



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



School Name St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
Woodford Lane
Winsford
Cheshire
CW7 2JS

Head/Principal Ms Martine Gum

IQM Lead Ms Amy Butterfield

Date of Review 10th June 2024

Assessor Ms Alison Williams

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group Northwessians

Ambassador Ms Sarah Linari

Next Meeting 4th July 2024

Meeting Focus TBC

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Summer 2022	5 th July 2022	Yes
Autumn 2022	10 th November 2022	Yes
Spring 2023	4 th May 2023	Yes
Summer 2023	29 th June 2023	Yes
Autumn 2023	4 th December 2023	No
Spring 2024	11 th March 2024	No
Summer 2024	4 th July 2024	

Evidence

- COE action plan and reviewed target documentation.
- Meetings with IQM lead.
- Discussion with school leaders.
- Meetings with parent group, pupil leaders, TAs and ECT.
- Tour of the school.
- Scrutiny of website.



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Summary of Targets from 2023-2024

Target 1: *Continue to work to embed the 'voice' of pupils, staff and parents' wellbeing within and outside St Joseph's.*

The school has developed effective systems to gather input from all stakeholders, using this feedback to enhance the support offered to pupils and families at St. Joseph's. Initiatives like "stay and pray," "stay and play," parent lunches, and sports days with family picnics foster community engagement. Volunteers actively participate in school trips, and parent surveys have been utilised to gauge opinions on the range and cost of these trips, guiding future offerings. Homework practices have been streamlined based on feedback, reducing the number of apps and platforms for different year groups to avoid overwhelming parents. A variety of workshops are available, including SEND coffee mornings, health workshops on sleep hygiene, and Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) interventions that can be implemented at home. The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) is well-established and organises numerous events such as discos, film nights, Easter parties, and school sleepovers. Additionally, the school hosts special events like Grandparents Day to further involve the extended family in the school community.

Next Steps:

- Build on the offer of opportunities for children and their families.

Target 2: *An effective and embedded research approach to ensure St Joseph's have a well-designed early identification and implementation of outreach targeted support from all staff.*

The school has established a systematic approach to addressing students' needs, beginning with initial concerns paperwork and followed by thorough observations. This structured method aims to understand each child's situation comprehensively. Within the school's embedded culture, teachers and staff are encouraged to reflect on what interventions have already been implemented for a child, their duration, and their impact. Trained staff play a crucial role in building a holistic understanding of the child's context, enabling them to identify clear next steps for support and development. This approach ensures that interventions are well-informed and tailored to meet individual needs effectively. By systematically gathering and analysing data on interventions and their outcomes, the school can continuously improve its support strategies. This process reflects a commitment to providing personalised and impactful education, fostering a supportive environment where every student can thrive. Now in its second year, the Resource Provision is led by a dedicated staff member who works there every morning and spends one afternoon in each phase to support Quality First Teaching (QFT) and embed inclusive practices. Teachers can refer students, particularly those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), for additional support. A "chat mat" is used to gather pupil voice, providing a starting point to determine areas of focus. Teaching Assistants (TAs) receive training to share interventions and adapt to the children's needs, enhancing their skills and confidence. This includes activities like sensory circuits. The trained staff operate as a 'triage' approach to signpost staff with next steps. They also provide regular sessions for some children, involving 20-minute weekly meetings and classroom observations.



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Next Step:

- Offer outreach support to other schools, starting within the Winsford Education Partnership (WEP) and aiming to assist IQM schools.

Target 3: *To provide a programme of support, initially within our WEP but also through the IQM trust, other cluster groups linking into the work being done throughout the school.*

The Mental Health Support Team (MHST) collaborates closely with the school, with practitioners regularly visiting to work with both children and parents. They offer a variety of programs, such as "Timid to Tiger" and "Feelings Detectives." There are half-termly meetings and consultations with the Pastoral Lead, ensuring consistent communication and support. Additionally, school staff have shared support and advice with the Autism Service. Addressing emotional school-based non-attendance, the Chester initiative and CW program focus on early identification, followed by meetings and the development of a tailored plan. This initiative has expanded to provide outreach support to other schools, initially within the Winsford Education Partnership (WEP), with the goal of supporting IQM schools in the future.

