly complex situation. Staff were very positive about the significant impact of this approach. They feel empowered by a knowledge of the six stages of crisis and their in-depth knowledge of the children. They recognise that it is all about the children, not about the adult and that a change of face is sometimes necessary in a situation. They describe how staff are now not too proud to request support and this change of face. Staff also told me that sometimes, when giving a child space when in a situation requiring de-escalation or when a child needs to self-regulate; "silence is golden".

It was the children who provided the most amazing evidence of the impact of the school's work on self-regulation. They had an impressive understanding of how they can support themselves and their peers to self-regulate. One child stated, "I have a sensory room and soft play area in which I can calm down". Another child said, "I have an emotion check with five emotions on my desk and it lets me know how to calm down. If I get or think I will get to five, I ask a teacher to take me to the soft play area." One child commented, "when my friend gets upset, I ask Miss if we can go outside and colour. I tell her to put her hand on the table or floor and I put my hand on hers and tell her to take a deep breath in and out."

The parents reinforced this, "children know how to understand their own needs and feelings and those of other children and this is not just the children with additional needs, it is everyone."



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There is an embedded approach to reflection and restorative practice across the school. In-depth work takes place in the reflection room, social stories are often used to discuss pupils' strengths, triggers and responses. Staff who work in the reflection room have had training to ensure that this is done well. This purposeful reflection is fed back to staff. The pupils value this approach and understand how the policy is adapted to meet the needs of individual children. A child told me, "someone in my class has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and they go for a calm-down walk, which is their reflection". The school has seen a significant drop in the number of students reaching the higher levels of the five-stage behaviour ladder. Looking at the data now compared to this time last year there has been a significant reduction in the total number of negative points children have received in a year group:

- 67% reduction for Year 2.
- 54% for Year 3.
- 89% for Year 4.
- 76% for Year 5.
- 85% reduction for Year 6.

Next Steps:

- Parent version of behaviour policy sent out/recorded and parent workshops held on behaviour as communication and how to support behaviour at home.
- Develop Alternative Education Plans (AEPs) to support robust alternative provisions for children who are accessing alternative curriculum content.
- Explore the impact of minibus pick-up more fully.

Target 2:

Explore the rationale and development of an in-school alternative provision and further develop and embed the use of alternative lunch and break time provision for children who find it difficult to regulate their emotions during unstructured times.

Over the last 12 months, the organisational structure of inclusion has been reviewed bringing all elements of pastoral care under one umbrella. The staffing responsibilities within the team and the lines of communication and accountability are very clear and effective. There are now two members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) with responsibility for inclusion. There is a clear referral process that is considered weekly to ensure the appropriate pathway is selected to meet the need. Governors are fully involved in planning and quality assuring provision. As the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion Governor told me, "we make sure that we are doing the right things for the children all of the time and that children are fully included in the school". There was an emphasis on 'we'. Governors work very much as a team with school leaders to develop and evaluate inclusive strategies. "We are always talking about developments. The school strives for the very best for the pupils."



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The NESST, a new inclusion area, was fully opened in September. It has a meeting area and three therapy spaces, a messy playroom, a sensory lightroom and a multi-purpose room. The area is staffed with four learning mentors and a play leader. What is particularly outstanding is that all therapy programmes are delivered by fully trained staff to ensure exceptionally high-quality provision. Dog Therapy is delivered by a councillor from Hope Therapy Dogs. The councillor is now training two school dogs to be able to support pupils informally. Once trained, pupils will be able to read to these dogs. The play leader has formed a link with Lancashire Wildlife Trust who now collaboratively deliver intervention in the forest school for pupils with SEMH needs. The school has a rebound therapy space with a trampoline. Parents of children who access this therapy raved to me about this new provision saying the difference it makes for their child is amazing. A Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) assistant is employed by the school and chatty therapy is bought in for 16 children to offer level three support.

In September the school opened a wonderful alternative nurturing alternative provision for reception and Year 1 children who cannot access mainstream and are waiting for a place in a specialist setting. They have four distinct areas designed to support their needs. On arrival at school, they have bucket time therapy and then access their sensory spaces.

All pupils who are on the SEND register but do not have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) have a Pupil Provision Plan (PPP), which documents their needs and the provision in place alongside measurable targets. A pupil who is not accessing the full mainstream entitlement will graduate to an AEP, which will document a child's needs and the alternative provision accessed. These are reviewed half-termly by the inclusion team. This new process has only recently been introduced and thought is being given to how pupils might move between plans. Some pupils have both an AEP and an EHCP and are awaiting specialist provision. After dialogue with parents, the Local Authority and Governors, a very small number of pupils have a bespoke reduced timetable and access sensory needs off-site with parents/guardians which are funded by the school. This could be swimming, accessing soft play areas, or working with horses in a local stable. A parent was very grateful that the end and start of the day had been modified for their child so they could leave slightly early to avoid the rush and noise that distressed them.

