



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



**School Name** St George's C E Primary School  
Buxton Road  
Heaviley  
Stockport  
  
SK2 6NX

**Head/Principal** Mrs Debbie Grindrod

**IQM Lead** Mrs Debbie Grindrod

**Date of Review** 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023

**Assessor** Ms Sarah Linari

### **IQM Cluster Programme**

**Cluster Group** Northwessians

**Ambassador** Mrs Siona Robinson

**Next Meeting** 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023

**Meeting Focus** Group input to share best practice on a range of themes

### **Cluster Attendance**

<b>Term</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<b>Summer 2022</b>		
<b>Autumn 2022</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> November 2022	N/A
<b>Spring 2023</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	Yes
<b>Summer 2023</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Yes

### **The Impact of the Cluster Group**

The Pastoral Lead attended both meetings to which they were invited last year following St George's successful Centre of Excellence accreditation. They really enjoyed the meetings. One meeting was hosted at a secondary school and the other was hosted at an Alternative Provision (AP). The Pastoral Lead appreciated the benefits of going to look at other provisions in different settings. At one meeting they discussed external links and shared information about setting up global links, which supported St George's staff in establishing their global links.

The Headteacher will ensure this positive engagement with the Cluster meetings continues throughout their involvement with the programme. As a reflective, outward facing school, Leaders seek advice and act upon feedback (where they feel it will



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positively enhance provision for their pupils). The example was given of the school's involvement with Pets As Therapy (PAT) which came about following a suggestion from the previous IQM Assessor. A dog from PAT now visits the school once per week. Leaders spoke with enthusiasm about the impact the dog has already had on reading, wellbeing and supporting self-regulation.

### **Evidence**

- IQM Centre of Excellence action plan
- Ofsted Report (July 2023)
- School website
- DfE school data and performance information
- School development priorities
- 'Four and the Law' intervention workbook
- EAL folders
- Displays
- Samples of pupils' workbooks

### **Additional Activities**

- School tour
- Learning environment audit

### **Meetings/discussions with:**

- Headteacher
- SENDCo/IQM Lead
- Senior Leadership Team
- Upper KS2/Maths Lead
- Lower KS2/English Lead
- EYFS/PSHE and Phonics Lead
- Primary Jigsaw Representative
- Local Authority Inclusion Service Representative
- School Nurse
- Ethnic Diversity Service Representative
- EYFS Lead
- Year 6 Teacher
- Year 2 Teacher
- HLTA and School Council Lead
- Pastoral Lead
- Pupil representatives from across EYFS – Year 6
- School Council Representatives
- Wellbeing Ambassadors



### Summary of Targets from 2021-2022

#### Target 1

##### **To support pupils with transition to high school.**

The school's commitment to a smooth and successful Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 transition was evident during the discussions with key staff and the Governor during the review day. The primary focus for this target around transition to secondary school was the strengthening of the link with partner feeder schools, fostering relationships that provide essential support to the children as they move to their next phase of education. St George's C E Primary School invited past pupils to return and share their experiences, which helped make the transition feel less daunting for the Year 6 pupils. Question and answer sessions were organised to address any worries and anxieties of the pupils, with Leaders identifying individuals who needed additional support. This involved individual and small group meetings with extra transition days, ensuring that every child's needs were considered.

Curriculum cohesion was also a focus. The Mathematics Lead worked closely with teachers from the main feeder secondary school, even observing Year 7 lessons to support the progress from a Key Stage 2 to 3 curriculum. Additionally, the involvement of the PE teacher from the secondary school in delivering dance workshops at St George's helped to ease the transition process for all. It provided St George's staff with professional development opportunities and a familiar face for the pupils. The emphasis on information sharing, including offering support to secondary staff regarding some of the more vulnerable children has resulted in children being better supported in their secondary setting. St George's staff feel that their offer of support and sharing of information could be better utilised by secondary colleagues. Therefore, this aspect remains a focus for development.

Parents and carers were supported with the completion of school applications, ensuring that no child was left without a school place. A specialist Year 6 parenting course was offered to all parents and carers to provide advice on how to support their children throughout the transition to secondary school.

In summary, the school's transition work has had a positive impact in ensuring that the children are better prepared for the challenges of moving from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3, and beyond.

#### **Next Step:**

- It would be great to invite the Key Stage 3 Leads in core subjects from the feeder secondary schools into St George's to observe lessons and approaches at Key Stage 2 as well as to look more closely at curriculum links to allow for improved progression planning in specific subject areas.



