



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



School Name Whitefield Primary School
Boundary Lane
Liverpool
Merseyside
L6 2HZ

Head/Principal Mrs Jill Wright

IQM Lead Mrs Marie Beale

Date of Review 23rd May 2024

Assessor Ms Siona Robson

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group All Inclusive

Ambassador Ms Sarah Linari

Next Meeting: 13th June 2024

Meeting Focus

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Autumn 2022	4th October 2022	Yes
Spring 2023	1st March 2023	Yes
Summer 2023	15th June 2023	Yes
Autumn 2023	17th October 2023	Yes
Spring 2024	20th March 2024	Yes
Summer 2024	13th June 2024	

The Impact of the Cluster Group

June 2023 – Christ the King

Whitefield Primary School used this connection to support the training of the Sports Coach at Whitefield to deliver Forest School in the academic year 2024/2025 with Years 2 and 3. The Sports Coach attended five sessions working alongside Christ The King's Forest Curriculum and they have shared their curriculum with Whitefield Primary School. They are using Learning through Landscapes to support moving forward.



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October 2023 – Host School

- The school enjoyed sharing practice around emotional regulation and therapeutic classrooms and the wider school environment. One of the Headteachers from one of the Cluster schools, who was new to the school and city, visited as a follow-up.
- This day was excellent preparation for the IQM Conference.

March 2024 – Holy Cross

- My Happy Mind was showcased – the school considered this but it was cost-prohibitive.
- Walking bus – this is not something which is needed at Whitefield.
- Their range of parent groups and parental engagement activities has challenged Whitfield Primary School to review their offer. The Family Liaison Officer and a Teaching Assistant (TA) are now trained to do the Nurturing Programme with parents. The school has also implemented a Family Cookery Club during which families cook a two-course meal. This has been offered to targeted families.
- Picked up the value of positive messaging with parents at the end of each week.

Evidence

- Meeting with teachers.
- Meeting with the Learning Support Assistant (LSA).
- Meeting with Inclusion Lead and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo).
- Meeting with Headteacher (HT) and Deputy Headteacher (DHT).
- Meeting with Year 4-6 pupils.
- Play journal.
- Learning walk.
- Meeting with parents.
- Visit to extra-curricular club.



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Summary of Targets from 2023-2024

Target 1:

Development of the SHINE project.

Parental Strand – training parents in Zones of Regulation.

The rationale of this strand was to build on the school's embedded Zones of Regulation. There was a gap in the knowledge of parents and the offer at home was very different to the approach at school. As a consequence, the impact was reduced and pupils were at times coming into school dysregulated. Parents were also sometimes dysregulated and were on occasion finding it difficult to analyse the size of a problem. Training for parents of children in Reception was developed. It was rolled out in small groups to create a safe space for parents and encourage open sharing. Different strategies were used to engage the parents and promote attendance: some were targeted, some were responsive to informal conversations and others responded to an open offer. Each group had several sessions and the school worked hard to ensure parents attended all of these by being approachable and sending regular reminders. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Parents were given straightforward strategies that they could use which are designed to have a big impact. They saw an immediate difference at home. On the second round of sessions, members of the wider family were attending. The levels of dysregulation in the morning reduced and conversations with parents were more positive as the parents could relate to the language of the school's behaviour policy. The message shared is simply that, 'behaviours are a teachable moment.' Mistakes are managed as they would in any other curriculum area. The link between social interactions and a child's emotional wellbeing is emphasised. The ongoing modelling for parents by staff during every interaction, regular references and sharing of information is changing behaviours and approaches outside school. This in turn is providing a more consistent experience for the children. A light bulb moment for parents was that their children need these skills to take responsibility for managing their feelings. In Reception, children are supported to move from co-regulation with an adult, who models the language, to self-regulation. Strategies are individually tailored for a child; they develop their tool belt. A staff member heard a child say, "I normally do this when I am in the red zone, it might help you".

The parents were full of praise for the training and the impact it has had. Each session was split into two halves, the second half was an interactive session with their children. It has helped parents to self-regulate and manage potentially stressful situations, particularly by applying, 'the size of the problem' technique. They were full of examples of how it has helped them. Many parents now have the Zones of Regulation on the fridge and these are regularly referred to. One parent shared with me how they were working out in the garden, when their child was joining in and how they began to feel irritated. They reflected on the size of the problem and took their earphones off and the child got fully involved. It ended up as a lovely, shared moment. Parents now double think to reduce their and their child's anxiety. The 'size of the problem' voice in their head is really powerful. Parents voiced how they would like refresher courses to support their children as they grow and have different emotional needs.



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Parents told me:

"The children loved it as we were speaking the same language. It helped us establish how big the problem is with the child and not overact".

"My child will now ask me what zone I am in".

"We are now all speaking the same language, the whole family".

"It has helped us in our day to life".