The lunch and break time provision in the NESST is used to support children who struggle to self-regulate during unstructured time. Several children have AEPs, in which, the need for this provision is identified. They access social circles, share games and read or play with Lego. Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) who supervise this provision may use the time to give bespoke support.

The school has its final accreditation for OPAL in July 2024. Play therapy is an important element of the alternative provision.

The pupils are aware of their own and the needs of their peers and what the school puts in place to support these. "I use my wobble cushion as I have hypermobility it makes me more flexible than other people". A parent told me, "children understand my child and why they are they are the way they are".



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Next Steps:

- Focus on baseline assessment and measurement of the impact of alternative provision offer, e.g., play therapy – develop mechanisms to record progress using quantifiable data and look closely at the impact of actions.
- Add Thrive action plan evaluations to termly deadlines and requirements schedules so staff are fully prepared.
- Evaluate AEPs and how they work alongside PPPs.
- Assess and record the impact of reduced timetable provision and quality assurance off-site provision.

Target 3:

Develop global citizenship in classroom practice through a focus on the Oxfam framework for global citizenship knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes.

A very concerning incident in the community was the catalyst for the comprehensive social cohesion work that has begun at Northwood. The Headteacher explained, “the aim is to give the children the knowledge to function as adults as part of a global community”. It is a changing mindset initiative. The school has adopted the ‘No Outsiders’ approach. Posters around school highlight that everyone is welcome in the school and share the message ‘no one is the same, but everyone is equal.’ A pupil explained to me, “no outsiders show that everyone, regardless of religion, race, gender or disability is welcome in our school”. They went on to emphasise, “no one is going to be left outside our school”.

Curriculum leaders have bought a range of new texts and use these alongside video clips, resources and lesson ideas from ‘No Outsiders’ to deliver global citizenship across the curriculum. In music, children have examined how music has travelled across the world because of immigration and migration. All children benefitted from a drama workshop on the plight of asylum seekers and refugees. The workshop stressed the importance of using the correct language and addressed misconceptions. The children I spoke to understand the plight of refugees. They told me about a book called ‘The Journey’ that they had studied, how it was about a mum and her children who had to flee their country because of war. A child in the pupil voice group said, “remember guys about the Ukraine war with Russia, we welcomed Ukraine refugees into our country”.

Classrooms are named after countries and children are planning and delivering an assembly about their country. Pupils are engaged in this and benefit from the increased global awareness and the personal development resulting from presenting to their peers. One child told me how much they enjoyed these assemblies and how they can now say ‘hello’ in Swahili. These assemblies are shared on Seesaw with parents. To launch the ‘No Outsiders’ project the school identified all the languages spoken in the school and children were videoed with ‘hello’ signs in their language. Children also chose from a shortlist, the song, ‘True Colours’ as their ‘No Outsiders’ song. This is played at the start of every assembly.



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Grid maker is being used to capture evidence of this target alongside activities linked to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development, school values and British values. Global citizenship has been incorporated into the culture and ethos of the school and pupils now have a wider awareness of national and global issues. This opening-minds work is effectively challenging misconceptions and stereotypes.

A pupil told me, "our classrooms are named after countries so we know everyone around the world". Another said, "we are all just the same on the inside, but we are all different on the outside".

Next Steps:

- To embed global citizenship in whole school practice.
- Headteacher to include updates on every newsletter from now on.
- Physical and mental wellbeing lead to monitor this area weekly.
- Create a link Governor role for global citizenship to support the monitoring and development of this area.
- Half-termly global themes days to be implemented and lead to be taken by subject leads.



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Agreed Targets for 2023-2024

Target 1:

To ensure parents have the knowledge and understanding of school inclusion systems and policies with a particular focus on the behaviour policy.

Comments:

- Consider active strategies for sharing information and upskilling parents.
- Capitalise on every opportunity to upskill parents.
- Guest speakers in coffee mornings.
- Share best practices at IQM Cluster meetings and a 'think-outside-the-box' agenda item with the Kirby Collaborative Heads Group.
- Create a video of reflective and restorative practice to show at parent meetings.
- Consider the role of parent ambassadors.

Target 2:

To ensure alternative provision is research-driven, precisely targeted to ensure impact in terms of meeting the needs of every child.

