



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



School: Woodchurch High School
Carr Bridge Road
Woodchurch
Merseyside
CH49 7NG

Head/Principal: Ms Rebekah Phillips

IQM Lead: Mr Andrew Smith

Date of Review: 28th June 2022

Assessor: Sarah Linari

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group: CIN NW

Ambassador: Sarah Linari

Date of Next Meeting: 7th July

Next Cluster Group Meeting Focus: Forest School, supporting deaf children and curriculum development.

Sources of Evidence during IQM Review Day:

Meetings held with:

- Headteacher
- Assistant Headteacher/IQM Coordinator
- Students
- Parents and carers
- SENDCo/SEND Teaching and Learning Leader
- Social Inclusion Officer
- Farm Manager
- Level Three Teaching Assistant/Parent Liaison Officer
- Farm Supervisor



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



- David Haycocks, Co-Owner Westlake Alternative Provision

Sources of evidence:

- IQM Flagship review documentation
- National Performance Tables
- Ofsted Report
- SIAMS report
- School website
- Tour of School
- Tour of Farm Provision
- Student work folders
- Photographs of enrichment activities
- SEND guide for staff
- Testimonial from SEND link Governor
- School environment
- Progress data
- Context data



Evaluation of Annual Progress towards the Flagship Project

Summary of Targets from 2020-2021

Improve Provision through the Education Endowment Foundation's Tiered Model

An Effective and Responsive Curriculum

Miss it, miss out (MIMO) sessions have proved successful in preparing students for assessments and developing their knowledge retention. Curriculum Leaders from English, maths and science deliver these revision sessions to ensure Year 9 students have acquired the necessary knowledge, particularly after missing large amounts of learning during Year 7 and Year 8 due to the Covid-19 school closures. The topics are linked to the curriculum, with key words and information provided in a booklet. Teaching Assistants support any students who require additional help in the sessions. The impact of these sessions on increasing students' retention of key knowledge has been significant. Year 9 students scored 46% higher in their Autumn Knowledge Test compared to the previous Year 9 cohort.

Period 6 sessions have been implemented to offer support to Year 11 pupils in the core subjects and two option subjects. These sessions are formal, with a contractual agreement between students, home and school to ensure attendance is high. Staff are paid additionally to teach the period 6 lessons highlighting the value Senior Leaders place on it. The impact of these extra lessons is clearly evident through the comparison of results between the students who attended period 6 and those who did not:

English

P6 attenders - average grade 5

P6 non-attenders - average grade 3

Maths

P6 attenders - average grade 4.6

P6 non-attenders - average grade 3.7

70% of the Year 11 cohort engaged in the period 6 lessons. Through attending these additional sessions, over the course of Key Stage Four, they will have gained an additional 190 hours of learning.

Responsive Teaching and Cultivating Independence

The homework policy was reviewed with Curriculum Leaders and updated according to the feedback. The online Google Classroom platform is now used to set all homework. Homework mainly involves revision of key learning to support the students in retaining information and building up their knowledge and skills in each subject over time. The homework is tested through starter tasks in the following lessons.

Leaders have developed an online Woodchurch High School Teaching and Learning site for staff which "houses all key resources, including the T&L Handbook, and documents our progress with T&L throughout the year. It also continues to house the full



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



programme for Early Career Teachers to support them with organisation, enable them to navigate and learn at their own pace and with mentors.”

There have been changes to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning following feedback from observations and lesson visits. The IQM Lead explains that “following feedback from staff last term, the format has also been updated to allow more time for whole group practising. The cycle is now extended over the half term:

1. Prepare and plan.
2. Practise and do.
3. Review”.

To be more impactful, the reviews now take the form of a presentation with a focus on the impact on learning. The IQM Lead feels that this has led to more accountability on the teachers.

In terms of improving the progress of Disadvantaged Students, the Leaders are able to demonstrate impact across three of their key programmes in which the majority of students are identified as Disadvantaged. The literacy catch-up intervention has led to 80% of students in the Year 7 cohort making positive progress, and 64% of Year 8s making positive progress. 64% of students who received The Reader intervention programme made positive progress. 100% of the students involved in the Year 7 Phonics Programme made positive progress.

Westlake Alternative Provision for Year 10 & Year 11 SEND Students

To enhance the already excellent support for students with special education needs and disabilities (SEND), the School has forged a partnership with a local landowner who has set up an alternative provision with a focus on learning outdoors, animal welfare, agriculture etc. Targeted Key Stage Four Students, many of whom have diagnoses of autism, attend the specialist provision at Westlake Alternative Provision to complete a NOCN Level 1 Certificate in Skills for Employment Training and Personal Development.

