



Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd

18th July 2017

Mr A Hill
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Flagship Review Date: 4th July 2017

Summary

The local area has faced significant falling rolls and in 2009 the school roll had fallen to 545 students. Since then the school has increased its roll, a trend which seems to be continuing despite falling rolls still being an issue in the area. In September 2015 and 2016, the school admitted into year 7 slightly above PAN.

The school has a strong reputation for supporting, managing and being successful with students with a wide range of different vulnerabilities and needs. They are recommended informally to parents by SEN Officers, Parent Partnership and Social Services. Despite the lack of any SEND labelling, many students have emotional and social issues emanating from outside of the school which directly impact upon their behaviour in school. Given the reputation of the school in supporting such youngsters, many in-year transfers are of this nature. The school believes that if it can support students in dealing with such issues then secondary negative behaviours are minimised. The school makes every attempt to help students deal with such issues through a range of strategies and provision. As a consequence of this, they often have students who academically may not seem to struggle, but whose personal circumstances put their academic progress as secondary. Their challenge is to support students through these crises, but also ensure academic success as it is the latter which will allow for a successful future.

The current headteacher will retire at the end of this academic year and one of the current deputy headteachers has been appointed designate. This year the school celebrates its 60th anniversary and there was an interesting display of photographs in the main reception area that chronicled those 60 years. Since my visit last year, the website has been redeveloped and is an interesting and very informative first point of call.

The school has a clear vision - *“At Walton-le-Dale, we believe education can change children’s lives. We also believe that education is for life and is more than preparing students for exams. We want our students to leave with the best exam results possible, but we also want them to leave us as well-rounded people.”*

In the Ofsted report from June 2014, it was noted that - *"Equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's ethos and students describe the school as 'like a family, where everyone knows each other.'"*

During my visit, it was clear that this remains the case in July 2017. It was arranged for a year 7 student to take me on a guided tour of the school. He was a very good ambassador for the school as he spoke honestly and positively about his first year at the school. Later, I was invited to join students and their Chinese guests for afternoon tea in the head's office. Following this, I was whisked away to meet students who form the International Club and Amnesty Group. What I was able to see through these relatively brief meetings with students, was that the school works very hard to live up to its vision of wanting students to leave them as "well rounded people".

In my meetings with staff and governors, there was palpable energy and drive coupled with a strong commitment to the values of the school. Despite the significant change ahead with the retirement of the current head, the school seems ready and to have the capacity to continue developing its flagship inclusive practice.

Assessment Commentary on Flagship Action Plan

The school continues to prepare for submission of evidence for the award of Dyslexia Friendly School. The assessor from the British Dyslexia Society is due to visit the school in September 2017. A member of staff with an interest in SpLD and SEND and who is training to become a SENCo, has joined the HLTA in preparing the submission for the award.

Regular updates through staff briefings inform staff of any students experiencing difficulties accessing the curriculum and managing in school. Whole staff INSET in the last 18 months has included courses on the most able, short term memory, growth mindset, revision strategies and child protection. New staff have undertaken additional CPD, including matters related to SEN students, behaviour management, literacy and the use of ICT in teaching and learning. In my meeting with Assistant Headteachers, we discussed how the school's professional development programme works and that there is a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching.

The school continues to support CLA students very well. Their attendance is excellent and the majority are achieving target grades. Intensive support continues to be given to the students and a specialist teacher is brought in each week to liaise with English and Maths teachers. She works with each CLA student for one hour each week. In addition, the school has recently appointed a Level 3 TA who also works with each CLA student on emotional and social skills.

CLA students are fully involved in all aspects of school life. For example, one of the students in year 7 has successfully represented the school as part of a team in a competition at a local college – the team all won iPads! She is also part of the drama group working on a Shakespeare presentation at an outside location. One of the CLA students has had a very successful interview at a local college to pursue a course on horse management next year off site.

Recognising the impact of an increasing roll, the pastoral team has been developed and there are now five pastoral co-ordinators instead of four. Pastoral leaders are also meeting more regularly as a group to ensure consistency of approach. Pastoral support is strong at Walton le Dale and during my meeting with Progress Leaders we discussed many aspects of the support including anti-bullying including homophobic bullying, e-safety, parental engagement and the careful tracking of progress through intelligent data systems. Again, this group were consistent with the values of the school in that they recognised their responsibility to facilitate academic progress whilst ensuring that barriers to learning were removed and opportunities to enrich the lives and experiences of the students were provided.

The Coppice Special School continues to successfully link with the Science, Art and PE Department where students work with peers in class following the same differentiated curriculum. The special school uses the facilities at Walton le Dale for drama productions throughout the year. Walton le Dale students provide support for these events.

A whole school audit of provision for Pupil Premium students was conducted in summer 2016. The outcomes were discussed at the start of the new academic year, with outcomes being priorities for the new School Improvement Plan. Core subjects identify all students requiring intervention including those identified as Pupil Premium. The school gives parents financial support for bus fares (half price), meals or free uniform. CLA students all access intervention for English and Maths along with weekly support for social and emotional needs. An Assistant Headteacher is responsible for tracking data regarding PP students which is carried out thoroughly and effectively. Despite the continued improvement of the pupil premium cohort, the school is far from complacent and continues to raise the need to continue diminishing the gap between them and their peers.

Last year, I discussed the school's plans to promote the academic year during the second half of the summer term. This has happened as planned and the new timetable was already in place by the time of my visit this year. KS4 courses have been amended in light of national changes with new courses and syllabuses where appropriate, including more vocational courses in Technology and Performance, to suit the needs of our students.

There have been 40 students this year who have been part of the nurture group all of which have accessed programmes to develop self-esteem, improve attendance and develop resilience. All our CLA students have been involved in the group. Programmes are now developed and staff are ready to share this with other high schools. This could be a very good opportunity to share excellent practice amongst other IQM schools.

The Fair Trade support continues each term where students use Fair Trade products and raise funds to support the partner school in India with equipment. Applications are being prepared for International School status including a visit from a representative from the British Council who has explained the process of applying. The school is keen to proceed with this work and will apply for the intermediate level straight away.

The International Club meets each week and activities are well underway. One example, mentioned earlier, is the visit of seven Chinese students who will spend a

week with the school. The school plan to set up exchange visits with a school in China next year. The Amnesty Group also meets each week and has been involved in supporting Holocaust Memorial Day, collecting teddies to send to Syrian Refugees and more recently writing poems and pieces to acknowledge support for victims of the Manchester bombings. Both of these groups show great potential for a most worthy development in the school's enrichment opportunities.

The school makes effective use of a range of professional partners and agencies where appropriate to ensure that the inclusive ethos and atmosphere of the school is of the highest order. All Staff spoken to during the review were highly motivated and proactive in their efforts to improve what is offered to the students. The school continues to innovate and seek new solutions to the challenges they faced in achieving the goal of enabling all students to succeed.

The school continues to grow as an inclusive, positive and purposeful community focused on high quality teaching and learning for students and staff.

Recommendation

I am of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark, Flagship review.

Further Developments agreed after discussion

The school should continue to review the quality of teaching and learning so that all students make good progress, in particular:-

- Improve the attainment of the talented, able and gifted students (TAG).
- Further diminish the achievement gap between pupil premium students and their peers.

The school should investigate The Solihull Approach alongside its development of Emotional Wellbeing.

Assessor: Barry Carney

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:



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