Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project

School	Fourfields Community Primary School Bentley Avenue Peterborough Cambridgeshire, PE7 3ZT
Head/Principal	Mrs Sue Blyth
IQM Lead	Mrs Elisabeth Cunningham
Date of Review	22nd June 2023
Assessor	Mr David Bowden

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group	Schools in Search of Excellence
Ambassador	Mr Roger Leeke
Next Meeting	11th October 2023
Meeting Focus	TBC

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Autumn 2022	12th October 2022	Yes
Spring 2023	8th February 2023	No
Summer 2023	7th June 2023	Yes

The Impact of the Cluster Group

Through attendance at the cluster group sessions the school were able to see different approaches to curriculum delivery. They also recognised how other schools implement mindful wellbeing sessions for the benefit of staff members. As a result, the school now offers weekly mindfulness sessions for teachers, as well as facilitating cover time for teachers to take termly wellbeing hours, allowing them to go for a walk, read or do anything that is positive for their mental health.

Evidence

Documents: evaluation report, website, policies, action plans, examples of risk reduction plans for behaviour.

Discussions with: Headteacher, SENDCO, Assistant Headteacher, Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Parents and Pupils.

Additional Activities: Tour of the school, book scrutiny.

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Evaluation of Annual Progress towards the Flagship Project

The schools project over the past year has been aligned with the title of 'Meeting the social and emotional needs of the school community'. Within this title there have been five elements:

Development of The Lighthouse and Rainbow Room for Social, Emotional and Mental Health.

The Lighthouse is a small, cosy building situated at the side of the school. It is designed and built to look like and be visible as a lighthouse. It is a space that was built during the summer holidays in 2022 and opened in Sept 2022. The space is a building on the site but separated from the school. The aim of The Lighthouse was to have a space for families to come to for morning drop ins, coffee afternoons and support groups and also to act as a friendly and welcoming environment to discuss family needs and complete aspects of family support such as Early help Assessments. It essentially acts as a hub where families come for support. It is named The Lighthouse as the school wants it to be a beacon of light to families. Inside The Lighthouse there is a quote on the walls: "My lighthouse, my lighthouse, shining in the darkness. I will follow you to shore." This quote sums up its purpose as a building, or hub, where parents and carers can find guidance, especially around social and emotional support for their children. The school also operate the rainbow room, which is a room where support sessions take place for children in need of social and emotional support.

The school has an ELSA trained HLTA with a specific remit of supporting families and social emotional support for children, using the The Lighthouse and Rainbow Room. At the start of the Autumn Term, this member of staff began to run coffee afternoons and drop- in sessions for parents of children with complex SEN or EHCPs. The school noted that the uptake on drop- in sessions was incredibly positive. During this time the HLTA also supported children from these families with specific ELSA interventions. Unfortunately, this HLTA had to take a leave of absence due to a prolonged illness, early on in the year. This member of staff has not yet returned (but hopes to in Autumn 2023); it is clear this member of staff is highly valued and after speaking with them in the previous year, it was evident they had a strong vision for their role in The Lighthouse and Rainbow Room. The loss of this staff member has had an impact on what the school wanted to achieve with these spaces; however, the school has been able to utilise other SEMH practitioners in the Rainbow Room, such as music and play therapists. In addition to this, within The Lighthouse, the SENDCO has run monthly coffee afternoons for parents with complex SEN and EHCPs, hosted parenting courses, SENCO network meetings and also used the space for early intervention family workers to undertake monthly drop- in sessions.

It is evident that the school, with the capacity it currently has, is utilising these spaces effectively to deliver social, emotional and mental health support to its children and community of parents. Once the school returns to its full capacity it will no doubt build on its current effectiveness.

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Development of The Nest, to ensure the appropriate nurture provision is in place to meet the specific needs of our pupils.

The Nest remains an integral part of the school, catering for particularly vulnerable children with social, emotional and mental health needs. Currently forty children across the school access it. The Nest is in essence a classroom within the school that has been turned into a large 'family dining room'. (Depending on the need children come and have their breakfast or lunch there). With a large kitchen table and inviting sofas, along with lots of space to play and learn, it is space for children to come and feel welcomed and nurtured. The Nest offers bespoke packages of support to help children deal with a variety of challenges such as dealing with trauma or bereavement. Children can access The Nest Based on part- time (as little as an hour a day) or full-time hours dependant on their needs. The Nest is run by a full-time teacher and teaching assistant, to ensure high-quality interactions and develop consistency with adults. Last year the school recognised that further provisions should be made alongside the nest to bolster the work that is undertaken in there. As a result, the school has established and embedded the use of a forest school on site, a gardening area and a therapy dog. The Headteacher explained that because of the work in The Nest, children are far better at regulating their emotions and as a result there are far less incidents of physical aggression within the school. One child explained, "I like The Nest, as I get to play lots of games, get along with people and it helps me control my anger."