The Teaching Assistant who supports the students and accompanies them to Westlake said that “the pupils have enjoyed the course, engaging well with the provision. The older pupils have supported the younger ones and they have grown in confidence over the year.” Tutors from Reaseheath College have been involved in delivering the course. The Teaching Assistant supports the students with literacy, which has given them more confidence when accessing the wider curriculum at School. The Farm Manager visited Westlake to look at the curriculum and identify any links with the curriculum offered through Woodchurch High School’s farm provision. Each student who attends Westlake is given personal development targets, for example for children with autism, there will be targets based around social interaction. Through this alternative provision, students are developing wide-ranging transferable skills which can be implemented across the curriculum. Some of the students who access the provision at Westlake go on to study at Reaseheath College at post-16. The tutors build up relationships with the students and are a familiar face once the student goes on to study there. It is giving the students clear progression routes as well as showing the different career opportunities available, which are much wider than a typical school curriculum.



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



The Co-Owner of Westlake Alternative Provision came in to meet with me as part of the review process. He talked about his vision for the provision and rationale for setting it up. He and his business partner purchased 25 acres of land and decided to set up a community facility to encourage young people to engage with the outdoors. He looked at a "shortfall within the community" at supporting young people with autism and felt that there was a need for a different approach. His vision is to nurture the young people and provide an alternative curriculum which inspires them and provides a pathway to future career opportunities.

The impact of attending the Westlake provision on not only students' personal development and wellbeing, but improving their future prospects, is extremely positive. In the student feedback form, one student commented that "I have enjoyed my time at Westlake [...] I have learned how to use tools safely" they also highlighted the social impact: "I have met new people and improved my social skills." Another student reflected on the experience, stating "I also like making friends and getting to know other pupils from other schools and how kind they were, and we all worked well together as a team. It is clear that this experience has had a huge positive impact on their social skills development, with one student commenting that it has given them "the opportunity for social situations [to form] which made it genuinely something to look forward to" and "alongside this the other people were nice and interesting."

Agreed Actions for the Flagship Project 2022-23

Project Title: Alternative Provision Project

Project Aim: To develop a bespoke alternative provision (based at Westlake) to support SEND and vulnerable students, including primary aged children from local primary schools, to engage the young people to prevent social and academic exclusion.

Outline of Project:

Leaders are hoping to set up an Alternative Provision based at Westlake, using the facilities on their own farm to develop animal handling and care. They plan to work in conjunction with the Local Authority to offer this programme to vulnerable pupils in primary schools who require a therapeutic alternative provision, where they can develop a greater understanding of the environment whilst benefiting from mentoring sessions on self-esteem, identity and belonging. The School recognises the benefits of Alternative Provision. However, Alternative Provision needs to provide high-quality, planned programmes which have a clear purpose and outcomes for the young people participating. The SEND Green Paper will inform the planning, promotion and delivery of this project.

Actions include but are not limited to:

- Appoint a trained mental health worker and counsellor to deliver the alternative curriculum programme.



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



- Work with primary colleagues to provide targeted support in a mainstream setting with robust standards focused on engagement, participation and progress.
- Provide quality support, such as coaching, self-regulation skills from skilled practitioners.
- Address barriers to learning and support children with complex additional needs.
- Offer opportunities, interventions and education across a continuum of support in a calm, orderly, stimulating environment.
- Devise a six-week programme to be offered initially.
- Create a programme for Key Stage Four Students and identify a cohort.
- Develop a promotional brochure.
- Link with primary Headteachers to plan the curriculum.

The Impact of the Cluster Group

The staff from Woodchurch High School engage well with the Cluster Group and are keen to share their best practice. The first Cluster Meeting of this year focussed on transition and reintegration. Woodchurch High School staff presented on how they support students through transition and meeting individual needs of students and parents. Faith Primary School in Liverpool hosted the second meeting to look at an inclusive learning environment in action. At the meeting, the staff representing Woodchurch High School discussed their transition processes and agreed to present their best practice at the final meeting of the year in July. Faith Primary School shared good practice, including their use of a multi-sensory approach, including salt lamps, zen garden and quiet areas. Following this meeting the staff at Woodchurch created a calm environment in the Inclusion Office to “allow for a quiet area should pupils need this.”

Overview

At the start of the review day, the Headteacher and Senior Leaders were asked to select one word which best describes the ethos at Woodchurch High School. They chose “community” as they “serve the local community” and “children who are part of the local community.” There is a warm, welcoming environment at the School. The modern, purposeful building is open-plan and inviting. The high ceilings and large windows offer ample natural light into the central areas, as well as views of the well-designed green areas outdoors, which creates an atmosphere of calm and encourages connection to the outdoors. The School and its grounds offer a juxtaposing, natural haven set in the middle of a large housing estate.

Recently, the School has seen an influx of children who speak English as an additional language (EAL), with a large community of families (around 22) from Hong Kong



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



choosing to send their children to Woodchurch High School due to the warm welcome extended to other newcomers. To support the new families, the School hosts coffee mornings every half term which are attended by a translator to aid communication. The Headteacher talks with pride about the hospitality the School extends to all stakeholders and external visitors. Having visited the School to undertake the Flagship review, I agree with this reflection.