### Target 2

#### **To support pupils with their knowledge and understanding of childhood overseas and support our pupils to become courageous advocates of change.**

The school has introduced global curriculum links to support pupils in gaining knowledge and understanding of childhood overseas. Firstly, they sponsored Tinh, a young Vietnamese boy, through Action Aid. This enabled pupils to study Vietnam both in class and during assemblies, providing them with insights into a different culture and its challenges. The motto 'same but different' encouraged the pupils to explore the things they had in common with Tinh as well as the different aspect of their daily lives." Geography lessons were structured to learn about life in Vietnam to broaden horizons whilst Religious Education (RE) sessions addressed misconceptions and encouraged a global celebration of differences.

The establishment of a connection with a Melanesian school heavily impacted by climate change, led to the formation of an Eco Council focusing on improving the school grounds and energy conservation, with far-reaching implications for people in distant regions. Two Melanesian Brothers visited the school to talk about their homeland, solidifying the global connection.

The school has integrated these global links into the curriculum, carefully incorporating them into subjects like Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education, where pupils learn about diverse bodies, cultures, and the shared responsibility for the world. They explore the diversity of cultures within the UK and study other cultures and religions in Religious Education lessons. This supports the school's work in encouraging the pupils to become advocates for positive change in the world.

#### **Next Step:**

- This year, the school's emphasis is on tackling air pollution, inspired by the Melanesian link and the fact that the school is located on the busiest main road in Stockport. The Eco Group will lead project work, in partnership with the local Church. The School Council pupils are planning to expand the front grounds of the playground, creating a green space with a sensory area and growing boxes. They have already written to the local Council to ask for the boundary fence to be moved to the edge of the school grounds which would add the desired space within the children's play area.



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### Target 3:

**To develop further the interaction between staff and parents – parents to become more actively involved in pupils' learning by having opportunities to attend relevant workshops.**

The school has taken significant steps to further enhance the interaction between staff and parents/carers, with a primary goal of ensuring that parents and carers become more actively involved in their child's learning journey.

During discussions with external partners on the review day, they praised the strength of parental engagement at the school, stating that the parents' voices are not only heard but also respected. When issues arise, support mechanisms are readily available, whether through Team Around the School meetings or drop-in sessions.

Parents and carers are greeted at the school gates every morning and after school, creating a welcoming atmosphere and allowing for any relevant information to be passed on. Parents and carers of children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are encouraged to provide feedback through a SEND parents' comments box in the Main Reception area. All parents and carers are invited to take advantage of the pre-loved uniform rail too, helping to remove socio-economic barriers.

'Stay and play' sessions and reading workshops were organised to involve parents and carers in their child's early education, with an emphasis on child-led play. The 'Thumbs up Thursday' initiative allowed parents and carers to come into school to observe classroom activities, promoting transparency and understanding of their child's learning environment. Special workshops were organised for SEND parents and carers, allowing them to connect and share experiences. This commitment to parent involvement extends to various events, including celebration events with the Church, such as the Harvest Festival, where parents and carers are actively engaged and feel welcomed.

The school utilises the online Class Dojo platform for communication, allowing parents and carers to share information and stay informed about school events and announcements. They have made an effort to ensure accessibility, translating the platform for all parents and carers.

Parent voice surveys are conducted regularly to gather feedback and there is a particular focus on enhancing engagement with SEND parents and carers, with potential plans to extend these efforts to other cohorts, such as English as an Additional Language (EAL) families. An open-door policy ensures that parents feel comfortable sharing their concerns and ideas.

### Next Step:

- Ensure consistent transition between year groups in terms of the communication with parents and carers, sharing the best practice in Early Years and using that as the model approach.



### Agreed Targets for 2022-2023

#### Target 1

**To positively support pupils affected by trauma.**

##### Comments

St George's is committed to supporting pupils affected by trauma. Leaders have invested in trauma training through Jigsaw, enabling the psychology team to disseminate valuable information to the staff through regular meetings. They brought this training in-house to further develop the focus on trauma-sensitive teaching. The Leaders are mindful of tailoring their approach to suit the school's unique circumstances as a transient population, often with limited access to external services due to long waiting lists. In the intermediate period the aim is to equip the children with a toolbox of strategies to better cope with their experiences, focusing on nurturing, providing structure, offering challenges, and ensuring engagement in their learning. To enhance the support further, there are now four Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) to deal effectively with the caseload.