The nest has clearly had a positive impact on the children in the school over the past year and by utilising the space and expertise within the nest, children's social and emotional needs can be effectively met.

Developing the role of Senior Mental Health Lead in School

One of the school's Assistant Headteachers has undertaken training and is now a Senior Mental Health Lead. This teacher is also the lead in The Nest. In these two roles, this person has been instrumental in ensuring the correct level of provision is delivered to meet mental health needs, ensuring that necessary interventions are in place for children such as Drawing and Talking and Lego Therapy. They are also part of a Cognitive Behaviour Therapy Programme, where they deliver cognitive behaviour strategy sessions to select children. The Senior Mental Health Lead also provides support for staff: they have sent questionnaires to staff to know issues and establish channels of communication and assistance and as a result, offer informal wellbeing catch ups, half termly mindfulness sessions or give hourly release time so staff can have time to take part in self care activities. The Senior Mental Health Lead alongside the SENDCO have also undertaken a wellbeing audit of the children, using the Raising Attainment through Wellbeing programme. This audit feeds into actions for the next IQM project which has a focus on developing the social, emotional and mental health of all pupils.

It is clear that the Senior Mental Health Lead role has been established and the role is having a positive impact across the school community in developing positive mental health and wellbeing.

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Outdoor Play and Learning Programme (OPAL) to be fully implemented and embedded.

The school is now at the stage where OPAL is fully embedded: they have Children's Play Council, children know and understand the Play Charter that determines the children's rights and responsibilities in play and how to keep themselves safe (alongside a Play Policy); they have zones of play established (such as tyre or swing areas); they have experienced adult play leaders who facilitate play and help children to manage risk; they are incredibly well resourced and have a self- access shed to house all the resources . The school works alongside the community to further resource, asking business for donations (such as cable reels and tyres). They recently held an OPAL grounds day where parents came and built new objects such as wooden cars and houses. The OPAL lead and Assistant Headteacher explained that the children's play has adapted and evolved, based on the resources that have been donated. They also explained: "The children no longer need to be directed in any play; they are intrinsically motivated to try new activities out and be imaginative. Imagination and resilience across age ranges has developed. Children don't just do what their friends do, they focus on their interests and because of this age ranges mix together."

The school regularly holds assemblies to celebrate children's play and show successes at playtime. It is evident OPAL is embedded and successful by virtue of the fact that when I asked the question, what do you like about school, every child answered with OPAL. They knew what OPAL was and fully understood how it has positively improved playtimes. One child explained: "I enjoy playtimes because we have OPAL and we have loads of things to play with…we just made a slide out of tyres and we have a wall of music!"

Moving forward, the school now wants to further develop the grounds by rewilding areas, creating new pathways and creating sand building areas. They hope that with the help of the school community they can make this possible. By also involving the school community (parents, carers and friends), these community members are able to see, first-hand the value that OPAL adds to the school.

From my own experience, playtimes at Fourfields are some of the happiest, most engaging and positive I have seen at any school because of the breadth of opportunity and creativity available to the children in their play. The children love playtime, are happy and because of this experience, they want to be at school. It is a huge success and undeniably contributes to the positive mental health and wellbeing of the children at Fourfields.

It was noted that during wetter times, less children can access OPAL because they do not have the correct wet weather clothing (such as wellies, coat or change of clothes). It was discussed therefore that the school would need a policy to ensure this clothing was provided for all children; however, with an awareness that this may not be affordable for all parents and carers, the school would need to determine ways and means to help equip all children with these items. This could be done by way of setting up a swap shop for no longer needed clothing items, where parents could donate and take items as and when they needed to.

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Circle of friends

Previously the school had implemented 'Circle of Friends' to enhance the inclusion of children who were experiencing social difficulties in school. This work was being undertaken by the ELSA HLTA at the start of the year; due to their prolonged illness this specific work stopped. However, identified children within this 'Circle of Friends' group were able to carry on the work with social interaction through provision in the nest. This shows the wide range of options the school has and can deliver in meeting the needs of children socially and emotionally.

Agreed Actions for the Next Steps in the Flagship Project

The school's next project is entitled: 'The Space Station- inclusion for all and Improving the Social, Emotional and Mental Health of all our pupils with the STEPS therapeutic approach to behaviour.