"I never asked my child before how they were feeling, now we talk about feelings".

Staff at Whitefield Primary School also reflect on 'the size of the problem' to help them with their wellbeing. Experts now train staff in other schools, who already have Zones of Regulation embedded, how to train their parents. They also offer follow-up support for the schools. A local nursery has identified that their feeder primaries may not be aware of the work they have done, so Whitefield Primary School has proactively targeted these schools to see if they wanted to get involved to support the journey for the children from this nursery. On the day of my visit, colleagues from several local primary schools were attending the training. They were effusive in their praise for the delivery and resources shared. Feedback included, "this will have an instant impact". "I came away with ideas to use in my setting". "So powerful".

Next Steps

- See the action plan below.

Transition Strand – develop an emotional literacy curriculum which would be delivered throughout Years 6 and 7.

The aims of this curriculum would be to:

- Develop children's emotional vocabulary.
- Enable children to communicate their state of regulation and what could help them.
- To teach children to know how to ask for help.
- To develop executive functioning and problem-solving skills.

The buy-in across Whitefield Primary School for their work on emotional literacy is high, but when ex-pupils came back from secondary school to visit, they were finding the experiences around behaviour difficult as the language and approach differed in their new setting. The transition project was born. The project looked at how the work around Zones of Regulation could develop to support pupils in secondary schools, incorporating the more complex emotional literacy needed as pupils hit puberty and have to cope with significant changes. Staff at Whitefield Primary School have developed an emotional curriculum for their main feeder secondary school, North Liverpool Academy, adapting the language to meet the needs of older students. The school is co-producing a research paper with Manchester University and Liverpool John Moores. A PhD student has interviewed Year 6 children and past Whitefield Primary School pupils currently in Year 7 about their feelings about the transition to create a baseline. The emotional curriculum has been informed by this feedback. One of the aspects the Year 7 fed back was a lack of understanding and clarity of the Behaviour Policy. In a session entitled 'Communication In School,' the Behaviour Policy and



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expectations are explained and students are supported to understand their circle of control. The project will be rolled out in September and Year 7 tutors are being trained in the summer break to be able to deliver the emotional curriculum and explicitly teach the Year 7 emotional literacy. The programme will cover how students can seek help, what effect the tone of a voice has and how to understand their emotions and the physical manifestations of these. The secondary staff will deliver the curriculum to Year 7. The PhD student will monitor this. This powerful piece of work has the potential to have a huge impact if rolled out across the secondary school. This impressive piece of work has looked at the key emotionally challenging change points for children, who transition into primary from home and transition into secondary school and are working to provide high-quality, supportive and nurturing wrap-around provision for their children.

Next Step:

- See the action plan below.

Target 2:

Improve early years practice and provision to support significant levels of need.

Intended outcome: improved outcomes for children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)/high-level need children while maintaining support for all learners and positive attendance.

A LSA, who is an experienced Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) SENCo, has had training to be an EYFS Special Educational Need and Disabilities (SEND) advocate and Communication Champion for the Nursery. She does the Wellcomm assessments with children and delivers talk-boost interventions to build confidence in communication. Merseyside Autism and Speech Therapy (MAST) also come in and train staff and work with the children on speech and language.

The school has introduced social and communication play journals in Nursery and Reception for children with EHCPs. The journals have bespoke personal development statements which are assessed as emerging, developing or secure by all staff who work with the child. These are shared with parents and are a lovely way to celebrate progress. The journal is a live document and is annotated with specifics to share information which can then be referenced by parents and other staff. The children have a session of intensive interaction every day. During this session, the specialist LSA copies the sounds and actions of the child to reinforce that the child can communicate non-verbally and be understood and join in with other children. It supports their confidence and levels of tolerance of other people in their space and supports interactions. The play journal is also used to record personal targets for children so that new adults can see what they have been working on. The impact of using these play journals is positive. Progress in these small steps that might have otherwise been missed, against early learning goals, is recorded, celebrated and shared as significant. Children who would have struggled to share their space can now parallel play alongside others and feel safe to do so.



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Next Steps:

- A key member of the support team is retiring in May. The school is recruiting additional staff at Level Three and will need to review against skills and train alongside them.

Target 3:

Roll out therapeutic classroom project into Year 5.

Intended outcome: increase wellbeing for children and staff and reduce dysregulated behaviour incidents.

The environment at Whitefield is key to their approach to inclusion. The school provides a calm space for children who need this to feel emotionally safe and able to learn. Staff have been trained as to the 'why' of the environment design. In the therapeutic classrooms, which are now used by Year 5 and 6 pupils, all the pupils have a Chrome book or iPad and these are their 'working walls'. The classrooms themselves are stripped back and minimal. Furniture is adult size creating an adult feel and ensuring accessibility for wheelchair users. The different levels provide alternative learning spaces for the children. If children want, they can sit or stand at high tables. The classrooms have 'belonging walls' with photos of the children in the class. The children are taught to look after the environment and are encouraged to be independent, selecting their resources and moving around the room to support or seek help from peers.

