



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



School Name: Ponteland Primary School
The Crescent, Callerton Lane
Ponteland, Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE20 9EG

Head/Principal: Lynn Blain

IQM Lead: Emma Ward

Date of Review: 28th September 2021

Assessor: Lesley Colthart

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group: Trail Blazers

Ambassador: Max Kelly

Date of Next Meeting: 17th November 2021

Next Cluster Group Meeting Focus: TBC

Sources of Evidence during IQM Review Day:

- IQM paperwork
- School website
- Loom videos
- Development plans
- Conducted tour around integrated site and school

Meetings were conducted during the assessment day with:

- Headteacher
- IQM Lead
- Deputy Head
- SENDCo
- Family Support Lead



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- Global Curriculum Leads
- Teachers and TAs
- Pastoral Team members including Behaviour and Family Support
- Conversation with parents
- Interview with parent of additional needs child
- Interviews with pupil group representatives

Observations and drop-ins across school included:

- Classroom observations
- Lunch time and playtime
- One to one work with individual pupils



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Summary of Targets from 2020-2021

The School's targets from the previous year were based on the school developments focus of the following targets.

Target 1: Inclusion placed at the heart of change.

A key target over the year was to ensure that staff kept pupil and family needs at the heart of decisions, working together positively to maintain the school's identity and uphold its reputation for inclusive practice. This 'can do' approach led to seamless transitions for pupils and families. Plans implemented included sharing short films and photographs of the new school, conducting tours for pupils, showcasing children's work, and working walls in the new spaces and creating features familiar within the previous building such as the 'street'. When regulations allowed, parents were also welcomed into school to meet teachers and view provision. Parents are appreciative of the way the transition was managed, particularly for pupils for whom change is difficult. Parent comments included, "School did everything possible to keep the relationship with families strong" and "There were no problems. Even through worrying times the school was great, always keeping us informed. I'm very happy with how it was managed." Another parent commented positively on how the old school had displayed portraits of every child around the school gates so children could find themselves and their friends when they weren't able to meet up. Relationships are strong and positive.

Ponteland Primary School made every effort to ensure links were maintained over Covid 19 closures for pupils who did not attend. Chromebooks were provided wherever necessary, and the use of Loom video messaging provided a digital classroom for presentations, information and step by step instruction ensuring everyone was kept in the loop. Pupils in school created informative curriculum presentations for others to support home learning. A great deal of emphasis was placed on the social side of communication too, with staff determined to be available in support of well-being. A parent said that her children had maintained excellent links with teachers so that they never felt like they were worried about anything during lockdown, and this was a huge relief for her.

Ponteland Primary provides a stunning environment which immerses the learner in culture, the arts, imagination, creativity, and nature both indoors and out. The Headteacher and Senior Leaders warmly greet parents and children each morning as they enter, with one parent noting that staff were "always visible and very approachable". There is a calm, nurturing, and purposeful atmosphere throughout the school, as staff ensure well-being is given equal priority with aspirational academic achievements. Staff have created an atmosphere where support and respect for one another is embedded and where effective practice is shared. All staff are excellent role models for children, with self-review and reflection being integral to what they do, meaning they are ever ready to adapt, modify and improve to meet individual needs. Senior Leaders have created a strong culture of professional trust. There is ease of access and clear signposting with the welcoming entrance displaying photographs of all staff alongside the school's values. It is abundantly clear that the principles of inclusion were laid alongside the first bricks and that staff continue to build upon this.



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Target 2: A Global and international curriculum to drive inclusion.

A further target was to take the recent change as an opportunity to review the whole school curriculum in line with Oxfam's global citizenship curriculum. This has evolved over the years to become a rich provision, with subjects intertwined for greater impact, giving pupils a deeper understanding of current issues, such as Black Lives Matter, teaching about diversity and identity whilst addressing issues respectfully. Subject Leaders worked together, seeking examples of best practice, and making links with schools who have embedded this. They plan lessons that immerse learners in meaningful experiences, link subjects through themes, weave the importance of values within lessons which promotes rich dialogue both within the classroom and beyond.

Pupils learn about diverse cultures which reflect strong role models and impactful lives. They enable children to avoid tokenism, recognising similarities and common ground in which they see reflection. The school's aims are underpinned through its values and the curriculum, which gives a strong focus to what they want to see mirrored within; in the texts selected for pupils to study and choose from the library; through the topics taught which cover discrimination, conflict, and social justice, power and governance and in the way pupils are taught to think critically so that they are prepared to look through a different lens and develop the skills and confidence to make a difference in society.

Staff guide pupils with frames of language to help identify misconceptions and be better prepared to understand context and perspective. Through these experiences and interaction with texts pupils have been helped to understand the impact their actions may have on others, which is evidenced through the behaviour within school and in their skills of collaboration and cooperation.

The deployment of specialists within art, music and sport further provides the inspirational and accessible learning experiences, nurturing talent and providing wide variety and challenge for all. Throughout the day pupils performed confidently within lessons including music and PE, demonstrating their enthusiasm and skill.

