



## 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 2024

**Assessor** Ms Siona Robson

### **IQM Cluster Programme**

**Cluster Group** All Inclusive B

**Ambassador** Mrs Sarah Linari

**Next Meeting** 16th Jan 2025

**Meeting Focus** TBC

### **Cluster Attendance**

<b>Term</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<b>Autumn 2023</b>	17th Oct 2023	Yes
<b>Spring 2024</b>	20th Mar 2024	Yes
<b>Summer 2024</b>	13th Jun 2024	Yes
<b>Autumn 2024</b>	5th Nov 2024	
<b>Spring 2025</b>	16th Jan 2025	
<b>Summer 2025</b>	2nd May 2025	

### **The Impact of the Cluster Group**

#### **25/11/24 Hosted by Northwood Primary School**

This meeting provided the opportunity for Northwood to share adaptive teaching strategy, behaviour regulation plans and graduated response and alternative education plans. Many colleagues seemed to take a lot back with them and it was lovely for Northwood staff to get this valuation from peers. They were particularly interested in the alternative education plan as some schools didn't have robust processes for monitoring external provision and safeguarding in offsite settings.



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



### **20/3/24 Laxey School**

Northwood attended virtually and benefited from sessions on mental health, writing and parental engagement, Staff were very impressed with the approach to writing and how they do moderation. This influenced the Northwood CoE strategy around writing. It was interesting to hear about the close relationships with parents and they were doing very similar activities around parental engagement to us. The school came away feeling privileged to have the access to mental health support that they have.

### **17/10/23 Holy Cross Birkenhead**

The focus areas were attendance and mental health strategies. Northwood came away with My Happy Mind which has now been implemented. They also used some of the ideas to inform their review of the school attendance processes and the resulting rewrite of the attendance policy to incorporate a trauma-informed approach. Northwood 'maggied' the idea of the attendance and attendance target for each class displayed on the classroom door. The school built on this idea to try and get increased ownership by the pupils. The attendance champions in each class now update these every day.

### **Evidence**

- Documents relating to the targets.
- Learning walk and lesson visits.

Meetings with:

- Teachers.
- TA's.
- Pupils.
- Governor.
- Parents.
- Inclusion team.
- IQM lead.



### Summary of Targets from 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.**

A parental engagement assessment and action plan has been written and implemented with actions reviewed and ongoing.

There are many opportunities for parents to come into school, raising awareness of the school systems and policies. 'Donuts for grownups' started in September and is an opportunity for parents to share a donut with other parents and perhaps to share a book with their child or play alongside them in a low-pressure, relaxed environment. Parents really appreciate this new initiative. "It was an opportunity for parents to interact with children and parents to meet other parents. Can I have another one!" Nursery and reception have stay-and-play sessions for parents and the uptake for this is very high with excellent feedback. Parents are also invited to Friday celebration assemblies. A parent told me, "The Friday celebration assemblies are lovely, very emotionally"

After a wealth of parental engagement activities, the school has recruited 3 parent ambassadors. It was a real pleasure to hear from them how they are settling into this exciting new role. They initially did a learning environment walk around the school and fed back suggestions to SLT. An idea they have proposed is to put up an achievement tree to show the pupils stars of the week. They have interviewed some of the children regarding the playground provision which they found really valuable. They told me that the pupils want a snakes and ladders and a quiet area with an outdoor library and opportunities to grow vegetables and flowers.