This project focusses on The Space Station, a classroom which will be developed to meet the needs of children with more complex SEN needs such as SEMH, ASC, ADHD, anxiety. It will be a space designed for those children who become emotionally heightened and dysregulated in the mainstream environments to be calm and successful. The room will be used to provide a safe place for children to self- regulate, be a sensory area to support their needs and also provide a learning environment where they can focus. To develop this space the school must resource it effectively not just with physical resources but with adults who have the correct expertise. As a result, the school must now employ someone with experience of complex needs such as ASC or ensure those working in The Space Station receive the correct level of training. As part of the development of this provision, it is imperative that those working in this space visit and experience other specialist settings so they are aware of how to provision it effectively.

Alongside this, to ensure that those within The Space Station and across the school are having their behavioural, social and emotional mental health needs met, the school needs to ensure they continually train staff in developing their STEPS behavioural approach, which is a restorative, trauma informed approach. The use of the STEPS approach is already well established within the school and its relative risk reduction plans for vulnerable children ensure that the most vulnerable children have a clear and consistent approach to manage positive behavioural outcomes for them; however, regular training is key to ensure the culture within the STEPS approach is utilised at all times. In addition, it is also important that parents and carers fully understand this approach to understanding behaviour and that the strategies it employs align with home and school and everyone is part of this nurturing culture. The SENCO explained there is a parental module of training around STEPS and this could be utilised in the new academic year.

Lastly, The Senior Mental Health Lead (Assistant Headteacher) alongside the SENDCO have undertaken a wellbeing audit of the children, using the Raising Attainment through Wellbeing programme. This audit has created a number of targets broadly:

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- To ensure staff are aware that negative behaviour is a form of communication and staff need to understand and investigate this to reduce negative incidents.

- To ensure staff are trauma- neglect aware and are able to refer cases of trauma and neglect to the correct channels.

- To ensure staff are supported with their own emotional health so they can effectively support others.

In order to meet these targets proper training and support is essential. Part of this training is for staff to carry out action research (as part of the performance management process), with support, researching practice, implementing it in the classroom and assessing its effectiveness. Leaders therefore need to ensure a strategic programme of training and support is in place. In doing so, this will have a positive impact on the Social, Emotional and Mental Health of all our pupils and especially on those children with complex needs within The Space Station.

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Overview

Fourfields Primary School proudly displays the word Shine on its school logo. This word is an acronym, standing for: successful, happy, inspired, nurtured excited. On the day of review, it was incredibly clear that Fourfields is meeting all of the parts of this acronym, but most notably happy and nurtured. Throughout the day it was evident that the school does whatever is in its power to be a welcoming, nurturing place, meeting the social and emotional needs of its children and community and in turn creating a community of happy people.

A tour of the school showed welcoming and engaging spaces. The school has recently had a library built. On the day of review, I witnessed children excited to engage with literature and talk about books. Their classroom spaces are large and purposeful and areas are adapted to suit a variety of needs. They have several spaces to address the needs of children with social and emotional challenges (The Nest and Rainbow Room) along with The Lighthouse, to support families. Their outdoor space is phenomenal: alongside a large array of fixed play equipment, they utilise the OPAL programme to enhance lunchtimes and playtimes, they have a retired bus that children can access at playtimes and lunchtimes and read 'quick fiction' like comics and magazines; they have a magnificent garden area (used within nurture provision and at breaktimes and playtimes), where children assist in growing food for the school canteen and to share with the local community (offering it through the Co-Op opposite the school). The School was recently assessed as having a top 10 gardening team of the year. The gardening leader explained: "The garden is great for behaviour, bringing people together, for talking and developing speech and language, developing relationships over playtime and giving responsibility; it creates a closeness with people."

The opportunities in the garden are just one of the many opportunities the school grants to its children, enriching their curriculum. As you walk around Fourfields, observe, and talk with staff and children you ascertain that this is a place of opportunity, where young people can experience new things. An example of this is the school's commitment to the arts. The school has its own music studio space where they can practise music, dance and drama. Currently, the school is linked with The Royal Opera House as part of a Cultural Champions Project: they have had live interactions with set designers, watched live opera rehearsals, had sessions delivered to children from artistic practitioners and also teachers have had training around the arts from this scheme. The Headteacher explained that: "In giving these opportunities, many children are engaging and excelling in music, drama and performance - without these experiences they may have never had the chance to do anything like this, at this level…it gives them another chance to find out what they are really good at."