Behaviour logs reflect fewer incidents and children who had previously been at risk of suspension and exclusion were able to complete the year successfully. Pupils feel supported by the environment and their readiness to learn has improved. Staff also use these classrooms for meetings and tend to gravitate to them at the end of the day. Pupils spoke very positively about the therapeutic classrooms:

"It is calm, there are no fixed emotions".

"I feel like myself in the room".

"It is all white, very therapeutic, it is good for your mental health".



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Agreed Targets for 2024-2025

Target 1:

Continue with the two strands of the three-year SHINE project.

Parental Training – support parents/carers to understand the Zones of Regulation and support their child to regulate.

Comments

- Children supported in a consistent way across home-school.
- Children learn to self-regulate more effectively.
- Share the training with all parents.
- Think about a new name for this training.
- Consider having parent ambassadors to support training and spread the message/ provide peer support.
- Organise a refresher course/training at the end of Key Stage 1 (KS1). Could this also be done at the secondary transition evening in the secondary setting?
- Train other settings to implement the emotional regulation work in their setting.

Transition – deliver training to Year 7 tutors in the emotional curriculum.

Intended Outcome

- Increased attendance and reduced exclusions in Years 7 and 8.
- Higher percentage maintaining expected standard at end of Years 7 and 8.
- Reduced anxiety about transition.
- Increased wellbeing scores at the end of Years 6 and 7.

Comments

The school has the funding to continue this work by training in local and national settings and providing project resources. This could have a significant impact in the secondary setting and the next review would need to capture this.

Target 2:

Development of PedTech – developing pedagogy, using technology to support teaching and learning with a focus on supporting inclusion.

Comments

The school has used technology as an enabler for a while. The school works with the National Grid for Learning (NGFL). EdTech hubs are a national network of schools that support technology to support teaching and learning. Whitefield Primary School is one of three schools in the NW hub. The school is looking to develop their practice building on a report written by Fiona Abrey Smith, called 'Changing Learning, Changing Lives'.



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In the next 12 months, the school will look at maximising an inclusive approach to using technology to promote:

- Teacher confidence.
- Personalisation of learning for children, providing choice.
- Building pupil confidence.
- Improve access to learning for SEND pupils or those with neurodiversity needs.
- Manageable staff workload.

As part of this target, the school is launching a Liverpool EdTech hub in June. Whitefield Primary School will be leading this hub with NGFL.



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Overview

The journey of the school concerning inclusion is focused on whole-school strategies and consistency. Leaders are passionate about everything they do. All practice is deliberate, research-driven and designed to meet the needs of the children and the community. Only the best is good enough at Whitefield. This officially 'Outstanding' school is one in which everybody buys into the school ethos. The strong sense of belonging to the Whitefield family is central to the culture. The importance of belonging and feeling safe is tangible across the school and within the wider community. Pupils and staff live by the powerful inclusive message, 'Be Here, Be Me, Belong.' As a visitor, I was welcomed with open arms. The minute you walk into the school you feel a sense of calm and emotional safety. Colourful Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) umbrellas hang from the ceiling in the entrance hall. The corridors are low-lit with fairy lights and sensory walls call out to be touched. Colours are muted, creating an aura of peace. There has been so much thought given to the choice of lighting, colours, tones, use of space and resources across the school. The school has sought advice from external experts to inform these choices. Each classroom has a safe space with a pod and children are encouraged to 'fly' to these spaces when dysregulated. The Zones of Regulation can be found near the pod along with cues for adults to use to support the child in talking about their feelings. Every classroom has a Keeping Safe board designed by the Student Leadership Team. This is prominent and the children are aware of how to seek help. The behaviour boards have visuals on whole-body listening, the Zones of Regulation and the size of the problem. Teachers regularly interact with these. Instead of students working on corridor walls, there are lovely journals in the library for each class to showcase their artwork. These are situated beneath a gallery of pupils' artwork which have been chosen by the children. Outstanding learning is celebrated in a Friday virtual assembly. A learner from each class is featured in a short video, in which they explain why they are the outstanding learner for their class. In this assembly, Pupil Digital Leaders also share key e-safety messages.