Next Step:

- School to work alongside OLHOC (Our Ladies Help of Christians) – this is the new MAT the school has recently joined. Primarily made up of secondary schools, St. Josephs is one of the few primaries who are now offering resources, expertise and training across other schools. A new SEND cluster of schools has also been initiated.

Agreed Targets for 2024-2025

Target 1:

Can the use of animals in school have a positive impact on children's mental health and well-being?

Comments

The school has received funding from the Virtual School to conduct a research project in collaboration with Chester University, led by the school's pastoral lead. This three-year program aims to initially support SEND children before expanding to the entire student body. The project was initiated in response to a growing number of students experiencing worries and low-level anxieties when attending school. Before COVID-19, animal therapy, involving a school dog, chickens, and rabbits, was a routine practice but was discontinued during the pandemic. Based on feedback from staff and students, there was a strong desire to reintroduce school pets, recognising the positive impact they previously had. As a result, the senior leadership team has committed to this new initiative with the purchase of two school guinea pigs, affectionately called 'pigs' and 'blanket'. The initial phase will focus on five children with high levels of anxiety or emotional-based school avoidance. The pastoral lead has researched extensively on child development and animal therapy to develop a comprehensive action plan for an



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appropriate animal therapy ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) program. This includes using the ELSA checklist and questionnaires for parents and staff to gather entry and exit data. The baseline assessment involves questions, the ELSA checklist, and teacher questionnaires. The program will utilise emotion fans, mindfulness techniques, strengths shields, and friendship-building activities, tailored to be accessible for children with Autism Spectrum Conditions. The project also includes specific tasks for the school's guinea pigs, integrating them into the therapeutic process. After successfully implementing the program, the lead will train staff in other schools to extend the benefits of this initiative.

This project will continue into its second year with a strategic plan to acquire a static caravan, expanding the school's capacity to offer enrichment experiences for children and their families. The focus will be on developing essential life skills such as cleaning, washing, and cooking in a practical and engaging manner. The static caravan will serve as a dedicated space where these skills can be taught and practiced in a supportive environment.

By providing hands-on learning opportunities, the school aims to empower students and their families with valuable life skills that are essential for daily living. This initiative not only enhances the educational experience but also strengthens family bonds and fosters independence among pupils.

St. Joseph's Primary School is committed to enriching the lives of its community members through innovative and impactful educational programs.

Target 2

Embed a metacognition approach across the school.

Comments

Three members of the leadership team at the school have completed NPQ qualifications and have been evaluating research on metacognition through the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) guidance. Recognising the importance of this focus, especially post-COVID, the leaders aim to build resilience and confidence in students to initiate self-led learning. Computing has been identified as a subject that challenges students, fostering resilience and engagement. The leadership team is inspired by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 'characteristics of learning' and seeks to apply these principles across all year groups. To support this, two teachers have completed metacognition training and have led staff meetings to share their knowledge. The next steps involve considering practical applications, making the approach purposeful, and assessing the impact on student learning and development.

The Impact of the Cluster Group (with details of the impact of last three meetings)

St. Joseph's Primary School has made significant strides in enhancing its educational environment through various initiatives. Hosting the IQM cluster meeting (Inclusion Quality Mark) last year has strengthened ties with other schools and facilitated



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improved communication via email, fostering collaboration and sharing of best practices.

Furthermore, the school has achieved a Silver award for being a Rights Respecting School, a testament to its commitment to promoting children's rights. Pupil Ambassadors play a crucial role in raising awareness across the school about rights such as the right to stay safe and the right to clean water. Their efforts emphasise the importance of understanding and respecting rights among students, creating a supportive and rights-focused school culture. St. Joseph's Primary School continues to uphold these standards, ensuring that every child feels valued, respected, and empowered in their learning journey.