Target 3: Implement values driven behaviour policy to support learning and well-being for all.

The well-being of pupils and families is given high priority, forming the basis of a Centre of Excellence target made all the more important throughout Covid 19. The Family Support Officer (FSO) drives initiatives and knows her community well. Throughout the pandemic she maintained close contact with families, anticipating potential changes as a result of the circumstances, and being proactive to address emerging needs swiftly and sensitively. Her frequent telephone 'check-ins' maintained relationships and ensured further signposting was available to families. The links with Foodshare have been strengthened as well as the provision of a weekly foodbank. A parent said, "There is no support I could ask for that I wouldn't get from this school."

Since the last review the FSO has proactively engaged in further training and established many links with other services, ensuring she is able to deliver a wide range of support for well-being and mental health. Children thrive and flourish both within



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school and out, as a result of the provision of programs such as Friends Resilience, My Mental Health Rocks, Kalmer Counselling and Young Carers support.

Parallel to this was the aim to implement a new Behaviour Policy, reviewing inclusion strategies to eradicate any stigma around additional needs and different learning needs. A great deal of training has taken place this year based on the expertise of specialists in behaviour, to further enhance productive learning and to build solid relationships between pupils and staff, whilst strengthening intrinsic motivation for children. CPD followed to give all staff across the school consistency of practice, a shared philosophy, and a range of strategies to draw upon. Staff coach, guide, and support pupils, helping with restorative conversations and helping them to suggest ways behaviours could be presented differently next time. The policy guides staff to teach self-discipline and self-respect and to help children make positive choices without the need for token reward. A 'value' a month is celebrated throughout school through assemblies and curriculum subject links, forming the basis of conversations with pupils around behaviour. All staff have embraced the philosophy, nurturing the values that enable all within to demonstrate respectful, considerate behaviours. All achievements are recognised, and self-esteem is promoted at every turn.

This spotlight on behaviour and values has been instrumental in underpinning inclusion. The provision for pupils with additional educational needs ensures that barriers to learning and participation are ameliorated. A parent whose child has more complex needs spoke of the way in which the whole family were supported prior to placement and the careful consideration given to all fears and concerns, stating, "At every juncture staff find a way to look after my child whilst considering the needs of every other child." She described a school which goes above and beyond whilst never making it feel that way, who willingly listen to feedback and who offer "unparalleled love, help and support" to ensure success. She sees real progress in her child because of staff giving her, "what she deserves so that she is defined by what she can do, not by what she can't". Evidence seen in classrooms and breakout spaces, where SEN pupils were engaged, productive and happy confirmed this.

Staff work hard to find whatever is appropriate to help individuals make progress, varying their approaches and maintaining strong links with support agencies. The carefully designed environment provides break out spaces, sensory experiences, use of assistive resources and equality of access throughout the two-storey site. The SENDCo leads a strong team and is passionate about researching current initiatives and finding the right approach for individual needs.

Teaching Assistants are well qualified to enhance provision and are skilled practitioners with the children they support, being able to plan according to individual interests in work and play. Pupil Premium is well used to deploy HLTA and LSA support, to deliver specific intervention programs within school and to strengthen home links: these are frequently evaluated for impact. The many agencies linked to school enhance in-house provision, working in collaboration to provide specialist advice for pupils with ASD, sensory needs, communication, and language, EAL and as additional support for emotional well-being.



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There is evidence too of the work staff have recently undertaken in neurodiversity, witnessed in the growing understanding of differences and empathy and welcome toward all learning styles. They are motivated to be engaged, tolerant, patient, kind and understanding, and the impact is clearly evidenced in their confidence, happiness, and well-being. When asked about the values the school embraces a pupil said, "Its mostly about respect, teachers trust us and help us to think about ways to do and say things better. They give us ways to show the value and tell us when we're doing the right thing."

Pupils demonstrate excellent behaviour, both indoors and out, moving about the two-storey building calmly and respectfully. So many children offered a welcome and a reason to show their pride in their delightful new setting. They were eager to show off their surroundings and are appreciative of the experiences the environment brings. During unstructured times they shared equipment and space, such as the MUGA, the library and individual play hubs negotiating and cooperating whilst fully engaged. A pupil proudly showed me younger children at play, agreeing that they were lucky and saying that "it's just that our teachers want the best for us, and they don't really need to tell us off, we know what to do." They spoke of enrichment experiences such as Forest School and opportunities to use the extensive facilities of the sports centre for swimming and climbing, as well as extended opportunities which they eagerly sign up to. Pupils are very confident using IT and understand e-safety and their role within this. Older pupils are mature and diligent, they enjoy their curriculum which "isn't easy but it makes us think and gets us ready for high school." Pupils feel very safe and cared for at Ponteland Primary "Everybody is important and if there is any bullying it's sorted quickly. It's a great place to be."