Parent consultations have been held on key changes across the school. For the new pupil drop off system, senior staff had a consultation meeting with parents which was well attended. Their views were fed into the new approach. Each morning after the families is greeted at the gate, the children now walk onto the playground independently. The children then meet their teacher in the yard. This greeting will be in a manner that they choose, a lovely touch. A poster with alternative greetings is displayed on every class room door. Even the youngest children have responded really confidently. The SENCO reported hearing reception children saying, 'I'm a big boy/girl, I've got this'. The new arrangements have also supported those pupils who have attachment difficulties. After the first few days of the new process, feedback was sought and some parents requested that the gates be opened 5 minutes earlier to reduce the bottle neck. Key staff are available at the gate every morning to ensure parents have a chance to give messages. SLT have notepads to record messages and then deliver these to the relevant member of staff. The class teacher is now focused entirely on welcoming the pupils. The pupils are also now less aware of the issues which parents are sharing which has been positive. This new drop off system is seen as a very positive change by parents. "The new meet and greet is brilliant, its fab. The way the staff were there to take on feedback and action this in the first few days was really good." Parents appreciated the survey that was sent out to evaluate the new arrangements. A parent simply said, "I think it's the best idea that the school has had."



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



The school also ran consultation meetings about the behaviour policy. Parent friendly versions of this and the emotional regulation policy have been distributed. A parent told me, "The new behaviour policy for parents is clear and easy to understand." Another parent told me that they appreciated the information shared regarding how the reflection room is used.

To raise engagement with class charts the parents were all given their logins again at a parents meeting. There is now a 90% take up, up from around 30%. This has had the added bonus of reducing phone calls about behaviour. The percentage of EAL families has risen from 2% to 11% so another parental consultation was run on meeting the needs of families. The feedback from parents was that there is a need in the school for a more global lens. Families requested greater celebration of their festivals, the planning for which is underway. I was shown the schools global advent calendar which is shared with pupils each morning. That days link was to Poland with festive greetings in Polish and a short video on 6 Polish Christmas traditions shared by a Polish mum living in the UK.

A parent calendar of events has been developed to ensure they are well prepared in advance for events. This was launched last summer and has meant parents are more informed. It particularly supports working parents. All the class teachers contributed to this, and the parents are now aware of the themed days and any potential costs. The calendar is updated if necessary but, as a result of this increased focus on the needs of parents, changes have been fewer than in past years. This is appreciated by parents. SLT are constantly evaluating their methods for communicating with parents.

A new parent communication flowchart supports those parents who need to contact school. SLT realised there was some confusion for parents as to who to contact about different issues. This flow chart links possible issues with the best person to contact, the time frame they can expect follow up to happen and what to do if their concern is not resolved to their satisfaction. The class teachers have seen that the right concerns are coming to them and the office staff are responding to smaller information or clarification requests. Difficult conversation training for Core SLT ensures interactions are smooth, consistent and purposeful. Parents reported to me that they have found the communication flowchart useful.

Regular attendance meetings are held with key targeted families. The school work with Impact-Ed to support their attendance strategy and gather parental views around attendance at school. A weekly, women only, coffee morning for a target group of parents offers support and builds relationships between parents and with the school. The group is mums only, a reflection of some of the challenges in the local community. They have a safe space to share. Northwood Together, a local organisation, facilitate this and arrange for other specialist input on areas such as budgeting, healthy eating and mental health. They described the group as fulfilling a number of purposes, support and links for parents, social prescribing and a focus group for consultation. The day of my visit Public Health had visited to talk about the healthy eating weight campaign which has been launched by the school. The parents really value the opportunity to gain qualifications in Mental Health for You and First Aid. Parents are also signposted to agencies which can support with a specific need and helped to complete any referral forms. This coffee morning was in full swing as I toured the school. The parents were



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



overwhelmingly positive about this provision. They talked about how they support each other and have made friendships. They said of the Northwood Together facilitator, "She will go out of her way to help, she will do anything. If she can, she will."

### Next Steps:

Further clarify the Parent ambassador role and consider ways this can be recognised, maybe have their own lanyard/ badge and some sort of recognition of the work they do. The group told me that they will attend Donuts for grownup events to try and recruit more parents and grow the group. With guidance from SLT they will consider their role and how they can contribute moving forward. They are currently looking at the indoor environment and have ideas how to improve this with new displays. For the summer term we discussed how perhaps the group could have oversight of the targets of environment, global citizenship and parental engagement. An ambassador is training to be TA and is doing a placement at Northwood. After a discussion with the chair of governors on the review day, the parent ambassadors will be invited to a governors meeting. The school plans to hold a EAL parent forum to continue to build relationships and gain feedback to inform school practice in this area. Consider ways in which the school can formally acknowledge attendance and achievement of parents in order to recognise their attendance at courses like first aid to boost self-confidence. Parents asked the school to consider developing an online focus group as an alternative to run alongside in person consultation sessions at a time convenient for working parents.

### Target 2:

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

The process for referrals for SEMH and Learning mentor support has been reviewed and separated into an inclusion referral and 1 for learning mentor support. In the NEST learning mentors have supervision from Elsa. This provides training and resources. Last year the staff were still doing their training for play therapy. This messy play provision is now embedded. A closing report to the teacher is sent following messy play and the ongoing impact from class teacher is monitored. For those pupils who need it in Year 3 upwards, they have had access to this trauma informed therapy which is delivered once a week for 6-8 weeks at the same time on the same day each week. After attending, the pupils are more able to play cooperatively, relate better to adults and are more able to express and validate their emotions. The school introduced My Happy Minds in September 2024. This has already had a huge impact; the pupils are already starting to talk about neuroplasticity and understand why they get anxious. They have better self-regulation and use more sophisticated language. There is a shared understanding of calming approaches amongst staff and pupils. A parent told me that they access the Happy Minds app at home to calm their child, so they are in a regulated state and are then able to explain how they feel and what they need. They used the app during a hospital appointment and their child was able to breathe right through the anxiety.



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



The wellbeing champions have been changed to Happiness Heroes in line with My Happy Minds to act as ambassadors across the school. They promote activities related to wellbeing with their peers. I met 2 Happiness Heroes with 1 saying, "I give the teachers the best hug." "We help people when they are sad, we make them happy by telling them a funny joke or playing with them." "Happiness heroes show other pupils happy breathing to keep them calm." The pupil went on to show me what happy breathing is, explaining that your lungs are like a balloon. The children could explain that flight, fight and freeze come from amygdala part of the brain. "It's like all your reflexes when you don't feel safe, and you know you are in trouble." "The prefrontal cortex tells you what to do and stores your memory." "It helps you calm down." "It's helped me understand what's going on in my head." The pupils display a sophisticated level of understanding and their ability to explain complex information was extremely impressive.

Teaching assistants have had more training on provision mapping to ensure they are setting achievable targets for interventions. Assessments informs the setting of the targets for the intervention. As a result of setting more specific targets the pupils have been successful and are able to move on to the next target. The SENCO has driven the setting of smart targets this year and has supported staff. There are now log sheets to record the targets and the attendance at interventions or a space to explain why the session was not able to run. It is clear that the whole approach to intervention is tighter, and target driven. Teaching assistants could clearly articulate the impact of this work. "In Maths I have been more specific in target setting. For example, setting the specific target, recognising numbers 1-5 and matching the number to a visual or physical amount rather than previously I may have had a target of 'improve maths skills', which is too general or 'learning the numbers 1-10', which is still not specific enough."

More children now access the sensory circuits and the sensory park and rooms. The forest school is also being used as a sensory space. The use of sensory activities and spaces is now used more regularly for self-regulation. About their daily sensory circuit, a child told me, "When I am flat like a pancake, I feel better."

Alternative timetables for those pupils on a reduced formal curriculum have been introduced to give a clearly picture of a child's provision. This clearly details where a child is accessing their provision and what that is for every day. These are reviewed half termly by the parent, class teacher and SENCO. The parent can play a big part of this alternative provision. Part of a child's timetable includes the school paying for horse riding outside of school during the school day to support sensory needs. The parents sign up to taking them and contribute to the risk assessment. There are currently 3 children on alternative timetables. The school is bridging the gap between mainstream and what a specialist provision would be able to offer as children await specialist settings. The governors are aware of alternative education plans, and these are discussed to quality assure for safeguarding.

