



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



School: Longdendale High School
Spring Street
Hyde
Cheshire
SK14 8LW

Head/Principal: Andrea Jones

IQM Lead: Jennifer Willis

Date of Review: 23rd March 2022

Assessor: Steve Gill

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group: Northwessians

Ambassador: Sandie Isherwood

Date of Next Meeting: 20th April 2022

Next Cluster Group Meeting Focus: TBC

Sources of Evidence during IQM Review Day: The school submitted extremely comprehensive documentation of their evaluation of progress both prior to and during the review demonstrating progress on the Flagship Project for 2021 – 22. During the review there were detailed discussions that were pertinent to The Flagship Project for 2022 – 23 that were agreed.

Discussions during the review with members of the school community included the following:

- Executive Principal
- Headteacher
- Deputy Headteacher
- Assistant Headteacher Inclusion, IQM Lead
- Senior Inclusion Leader & DSL



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



- Aspire Centre Manager
- Student Leadership Co-ordinator
- Assistant SENCo
- Head of Year 7
- Pastoral Support Worker for Year 7
- Pastoral Support Worker Years 8 & 9
- Parent
- Students in a variety Leadership Roles



Evaluation of Annual Progress towards the Flagship Project

The school's progress on their Flagship project since the last review was focussed on the

'Development of Student Leadership.'

The vision was to promote, add value and increase the importance of the role of Student Leadership for both students and the staff body, so that the Student Council became the way for learners to be heard and to understand and to see in real terms the impact of their contributions. Thereby promoting a sense of pride in being a part of the LHS community amongst students. To achieve this the project focussed on four specific strands as outlined below. During the last year the staff and students have worked hard to ensure successful outcomes have been achieved. This can clearly be seen in the review document completed by the school and is outlined below and that was supported by extensive conversations with the stakeholders as part of this review.

Running an effective and consistent Student Council. The Form Representative role was relaunched with two representatives for every form in all year groups and sessions were based on the importance of students having their own voice and having their say within their community. Assemblies were delivered to all year groups emphasising the importance of Student Voice, linked to Democracy Day. Student Voice feedback shows that many more students than previously wanted to be involved and there was an particular increase in the number of students who had previously not wanted to be involved. Disadvantaged (DA) percentages showed 38% increase in DA in Anti-Bullying and Mental Health and Wellbeing Ambassadors, 19% in Form Reps, 40% in Sports Leaders and 30% in Subject Leaders. Senior Leaders each have specific roles with specific areas of school life under their co-ordination. Student Voice has evolved and is now very strong. Student Leaders have been given a specific time slot in tutor time each week and Student Leaders take notes at meetings to deliver back to students in tutor time. The Student Board in the entrance hall is regularly updated with 'You Said We Did' information so that students can see that their voice is valued, their ideas are being shared and highlighting any actions taken from their ideas.

Next Steps: To look at ways to continue to increase the engagement from DA students in leadership roles across school.

In respect of developing skills and a sense of responsibility to assist learners to be actively involved in public life. Training for Year 10 Subject Leaders was provided that looked at the importance of being a leader and the qualities needed for such a key role, with a focus on being a role model, even when it's difficult. This led to the biggest group of Y10 Subject Leaders that the school has had and enhanced and increased engagement from a year group that had previously not engaged with Student Leadership. Feedback from HODs shows that Student Leaders have been extremely helpful and useful this year. The SSAT qualification could not be completed in the last year for various reasons. It has been relaunched this year with a new group. Year 10 students have had the opportunity to apply for the Bright Leader's programme acting as a stepping stone towards the SSAT award when they are in Year 11. There have been regular meetings and conversations with HODs regarding their Student Leaders involvement, with



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



Languages and Humanities working with their Student Leaders towards a qualification and this will continue this year.

