



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



School: Walton Le Dale High School
Brindle Road
Bamber Bridge
Lancashire
PR5 6RN

Head/Principal: Mr James Harris

IQM Lead: Mr Peter Howarth

Date of Review: 13th July 2020

Assessor: Steve Gill

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group: Inclusion Pioneers

Ambassador: Stephanie Robinson

Date of Next Meeting: Cancelled due to Covid-19 pandemic

Next Cluster Group Meeting: Focus: TBC

Sources of Evidence during IQM Review Day

This review took place during the Covid-19 pandemic. The review was conducted remotely using Zoom video conferencing. Prior to the day, documentary evidence related to inclusion and the schools Flagship status was reviewed. I was able to scrutinise electronic documents. The school submitted extremely comprehensive and very accurate documentation of their own evaluation of progress and during the online review the next steps for 2020 - 21 were discussed and agreed.

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

- Headteacher.
- Deputy Headteacher & IQM Lead.
- SENCO.
- Assistant Headteacher – Teaching & Learning.
- Assistant Headteacher – Curriculum.
- PSHE Co-ordinator.
- Head of English.
- Head of MFL.
- Progress Co-ordinator.



Evaluation of Annual Progress towards the Flagship Project

The school's progress from the previous year were based on the project focus of 'Brilliant Teaching in an Inclusive Classroom.' The purpose of the project has been to establish, trial and publish a 'model', 'toolkit' or 'recipe' for 'brilliant teaching' in an inclusive classroom, where brilliant teaching is defined as that which leads to a great education, including excellent examination results. The challenge has been to identify structures, techniques, strategies and approaches which enable all students to be engaged and to make appropriate progress. While the needs of particular students have played a part, the quest has been to find strategies that are applicable in a classroom that includes students with a range of additional needs. The school has made a great deal of progress towards achieving their expected outcomes for the end of the year, supplying comprehensive detailed evidence of success prior to the review. The school has worked to achieve this through the following steps:

Establishing factors that contribute towards brilliant teaching in an inclusive classroom. To achieve this, a wide range of stakeholders were interviewed identifying their perceptions of brilliant teaching in an inclusive classroom, establishing the 'ingredients'. A range of sources were then used to validate the approach to be used and the 'ingredients' or 'toolkit', these included: The Research Schools' Network, EEF sources such as Metacognition, Pupil Premium and Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools. The student council were consulted and all staff, both teaching and support were asked for their opinion.

By creating a "recipe" or "toolkit" for brilliant teaching in an inclusive classroom and piloting it. By October, the school were using the feedback from the above activities and liaising with the SENCO, who reviewed the strategies to ensure that they were appropriate for students with SEND, the whole-school T&L Toolkit was updated and disseminated. The Toolkit is now used with new staff during induction, Trainees and NQTs to direct the target-setting process. Elements of the Toolkit have also been pushed on a whole-school level such as Direct Instruction that is a common thread running through all strands of the Toolkit; vocabulary, oracy and behaviour for learning. Scaffolding and to an extent, metacognition have also been a focus throughout the last academic year as teachers have started to make the implicit, explicit.

By January, the whole-school T&L Policy had been launched to all staff, underpinned by the T&L Toolkit and outlining the key principles to be found across the school. The strands of the Toolkit were made explicit and approaches were offered to target these areas. In addition, CPD was offered in the form of weekly drip-feed 'Top Tips in Two Minutes' and also 'Pastries and Progress'.

The T&L lead has trialled an approach to writing with her lower ability Year 9 group. This approach was devised by the English department and is now used as a departmental approach. A further strand of the 'Toolkit' that has been a focus has been consistent behaviour for learning, with a real drive to raise expectations within the classroom and through home learning. This has had some success as external evaluators have referenced this in their reports such as C. Morris, National Leader of Education and J. Doyle, Lancashire School Improvement Service.



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In January, a whole-school Quality of Education review was undertaken by SLT in liaison with Middle leaders, students and staff. The outcome of this in terms of teaching, curriculum and behaviour was very positive. Feedback was provided to all staff and best practice was also modelled in terms of feedback. The school has started to share with external networks through the Teacher Development Trust and also through the Preston Teaching School Alliance with teacher trainees. They also met with Penwortham Priory Academy to discuss this approach to driving T&L.

By March 2020 when lockdown occurred, the school had co-created an evidence-informed Toolkit for brilliant yet inclusive teaching. They had strengthened this with a comprehensive T&L Policy and subsequent drip-fed CPD. They had trialled an element of this in English, vocabulary instruction and scaffolding using visualisers. This was then evaluated in a low-stakes manner in terms of lesson drop-ins and then in a formal manner in terms of a whole-school Quality of Education review. The results of this were shared with staff and middle leaders will action them as soon as the school is able to when re-opened fully from September 2020. The project will continue to evolve and develop at the school and the following steps will be taken over the next twelve months alongside the proposed project below and will be reported on and discussed at the next review:

From September - October an evaluation of the Toolkit will take place and amendments made in light of the new Evidence Review, published June 2021 with input from all stakeholders.