The support for children with special educational needs and disabilities is excellent. The staff explain how “SEND and inclusion run through everything we do.” There is a staff guide booklet for the whole class SEND support strategies to promote an approach which suits all learners’ needs and includes everyone in the learning. The Pod is an inclusion area where the Support Staff are based, meaning that the young people can access staff throughout the day. There is a Sensory Room which is used as students need it. A full time School Counsellor supports students with mental health and wellbeing needs. The SENDCo and Inclusion Officer work in cohesion to provide a holistic package of support. Communication amongst staff is effective which ensures the support for SEND children is exceptional. The SEND Link Governor undertook a SEND review in the Spring Term and commented “I was very impressed by the inclusivity of the School’s offer, and the variety of needs which are supported by the SEND Team. The School obviously embraces the challenges, whilst ensuring that all children are included in a wide variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities.”

For any young people who require additional support, supplementary to the inclusive provision for all, the School boasts its own farm. The Farm Manager and Teaching Assistant led a tour of the Farm as part of the review day. Currently, a group of vulnerable Year 7 students participate in an intervention programme on the Farm, alongside two Year 8 children who act as mentors. The Farm Manager explained how the intervention is “all about character building, developing resilience and independent learners.”

A scheme of work has been created to include an array of transferable skills however there is flexibility within the planning for staff to add in activities in response to any issues which may arise. The students attend the Farm for two hours each week on Monday mornings. This provides them with an exciting, positive start to the week to incentivise them to attend School and set a positive frame of mind for the rest of the week. A small group of Year 10 students also access the Farm provision for one day a week. Other students can access the Farm during break times with a pass.

At the Farm, students care for many different animals including alpacas, goats, chickens and a giant tortoise. There is a sensory garden with a bench to offer a quiet, calm space throughout the day. The Eco Garden has been developed by the students, who have learnt all about sustainable horticulture.

The staff on the Farm are highly motivated and keep abreast of the latest techniques through research. The Farm Manager was previously a geography teacher so she includes links to the curriculum into what they do on the Farm. As well as the farming and horticulture skills taught at the Farm, students’ literacy skills are developed. The Library Shed has a range of reading materials with cushions which the children can sit on to read on the grass in a more informal, relaxed setting. There is also an Alpaca



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



Reading Station where young people can read to the non-judgemental alpacas. The staff feel that the less formal reading opportunities have encouraged the children to read for pleasure.

At Woodchurch High School there is a positive climate of inclusivity amongst the student population. Assemblies are used as a forum to teach about differences and promote tolerance. The students observed and spoken to during the review day were all accepting of each other's differences. They treat each other with respect. The group of students who met with me as part of the Pupil Voice panel seem very happy at school. They were students with a range of SEND from Years 7 and 8. Their future ambitions include sports personality, maths teacher, footballer, army officer and speculative zoologist (which they had to explain to me). When asked what the best aspect of school life is, they said "the Farm" as it is "just amazing so we go every morning." Another student accesses the Farm at break and most lunchtimes. They also enjoy Fun Club, which is an after-school enrichment club for targeted children who are invited by the Inclusion Team.

I also met with a group of parents and carers of children with SEND. They describe Woodchurch High School as "incredibly supportive" and "caring" with "great provision." The School has an excellent reputation in the local area and beyond for its inclusivity. They all feel their children are safe when at school and happy. There is no bullying towards children with SEND. Parents and carers talked about how the staff "go above and beyond" to support their children. They have a main point of contact in School for ease of communication, though they feel that all staff are approachable and that they can talk openly and honestly to them. The Pod is described as a "safe space" with the staff and students "like a family." Their children are fully included in all areas of school life.

Staff offer a range of enrichment activities to enhance the curriculum. Students who access the Farm Provision enjoy a residential visit to the Cheshire Show where they show the sheep in a professional arena. A group of Year 7 SEND and vulnerable students were invited to produce an Afternoon Tea for the local primary school teachers. They had to plan and prepare the food then serve it to the teachers. During the event, they showcased the work they have completed since joining in September to their ex-primary school teachers. The event was enjoyed by all.

The Senior Leaders and Inclusion Team at Woodchurch High School are highly organised. They sent detailed evidence in support of their work towards the Flagship Project in advance of my visit. It is clear from the process that the staff are committed to the inclusion agenda and improving the life chances of young people not only in their School, but the local community and beyond. The alternative provision and enrichment opportunities offered not only enrich the school experience but transform the future prospects of the students involved.

Staff show genuine passion towards working with children from all backgrounds, with different needs. It was a delight to meet the students, staff, parents and carers at Woodchurch High School.



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



I thoroughly enjoyed my visit and witnessing the excellent inclusive practice which is engrained across all aspects of school life. The School has continued to move from strength to strength in terms of its inclusive practice. I therefore recommend they continue to hold Flagship status. The next review will look closely at this year's plans for the new Flagship Project.

Assessor: Sarah Linari

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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

Agreed Actions for the Next Steps in the Flagship Project:

The Impact of the Cluster Group

Overview