A significant contribution to the IQM cluster has been the sharing of the project created by the Pastoral Lead in school.

BURT (Breathe, Understand, Relax or Regulate, Think), is an initiative, based on feedback from children's words and actions, has been integrated into all year groups. The BURT program includes a BURT bag and BURT buddies to assist children experiencing separation anxiety or feelings of blame and shame, with a suitcase for residential trips and a social story tailored for children with Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC). Additionally, there is a BURT friendship stop and Wilma, a quieter turtle character representing emotions kept inside. A story about BURT and Wilma's meeting emphasises coping strategies and seeking adult help. Children participate in a six-week program to create their own coping shell and have one-page profiles reflecting their coping mechanisms, such as stompy feet or wings symbolising fight/flight responses.

The BURT initiative has extended support to other schools, inspiring the creation of new puppets and providing significant assistance. The program includes psycho-education training, promoting a whole-school approach to emotional regulation and resilience. Visual aids, like a crocodile, monkey, and child, depict internal brain processes, normalising these experiences and fostering empathy and understanding. This creates a safe space for children to discuss their emotions and develop coping strategies

The school has not been represented at either of the 2 cluster meetings held so far this academic year. The third and final meeting is taking place on 4th July and the school is expected to send a representative(s) to this meeting as regular attendance at cluster meetings is required to maintain IQM Centre of Excellence or Flagship School status.



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Overview

St. Joseph's Primary School, part of the Winsford Education Partnership, is dedicated to providing an inclusive education for its pupils. The school is proud of its commitment to serving the vibrant and diverse community in Winsford, maintaining its status as a 'Good' school in the last Ofsted inspection in 2018. The ethos at St. Joseph's is deeply rooted in its core values: Positivity, Respect, Independence, Determination and Enthusiasm. These values are integral to the global curriculum and shape every interaction within the school community, ensuring a broad and enriched learning experience for all pupils.

During the assessment visit, it was clear that the school's commitment to inclusion and meeting community needs is strong. The importance of relationships is emphasised, with a high value placed on building connections and supporting transitions. Weekly sessions are conducted for six weeks, not only for Year 6 but across all year groups, to prepare children for moving classes. Each child has a transition book filled with photos, notes and other personal details, which are shared with parents. The school is aware of which parents and families need additional support and approaches them with respect, trust and without judgment. This thoughtful and inclusive approach underscores the school's dedication to fostering a supportive and welcoming environment for every child.

The feedback from parents during the review, reaffirmed the positive atmosphere observed throughout the school day. Parents humorously remarked on their frequent presence at the school, participating in activities like hearing children read, joining trips, and attending parent lunches. This active involvement contributes to a strong sense of community where everyone knows each other well.

Parents expressed deep appreciation for the comprehensive support their children receive. They spoke passionately about the inclusive environment and praised the school's efforts to ensure no child feels left out. One parent highlighted the caring attitude of teachers, describing them as not only educators but also surrogate parents who always have their children's best interests at heart.

The open communication between parents and school staff was highly valued, with parents feeling comfortable and supported in discussing any concerns. They commended the school's responsiveness in resolving issues promptly. Parents also appreciated that their opinions were sought and valued, whether regarding homework, extracurricular activities, or other school matters.

Overall, parents described the school as a family-oriented community where they feel welcomed, supported and informed about their children's education and well-being. The word "family" resonated strongly in their descriptions, underpinning the nurturing and inclusive ethos of the school.

During a walk around the school, it was evident that the school is deeply committed to nurturing the development of children as whole individuals, consistently emphasising its clear Catholic values throughout all aspects of school life. Displays prominently showcased this commitment, reflecting the school's ethos and mission statement.