All of the interventions have been audited and the offer has been refined so that the only interventions now on offer are research informed with evidence-based impact. This has been captured in the schools the school's working guidelines for alternative provision.



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



### Next Step:

To run training on use of log sheets to record behaviours in the interventions in a shared systematic way. Evaluate impact of Happy Minds through a student voice activity, a google forms questionnaire and a P4C style discussion with the Happiness Heroes around questions like; Are children at Northwood happy? How do we know?

It would be useful to look at the role of Happiness Heroes and what they do. They could perhaps lead the happy breathing sessions. Explore different ways to measure impact of interventions. Consider training for happiness heroes. How could they share their impact? This week as a Happiness Hero I did...

### Target 3:

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

The school buys into No Outsiders. This is a thread through the curriculum and the praise system which has been embedded this year. I watched a lovely video that introduced this initiative 2 years ago and a recording of an assembly from last week on gender. This, like everything at Northwood, was done in a communication friendly way. The assembly raised big questions around challenging gender stereotypes and the children were encouraged to share their ideas and thoughts. The school approach to No Outsiders is now more formally shared with parents and the community on the website. Northwood Primary have shared their work on No Outsiders with the Kirby Collaborative, the group of 12 local primary and 2 secondary schools who, as a result, are all now embarking on this initiative. For the children, being a No Outsiders school means that people from all around the world can come to their school and be welcome. The pupils went on to clarify this with the comments, "We are all the same, we are all equal." "Everybody is different, but we all deserve to be treated the same," "we are all different but we all welcome." "No Outsiders means everyone is equal."

The English curriculum has been adapted to reflect issues across the world. A Year 3 book, *The Day War Came* raises awareness of the plight of refugees. In Year 4 they look at *The Boy at the Back of the Class*, a story about a boy who arrives from a war-torn country and how he is included within a new school in the UK. The school has been raising for Now Bahia, a charity aimed to provide education for street children in Brazil. The school also works with Share Knowsley, a local refugee charity, on a Christmas card project following an assembly to the children last year. As a result, the children have greater empathy and understanding and by sharing this at home there is a secondary advantage; parents are also benefitting from the themes discussed in this wider more diverse curriculum.

Next week the school is running their annual enterprise fair. This year this is based around global themes and pupils will learn about countries that are linked to the products they are selling. Year 3 are cooking and selling bratwursts and linking this to Germany. Year 6 are learning about football around the world linked to a penalty shootout. Every Year group is named after a country, and the pupils now deliver assemblies on their class country as a result of more in depth research. In music, Brazil,



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



a Year 4 class, has been learning about Samba music and in geography and history have looked at the rainforest. In their assembly a pupil from Brazil was taking a lead role. Year 2 have compared life in Kirby with life in Kenya. The class names now have greater meaning for the pupils. "I am in Egypt class, and I know there are pyramids there where they bury their kings."

### Next Steps:

Class names is a lovely way to get pupils to research and learn about the global community but could perhaps be improved by choosing countries where pupils in the school come from, use children and their families to educate the relevant class about their country. The school plan to review the curriculum and ensure they are identifying and delivering global themes across the curriculum. Identify parents who can share their culture. Perhaps parents can run sessions for the pupils and staff? Practice shared from another school was a display on cultural heritage and where staff and pupils are linked to the countries their families come from or from where they have cultural heritage. Francis De Sales Junior school are working on global competency and have the International Schools Award. Staff are sharing a book on global politics called Prisoners of Geography. This would be a good link for sharing practice.

The governing body has just elected EAL parent governor, consider what this role will look like in terms of monitoring this target.

