



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



School Name	Hopefields School 16 High Force Road Riverside Park Middlesbrough Cleveland TS2 1RH
Head/Principal	Ms Emily Greenhalgh
IQM Lead	Mrs Emily Isabell
Date of Review	3rd October 2024
Assessor	Ms Joanne Smith

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group	Inclusivators
Ambassador	Ms Emily Carr
Next Meeting	13th November 2024
Meeting Focus	TBC

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Spring 2024	25th January 2024	No
Summer 2024	3rd July 2024	Yes

The Impact of the Cluster Group

Hopefields School is finding that connections with other like-minded inclusive schools are particularly helpful with curriculum development. Direct actions from the cluster group include:

- Contact made with two local schools.
- The Lead teacher for mathematics has visited both schools to share best practices around the transition from Y6 to Y7.
- Resources have been shared between schools in Maths.
- Links made with colleagues for the new Maths Hub.
- The Headteacher is speaking at the upcoming IQM conference.



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Evidence

Sources of Evidence:

- IQM Self Evaluation
- School Website and Policies
- Ofsted Report
- Pupils' Books
- The school environment
- Learning walks: observation of pupils learning in lessons

Meetings Held with:

- Headteacher
- SENDCo and IQM lead
- Teachers
- School Staff
- Students
- Informal conversation during lunch
- Parents



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Summary of Targets from 2023-2024

Target 1: Further develop reading for pleasure outside of the classroom, including the use and knowledge of phonics in classroom teaching.

The environment is literacy-rich; the communal space has a library feel, and the First News publication was readily available for students to read during the day, which I noticed they did. There is a library wall of books, and I noticed students enjoying time to read alone; they also enjoyed reading in the sensory room during their lunch break.

The school has successfully appointed an experienced teacher to lead the teaching of early reading and phonics. Currently, a recommended DfE programme is being adapted for any student needing support learning to read. Targeted interventions support students and assessments are used to identify gaps and to evidence progress.

Leaders engage the expertise of others to monitor their work and their progress to develop further. They are determined to do all they can to ensure students leave the school with a strong sense of belief in themselves and know that being able to read well will unlock many opportunities.

Next Steps:

The school continues to place reading at the heart of their plans. Whilst they are pleased with their progress in this area, they remain committed to strengthening the reading curriculum, especially for those in the early stages of reading and are researching phonics programmes that will best support their learners. They plan reading reviews with external school improvement advisers to validate and support further development.



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Target 2: Further embed the curriculum planning model to ensure a cohesive curriculum with a strategic overview and key assessment points throughout the academic year.

Many subjects have now been carefully mapped from EYFS to grade 9. This means that a clear sequential plan of learning supports bespoke curriculum plans for students. The school uses a suite of adaptive assessments, which ensures that students are assessed, and analysis and reports allow teachers to pitch learning accurately, which means any gaps in learning are swiftly identified and children achieve and begin to build knowledge and skills quickly. It also means standardised scores from assessments evidence success and allow students to celebrate success and build their self-belief.

Workbooks evidence that adaptations are made so pupils can access learning effectively. Teacher scaffolding and modelling are embedded and workbooks are to be proud of. The school's convictions, which are placed at the front of each workbook, remind everyone to recognise opportunities that can be found in all subjects. They remind everyone to stop and reflect on learning for a range of reasons, e.g., awe and wonder. This simple but effective practice ensures the school's convictions, vision and values are shared every day in all that they do.

The leaders have developed a new analysis and reporting process that is overseen by leaders. This has ensured all data tracking is moderated and judgements are secure. Pupil voice is a key mechanism in monitoring the curriculum offered.

The appointment of a member of SLT with responsibility for the teaching of PE has had a significant impact on the subject's development. Specialist teachers allow for expertise and ensure a strong curriculum offer.

Next Steps:

Collaborative working with other local schools and settings is planned so that the leaders continue to further develop excellent practice in their curriculum offer.



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Target 3: Utilise every available platform to share the magic of Hopefields; continue the Headteacher's mission to "disrupt the system within the confines of the system" by speaking up proudly about the difference Hopefields is making to the life chances of students.

Hopefields continues to be at the forefront of non-profit independent education in the area. The leaders of Hopefields meet many families and learners whose experience time and time again tells them that something different is needed. The leaders at this school have responded to this very strong message by creating a place of learning that ensures transformational change. However, at first glance, although Hopefields looks similar to many other places of learning, it isn't. To make for a very calm and relaxed learning space, leaders know that complex challenges require complex solutions and the commitment everyone gives to ensuring the school's success makes sure the leaders' vision is translated into everyday practice. The school's Nurtured Heart Approach is well embedded; this requires the hearts and minds of all involved in the life of the school to give consistent messages of absolute no, absolute yes, and absolute clarity.