Involving students in debating promotes higher level thinking, skills for the future and encourages social mobility, bridging the deprivation gap. It was agreed that Unloc was the best debating programme for LHS students. The programme started in May and ran for 10 weeks and was a huge success with students benefitting from involvement in and experience of debating. Students planned how they would move forward with a view to launching again in March, but the pandemic caused issues, although this has now been developed with Glossopdale HS and a debate will be organised once Covid restrictions allow. The school have linked with the ASFC Politics Department organising a debate and launching a politics project with them that included a successful visit to ASFC where they met and talked to Angela Rayner MP. The students spoken to about this were extremely positive about their experience.

Promoting a sense of pride and belonging within the Student Body. Over the last year the school has continued to send out Weekly Bulletins, held virtual School Council meetings and sent out working from home and wellbeing tips that had been gathered from Student Voice. The Student 'You Said We Did' boards were regularly updated and in fact all the boards on the main corridor were used to display various aspects of Student Leadership and how it affects all areas of School Life. Sports Tournaments have restarted, with the BT Sports Senior Leader playing a big role in this. Sports Leaders have been chosen from each year and were part of Student Leaders rewards breakfast in December and the Interform Football Competitions launched in February. Departments have used Student Leaders to assist with re-launching clubs. The Enrichment Fair was run by Year10 Student Leaders. It was a huge success with lots of sign ups and students have continued to raise the profile of their clubs across the school. Students have also continued to help with clubs, particularly in the Art dept.

The profile of charity events across the school has been raised significantly since Sept 2021. £800 has already been raised towards charitable causes in the last 3 months alone. Multiple events not only raise money but also awareness of charities and issues such as:

- Green Mental Health Day where students wore green and completed tutor time activities that brought in donations for TOG Mind
- A Charity Bake Sale for The Christie where whole school involvement, raised £470
- Poppy Appeal – Poppies sold throughout the week £145 raised
- Children in Need - students and staff wore a yellow accessory and took part in a quiz in tutor time, donations given raised £210.

Next Steps: To continue to evolve the primary school link with the student Council from Gorse Hall Primary School.



Agreed Actions for the Next Steps in the Flagship Project:

'Parental Partnerships Post-Covid Re-engagement Project'

Due to the pandemic and subsequent government guidance, families have not been able to come onto the school site and engage with staff in person. Parents' evenings have been held virtually and all communication between school and families has been either by letter or on-line. Consequently, staff have noted that fewer parents are now engaging with school. Parental attendance at their most recent parents' evening was one of the lowest, with only 74% of Year 10 families making an appointment with their child's teachers. The school recognises that working in partnership with parents and carers and subsequently increasing parental participation in school life leads to greatly improved pupil progress, punctuality, attendance, and behaviour. Parental partnership will be a focus moving forward to re-engage and encourage significantly more parents and carers to be involved in their children's learning. From the project outline above, and the detailed actions included in the comprehensive review document formulated and in the process of being enacted it is clear to see that the school are keen to see successful outcomes for the project through the steps briefly outlined below. Although after detailed discussions with key staff during the review these may evolve and change as research is undertaken:

Transition and Induction: This will support parents as their children transition through or between schools, providing clear guidance on parental responsibilities and that of the school, staff, and pupils, and share this key information with parents as a key part of the induction process.

Participation: This will include all groups of parents in supporting their children's learning and developing their own learning where appropriate. With a focus particularly on those children who are disadvantaged (DA). Creating an ethos that says that all families are reachable.

Communication: The school and its staff will take steps to ensure that the school is a welcoming, communicative, and friendly place for parents.

Guidance: They will provide clear and accessible guidance to help parents support their children's learning and development.

Home-School Links: They will ensure that these links are strong, with parent-friendly policies produced to establish effective home-school links. These will include an easy and quick to read policy summary for key policies and protocols.

Outcomes: It is hoped that by the end of the year that more parents will be actively participating with the school in partnership to support their child/children's education and attending a variety of sessions in school including parent/teacher meetings and parents evening. Now restrictions have been lifted the school are actively working to improve this and are looking to see an improvement in parental engagement up to 85% in the next year.



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



The Impact of the Cluster Group

The school has been an active, supportive, and valued member their cluster. They have participated in several virtual meetings during the pandemic. As part of a cluster rationalisation process the school moved to the Northwessians cluster group. The group were due to meet on the in early March but, this had to be cancelled. However, the school remain committed to attending and are waiting for a new date.