## Agreed Targets for 2024-2025

### Target 1

**Develop further and embed current initiatives within the global citizenship project and achieve School of Sanctuary**

### Comments

Please refer also to the next steps above for target 3. The school is working towards and achieve School of Sanctuary and using the school of sanctuary network to inform their practice. Set up a parent focus group for school of sanctuary, targeting EAL pupils. Consideration will be given to an induction process for EAL pupils and learning from schools with good practice in this area. The school intends to develop EAL parent engagement to enhance the curriculum. The link governor for global citizenship will take on a monitoring role for this target. Consider having a parent ambassador linked to the school sanctuary. Enhance the computing curriculum to enhance knowledge and understanding of global issues. Plan for Nest clubs/ breakfast events for children or parents for anyone lacking in confidence due to a language barriers. Look at the way the school recognises and celebrates festivals and how parents can support this. Training and CPD for staff and children and information for parents will be a key feature of this work.



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



### Target 2

Embed trauma informed approach to attendance and targeted support for families with barriers to attendance.

#### Comments

This is a huge priority for the school. They will use the IQM network to magpie best practice, all systems and processes need to be trauma informed and embedded across the school. The school will continue to develop their work to foster in pupils a sense of connection and belonging with the school to improve attendance. Staff CPD twill be delivered by Inclusive attendance and the school will continue to work with h Impact Ed on surveys and act on the outcomes and their recommendations.

### Target 3

Develop outdoor adaptive provision for children to create therapeutic spaces to support mental health

#### Comments

The school is looking to create a ZEN rooftop, a new quiet are and utilise the perimeter space of the field. The starting point is to consider who are the users and what are their needs? What is the purpose of each space? How do they link with the other CoE targets and the school values? Is there the potential for a safe space for families and pupils, providing a physical space for reflection and for emotions to be shared, e.g. laying a pebble to remember lost loved ones with an understanding that this will be consumed within the garden and would not necessarily be found again. Consider how can the spaces be used to fostering a sense of belonging. Is there way to have a physical symbol of the pupil's connection and belonging to the school family. Could the space have alternative uses, could the parent coffee morning go outside?



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



### Overview

Northwood Community Primary School never stands still. The school is constantly evolving and improving its already outstanding inclusive practice and provision.

Governors are aware of the CoE targets and are well informed, they are aware of the parental consultations and the impact of these. The chair of Governors is passionate and has experience of inclusion. The chair of governors sat in on the parent meeting and appreciated listening to the parents discuss the targets.

Over the last year, the school has had a massive focus on the wellbeing of staff and children.

A staff 'Change Group' has been rebooted and there is now a solution-focused approach. The group have a budget to upgrade the staffroom resources. Staff have just nominated their peers for a golden heart. The member of staff with the most nominations gets a formal recognition and for all staff nominated, the reasons for these are shared.

A teacher work-load group has been set up to look at systems and processes so staff can work smarter. A wellbeing charter was shared with staff last summer. The school ran an inset day in July on staff wellbeing and the golden ticket is still in place which gives staff the opportunity to take time equivalent to a day for personal priorities outside of school.

The school achieved the Wellbeing Award in July 2024 through Optimus Education, a well-deserved accolade for the work the school does in this area. The Nest learning mentors led on this and worked with staff, pupils and parents.

The school has amended their appraisal approach this year. They have introduced instructional coaching as the vehicle for developing teaching and learning. Each teacher has a coach, and this is quality assured by the head. The impact of this is that the areas for support are more visible and tightly targeted. The right support is now provided for the right people and this, in turn, has impacted staff wellbeing, performance in the classroom and pupil outcomes.

This approach has been used to improve the quality of writing across the school. Observations and instructional feedback happen in week 2, 6 and 10 of each term. Teacher targets are shared at SLT in order to quality assure these and identify any additional support needed for the teacher in order to ensure success.

The school has also been working with Literacy Counts to ensure staff are well trained in developing pupils' writing and provide opportunities to moderate pupils' work with teachers from the local schools' network. Teachers have a 'writing moderation' coach, which may be different to their instructional coach, to support judgements when assessing pupils' writing. A third strand is focused CPD on developing writing, the planning of this is responsive to the information which comes out of the instructional coaching cycle and the moderation activities.