To assess progress towards this first target Leaders will utilise Bounce Together, an online Mental Health and Wellbeing measurement platform that encompasses the perspectives of parents and carers, staff, and pupils. These surveys will help the staff gauge their school community's wellbeing and will be instrumental in making data-driven decisions. Currently, Leaders are analysing the data collected over the summer and are looking to implement interventions that develop resilience and boost self-esteem. They plan to periodically redo these surveys to evaluate the progress against the baseline.

#### Target 2

**To positively support all pupils to address the barriers to academic progress exacerbated by poverty.**

##### Comments

As part of the Offerton Cluster of schools, and in collaboration with the Local Authority (LA), Leaders have developed a strategic plan to address the barriers to learning caused by poverty. This initiative began with a detailed report and recommendations based on valuable stakeholder feedback collected at the start of September. To effectively tackle these challenges, a portion of the budget has been allocated to purchase supermarket vouchers for distribution, ensuring that families have access to essential resources.

Enrichment opportunities, such as trips and experience days, are being reevaluated to make them more accessible to all pupils, recognising the diverse socioeconomic backgrounds within the school community. The school fair's timings have been adjusted to eliminate any pressure to stay after school, and the book fair visit has been rescheduled to start later too. The strategic plan aims to poverty-proof the educational experience by leveraging local charities, food banks, and Governor-supported poverty-proofing surveys. Measures like providing breakfasts and wrap-around care have also been implemented, ensuring that every child's basic needs are met while focusing on the holistic development of pupils.



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### Target 3:

**To continue to create a positive and supportive environment for all children without exceptions with a focus on attendance.**

### Comments

Leaders have developed plans to support all children with attendance and safeguarding concerns, prioritising the focus areas recommended by their recent Ofsted inspection. These plans include a meticulous approach to assessing and analysing attendance data to identify trends and areas of concern. Additionally, regular meetings have been established with external agencies at the hotel where displaced families reside. The meetings are now attended by the Headteacher to ensure that every pupil's attendance and safeguarding needs are addressed proactively. Furthermore, the school has implemented an Early Help identification system for Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) to identify any pupils and families who may require additional support.

Daily attendance checks are conducted by the attendance and pastoral teams. For families facing attendance challenges, daily support is offered creating a well-rounded and proactive approach to attendance and safeguarding for all pupils. These systems will continue to be implemented with rigour.

The Assessor suggested looking at incorporating the 5 Foundations Framework, which provides a structured approach to creating a culture of good attendance. The Assessor will share Yew Tree Primary Academy's Attendance Policy to support the development of consistency regarding attendance management.



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### Overview

St George's Church of England Primary School's inclusive ethos was beautifully encapsulated by the IQM Lead on the review day who described it as a "a family - a real family - with no outsiders." This sentiment accentuates the school's unwavering commitment to making every member of the community feel valued and supported, regardless of their beliefs, cultural background, or any other differences. In this nurturing environment, everyone is not just welcomed but cherished, as the staff recognise the strength and beauty that diversity brings. The school is a place where each individual finds a sense of belonging, knowing they are part of a family that celebrates unity in diversity, encouraging a profound sense of togetherness that empowers the pupils and staff to thrive and grow as one cohesive whole.

A recent Ofsted report (July 2023) celebrates the school's inclusive practice, highlighting that "pupils are happy and well cared for". The report also comments on the harmonious culture created, stating that "they are welcoming towards others, and they are happy to celebrate the differences between people."

The support for English as an Additional Language (EAL) children at the school is exceptional. All staff are committed to nurturing a thriving and inclusive community where every child has the opportunity to excel and feel valued, regardless of their language background. A key feature of the support system is the extensive use of visual aids, which are consistently prominent in every classroom, making learning accessible for all. The Local Authority's dedicated Ethnic Diversity Team has been instrumental in working alongside the school to develop their approach, introducing initiatives such as the 'New to English' survival kit. This programme systematically builds language skills over a six-week period, providing EAL learners with a strong foundation to thrive academically. Regular training sessions for both teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs) ensure they are well-equipped to support EAL children effectively. Last year, the school were further supported to develop provision by having EAL specialists work with them two mornings per week, allowing for dedicated support and tailored interventions. The culture of best practice sharing is encouraged through purposeful discussions at staff meetings, allowing for continuous improvement of the EAL support.