Overview

Longdendale High School is an average sized, but superbly inclusive, secondary school with 803 students on roll in Tameside. LHS became part of the Stamford Park Trust, a Multi-Academy Trust led by Ashton Sixth Form College in January 2021. Those involved with the Trust have a shared belief that the young people of Tameside should have access to the best education provision so that the students in their care are able to realise their ambitions for their future and their life chances are improved by embedding outstanding practice across the Trust. This is encapsulated in their vision, *'Excellence and Ambition'*. That is mirrored by LHS mission statement, *'We endeavour to achieve and aspire to be successful'* and is embodied and embedded in their core values of ASPIRE – Achievement, Success, Professionalism, Integrity, Respect and Endeavour. LHS is totally committed to maximising the achievement of all students. It is clear from the evidence of previous reviews and this in school review, superb inclusivity is ingrained in the ethos and nature of the staff and is enacted every day and which they should be extremely proud of.

Staff led by the inspirational and aspirational Headteacher, and her extremely dynamic and passionate Senior Team, supported by the newly appointed Executive Principal all have an acute understanding of the school context and a drive and a passion to support students and their families with the highest aspiration for them all. Inclusion, care, nurture, and support are at the core of everything that happens at the school and is naturally ingrained in every aspect of school life. It is a setting that prides itself on providing the best for everyone. It is a vibrant, caring, and friendly place to attend as a student and as a member of staff. It is thriving exceptional hub of educational and inclusive excellence where every member of staff is committed to the school and highly valued by the Leadership Team and each other. Strong relationships with students and families continue to evolve and mean there is a high degree of trust and a very good understanding of how the school can best support students and their families. The overwhelming feeling from the parent spoken to during this review and supported by evidence from previous reviews is that the school is a supportive caring haven for their children, and they appreciate the commitment of all staff. The school's actions to care for its students, families and its staff in my judgement continues to be outstanding.

Conversations with key members of staff, were extremely useful in confirming that the school continues to more than meet each of the 8 elements of the IQM award. During the review discussions were held with staff to discuss key aspects of the school and its inclusivity that was supported by documentary evidence to enhance and underpin discussions, that allowed an extremely positive and superbly inclusive picture of the school to be seen. What continues to stand out very clearly from the evidence of this and previous reviews is the pride the staff feel for the school and what they achieve there,



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



but also the passion that is immediately evident when walking around the school, in conversations with them and is clearly demonstrated in the way that they engage and work with each other, students and families to more than meet need, going above and beyond what is expected. Everyone at LHS understands their role and work in harmony and collaboration with each other to achieve successful outcomes for all. Staff pride in their excellent inclusivity where they naturally and actively promote equality and diversity stood out again during this review. They are committed to maximising the success, achievement, and outcomes for all students, each other, and families.

Meetings throughout the day with staff, students and a parent gave an extremely vibrant and detailed picture of the superbly inclusive life at LHS. They have made great strides with their Flagship project that is clearly and comprehensively detailed in the report above. Conversations and discussions during the day were involved, wide ranging and extremely interesting and pertinent to ensuring that the school still meets the criteria of the IQM Award and included discussions about their Flagship projects and inclusive provision, as well as meetings discussions identified below:

An initial meet and greet with the Head Boy and Head Girl who were extremely articulate and marvellous advocates and ambassadors for the school. The conversation with the two was interesting and demonstrated their love of their school and touched on student leadership and how they were instrumental in affecting change and the legacy they would be leaving behind as they moved on at the end of the school year. It was a privilege and a pleasure to talk to such inspiring and aspirational students.

I met with the newly appointed Executive Principal and the Headteacher 'to look at the changes in context of the school and the Trust since the last review, including how they are working with external partners such a MIND and Manchester City FC – City Inspires. It was clear that there have been major changes and improvements in the both the Trust and in the school that are allowing them to work more closely together and to support positive and rapid change. The appointment of the Executive Principal has ensured that work is evolving and coming to fruition more quickly. It will be of great interest to see how this has developed at the next review.

