



Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd

22nd June 2015

Ms Maxine Low
Brooklands Farm Primary School
152 Fen Street
Brooklands
Milton Keynes
MK10 7EU

Assessment Date: 17th June 2015

Summary

Brooklands Farm Primary School is a warm and welcoming school that is at the heart of its community. This was the school's first IQM assessment, although the Headteacher reported that she has used the framework to guide her in creating an inclusive setting since the school first opened in 2010. On my visit to the school, I had the opportunity to verify information provided on the self-evaluation form using a sample of the documentation provided, pupils' books, a learning walk, and discussions with a range of staff, pupils, governors and senior leaders. In addition to the above, prior to my visit to the school, its website provided key information about recent events and school policies. My thanks go to the Headteacher and SENCO who welcomed me into their unique school for a day and to all the staff, parents, pupils and governors I had the pleasure of meeting.

The school is situated in a new area of Milton Keynes, just off the M1 motorway, that is undergoing significant building construction. It opened its doors to 47 pupils up to Year 1 age at the beginning of the coalition government and has undergone rapid growth in pupil numbers since then to the 580 pupils on roll at present. The school is 3 form entry and 4 form entry in some year groups and has pupils from Nursery to Year 6. A recent successful bid to the Local Authority to expand the school to 6 form entry means that some pupils will be educated on the school's new site from September 2015, which is four fields down from the current site. The Headteacher believes that local children should go to a local school. Milton Keynes has a transient community and many families move there for a fresh start from other countries or from different parts of the country, however social support mechanisms are not always readily available and therefore the school supports parents in developing these.

The school building is modern, bright and airy with colourful displays that showcase pupils' work on whole school projects as well as individual curriculum areas. Personal, social, emotional development and well-being are at the centre of everything the school do with pupils and parents and it is unique as there is an Early Years' teaching style defined as orchestrated learning that is consistently used across all year groups. Varied teaching methods are used to support pupils with developing independence in their learning and pupils value collaborative learning with their peers in talking trios.

The principles of Restorative Justice form the foundations of the excellent behaviour observed in and around the school; pupils are courteous to each other and to staff. One pupil I came across in the corridor at lunchtime enquired about how my day in the school was going and listened with interest to my response even though she was on her way outside to meet her friends. I felt privileged to spend a day in a forward thinking, inclusive school that offers its pupils an education that is not just academic but that equips them with social and emotional skills for life. The school aims for pupils to lead their own learning and this increases as pupils move up through the school.

The school vision is: Weaving a Learning Journey. They believe that they will achieve excellence during that learning journey if they: OPEN (hearts, minds, eyes, ears and dialogue), GROW (talents, mindsets, skills, knowledge and relationships) and BELIEVE (I can...we can...and you can...). This Open, Grow, Believe ethos is based on a growth mindset that is shared by all pupils, parents, staff and governors; it runs like a thread through all the school's work. Pupils undergo a six week induction in which they are taught about the school's ethos and how to adopt it whilst their parents are supported with getting acquainted with the school's systems. One member of staff said "It's a strong ethos, but not hard to learn."

There is a personalised approach to pupils' learning, with child centred reviews taking place for pupils on SEN support and those at risk of exclusion. Teachers frequently provide pupils with verbal feedback and agree on next steps to move their learning forward. Pupils are happy at the school and their well-being is monitored on a five-point scale through the daily check-in and check-out. All pupils have a protective hand on which five individuals who they can turn to if they are upset are identified. When asked who is available to help in school, one pupil said "Teachers are a helping hand, they comfort you in a test and when you feel low, they help you to feel better."

The Headteacher is inspirational in her commitment to inclusion and her compassion for vulnerable pupils who have special educational needs, behavioural needs and difficulties in their home environment resonates through the attitudes and behaviour of all staff. Staff are valued here and are caring towards each other as well as the pupils. The school invests in their staff by employing a counsellor who provides supervision for all teaching and non-teaching staff.

The most impressive aspect of the school's work that I came across on my visit was the welcome they give pupils and their families who have failed in schools elsewhere and their commitment to providing these pupils with a fresh start. They build strong links with parents of these pupils and review strategies regularly for maximum success. A new member of the governing body who was interviewed on my visit echoed the words of the Headteacher: "Each child leaves this school with a suitcase – failure shouldn't be one of the things in it." The Headteacher and staff recognise that there is a complexity in admitting challenging pupils but that "there is a moral imperative in accepting them."

There are challenges ahead for this school as it grows to have 1350 pupils on roll and I am confident that with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors' inclusive vision for the school's future that their exceptional work will continue. My recommendation is that this school should not only be granted the IQM, but that it applies to become an IQM Centre of Excellence, whereby it is able to share its good practice.

I am of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark. There are only minor areas requiring development and the school is aware of these. I recommend that the school be awarded the Mark and be reassessed in 3 years' time.

I also recommend that the school be awarded Centre of Excellence status subject to the inclusion within its plans of the appropriate areas for development and the completion of the Centre of Excellence documentation. If the school chooses to pursue this status and it were to be awarded the school would be subject to annual review from this point forwards.

Assessor: Smeeta Vaghela

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:



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