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



An adaptive and inclusive teaching practice toolkit for staff has just been revisited after being launched in March last year. All lessons are taught in a metacognitive structure. CPD for staff this year has focused on upskilling teachers to provide high-quality modelling using the think-out-loud technique. The final part of every lesson is independent practice scaffolded as required to ensure every child is successful. All staff now have a clear idea of how to meet the needs of pre-key stage pupils and what adaptations might look like in the classroom.

Clicker 8 is an app on the pupils' iPads. The use of word bank using widgets are all supporting the acquisition of tier 3 vocabulary. Every teacher provides a writer toolkit now for each genre of writing and is used consistently by each teacher. These toolkits are now adapted for pre-key stage pupils. A toolkit I saw had, for a child in Year 4, the Year 2 vocabulary as well as the Year 3 and 4 words. Lightening Squad has been introduced to support pupils in KS2 who have not met their phonics goals. This evidence-based intervention is delivered by TAs and is having an impact.

The school has introduced a new values assemblies started this year. An introductory assembly might be on the school value of happiness and then the children will work towards this value for the next 2 weeks and a follow-up assembly will be used to present children with a value award, Parents are invited to this assembly. In between these 2 assemblies, there will be a No Outsiders assembly. Feedback from parents has been very positive.

Learning walks are always a delight at Northwood. It was 'No Pens' Day on the day of my visit. I loved hearing some of the show and tell in Year 5; hearing how a child's Pokémon cards are, "literally my whole life" and learning about another child's achievements at Polish Scouts.

I visited the DSP with its wrap-around playground which enables the space to be used for continuous provision. It was lovely to see pupils having a Doh Disco which helps to develop their fine motor control. The light therapy room is a beautiful resource used for self-regulation. The nurture room is also accessed by pupils in the mainstream who have complex needs to help meet their EHCP targets. Since my last visit, the school has developed an immersive room adding focus shapes and tactile sensory boards.

The school was decorated for Christmas with real trees which at the end of the term will be donated to families in the community who need them. Another new addition is the book vending machine funded by the LFC Foundation as part of a reward system to recognise reading and story language at home.

Outside spaces continue to be developed. A new sustainability project is driven by a focus group from across the school, including kitchen staff, site manager, teacher and SLT looking at sustainability from every angle. The school is looking at rewilding where they can and allowing pupils to explore these environments. A new greenhouse in the Forest School will provide the opportunity to play, and plant foods. Tomatoes, and strawberries which the children use to create dishes or use as a tasting activity. Some children had never shelled peas before. The welly shed means that pupils can access the field all year round supporting their wellbeing.

Every child at Northwood is fed every day by the committed kitchen staff. High-quality food is sourced locally.



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



The school is quite rightly proud of their careers fair. To raise awareness and aspirations 29 professionals from the local area came to school to talk to the children about a wide variety of jobs. A Yoga teacher shared how they had trained in Thailand and Bali and a boxing champion from Kirby told them how he had taken part in competitions across the world.

This review captures just some of the practices developed over the last 12 months. The staff are a committed, driven team with shared values and a clear vision to deliver the very best possible educational experience for the pupils. The wonderfully inclusive practice goes beyond the walls of the school. Northwood lives up in every sense to its name as a community school.

Some last words from parents and pupils.

Pupils:

"It's a brilliant school, it's the best school around here."

"It's an amazing school."

"It's the best school in the world - the best in the blue, wide world."

Parents:

"The school makes every effort to include my child in all aspects of school life and where there are challenges the school talks to me and we talk together to find a solution."

"The school have been perfect following a medical diagnosis for my child."

"Reassurance from all staff has been unbelievable while my child has suffered a medical condition. The communication is incredible, I cannot fault it."

These are well-deserved accolades for what is a truly inspiring place to work, learn and play. I am firmly of the opinion that Northwood Community Primary 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