The Student Leader Co-ordinator and Assistant Headteacher Inclusion gave a detailed review of the Student Leadership Project from the previous year and plans for it to continue to evolve over the next year; I was able to see the Year 7 Pastoral Support Worker in action when visiting the Year 7 Break Club and to discuss in detail her work in the school and to talk to some of the Year 7 students about how they feel about the school and are supported as part of the club. It is an example of the schools forward thinking and their superb inclusivity and is something that other schools should aspire to in having non-teaching Pastoral Support Staff in place.

I had a further meeting with the Head Boy and Head Girl, Student Council and Anti Bullying Ambassadors who gave their views on how student leadership had evolved over the last year and were able to articulate their involvement in school life, projects they had been involved in and we discussed ideas for the future. I was extremely impressed by the students, their maturity, and their ability to engage in such high-level conversations. They are a credit to themselves and the school. It was a privilege to meet with them and showed the undeniably inclusive way that the staff and students work



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



together and are actively involved in dialogue and actions to improve what happens at LHS for everyone.

I had the opportunity to tour the school and conduct a learning walk with the DHT and see first-hand what happens in classrooms and around the school, talking to staff and students. We were able to discuss the new Behaviour Policy and how that was embedded across the school and was resulting in improved relationships between staff and students. The school was a calm oasis with very few students on corridors. Classrooms were hives of meaningful learning and activity with students clearly engaged and involved in learning, but who were happy to discuss and give their thoughts about the school and what they were doing in class. It was very apparent that relationships across the school, between students and staff and between staff were exceptional and that this is the result of well thought out and executed planning that everyone is now buying into, this was also backed up by conversations with numerous students. It will be interesting to see how this has evolved at the next review.

The AHT Inclusion talked about the new Flagship project to re-engage parents in the children's education and the steps that will be undertaken to ensure that this improves and moves towards 100% parental participation. It was clear to see the passion to ensure that all students receive the best support possible, and this must include parental engagement in the process, it will be interesting to see how this has developed and what research has been identified to support the project at the next review.

The meeting with the Senior Leader for Inclusion and the Aspire Centre Manager focussed on improvements made in the already superb support offered to students included discussions about well-being, safeguarding, family conflict training, TOG MIND - piloting a community HUB approach, the SWIS project, continuing to support the superb support offered by the team. I had a brief opportunity to talk to the school's Social Worker who works in the school 4 days a week and had been in post for nearly a year. She felt that her work in school enabled the best outcomes for the students and families in a timely and effective manner and felt that she had been included very quickly as part of the LHS team.

The phone conversation with a parent was extremely enlightening and positive. She couldn't be happier with her experience of the school and the way they support her and her children. She was able to clearly articulate her experience of two schools with her elder child and explained that the move to LHS has been such a positive experience and this was followed by her younger child attending the school. She said that she could not fault the school and that they had quickly built a superb level of respect and trust and two-way communication is encouraged and is superb. A fantastic accolade for the school and indicative of their inclusive approach with parents.

I met with the Assistant Headteacher, HOY Year 7 and the PSW for Years 8 and 9 who is also a new member of staff who felt well supported, and this allowed her to be effective in her new role very quickly. We discussed in detail changes in student support since the last review and was an opportunity to celebrate these changes and to look at the extremely positive impact they had had on the school, staff, and students, such as the work with The Brilliant Club, City Inspires programme, in house screen for students who need it and the emerging work with the Ambition Institute.



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



Every member of staff spoken to felt that they are supported to achieve success for their students and for themselves, delivering outstanding support, and educational experiences alongside superb Student Leaders who making a positive difference and are continually evolving their roles that can only have a beneficial effect on the school and this is demonstrated by the way that staff and students are engaging and working with each other. Superb teamwork is key to this success where all members of staff, and increasingly students, are committed to maximising successes, achievements, and outcomes for everyone and each other.

I am therefore firmly of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark to maintain its status as a Flagship School. I therefore recommend that the school retains its 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: Steve Gill

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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