In addition to this, the school has implemented a range of supportive measures to cater to the diverse school community. Each classroom is equipped with an EAL Folder, containing resources that are not only very pictorial but also include a 'Buddy Checklist,' which helps pupils self-assess their progress. The resource pack includes a checklist with 'I can' style statements, enabling them to communicate and navigate essential aspects of school life, such as using the toilets or knowing where to put their bag each morning. Furthermore, the school acknowledges the incredible linguistic diversity within the school community with a class list that identifies the different languages spoken. To address communication challenges when liaising with families or children with little or no English language, the school utilises the 'Big Word' telephone interpretation service which is particularly helpful when a pupil or family members are in distress and require immediate assistance or early help.

Inclusivity is at the core of the school's mission. They offer assistance with uniforms and food, making these resources accessible to all. They maintain a nurse drop-in service for medical needs, demonstrating a comprehensive approach to pupil wellbeing.



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Technology use, like the 'Say Hi' app and translating resources, is maximised to foster better communication with the EAL children and their families. The school invests in bilingual books and strives to meet cultural backgrounds, reflecting a commitment to embracing diversity.

St George's pupil population is very transient. The school serves as a sanctuary for displaced families, offering a safe haven to those seeking refuge and asylum. Every year, the school welcomes a significant number of 'displaced' children (currently around 40), all of whom hail from diverse backgrounds and often traumatic experiences. They are living with their families at temporary accommodation in a local hotel. The Pastoral Lead plays a pivotal role, going above and beyond to offer unwavering support to both families and children. In recognition of the increasing needs, the school will soon be appointing a new staff member to enhance capacity of the team dedicated to attendance and family wellbeing.

The staff feel that their responsibility extends far beyond teaching; it often delves into the realm of social work due to the unique needs and challenges faced by displaced families. Their commitment is clear: "if we can't directly help, we will do everything in our power to connect families with the right resources and support." They work closely with Stockport's 'Team Around the School' network, ensuring a coordinated approach to addressing the multifaceted needs of these families. Staff describe the school as "overtly welcoming" and staff "genuinely care about every individual who crosses our threshold," striving to make their journey towards asylum and integration as smooth as possible.

Values of respect, tolerance, and acceptance is intrinsic to the school's ethos. Children are explicitly taught these values and are encouraged to support one another through a restorative practice approach. Staff are equipped with a comprehensive restorative practice folder and a visual script. The inclusion of prompt cards on staff lanyards ensure that restorative approaches are consistently integrated into daily interactions, both during playtimes and throughout the school day. The "Buddy Bus Stop" in the playground provides a tangible symbol of the school's commitment to resolution and healing. Each year, a group of pupils undertake training provided by the Local Authority (LA) to become 'Restorative Ambassadors' to offer peer support during play and lunch times. The aspiration is for the children themselves to increasingly take the lead.

Emotional wellbeing is a key focus area this academic year. In every classroom, there are designated 'Hippo Areas,' where pupils can take a brief five-minute pause to calm themselves and engage in restorative practices. This space allows them to "wallow in the mud" of their thoughts and feelings, which is completely validated. TAs and teachers are always available to provide support after this reflection time. In the Hippo Corners, there are sensory and calming techniques on offer, including ear defenders, to cater to various needs. Colour monster visuals help pupils with emotional regulation and the validation of their feelings. A bespoke intervention has been created to support Key Stage 2 pupils, the 'Four Against the Law' intervention programme, designed to assist children who are struggling with boundaries by categorising emotions and understanding the levels of consequences. This approach not only clarifies what behaviour is deemed acceptable but also helps pupils anticipate the outcomes, consider changes, and understand what adults can do to support them. The Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) Specialist has adapted the strategies to make them bespoke to



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individual pupils. Resources are also sent home to further involve parents and carers in supporting their child's emotional development, including resources like the 'Zones of Regulation' workbook and real-life scenarios that children can relate to.

Beyond supporting emotional regulation, pupil Wellbeing Ambassadors play a crucial role in reassuring their peers that the school is a safe and supportive environment, where their emotional needs are a top priority. During the discussion with the group of pupil Wellbeing Ambassadors, we delved into the essential aspects of their roles. They talked about being dedicated to creating "a warm and welcoming environment" in the school. They prioritise "kindness and respect for everyone," both peers and teachers. Their weekly meetings help them stay organised, and they have even established a charter that highlights the importance of helping people feel comfortable and okay. Notably, they recognise the significance of self-care and stress management. These Ambassadors are champions of a positive, inclusive, and supportive school community.