Comments:

- Evaluate the provision to ensure that all needs are met.
- Measure the impact of alternative provision more effectively so that support can be highly and precisely targeted and inform the next steps.
- To explore trauma-informed Physical Education (PE) approach to dovetail into OPAL and alternative provision offer.
- Quality assure provision by capturing staff and pupil offer.
- Focus on baseline assessment and measurement of the impact of alternative provision offer, e.g., play therapy – develop mechanisms to record progress using quantifiable data and look closely at the impact of actions.
- Add Thrive action plan evaluations to termly deadlines and requirements schedules so staff are fully prepared.
- Evaluate AEPs and how they work alongside PPPs.



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- Assess and record the impact of reduced timetable provision and quality assure off-site provision. Parents are to record what they are doing in the time at home to the child's AEP and share these plans anonymously with Governors.
- Seek research-informed practice regarding reducing the percentage of persistent absentees. Consider a modified approach to reduced timetable provision using the family hub. Coffee mornings with parents where a child can be registered. Look to develop a bridged provision.
- Develop the space between the perimeter fence and garden fencing as a learning space for outdoor creative and exploratory play.

Target 3:

To plan a community cohesion action project to embed global citizenship in the whole school community.

Comments:

- Spreading the message in the community.
- Staff meeting on community cohesion – what it means, how we should do it and to generate ideas on the next steps in terms of the project.
- Using external agencies to support school aims.
- Use prominent parents in the local community to be ambassadors.
- Consider how pupils can spread their learning around global citizenship in the community.



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Overview

Northwood Community Primary School is an inspiring place to visit. Leaders never stand still at Northwood; they are always looking for ways in which they can improve the quality of provision for the children while simultaneously ensuring staff wellbeing remains high and workload manageable. What was very evident was that all members of the community were on message. This is the result of the reflective, creative and passionate leadership in the school. Staff, pupils, parents and Governors were all aware of the Centre of Excellence strands and could articulate the impact of the school improvement work undertaken. The children in the pupil voice group were phenomenal; articulate, informed and enthusiastic. Inclusivity is a golden thread that runs through all practice. Recently Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has been looking at the inclusion statements for each curriculum area. These high-quality documents identify the main barriers and challenges that might be experienced by children in a particular subject. These are documented under each area of need. Dyslexia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) are part of a comprehensive list that includes subject-specific barriers such as dyscalculia in mathematics. There are then quality-first teaching strategies identified for each need which teachers can use in the classroom to mitigate the challenges pupils might face. When subject leads conduct learning walks, they check that staff have these inclusion intents in sharp focus in their planning and delivery of learning.

Northwood is child-centric. The staff know the children. At the end of each year, there is a comprehensive handover to ensure this detailed knowledge of need alongside the strategies to use to meet this need, are shared with the new class teacher. Every Thursday the school runs a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) surgery for parents so they can access the Assistant Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) who will listen to and address concerns. All meetings are logged to ensure feedback to the relevant members of staff. There are also SEND forums for parents. In the last one, a specialist teacher from the Local Authority delivered a session on ASD. All SEND provision is recorded on Provision Mapping and parents have access to this. The school website has recently been redesigned to ensure that all the relevant equality, inclusion and SEND information for parents is more easily accessible. It has a phone-friendly view making it more useful and versatile for parents.

The 'Kagan' approach is used to create deliberate heterogeneous seating plans and to structure pupil interaction in the classroom. Pupils sit in tables of four to facilitate this structured approach to paired and group work. This approach ensures that there are no 'hogs or logs', no child dominates and no one opts out. Research has found that 90% of the talk in lessons is by the teacher. This approach is effective in supporting a move at Northwood to move to less teacher talk and more pupil talk. The school is keen to ensure that teachers are quiet while pupils are engaged in independent work, providing only the quiet support needed to an individual to allow them to progress. Another strand of the Kagan approach is on the importance of relationships and synergy between every individual in the classroom. Staff complete weekly class building activities with their children.



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The acquisition of language is a key need of pupils at Northwood, 78% of pupils on the SEND register have communication and language needs. Work in this area is so well embedded at Northwood that the Headteacher now leads the speech and language strategy for the Kirby Collective, a group of 11 local primaries. On the day of my visit, the Headteacher was interviewed by radio Merseyside about National No Pens Day, which is aimed at celebrating talk and language. It is not surprising they were chosen, as this is an area in which Northwood excels. A new online intervention has been introduced to support the lowest 20% of readers in the school to promote their reading fluency and comprehension. Pupils work on this in pairs which supports the school's focus on peer collaboration in learning. There is a no-hands-up approach across the school, a strategy designed to ensure all pupils participate in the lesson. Makaton alongside the use of widgets is being rolled out across the school to support language acquisition. This has proven to be particularly effective in supporting children new to the county with their acquisition of spoken English. Northwood has a communication-friendly status. Specialist language teachers working in the school speech and language hub deliver Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to mainstream staff. Key vocabulary is displayed in classrooms. There has been a deliberate strategy to ensure this list includes only the words pupils need to know. This is to avoid overload and saturation which had previously been observed. Five to eight minutes of each lesson are now spent on the tier two vocabulary and widgets are used to reinforce the meanings.