CPD is now aligned to the priorities in the T&L Policy which, in turn, filters into the Toolkit. So, all priorities will be pushed through this and the weekly Teaching and Learning Digest.

Continue to develop work with networks including Preston TSA, Teacher Development Trust and through school to school collaboration.

Agreed Actions for the Next Steps in the Flagship Project

'Exceptional Support for One Another.'

This is a key part of the school improvement plan and is an integral part of their ethos. Walton Le Dale High School will develop an exceptional model of support through supporting staff through effective, targeted and tailored CPD; staff supporting students through a whole-school individual mentoring model and students supporting students through student leadership and participation. As the school emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic they will draw upon their key strength of knowing each member of their community as an individual to develop a whole-school approach to individual support. Early discussions with a feeder primary school indicate their interest in developing this model as well. The following actions will support the successful implementation of the project.



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Supporting staff through effective, targeted and tailored CPD.

This will include a CPD model and provision that is clearly linked to the school priorities addressed through the T&L Policy; CPD opportunities in the form of a menu for all staff. Use of the National College of Teaching for resources that will be used in-house as part of the school's CPD strategy and the development of lesson study as a model moving forward, for NQTs, RQTs and other willing staff.

Staff supporting students through a whole-school individual mentoring model.

As the school emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic they intend to use the strong relationships between staff and students to forge a mentoring model where every student has a 'key adult' on the staff who knows them very well and can act as a 'bridge' and a 'broker' to support them in their educational journey post lockdown.

Students supporting students through student leadership and participation.

This will be achieved by developing Student Leadership at the school and involving students in as many different groups and leadership roles as possible that will include the following; dividing the School Council into 4 groups with specific leadership roles such as Student Cabinet, Eco Group, Online Safety Group, Charity and Fundraising Group. All of these to be set up and begin to operate fully post COVID-19 and start to have an impact on practice as soon as is feasible; form captains leadership role to be separate to the above role and they will lead the Section Cup, an inter-Section (House) competition: Mental Health Ambassadors will have a new leadership role to support students with their Mental Health and Anti-Bullying Ambassadors that will be a new leadership role to support students will be set up fully on return post COVID-19 and after training by the Diana Award.

The Impact of the Cluster Group

Walton Le Dale High school are active participants in their cluster group – Inclusion Pioneers. The school and the staff who have attended have benefitted from membership of the cluster group as confirmed by a conversation with the IQM Lead and Deputy Headteacher who had attended some of the meetings himself and are keen to host a meeting in the future when feasible to do so. The impact within school from participation in previous meetings has been:

5th July 2019 - Greenhill Primary School, Wakefield.

The focus of the meetings was 'The Effective work of TAs to support Teaching and Learning.' The delegate who attended brought back to the school a wealth of ideas about the role and use of TAs that included ideas about TA development files; how to most effectively deploy TAs; how to deploy them to support students with their behaviour and how to support CPD for TAs that the school have found extremely useful.



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13th November 2019 – Whitehill Primary School, Halifax.

The focus of the meeting was 'ASD'. The meeting was attended by the school's specialist ASD HLTA and during the day she was able to get ideas from the host school to inform their practice and how to better support their ASD students. She was able to share with other delegates present what they do to support those with ASD during Year 6/7 transition in particular.

13th March 2020 – Stubbin Wood School, Mansfield.

The focus of the meeting was 'Speech and Language' and as the day was hosted in a Special School it was interesting to be able experience that aspect in a different setting. The Deputy Headteacher was able to take some excellent ideas from the presenter about how to develop their practice; how to engage some learners with actions and role play; how to use a sensory garden to support learners; how to use a school dog to support learners and how to use quiet rooms to engage learners. Some of which may well have a successful application at Walton Le Dale in the future.



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Overview

Walton le Dale High school is a thriving smaller than average 11-16 secondary school. The school prides itself on superb pastoral care, actively promoting equality and diversity and is therefore an extremely welcoming, inclusive and caring school. Everyone at the school is fully committed to maximising the achievement of every student. WLD continues to be a school that is in a constant state of review evolving its educational and inclusive practice for the benefit of everyone in the school community. A place that provides a happy, stimulating and vibrant learning environment that focusses on helping students to develop as effective independent learners and positive members of their community and society. As can clearly be seen in the Headteachers welcome on the website, 'Our core aim is to create a happy, secure and caring environment that enables students to learn and mature. We want our students to work hard, achieve their best and develop a sense of responsibility towards themselves and others. We want our students to strive for excellence in all that they do. We want our students to feel proud of their school and of themselves.' It is clear from such an inclusive statement and from the evidence of this online review and previous reviews that the school's actions to care for its students is a superb judgement.