Another opportunity that all children in the school will be receiving in the coming academic year is the opportunity to engage in a forest school. The development of the forest school has been new this year. The forest school leader is passionate about using the outdoor learning space as a form of nurture provision. Currently this is what it has been used for, with small groups, however, in the next academic year every child will engage in a block of forest school learning. The forest school carries on the learning found in OPAL, developing responsibility, resilience, independence and risk taking. The

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leader explained that, moving forward, they want to measure the impact the forest school is having on its learners. As a result, they are completing case studies on learners in the forest school, understanding how they develop over time using the Leuven scale- measuring emotional wellbeing and involvement. The leader plans to use this tracking to formatively understand children' s interests to develop the forest school. The challenge here will be to create a manageable system of tracking. At present the leader aims to do this with a select group of children.

Overall, Fourfields excels in providing a nurturing environment to their children. Through elements such as Forest School, school gardening, OPAL and The Nest, they can ensure children's social and emotional needs are met while also providing them with life skills. Other examples of this are: the school uses their own therapy dog to provide therapeutic relationship support to its learners; the school uses an outreach therapy dog that comes in and the children guide it through obstacle courses, developing teamwork; the site manager works with the children in The Nest, once a week, developing skills such as woodwork or bike maintenance. The Headteacher explained that they wanted to create their own version of alternative provision for SEMH so that everything could be done, in house, to meet the needs of the children. On the day of assessment, early on in the morning, there were small groups of children working 1:1 with a sports coach. This is a mentoring programme that helps children to be ready to learn in the morning; nurture is at the forefront of what Fourfields does and they ensure they put strategies in place so that children feel safe and ready to learn.

The curriculum at Fourfields is engaging, innovative and challenging. On the day of the review, I witnessed children absorbed in their learning. They were incredibly polite and articulate and could explain clearly what they were learning about. In reception the children explained what cocoons were, showed me cocoons and talked about the lifecycle of a butterfly. In a year 4 class, one child explained to me what they had been writing about and then told me the favourite part of their English work: "I like writing stories as I have the freedom to express myself." In year 6 they were understanding chronology by placing composers and musicians on a timeline. They were then going to link the composers and the musicians to historical events on this timeline, linking arts and history.

Across the school, all learning is enquiry led. There are no learning objectives, only questions such as:

- What is a Haiku?
- How do you draw a portrait?
- How can your travel be greener?
- What symbols can you use to draw circuits?

The books show that these questions allow the learning to flow from them. Children's work is incredibly well presented, shows they have a deep understanding of the questions posed and when you verbally pose these questions to the children, they can talk through them or use what they have in their books as reference to answer any given question. Across the year groups, progression is evident. Children's work is also adapted dependent on the stage and needs of the child.

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The school is a very happy place to be and the children are happy to articulate this. One child explained: I really like this school. I love playtimes and we learn interesting things." Another child explained: "Adults are kind and caring here and it is a place where you don't have to feel sad…in the classrooms we have boxes of things to make us feel better." In this instance the child was explaining that the classes all had activities the children could access to regulate their emotions, once again placing nurture at the forefront of everything. It is clear when you walk around the school and listen to interactions between children and adults that there is a high level of mutual respect.

Parents spoke highly of the school, explaining that the school has excellent communication and gives the children the education they need and deserve. One parent told me: "This school has a big open door…your child is welcome and they will do what they can to understand your child's needs." In a recent parental survey, parents were asked what was one thing that Fourfields does well. The majority of responses noted inclusion. One parent explained their child had been attending school in The Nest. Because of this, they were now happy to come to school. They also explained that the work in The Nest had been instrumental in helping their child communicate socially with others.

Leadership is strong at Fourfields. The Headteacher, along with the senior leadership team have a very clear vision of school improvement which wholly aligns with their SHINE acronym and children being successful, happy, inspired, nurtured and excited. Staff feel motivated and children are happy and engaged. Teachers and other adults are also allowed to shine; they feel supported to deliver what is needed for their children and they feel their voice in school improvement is valued. One teacher explained: "I have been here for 14 years and I love coming to work. I am happy and supported. Your voice is heard here." The Headteacher explained that the school is a community that works together to do the best for the people within it. This was echoed by several members of staff, with one telling me, "It is very supportive here. If you need training to improve, they organise it. There does not feel like a hierarchy and I am valued for what I do" Another staff member said, "We are evolving and growing and my ideas are taken and used…I feel part of a community."

The school continues to move from strength to strength in terms of its superb inclusive practice and 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 Flagship School. I therefore recommend that the school retains its Flagship 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 Flagship status.

Assessor: David Bowden

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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

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