Pupils are fully engaged in their learning at Northwood. I was impressed by a music lesson where boom whackers were being used to create a piece of collaborative music. The teacher was full of praise and positive feedback for their teamwork. I visited an amazing Physical Education (PE) lesson during which pupils were creating a piece of dance and movement based on the themes of a journey, sailing, navigating, building and finally farming, linked to their History topic on the Vikings. Pupils were working collaboratively in their Kagan groups and every child in the room was fully participating. I saw staff using non-verbal clues to get a class to focus on an instruction, children responded by clapping, putting their hands up and then sat quietly. A local Amazon link provides fruit for every table in the lovely calm and spacious communal area. This space is used for breakout work and interventions and is complete with a wonderfully calming vertical fish tank. Before you exit the building, you walk past the Snack Shed, where pupils are independently running a tuck shop for their peers.

Over the last year, there has been a CPD focus on adaptive teaching. Staff have been developing the skills to make learning accessible to all pupils and thereby reduce the need for out-of-class intervention. The adaptive and inclusive teaching guide outlines what teachers should be considering before, during and after teaching a lesson. Learning walks have evidenced the impact of this focus. In all lessons seen in the last six months, SEND and struggling learners have been identified, planned for and supported. The voice of the child captured the positive impact felt by children because of their increased inclusion in the classroom and their increased confidence levels. Leaders are now looking carefully at the remaining, necessary out-of-class interventions to ensure that these run seamlessly alongside mainstream provision and minimise the impact of missed curriculum time.



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In terms of assessment, leaders have recently brought in Evidence for Learning as an assessment model for their designated provision. This approach allows the creation of a personal assessment model for each child based on their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) targets. As a result, assessment is now much more closely linked to targets and progress is more evident. The system has supported staff workload as it is easier to use. Parents also have access to this.

Northwood continues to develop links and become involved in projects that have potential benefits for the children at the school. I was told by school leaders, "we like to get involved in a lot of projects. If you stand still, you go backward." The school is now involved with IntoUniversity run by Liverpool University which aims to raise the aspirations of children. Year 6 has a week of off-site provision, visiting the university and taking part in a range of activities and visits to aspirational venues. At the end of the week, they graduate at Liverpool University with parents proudly in attendance.

The Northwood estate has been identified as an area with significant levels of deprivation, high Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) levels and multi-generational unemployment. As a result, the school participates in the cradle-to-career project which is now entering its delivery phase. The Deputy Headteacher at Northwood Community Primary School co-chairs the steering group for the Health and Social Care strand of the project. A family hub has opened in Northwood to bring together health professionals, social workers and social prescribers to work together to break down barriers to accessing support in the community and promote proactive requests for help. Northwood Community Primary School has appointed a member of staff to lead family engagement activities in school and be the hub link.

To conclude, I would like to share a golden moment from my conversation with a group of pupils. It is a wonderful example of the impact of the work the school has done on self-regulation, pupils understanding of key vocabulary, language development and peer collaboration. A pupil was explaining to me about his five levels of anger and what they look like. They described level three as lava just bubbling over the top and level five as a full volcano eruption. They went on to say that returning to the bottom level was like an extinct volcano. Another child chipped in at this point and suggested it was like a dormant volcano. At this point, the whole group got involved in a discussion of the meanings of extinct and dormant, which better-represented level zero. It was like I was not in the room; it was magical to observe.

Finally, a lovely quote from a Year 6 Pupil, "the most important thing is that we have the same amount of love. We need to live, love and care for ourselves and others."

A parent stated, "all of my child's sensory needs are being met and they will now pick up a pen and colour at home something they have never done before". Another parent said, "from the day my child started at the school, they had plans in place for them and everyone works together as a team around my child." Finally, "communication is strong, 100% amazing. We get regular updates about what we are aiming for. Everything is for the kids here."



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I continue to be firmly of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark to maintain its status as a Centre of Excellence. I therefore recommend that the school retains its Centre of Excellence status and is reviewed again in 12 months. The next review will look closely at how the school has interacted with its Inclusion Cluster and promoted continuing outreach. Evidence of Cluster working will underpin the capacity for the school to maintain its Centre of Excellence status.

Assessor: Ms Siona Robson

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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