Discussions with key members of staff was extremely useful in confirming that the school continues to successfully address all 8 elements of the IQM award. Further meetings and discussions during the review continued to demonstrate the school's superb, naturally ingrained inclusive ethos. The evidence I accessed from the wealth of information provided by the school in terms of documents, prior to the review and during the review, that included pictorial evidence, social media and from the school's website, supported the discussions and the school's superb inclusivity. Over the course of the review, staff actively engaged in meetings to discuss in depth, the review of the previous Flagship project and to talk about their successes and future developments. There was also in-depth discussion about the new Flagship Project for 2020 – 21. The meetings with key staff demonstrated their professionalism, enthusiasm and passion for teaching and for the fundamental inclusive principles that naturally occur in the way that they educate, care about and for and nurture their pupils. It is clear from these conversations that the staff at Walton Le Dale High School are extremely invested in what they do and view what they do as a vocation and this has an enormously positive effect on their peers and their students and is something they should be proud of.

The initial meeting with the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and SENCO looked at how the school has moved forward since the last review in terms of inclusion, how they had successfully managed to continue operating during lockdown supporting the children of keyworkers and vulnerable families with an impressive level of staff support, a well thought out and executed plan with differing levels of support to suit the needs of students and families and tailored to their needs and also the needs of staff, using a variety of different methods to ensure appropriate and timely contact and support. We were also able to talk about how they had been able to open up the school and provide education and support for more children and their well-developed plans for getting the school fully open in September protecting both staff and students. A fantastic achievement that says a lot about the calibre of staff at the school and their naturally inclusive nature, that also suggests a total commitment to the students and families in their care and is a testament to the effort and planning that has been



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undertaken to make it happen. The staff should be congratulated for their efforts in this regard.

Further meetings during the day focussed on key elements of their superb inclusive practice and clearly demonstrated staff professionalism, dedication and enthusiasm that one would expect from such a superbly inclusive school. It was clear from the evidence of all meetings that the staff feel privileged to be not only part of the education system but part of the staff at the school and are fully supported at all levels to achieve success.

The meetings included: an overview of their Flagship Project, 'Brilliant Teaching in an Inclusive Classroom', progress to date and next steps as detailed above; an in-depth discussion of attainment outcomes, attendance and behaviour, relating to a variety of key focuses and to the school's inclusive ethos and vision.

The school's active involvement in their Cluster Group 'Inclusion Fusion' and how ideas seen at the different cluster meetings attended had been bought back to the school and were adapted to suit the school or were being discussed for future use.

I was also privileged to participate in a wide ranging discussion about Mental Health and how the school is supporting its students and staff in these challenging times along with their superb plans in respect of this from September, such as developing the role of Mental Health Ambassadors and plans in place, to identify and train Anti-Bullying Ambassadors through The Diana Award.

There was an opportunity to focus on inclusion related to student and parent voice which demonstrated the school's excellent relationship with parents as evidenced by recent parental surveys where parents voiced their support of the school, 'Supportive school, whenever I have raised anything the school have always been very responsive and compassionate. Pastoral support is as important to the school as academic support. Very welcoming' 'We like the family feel of the school and the strong relationships that are so apparent between the staff and pupils. 'The school ethos is one of warmth and inclusivity which we value as parents.' Superb statements that show the true inclusivity of the school from a parental perspective.

I was able to look at Teaching & Learning in terms of what progress had been made in the last twelve months, including the superb way they had supported and engaged with their students and families to deliver the best education possible during lockdown and the school's partial re-opening in the summer term and their comprehensive plans for re-opening fully in September, effectively supporting student and staff re-integration with access to a full curriculum offer that should allow students to make significant progress in regaining lost ground as rapidly as possible in a superbly inclusive environment.

In the final meeting we were able to look at the school's Flagship Project for 2020-21, 'Exceptional Support for One Another.' That is a key part of the school improvement plan and is an integral part of their superbly inclusive approach that, while sensitive to the needs of staff and students, will allow students to moving forward with their education in a highly focussed and supportive manner. While the new project is separate from their previous project it is part of their ongoing ethos to support their



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students and deliver brilliant teaching in an inclusive classroom and school for which the school and its staff should be richly applauded.

It was a pleasure to visit Walton Le Dale High School to conduct their Flagship review, albeit through an online review. Everyone involved with the school should be extremely proud of what they achieve on a daily basis and the emphasis placed on ensuring everyone is nurtured, cared for and included. The review underlined their superb inclusive ethos that is at the heart of their approach to the education and support of their students and was discussed openly with all stakeholders during the day. This is a school that is constantly looking at ways to develop and evolve for the benefit of its learning community with a mutual respect and care that is evident across the staff body and it was clear that there is a fantastic rapport between the staff and I suspect between the staff and the students, although not seen during this review. There are 'No Outsiders' at Walton Le Dale High School everyone is included.

The school continues to move from strength to strength in terms of its superb inclusive practice and I am 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' time. 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