Staff's relationships are characterised by a strong sense of unity and mutual support. There is a culture where colleagues "lift each other up," emphasising the positive aspects of their work and "recognising what each member is doing really well." This collective encouragement extends to the staff's support for the Headteacher, allowing them to lead with confidence and a clear sense of priorities. All Leaders were invited to collaborate on the School Development Plan (SDP), ensuring that their goals are aligned and shared across Phase Teams. Leaders' commitment to staff wellbeing has resulted in a positive change: staff now enjoy a full hour for lunchtime, where they come together for support, laughter, and a moment to recharge before the afternoon sessions begin. This unified spirit not only enhances professional relationships but enriches the overall experience of working at the school.

In the discussion with the Chair of Governors during the review day, it became clear that their vision for an inclusive education is strongly aligned to the school's ethos. The Governor explained that the school is dedicated to creating a welcoming and safe environment for all pupils, irrespective of their backgrounds. An area of exemplary practice identified by the Governor is the pastoral support provided to all children. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) demonstrates a deep awareness of each child's unique needs and consistently prioritises their wellbeing when making decisions. The school emphasises "holistic inclusion," focusing on "the wellbeing of every child rather than specific groups," and they actively invest in this commitment. In essence, the school not only talks about inclusion but "lives it" on a daily basis.

Representatives from four external services with which the school works closely kindly visited to speak to the Assessor during the review day. They unanimously described the school's commitment to its pupils and their families as truly "exceptional." The school works closely with all external support services, and make sure to exhaust all their in-house resources before seeking support, reflecting a dedication to going the extra mile for their pupils. The school does not just meet inclusion standards; it takes a holistic approach, providing resources for teachers to support trauma and offering courses like parenting anxious children, even exploring ways to make it accessible to EAL families. This commitment extends to displaced children, with the school willing to cover costs to meet their needs. They also invest in training around attachment and neurodiversity, reinforcing their solution-focused ethos.



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The discussion with the group of parents and carers on the review day revealed a strong and unanimous support for the school's commitment to inclusion. The school's firm stance on the "no outsiders" mantra was highly appreciated, as it not only welcomes displaced children but also encouraged other children to build friendships with peers who have differences. Parents and carers commended the school for upholding Christian values and a general ethos that ensures that prejudice is not inherent. Parents and carers also highlighted the school's proactive approach to communication. Additionally, they praised the school's support for parents and carers, emphasising its non-judgmental and informative approach. In summary, the school's outstanding efforts in promoting inclusion, communication, and support was highly acknowledged.

The Assessor partook in a delightful discussion with the School Council Representatives on review day. They shared some wonderful insights about life as a pupil at St George's. One young pupil enthusiastically exclaimed, "the best thing about the school is that it's really good - it's fun, we get to play football, and we get help when we need it." Another chimed in, "we learn different letters we don't know how to spell, and we try our best." They were appreciative of the staff, noting that "the teachers understand us," and in English, they "do loads of stories." Friendship was another highlight, with many pupils expressing how they have "lots of friends at school who help when we struggle," One child summed up the atmosphere, saying, "if you're struggling, everyone is helpful and kind. Teachers tell you not to give up and always help you." When asked about their motivation to be part of the School Council, their responses were inspiring: "we wanted to talk to important people and help make the school a better place." As for their future ambitions, the dreams of these young minds ranged from game designer, author, teacher, boxer, to basketball player. One even aspires to become the future Prime Minister of Zimbabwe. It was a heartwarming conversation that showcased the diversity of talents and dreams within this vibrant group of primary school pupils.

St. George's C E Primary School is a true 'School of Sanctuary,' a place where every person is encouraged to be the best they can be. The staff's hard work and dedication to the children shine through in their willingness to seek help and provide training opportunities with external services to empower them to deliver preventive care. The real sense of community, the acceptance of various faiths and religions, and the emphasis on communication, support, inclusivity, and aspiration all make this school a warm and welcoming place where every child and their family are valued, ensuring that every person has the opportunity to thrive and succeed. Hence my recommendation that St George's Church of England Primary school retains its Centre of Excellence status and is reviewed again in 12 months' time.

I continue to be 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 Sarah Linari

**Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:**

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