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The school offers a comprehensive residential program starting early with Reception children staying overnight in school. Year 2 students have a one-night stay at a local camp, while Year 4 enjoys a two-night residential trip. Year 6 students have the opportunity for a full-week residential experience. Additionally, there was enthusiasm evident among students for the Key Stage 2 trip to France, which is organised annually.

Displays around the school highlighted various initiatives that contribute to the inclusive culture, such as being a Rights Respecting school, promoting activities under "Let Girls Play," and ensuring children's safety. These displays reinforced the school's commitment to fostering a supportive and respectful environment where all children can thrive. The emphasis on Catholic values permeated every aspect of the school's ethos, creating a cohesive and nurturing educational environment.

The vast outdoor space provides ample opportunities for children to engage in various activities. These include play areas, quiet spaces, a fairy trail in Key Stage 1, a sports area and a sensory garden. The school also offers a Forest School program delivered by three trained practitioners, featuring a well-planned curriculum that includes sessions for parents.

Every classroom has a tailored 'calm space' designed to meet the specific needs of the children in that room. Some spaces are bright with motivational posters, others are calming and some are filled with engaging reading books. Children with SEND are well supported through highly effective quality first teaching, allowing most to seamlessly access classroom provision. For children with more complex needs, individual workstations are provided, enabling them to thrive within the mainstream environment.

The school also provides a ten-place resourced provision (RP), led by one teacher and supported by four adults. Each child in the RP has a personal workstation and pupil profiles are displayed to ensure all adults are familiar with each child's needs. These profiles ask three simple and effective questions: what people know and admire about me, how you can support me and what I find tricky. Children in the RP are included in all school trips and have opportunities to access mainstream provision throughout the week. This comprehensive approach ensures that all students are well-supported and able to participate fully in school life.

Conversations with teachers, including an Early Career Teacher (ECT), reinforce the school's deeply embedded culture of inclusivity and support. One teacher noted, "It felt like home as soon as I walked around." The guidance and support from colleagues and leadership are evident, with SLT attentively responding to staff needs, such as creating a quieter PPA room for focused work. A notice board in the staff room features thank-you notes, fostering a sense of appreciation and value among staff. The emphasis on well-being and a strong sense of togetherness is palpable, as teachers go above and beyond to provide enriching experiences for the students.

There is a robust system for supporting SEND children, characterised by strong home-school connections and regular half-termly meetings to discuss progress. This collaborative approach ensures that children see their parents and teachers working together. Classroom adaptations, evident during a school walkaround, include visual



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timetables, concentration toolboxes and designated spaces for children needing a few minutes to themselves. Brain breaks and sensory circuits are integrated into daily routines, supporting children's diverse needs. The inclusive practices and the staff's dedication to going the extra mile make the school a nurturing and effective learning environment.

Pupil voice from various groups reinforce the inclusive nature of the school, highlighting its commitment to creating a supportive and engaging environment for all students. Mini-Vinnies are active in raising money for charities, organising competitions and supporting the local community. The school council has successfully raised funds for new toy boxes in each phase and lollipops at lunchtimes and even organised a school sleepover. Digital leaders promote online safety through creative activities like making posters, writing books, and classroom discussions.

A wide range of clubs are available, offering children unique opportunities such as fencing, drumming, crafting, and baking. Inclusivity is a core value, demonstrated by a Year 6 student with diabetes who led a whole school assembly to raise awareness and is participating in a charity walk. His initiative, despite initial nervousness, sparked curiosity and questions from other students, promoting a deeper understanding of his condition.

Students articulate their appreciation for the school, discussing their Catholic values, uniqueness and the supportive nature of their teachers. They feel reassured that if they are upset, teachers will help them. The children express enthusiasm about having animals in school, particularly the two new guinea pigs. Their pride in their school is evident, and they describe it as "inspirational."

In response to the evidence gathered through the review and the paperwork submitted, I am firmly of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark to pursue Flagship School status. I therefore recommend that the school moves to Flagship 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 Flagship status.

Assessor: Ms Alison Williams

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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