This, along with a curriculum offer that reaches every student, makes sense to students, and the success of learners speaks for the excellent work that takes place every minute of every day.

Hopefields hosted the pupil inclusion panel in July 2024 for Middlesbrough Inclusion Service and is developing support for students from authorities across the Tees Valley and beyond.

The Headteacher is sharing the school's excellent work at the IQM conference in October 2024.

A further four members of staff will be trained in 2024-2025 in the Nurtured Heart Approach and will become certified trainers. This means a strengthened outreach model that will support the most vulnerable learners.

Parents are keen to spread the good work of Hopefields and are strong Ambassadors for communicating the positive change that Hopefield brings to pupils and families.

Next Steps:

Embed the new IQM Coordinator into the Hopefields model, upskilling and completing SENCo training for independent schools. Continue to share the excellent work of the school.



Agreed Targets for 2024-25

Target 1: Embed the new IQM Coordinator into the Hopefields model.

Comments

The new SENDCo and IQM lead share the vision of the Headteacher. She is passionate about working collaboratively and learning best practices to ensure the best learning experience for students at Hopefields. She is an excellent advocate for inclusion and has a deep understanding of how children learn. Growing expertise of staff through coaching is seen as key.

Working closely with the knowledgeable previous SENDCo/Headteacher when completing annual reviews and meetings about SEN will allow expertise to be disseminated rapidly and ensure that pupils are well supported through the EHCP planning and review process. The Headteacher has an excellent understanding of the EHCP process and supports families well to ensure the best educational support through targeted funding is agreed upon.

Target 2: Continue to upskill subject leads in their department areas with targeted Professional Learning Development and Monitoring Moderation Evaluation Quality Analysis.

Comments

Planned school improvement quality assurance activities are undertaken with the expertise of external consultants and colleagues in other schools to work alongside school and subject leaders. The school is outward looking and there is an expectation that staff look to develop their practice further. There is an opportunity to learn from experienced colleagues in other schools, and teachers and leaders are undertaking National Professional Qualifications to develop leadership skills. Staff also undertake training to broaden expertise in the Nurtured Heart Approach to which the school is deeply committed.

Target 3: Further consolidate the wider curriculum offer with a particular focus on vocabulary. Ensure that children remember their learning and know how this relates to everyday life.

Comments

The school is very reflective and continually self-evaluates to strategically develop curriculum subjects further. The cycle of curriculum review is well planned, but leaders also recognise that they need to be responsive. As students join, the school leaders remain acutely aware of their needs and ensure that their curriculum supports success. They are very aware that this means their offer in some areas needs careful research and planning as learners, in some cases, may find making up lost curriculum learning time a challenge. Their continual reflection means that learning is planned to ensure big ideas and themes are reinforced through multiple curriculum areas.



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Overview

Hopefields School remains a Centre of Excellence and is exemplary in its inclusive practice. The ethos and vision of the leaders are shared in every communication. The Headteacher and SENDCo are very clear about their core purpose, which is simply to ensure the very best outcomes for children. The leaders are clear that they are working to transform the lives of young people and expect the same from colleagues. They are agents of change. The staff are unwavering in their endeavours to make certain that they ensure every student leaving Hopefields is ready for the next stage in learning and life. 100% of learners go on to further education or employment.

The leaders and staff ensure the school is a calm, safe place for students to learn and grow. The expectation is that students will achieve and thrive in their care, and this is what happens. Everyone is seen as having a responsibility to create a positive learning environment and to be their best self. However, it is also recognised that this means careful planning to support every student in their journey to ensure success at every opportunity.

Students learn how to keep themselves and others safe. Adults model positive behaviour. Consistent messages are shared about following the rules to ensure a safe, respectful and happy place to learn and grow.

The Headteacher is deliberately bothered about all aspects of school life. She makes thoughtful choices, from ensuring the children have the right people supporting them to reducing as many variances as possible, e.g., the staff uniform, the environment, the daily routine. The set of convictions practised daily permeates throughout the school and the authenticity of the belief that every student will achieve can be observed through excellent relationships and is evidenced in the students' work and conversations with them. They said they felt cared for; they talked confidently about their next steps, with one student saying she wanted to go on to college to learn more about working with children with SEND; another chatted about developing her skills working with animals after a love of this work had been ignited at Hopefields. Each child is known and they told me that what made a difference to them being able to enjoy school was that they were "finally listened to." Another student was keen to share, "Hopefields is like being part of a bigger family here; everyone cares."

The school places attendance high on its agenda and staff are rightly proud of the significantly improving attendance of pupils as they join Hopefields. The collective attendance of students before attending Hopefields was approximately 14%, rising to above 70% when enrolled at the setting. A parent said that the school provides such great experiences of learning that attendance no longer becomes an issue because students want to attend. The same parent said the positive change in her child is because of the "amazing work of staff." She shared that how a member of staff supported her child's transition into the setting gave opportunity to build relationships and trust and this has quickly grown. Looking forward to learning, making friends and joining in has become the norm. It is clear that parents feel welcome and listened to and this is much appreciated by families.

The barriers that students may face to learning, any additional needs and previous adverse experiences are acknowledged and addressed so that they do not continue to



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impact negatively on their right to an education. Plans ensure support is given and further expertise is sourced, where needed. The staff appreciate that sometimes students may wobble and when a behaviour change is observed, they share this information quickly to best support them. Whilst regulated happy students is the norm, staff recognise that all behaviour is a form of communication and skilfully know when to give space and time and when to intervene should a student become dysregulated.

Pupils are encouraged to talk through their feelings and are given the offer of support to communicate their feelings with others. This means that lost time learning is minimised. Staff are always close by if needed, and this gives a real sense of feeling safe. More than one student said that they felt the staff cared for them.

The curriculum design is innovative. The Headteacher shared that plans have been "carefully crafted." The links between learning support opportunities for pupils to remember and apply knowledge and skills. The wider curriculum offered is excellent. The opportunities to learn outside of the classroom are the norm. The school farm and off-site visits for PE and science are very much enjoyed. One student shared a recent experience of den building at the farm, which became impossible due to windy weather. The laughter as they shared the experience was an example of a student celebrating the convictions that the staff team and pupils are asked to recognise. In a separate conversation, this lesson was remembered in the same joyful way by a member of staff. It was uplifting to hear students and staff sharing happy experiences and recognising these moments as meaningful and important enough to share with others. Joy is high on the agenda at Hopefields. It is clear that the convictions and values made explicit in the students' workbooks and that are displayed around the school are well embedded.

There is a long waiting list of pupils wishing to attend Hopefields. While leaders recognise that they have to remain realistic in what they can do and how many students they can support, they continue to look for ways in which they can impact positively on even more learners. They offer outreach learning support at their school farm, which, when observed, showed that such a positive difference can be made even when time and resources are limited. The teacher leading the outreach session shared how rewarding it is working at Hopefields and felt that making a positive difference in the lives of young people is a privilege. Her enthusiasm for the development of the farm is wonderful; she makes the most of every day for the children and every minute with the students is seen as important and an opportunity to learn.

The leaders' reflection on their work is forensic. The end of school day staff briefing ensures children and the daily journey of learning remain the focus of their work. They design and evaluate their curriculum to ensure that pupils are getting the best offer possible. If a pupil is not engaging for whatever reason, this is investigated and a solution is researched. The school looks to evidence-based research and rightly talks about doing less but doing it well. However, this does not mean children are not given access to a full curriculum; it means that a relevant and meaningful curriculum that will support educational outcomes is prioritised. A planned approach to developing sequential subject plans allows for the adaptation of the curriculum to support all students' learning without lowering expectations. Students are carefully assessed using adaptive assessments, which allow leaders to track progress and plan appropriately. The quality assurance cycle involves the support of experts from other settings and allows for accurate self-reflection.



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The trusting relationships support students even in their most difficult moments. Students are encouraged to forgive themselves and others and to acknowledge and take responsibility for their words and actions. Compassion, kindness and gentle humour all support honest conversations. The reality of living, learning and working in the world is not shied away from and it is an expectation that all staff support pupils to understand that they have every right to enjoy their place in the world. The adults make it implicit that everyone's contributions are valued. Praise is specific; for example, when a pupil shared their thoughts in the JoinUp session, the teacher acknowledged that she knew that sharing was hard for that learner to do and was proud that they had been able to do this. The staff skilfully taught pupils to be happy for others and I noticed that pupils who had not shared with the group during the JoinUp made sure they shared their positive thoughts with their friends and staff.

Learners said they looked forward to coming to school; they shared that they enjoyed meeting their friends and their lessons were interesting. Visitors are frequent to the school and learners are encouraged to share their thoughts about Hopefields and their good work with others. The quality of the students' work is good. Their progress is evident. Students' talents are harnessed and developed and examples of pupils developing their skills were demonstrated exceptionally well, particularly in art.

The Headteacher said that her primary focus was to ensure that staff are well cared for so that they have the skills and resources needed to make sure students have the very best quality of care and education. Staff say that they feel they are listened to and feel supported in their work and all talk warmly about the pupils, their colleagues and the leaders. The staff are encouraged to look outward, research best practices and undertake professional development; they enjoy working collaboratively with others.

The staff, students and parents belonging to the Hopefields family are people of hope; they have high expectations; they look to the future, not the past; they work for what is and what can be. The school is an exceptional place that lives up to its name.

The next steps from the 2023 assessment have been addressed and the work in the eight IQM elements continues at pace to further develop and enhance positive outcomes for students.

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 Joanne Smith

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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