Governors fulfil their statutory duties, providing appropriate challenge and support. Communication with stakeholders is excellent and staff were keen to point out that they feel trusted and are eager to give back the skills and knowledge gained from investment in their personal CPD and specialist training.

As lead school for School Direct Teacher Training in the MAT partnership, links are well established with Northumbria University and the school provides excellent nurture for the future generation of educators.

Agreed Targets for 2021-2022

The school has provided a comprehensive action plan for the coming 12 months, which includes specific targets alongside a clear timeline and the identification of roles and responsibilities.

Some of these targets are ongoing and are appropriate to keep the school moving forward on its journey and to build on the impressive developments already made.

Target 1: To further develop provision for Years 1 to 6 across the outdoor area of the new site with the aim of ensuring fully inclusive and highly engaging playtimes, branching into the surrounding natural woodland, and using all available space to aid creativity and imagination.



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An audit of current provision of the opportunities provided by the site is underway. Parents are to be surveyed to gather views and ideas. A Play Coordinator is to be appointed, who will be responsible for specific training and coordination of lunch time staff and TAs. Staff have identified and approached OPAL Play Specialists to provide a comprehensive action plan alongside Senior Leaders. They will help create distinct areas according to interest and will support with ideas, the purchase of equipment and CPD whilst maintaining links throughout the year as the project is established. This plan will be launched through assemblies and delivered with a focus on guiding pupils to engage in safe and respectful play. There will be continuous monitoring to ensure fully inclusive practice.

Target 2: To develop sensory spaces and resources throughout school to help pupils to self-regulate, to develop a culture of inclusivity, respect and understanding of the needs of others.

The SENDCo will conduct an audit of sensory needs across school, identifying potential spaces and purchasing sensory resources and equipment.

The school is to appoint a Special Educational Needs HLTA and plans for CPD and staff meetings will follow to strengthen a whole school understanding of neurodiversity. All children are to be taught to understand different types of learning as well as the benefits of varied approaches with the clear aim to maximise impact of provision and minimise stigma. Plans will be developed over the coming year and will be built around the needs of pupils so that all sensory diverse learners will be supported to fully engage in school, to access the wider curriculum and to learn according to preferred style.

Target 3: To expand opportunities for creativity and parental involvement through the development of music and art and to offer wider and richer experiences.

A specialist Art teacher has recently been engaged to deliver the art curriculum for pupils from Year 1 to Year 6. This is to ensure that children's art work is given a high profile around school and that displays throughout recognises and values their talents and contributions. Parents, governors, and the local community are to be involved as plans include pupils working towards staging an exhibition of their artwork.

The Pele Trust is to appoint a Director of Music across their schools with Ponteland Primary being able to access one full day's teaching from a specialist within Y4 to Y6, who will also deliver singing assemblies for Y1 to Y3. An in-house Curriculum Lead for music will strengthen plans and provision, ensuring access for all and enhancing the professional development of teachers. Support for all teachers will include CPD and staff meetings to establish best practice. A target is also in place to establish a Musical Ensemble and choir within Ponteland Primary with the idea of coming together across the Pele Trust as part of a joint schools' orchestra, thus building strong links across schools within the Trust.



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The Impact of the Cluster Group

Ponteland is part of the Trailblazers Cluster group and has maintained virtual contact over the year where they have been able to reflect on initiatives and implement shared ideas into their own experiences. For example, the virtual meetings during lockdown for pupils to encourage social interaction and the support for technology for parents through step-by-step instructions were enhanced. The use of an Engagement Tracker to measure interaction with children arose directly from learning from the experience of other schools in the cluster. Further consideration was given toward staff wellbeing because of Covid 19.

Overview

It was a pleasure to visit Ponteland Primary School in its new setting and to review the detailed and comprehensive paperwork provided demonstrating inclusion plans in action. Ponteland Primary remains a school where inclusion is given the highest priority and where all within embrace the values they promote. This beautifully presented, warm and exciting school is part of the Pele Trust, being situated on a purpose-built site and housing the Primary School, High School, local sports centre, and community centre in the heart of Ponteland Village. It provides a high standard of inclusive education in a values led environment where children are nurtured to be the best they can be. The school has maintained and strengthened its aims to build a community which values respect, kindness, good humour, and empathy.

Whilst Covid 19 presented all schools with many challenges, Ponteland Primary School was also faced with a move to its newly built premises during the most difficult of times and did so with a determination to offer stability, continuity, and familiarity and to allow every child to feel happy and safe. The success of this was due, in no small part, to the experience, determination and thoughtful change management strategies of the Headteacher and her team who set the tone for inclusion, ensuring that the vision for the new build was communicated clearly and that all voices were heard

Ponteland Primary has continued to make good progress in its second year as an IQM Centre of Excellence and as such I recommend that the school continues to hold IQM Centre of Excellence status and is reviewed again in 12 months' time.

Assessor: Lesley Colthart

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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