During my learning walk, I visited every year group. Children in all classes were engaged and enjoying their learning. They were thinking hard and were confident to offer ideas. Learning partners were supporting each other and children were making progress as a result of this embedded peer collaboration. Their writing has been up-levellled as a result of peer editing. The curriculum has been carefully designed and tailored to meet the needs of the children at Whitefield Primary School. The pupils spoke enthusiastically about the Jigsaw curriculum and how scenarios are discussed alongside calming scripts to help them be 'learning-ready'. They told me how they reflect on the messages in assemblies. One was about sympathy and they told me how they learnt to put themselves in other people's shoes and look at situations from different perspectives. In EYFS the topic of journeys ensures that the children start with familiar experiences to which they can relate. It starts with buses and trains and then moves on to the more fantastical. It was lovely to see how the Nursery and Reception blended during free-choice time. Their classrooms facilitate free flow between the two spaces. This supports the modelling of play behaviours by Reception children which is having a positive impact on the emotional and social development of the pupils in Nursery. It also means that Nursery children working at a higher level can access more complex resources. Careful thought has been given to how the environment supports creative, experimental learning but ensures pupils are not overwhelmed. The work



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done on emotional literacy was evident when a child was on the verge of distress as a result of his block construction having been knocked down. The teacher employed the, 'how big is the problem' approach and soon they had enlisted a couple of other children to rebuild the tower and the teacher was able to move away, leaving smiles and a collaborative solution in place. A lot of work has been done with the children around the physicality of feelings. They are encouraged to look in mirrors and consider each other's faces when talking about emotions and what these can look like. The pupils told me, "the teacher helps you get in the green zone and you can say how you are feeling".

Leaders are unapologetic about the requirement for consistency in what is delivered and their high expectations of staff and pupils across the school. This consistency enables all learners to feel safe in what is expected of them. Staff have efficacy in how they deliver the curriculum to meet the needs of their specific class. Inclusion is a thread running through all staff training. Adaptive teaching has been a focus of Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Staff use visualisers to good effect to model learning. The annotated learning materials are then available to the children online as a reference. Staff meetings have included sessions on sensory circuits, looking at paired talk and using learning partners effectively. Specific training is arranged for staff who need to upskill in a certain area. This is then followed up using a coaching approach. Stay House from Chester is currently teaching drama and upskilling teachers in this area of the curriculum. No child feels excluded as a result of the systematic whole-school approach to meeting individual needs. This is deliberately not centred around an intervention removal model. Where interventions are in place, these are specific, targeted and delivered by trained staff. The school capitalises on every opportunity to teach and model to children all aspects of their social, emotional and academic development. The staff know the pupils well and support them with the next steps. There is a passion for providing the provision that is right for the child not moulding a child to fit the provision. Leaders have made changes to the school day to include a 30-minute morning playtime. All members of staff are out with the pupils supporting and modelling play and the use of equipment. This has had a significant impact on playground behaviours. Many children starting school have low motor skills and have not experienced walking on different surfaces. The outside environment has a range of uneven surfaces and different gradients; sand, cobbles, shale, small hills and trees. Children are encouraged to run and enjoy the freedom of the space. Weather does not stop play at Whitefield Primary School. Children have wellies and waterproof suits to facilitate the continuous provision.

The parents I met had nothing but praise for the school. They praised the way that the needs of their children are considered and accommodated. "I cannot fault them". "My child is on the ADHD pathway; the school has been so reassuring". "We have moved away but I will not move my child as the school is so good". Attendance is a strength of the school as a result of a multi-layered approach. The narrative of Whitefield Primary School is, 'Be here, Be you, Belong'. The key message is that everyone is part of the family, they belong and can be themselves. The children are missed and feel this when they are absent. Soft landings introduced post-COVID have now become part of daily practice and arrangements are bespoke to the child. Relationships with families are strong and the Family Liaison Officer has a positive trusted relationship and can therefore support proactively and directly. A total of 43% of the school population has English as an Additional Language (EAL) so the beginning and end of each term are critical points in terms of attendance.



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The Pupil Voice Group were articulate and passionate, keen to tell me about the Whitefield family and how proud they are of the school and all that work and learn within it. They value the Student Leadership opportunities and explain how class debates and surveys are responded to by the Headteacher. A recent one on transition resulted in the introduction of a day in the summer term with their September teacher. The children told me how well they are supported and how they know where to go and who to talk to if they feel unsafe. They spoke very positively about the work they have done with Bright Leaders on leadership skills. Year 5 pupils told me, "I was scared of reading aloud, but they helped me and guess what, I did it!" "They help children overcome their fears". "My confidence went up to a 10!"

My day ended with a visit to some of the school's extra-curricular clubs. It was wonderful to see so many children engrossed in some complex moves at the Dance Club and to observe the Year 6 Photography Club that had joined them to practice their action photography. A great end to a great day.

Whitefield Primary School could not be more committed to inclusive education; developing and embedding excellent practice in all areas of their provision. It was a privilege and a pleasure to be a part of the Whitefield family for the day. Thank you to staff, students and parents for your warm welcome, time and infectious enthusiasm.

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 Centre of Excellence. I therefore recommend that the school retains its Centre of Excellence 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 Centre of Excellence status.

Assessor: Ms Siona Robson

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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Director of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd