



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



School Name	St William of York RC Primary School
School Address	Nugent Road Bolton Lancashire BL3 3DE
Head/Principal	Mrs Clare Lighbown
IQM Lead	Ms Rachael Adams
Assessment Date	4th July 2023
Assessor	Ms Elli Rhodes

Sources of Evidence

- Key staff members including IQM lead.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs).
- Children.
- Parents.
- Governors.
- School's Twitter feed updates.
- School's website and policies.
- Displays and information around the building.
- IQM self-evaluation documents.
- Examples of work Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) collaborative books, 'Destination Bolton' project).
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) support and Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) paperwork.
- Curriculum mapping information.
- Report from ungraded Ofsted inspection in March 2023.

Meetings Held with:

- IQM lead.
- Parents (two groups).
- Oracy Leads.
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) staff and pupils (learning walk).
- Key Stage 1 (KS1) staff and pupils (learning walk).
- Key Stage 2 (KS2) staff and pupils (learning walk).
- Governors.
- Group of children from Year 2 to Year 5 (Year 6 out on an educational visit).
- Teaching staff (teachers).
- Teaching staff (support staff).
- GIFT team (Year 5 and 6 pupils with additional responsibilities).
- Physical Education (PE) leads.
- Personal Development leads.



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Overall Evaluation

St William of York is a vibrant one-form entry Catholic primary school with a nursery in a densely populated and diverse urban area. Everything the school does is underpinned by strong relationships, within and beyond the building, and by a clear understanding of the needs of each person in that community.

The school is in the second-most deprived, and 96% of pupils live in the most-deprived, postcode area of the country. Speakers of English as an Additional Language (EAL) comprise 45% of the pupils and an increasing number of new starters arrive from overseas with little or no English. Of the pupils, 73% are members of an ethnic minority group, 38% are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and 15% are on the SEND register, with a ratio of almost two-to-one boys to girls, of whom eight have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in place.

The starting points of children entering the school are lower than the national average; however, children settle quickly and make very good progress so that attainment is high by Year 6, with 91% of children achieving age-related expected results in reading and mathematics Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) last year. As the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) and IQM Lead commented, “in a school like this we can’t just teach. If the school was to get graded as ‘Outstanding’ for the personal development area, those are our pupils, those are our families, that is what matters.”

According to the Ofsted routine inspection conducted in March 2023, if the school was inspected now under Section 5 it would be likely to achieve a judgement of ‘Outstanding’. Indicative of the attitude here, the SENCo committed to the IQM assessment process in order to continue developing the provision – where other settings may be tempted to rest on their laurels, St William of York school is continuing to push and improve even further.

This school welcomes children and their families from across the local area and all over the world, many of whom are new arrivals to the country and value the school very highly as a resource for connections, information and support. Unlike other settings where international new arrivals form a significant proportion of the population, the transience of pupils is very low, as families rarely leave the community once they join. One parent said to me that he had decided not to move house – and definitely not to return to Sri Lanka in the short term – because his children had made it very clear that they would refuse to move school! A child who joined the school mid-year summed it up by saying, “I thought I might take days to make new friends here... but it only took until break time!”

Families with a heritage of generations living in the Bolton area are also highly valued, welcomed and relish the vibrancy of their community. They are equally celebrated and supported and the parents I spoke to were effusive about the school, its staff and the central role it plays in their families’ lives.

A key strength of this setting is the close relationships between staff and their pupils and colleagues, pupils and their peers, and between the school and families. Every child and staff member I spoke to clearly feels heard, seen and known as an individual, and has their unique needs met as well as possible. Parents spoke very movingly of their experiences in joining this school’s community and the feeling of being members of a family was mentioned time and again.



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Children throughout the school articulated its inclusive ethos beautifully, using phrases such as, “Nobody is left alone,” and “Everyone treats everyone the way they want to be treated. It is so diverse and so equal.” They spoke of reaching out to new arrivals, giving peers extra time or space, and talked about their teachers and senior leaders’ modelling of inclusive language and approaches.

The Governors offer an effective ‘critical friend’ approach and are clear about their roles and how they can help the school to be inclusive, from finance and budgeting as well as safeguarding and SEND points of view. Again, they feel valued and known as individuals, able to use their skillsets for maximum impact, and passionate about being part of the family of the school. They are also rigorous in their approach, reviewing documents and ensuring meetings are as effective as possible, conducting audits and reporting back to staff on a frequent basis.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is committed to getting the best for every child and lead the staff in making accurate and timely use of both attainment data and qualitative information about children’s backgrounds, contexts and needs for support or challenge, or both. They are perpetually striving for improvement in their own practice and looking for opportunities to further develop, ensuring that changes are beneficial and do not simply add to staff workload.

Recognising the unique pupils they teach, the staff have implemented a bespoke curriculum and make elegant use of opportunities to link local, national and global topics, as well as periods of history that can otherwise feel remote, to concrete and relevant experiences in their pupils’ lives. They do not shy away from exploring topics appropriately from multiple perspectives; for example, the benefits to Bolton of its rise as one of Lancashire’s cotton towns, and the costs of the Industrial Revolution felt elsewhere.

A key element of the curriculum that is very noticeable in its positive impact is the introduction of oracy, which is one-third of the way into a three-year launch period. The four strands (physical, cognitive, linguistic and social/emotional) have been introduced to all children, with clear progression in skills and expectations from Early Years (EY) to Year 6. A key element is ‘proof of listening’ such as body language, eye contact and focusing on what is being said, rather than waiting to speak. It was remarkable to see every child listen fully to their peers during our group discussions and following on from each other’s ideas so attentively. The youngest children develop full sentences alongside Makaton use, and the language modelling they receive supports all learners. Meanwhile, the older pupils are supported to consider context, for example giving a ‘fast answer’ rather than a full sentence to answer the dinner register.

Each child’s experience is carefully and thoughtfully curated throughout their school life, and provision is tailored to individuals’ needs, skills, interests and areas for further development. The staff strive to listen to and learn from the children and families, as well as providing rich learning environments and opportunities for each pupil.



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Parents, carers and guardians are active and welcome partners in their children's education and wider development. Their global and local links are celebrated and cherished, contributing to a vibrant culture of mutual respect and appreciation. The families, local community and Catholic school community are all recognised and drawn upon as rich resources by school. Staff have deep and detailed knowledge of the children they teach, their key characteristics and how to balance high expectations with any adjustments which may be required. Local events and opportunities are promoted in school and children feel proud to represent St William's at sports festivals, on educational visits or when visiting charities or other schools.

I am of the opinion that St William of York RC Primary School fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark's Inclusive School Award. There are only minor areas requiring development and the school is aware of these. I recommend that the school be awarded the Mark and be reassessed in three years' time.

I also recommend that St William of York RC Primary School should consider applying for Centre of Excellence status subject to the inclusion within its plans of the appropriate areas for development and the completion of the Centre of Excellence documentation. If the school chooses to pursue this status and it were to be awarded the school would be subject to annual review from this point forwards.

Assessor: Ms Elli Rhodes

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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Element 1 – The Inclusion Values of the School

The inclusive ethos of the school was repeatedly articulated by staff and pupils, Governors and parents throughout the assessment day. A member of support staff described the approach as being able to, “realise everybody is individual and has different requirements from you, so it is about being open to adapting yourself and what you do to meet their needs. I think we just do that in general, it is not something you have to think hard about because it is in the practice.”

Several staff independently commented on the quality of appointments to the staff team and credited the Headteacher with skilfully building a workforce who have inclusion as their highest priority. They said, “we continue to learn every day, but I think the Headteacher is really strong at hiring the right people for the right things and making sure they fit the ethos and the existing team”. Another colleague added, “including every child in every lesson comes naturally, and that is why we were recruited to work here”.

Staff are experienced in, and highly skilled at, quickly establishing relationships and assessing needs of new pupils, to ensure the correct support is in place as soon as possible. SEND graduated response and action planning is evidenced in children’s individual files and in the provision visible across school.

The team is proficient at including every pupil and staff member as an individual and makes good use of universal provision as well as tailored input for example, the use of Makaton across EYFS to meet the needs of all learners, whether they are new learners of EAL, pupils with additional Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN), or English speakers whose environment has not yet provided rich enough models or secured their language skills sufficiently.

The staff are clear that collegiate approaches are taken to strategic decision making, policy development and that they are comfortable and confident to raise questions or make requests. The core values (love, forgiveness, respect and compassion) were selected through consultation with all stakeholders. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is effective in leading and delegating, and staff feel empowered to take responsibility for key areas of school life. Teachers reported that the budget for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) has been protected from cuts, even in the difficult financial climate of recent years, and TAs said their training needs are well met and they are always included in relevant updates and would feel welcome to attend a staff meeting if they wished to.

All teachers take responsibility for all their pupils, and we discussed the misconception which arose from an adult unfamiliar with the ethos here, who assumed that TAs would have their own group, probably of children in need of further support, which is emphatically not the case at this school.

Pupils have benefited from explicit training in oracy skills which include ‘proof of listening’ and demonstrated a striking commitment to giving each of their peers’ time and space to be heard, in all my conversations with various groups during the day. They relish the friendships they make within their own year groups and across the school and demonstrate respect for each other, staff and the school building and premises.



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The school is friendly and welcoming to visitors, and the parents I spoke to all emphasised how welcome they feel; both at events in school and more informally to call in and ask for information or support. Staff confirmed that they are comfortable asking colleagues for help and support, and a member of staff who is currently off work is included in the weekly staff briefing, keeping them, at their request, in close contact with colleagues during their absence.

All learners are celebrated, and all children are included in the exceptional displays which adorn the classroom, corridor and hall walls. The environment is as vibrant, purposeful and pleasant as the people who populate it. The Oracy and Personal Development Lead and Assistant Head said, “there are not many ‘rule rules’ [for staff] here, but one is that every child’s work must be displayed”. This was evident, as one of many examples, in the writing about ‘The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe’ in her classroom. The quantity of writing and the fine motor control varied, while the rich content and quality of vocabulary were consistent across the pieces I read. I was told about other examples, such as where a young man at the stage of ‘mark making’ rather than writing was invited to create an illustration for a writing display, and his work was equally valued and celebrated.

The younger children I spoke to were able to explain what inclusion means, such as, “nobody being sad because they are left out” and “everyone gets a chance and gets what they need to join in.” One pupil said, “this school is a lovely place to be”, and another commented that, “the teachers here are the kindest people I have ever met.”

Upper Key Stage 2 (UKS2) children further expressed it as, “everyone treats everyone the way they want to be treated. It is so diverse and so equal. Everyone is included and treated as one body and one family. Nobody is left out alone. Another good thing is if you are new, everyone is kind to you, and they will tell you all the good things about school. If a new person comes, they already have friends here who would love to meet them. You have friends here who you just have not met yet!”

Pupil wellbeing is central to the school’s ethos and explicitly included in the vision statement on the website. This is made possible by a staff team whose own wellbeing is prioritised by senior leaders and colleagues. They explained to me how much they value the open communication, the positive approach of the SLT and things like being able to take time off for their own children’s school transition and performances. One staff member said, “the approach is always, ‘how can we make this fair?’” and another said, “I feel like I can always ask for what I need, and it is never a problem to ask.”

Next Steps:

- Inclusion values are firmly and fully embedded across the school community and articulated by all its members. This is an ongoing effort when new arrivals, into school and the staff or Governors team, join the community.



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Element 2 – Leadership and Management and Accountability

Leaders and all staff are ambitious for every pupil and strive to include, support and challenge them all. The oracy training the school has implemented, for example, seeks to improve outcomes and life chances for every pupil.

The Personal Development leads had noticed that Year 6 pupils' aspirations were somewhat immature or limited, and responded by running an 'Aspirations Week' to increase exposure to the careers available to them. A butcher, nurse, police officer, lawyer, football analyst, youth worker and others visited the school and spoke to the class. They had a lot of questions and reflected afterwards on how much they had found out. The Year 5 pupils already go to Salford University for a similar careers day, and this week complemented that very well because a lot of the people were from the local area.

Safeguarding was judged effective during the Ofsted inspection in March and children are clear that adults keep them safe and are easy to talk to. Governors talked to me about regular safeguarding training, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance and how the Headteacher reports incidents as necessary.

Self-evaluation is good; staff and Governors are aware of key statistics such as the percentage of EAL speakers, and data such as Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) results, which help to measure progress and address gaps swiftly and effectively – and qualitative knowledge of the pupils is excellent and well-used to meet the holistic needs of each child.

Staff turnover is very low, and staff tend to leave only to progress their careers or pursue interests and skills which have been nurtured here, for example with a move into Educational Psychology (EP) or Speech and Language Therapy (SALT). These and other specialists are well used in school, with links to both local authority and private professionals, and strong relationships built to benefit the pupils as much as possible.

Governors have strong links to the school, as parents or grandparents, as former pupils themselves, or as members of the parish and local community. They are committed to both celebrating and improving the school's provision and are clear about the need for constructive criticism and challenge as well as support. One Governor highlighted the school's statement that, 'every child has a unique gift' and commented on how this is also true of the Governors, who work to their strengths and interests to maximise their impact, for example by bringing professional expertise to the finance committee.

The Governor with responsibility for curriculum and SEND said that she is quite new to the role and has had a steep learning curve, coming from a non-education career. She appreciates that each curriculum meeting begins with a presentation from a member of staff about a subject area. The last meeting was a presentation on PE – and sports day here now includes a range of challenges and activities so that every single child is not just included but celebrated, and speed is not always the crucial factor. In her SEND link role, she visits the school each term to plan, review and audit the provision and values how welcome her questions are, helping her to learn as well as check and challenge.



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The Governors I spoke to were passionate about inclusion in all its forms and their knowledge of individual children was detailed. They commented that the ethnic diversity has not resulted in any racially motivated negative incidents and said, "The children are aware that regardless of who you are and what language you speak, they are all part of one family. That shows how well the teachers, top down, have educated the children."

Governors agreed that meetings are clear, with regular agenda items about key issues. Information is circulated ahead of meetings, so people are ready to ask questions, and meetings run more efficiently and are accessible. "Then we go into detail, for example to establish how we meet the needs of the children with SEND needs – and we also take into account where they have strengths, for example they may be an excellent singer!" Another said, "We're not just talking about inclusivity of children; it's the staff as well. The Head allows – helps – others to shine, for example the SENCo taking the lead with the IQM assessment."

Planning, intent and policies are clear, and are borne out in practice and implementation, leading to clear impact for all members of the school community.

Pupil Premium (PP) and other funding is carefully and creatively used on staffing, resources, curriculum and enrichment as well as staff CPD, to maximise impact and value for money.

Next Steps:

- The effective monitoring and evaluation systems have highlighted areas for development in mathematics, to improve pupils' resilience and self-help strategies, and in the 2023-24 academic year, the data analysis system is due to be overhauled to both prioritise key pupil groups and streamline the process, reducing workload and improving staff wellbeing.
- I did not meet the full Governing body, so this may already be the case, but I reflected on the benefits I have heard in other schools of 'lived experience' among parents being brought into the Governing team, for example with EAL speakers, those whose children have identified SEND needs, and others who may not otherwise see themselves represented. I visited a school recently where expenses of attending meetings can be claimed for, thereby making the role more inclusive.



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Element 3 – Curriculum : Structure, Pupil Engagement and Adaptation

The curriculum at St William of York is broad, ambitious and focuses on developing the whole child. Progression in subjects is clear from pupils' books and classroom displays and from their knowledge of topics, which they universally delighted in sharing with me, from facts about Mexico and Popocatépetl to Florence Nightingale's key contributions to healthcare. Displayed work is exceptional and, the artwork, some of which was created alongside the school's resident artist, is worthy of a special mention.

The Personal Development curriculum mapping is one subject area's example of how the staff team plans for differentiation and cohesion so that all age groups are learning about 'the rule of law' at the same time in the year, but in a range of contexts and depths as appropriate to their age and stage. Initiatives such as anti-bullying week are included on the planning, although it was clear that they are incorporated year-round into the ethos and explicit teaching, responding to needs as they arise, rather than being restricted to a particular week or day.

Reading skills are a high priority and key vocabulary is central to curriculum planning. A wide selection of books and other materials are available around the school and used as the basis for topics and displays. Those attaining lower levels of reading ability are read with daily and termly assessments to ensure this target group is based on current needs. The whole school 'Voice 21' oracy project on speaking and listening also contributes to pupils' developing vocabulary and linguistic awareness, which feed into reading skills.

The curriculum incorporates local, national and international aspects. A timeline-style History display encompasses Year 2's studies of local football legend Nat Lofthouse and Year 5 considering the Industrial Revolution explosion of Bolton's population, along with other cotton mill towns, Year 4 finding out about life in Tudor Britain and Year 1 learning about the Crimean War. Good use is made of the resources available in the school community, and a recent project 'Destination Bolton and Wigan' celebrated every pupil's family origin, whether from all corners of the globe or generations living within a few miles of the school.

Rich and varied opportunities are provided outside the classroom, from visits to museums, a sculpture park, the seaside, local universities, an outdoor education centre, the zoo, safari park and local landmarks, to visitors including a 'money sense' workshop, the 'life bus' and careers/aspiration sessions.

Challenges and risks are built into the ambitious curriculum and children are immersed in 'real world' experiences which equip them for successful futures. The curriculum was designed, and is adapted, to be bespoke for school and in consultation with all staff; as such, they are confident in discussing it, and comfortable to make or suggest changes.

Next Steps:

- Continue with years two and three of the oracy project. Subject leaders are developing ways to record the learning arising from the school's 'pause and reflect' days. Leaders are reviewing adaptations for pupils with SEND needs, to ensure full access to the curriculum, tailored rigorously to each pupil.



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Element 4 – Teaching and Learning: Learning Environment, Planning Resources, Pedagogy

The curriculum is well-planned and differentiated to provide the appropriate challenge, support and interest to all learners. Differentiation is skilfully managed by task, support available and expected outcome. PE leads explained their use of adaptations within lessons, to include all learners. They use the STEP principle – alterations to the space, task, equipment, and/or people. There is also the opportunity for children to take ownership of their own differentiation, for instance by selecting an area to practise dribbling with a football, based on the density of the cones that have been set out. These principles are used in context-appropriate ways across the curriculum.

Pupils' engagement is high across the curriculum, in all year groups and subjects seen during the assessment day. Children were keen to share their knowledge, show their work and explain their school's culture, for example the four houses and who they are named after. The website is full of information about all aspects of school life and is accessible to parents and carers.

Technology is used appropriately across school, for example with interactive whiteboards, but does not interfere with face-to-face human interaction and relationship formation. Support staff are well used, deployed in every class where possible and to support identified children, individually or in groups, in carefully planned and timetabled sessions. Teachers retain oversight and responsibility for all learners and work collaboratively with TAs to plan and review lessons and make adaptations as needed. Support staff feel, and are, valued and heard in these processes, and are confident to offer feedback and make suggestions. They audit resources each year and their detailed knowledge of learners allows them to suggest additional or replacement materials to acquire.

The environment throughout school is calm, welcoming and purposeful, with displays supporting pupils and pride clearly taken in the classrooms, communal areas and specialist rooms such as the chaplaincy and learning resource centre with its computer suite and beautiful reading area.

There is an emphasis on routines, particularly in EYFS, which helps children to feel safe, secure and ready to learn as well as supporting those learning or developing their English skills, along with Makaton, visual timetables and Widgit symbols. Staff are extremely knowledgeable about the holistic needs of their pupils and good use is made of external professionals such as a local specialist provision's outreach service.

Pupils contribute very positively to lessons and their use of the oracy skills is very noticeable, as they explicitly 'build upon' or 'agree with and add to' their peers' contributions. Active listening and respectful communication are expected, demonstrated and celebrated by all staff, making this part of the school's culture even at this early stage of implementing the new approach to oracy skills.

Next Steps:

- As per Element 3, continue implementation of oracy and SEND need adaptations. Some staff needed a little prompting to reflect on all the steps they naturally take to support learners. Your trumpets are great – blow them!



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Element 5 - Assessment

The leadership team and staff across the school are skilled and swift at gathering and analysing data to identify gaps and plan learning, both within and beyond the typical school curriculum. Starting points on entry are low, compared with national averages; however, children make excellent progress to reach high attainment by Year 6.

The staff identify groups and individuals who will benefit from provision which is additional to and different from the tier one offer; however, they also understand that what benefits those with particular needs often benefits their peers and make their tier one universal provision extremely supportive and inclusive. For example, they know that speech and language in English is poor in EYFS, for a range of reasons, and teach Makaton to all children. For some it supports development of English as a first language, for others acquisition of EAL, and for others helps mitigate neurological or developmental differences.

Records are kept for each child, group and class, and parents are kept well informed, not just through formal mechanisms such as parents' evening and reports but daily where needed. Staff are found to be proactive, knowledgeable about the children and families, and easy to approach, even for parents who explained to me that they disliked their own teachers or expected to find it tricky as new arrivals to the area.

All staff employ a positive, nurturing approach to their pupils and there is a 'no shouting' policy for all staff, including lunch time and kitchen workers who are employed by the council rather than school directly. A Year 5 member of the 'Gift Team' told me, "the school is a very nice place to be because the teachers are very welcoming and kind, and the teachers never shout. If you do something wrong, they just say you made a mistake, you can try again."

Teachers incorporate formative assessment into all their work and are quick and effective to respond to misconceptions or gaps in knowledge. For example, where a child was found to be confusing elements of a history unit, plans were immediately made to provide visual materials to support understanding.

Pupils are aware of their skills, knowledge and next steps, and were eager to share these with me during the assessment visit. They are proud of their classroom environments and pointed out work done by their peers. The Year 5 pupils talked to me very articulately about how they had developed, and how much they had learned and enjoyed school, since starting in Nursery or Reception.

Voice 21 oracy has had a marked impact on how the children work with peers, and the 'physical strand' is evident in their body language, active listening and hand gestures used to support paired and group work in lessons.

Next Steps:

- Learners' engagement, attainment and progress are effectively tracked, but the process is contributing to a heavier than ideal workload. Leaders have identified improvements can be made and planned a project for the next academic year to consult staff and overhaul their practice.



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Element 6 - Behaviour, Attitudes to Learning and Personal Development

The whole school environment, indoor and outdoor, is not just calm and organised but warm, welcoming, cared for and beautiful. Inclusion is embedded in every aspect of school life and the pupils and staff thrive here, as do parents and Governors. Two parents talked to me about their children being determined to attend school even when ill and worrying about the summer holidays being too long.

In a school where children come from many and varied backgrounds, with different societal and cultural norms as well as the individual culture of every household, it is recognised as important that behaviour expectations are clear, consistent and well communicated to everyone. The behaviour policy is easy to find on the website and begins with the school's intention, 'that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well'.

There are four 'basic expectations' for everyone (be kind, tidy, listen and consider how to move around school) and each year group agrees a code of conduct in September, so that age and need-specific frameworks are in place as children's development and understanding progresses. The policy also sets out expectations of staff and parents, and the processes for rewarding or supporting pupils' behaviour. There is a specific section for EYFS, and a section aimed at lunchtime supervisors, in recognition of the different context and staff-to-pupil ratios that occurs in most schools but is often overlooked. The policy is clear, fit for purpose and, crucially, followed consistently by staff.

Pupils understand and follow the school rules and help each other to remember them too. The oracy project leads commented that, "Oracy was brought in expressly to include everyone. Teaching them to talk has started to set the expectation that everyone can and will join in. That culture has been difficult to shift but I have a hands-down policy and I select pupils to speak. If you get it wrong that's totally fine. Whether you have SEND, you are a new arrival, whatever – you are expected to have a go. It follows from building safety in relationships." This school sees beyond 'behaviour management' style processes to nurturing behaviours that lead to safety, learning and success for all pupils.

Attendance is fractionally below 95% and staff and leaders are keenly aware of individual pupil and family circumstances, and actively addressing these where they can. There are also two pupils who attend alternative provision part of the time but remain on the school's roll. The breakfast club helps provide a 'soft start' to the day and ensures pupils are punctual. Staff are visible and available every day, which is appreciated by parents. There have been zero exclusions in the past year and positive attitudes to school and learning are actively promoted.

Healthy lifestyles are promoted throughout the school and curriculum; a small snapshot of examples includes daily tooth brushing and dental nurse visits in EYFS, mindfulness, wellbeing, multisports, board game, crafts, modelling, football, art, story time and many other after school clubs, attended by almost all pupils. Where other commitments such as Mosque or madrasa make this difficult, lunchtime clubs are available as an alternative.



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Pupils are aware of the support available from adults in school and would feel comfortable speaking to their teachers or any member of staff if they had a worry, were feeling missed out, or wanted to raise anything.

Opportunities within the local community are actively and effectively promoted. School runs frequent free taster sessions and strives to, "give children experiences that they may not have at home, parents may not be able to afford or find time for," as one staff member put it. The town's theatre staff were due to visit the school to talk to parents about free opportunities over the summer, at a parents' coffee morning, rather than on a website or flyer which parents may or may not access.

Next Steps:

- Practice in this area is exemplary and very effective. The next steps are to continue this excellent approach and support cohorts through their respective transitions into, through and out of the school at the end of term and in September, for which plans and activities are already in place.



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Element 7 - Parents, Carers, Guardians

Parents are very happy with the regularity and quality of reporting from staff and feel actively involved with their children's education. One pupil's mother expressed her gratitude that, "they accommodate me with a later time slot or alternative date for parents' evenings as I work shifts. I never feel like I'm being a pain or that I'm missing anything."

Staff are proactive where parental engagement is lower, and generally find that it increases through the establishment of trusting, respectful relationships, which are a key strength of this staff team. A parent said, "communication wise, they are on point – staff do not wait, we are informed straight away. Parents' evening is efficient, they pack the information into five minutes!"

Others said that any issues are, "looked into as soon as possible" and a timeframe is agreed for any actions and that, "staff and parents' communication is good, we talk to each other all the time. School is proactive and already knows when there is an issue. They confirm what I can see in my children's faces, and we work together as a team."

One parent talked very movingly about support which was offered for her secondary-aged child, on moving to the area, when the impact of her caring responsibilities on the primary-aged children was picked up by the school. She said, "this school never leaves families alone [to struggle]. I never told other schools about my eldest child's additional needs and the effects on the younger siblings. My youngest loves school! He loves his friends and I want to thank all the parents and amazing staff. We are so happy here."

The school's inclusion policy is integral to the website and explained clearly under the 'values and ethos' section. There is also a copy of the 2021-24 accessibility plan and the current year's equality policy. Parents who speak multiple languages agreed that the school makes good provision for translation where needed. One lady said she had previously been expected to manage with a Lebanese interpreter attempting to broker East African Arabic for her, "but here, they checked with ME instead of assuming, which is how it should be!"

There are also regular meetings for children on the SEND register and parents feel valued both as partners in their children's education and as members of the school community. Several said, "it is a Catholic school – we're not Christian, and there's been no discrimination; everyone is welcome. That is what you need in a school – that diversity."

It was mentioned that links during closures for the Covid pandemic remained strong, and some children made huge progress even working remotely. The yard was open for people to come and collect books which families looked forward to and which kept a sense of community and belonging for those not attending in person. Parents are invited into school now for a range of activities, including "Mystery Reader" visitors where the children do not know in advance whose parent will be this week's storyteller, and the story does not have to be in English, fostering both inclusion and exposure to unfamiliar languages and traditions.



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Where families need additional support, the school staff are attentive, proactive, knowledgeable and responsive. Early Help processes are opened through the SENCo, and following a review period of six weeks, a referral is made if there are still concerns. Staff see this as a positive opportunity, remarking that, “those conversations then tend to open, things come out that wouldn’t at the gate in public. I’m all about the relationships.”

After considering the needs of pupils and families, the EYFS nativity is no longer performed live. The children are recorded in the outdoor area or classrooms, and staff prepare the video to be shown in the school hall. The families then all watch together and children often sit on parents’ knees, wearing their nativity costumes to enjoy this special event in their school career. This allows them to enjoy their success and fully share it with their parents and carers. The video is then made available afterwards, so family members who cannot attend are able to view it and be included (no doubt the children also watch again, gaining a repetition of a key experience, which is known to be so beneficial at this early age).

A parent closed our discussion with the summary, “it is difficult to think what they could do better because it has [all been] changed as we go along. If you want your child to feel loved, included, looked after, safeguarded – send them to St William’s.”

Technology is very well used, with the website kept up to date and a very frequently added-to Twitter feed, which shows curriculum activities and special assemblies, staff information, trips and transition. While this report was being written, a tweet from Voice 21 Oracy project, celebrating the wonderful poetry recital assembly which I saw being rehearsed, was retweeted for the community to see.

Next Steps:

- As elsewhere, St William of York has excellent practice in place and is seeking to improve even further; there are plans for targeted support packages, for example inviting EYFS and KS1 parents of children with SLCN to a coffee and information session in partnership with the local specialist outreach and SALT professionals.
- There is a wealth of information easily accessed on the website for speakers and readers of English. I wonder about the options available to make some of this more accessible to EAL speakers. The number of languages spoken is likely to make full translation prohibitive; however, key elements could perhaps be selected, and parents/carers consulted on what would benefit them most.



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Element 8 – Links with Local, Wider and Global Community

The school is aware of, and makes excellent use of, the resources available in the community, from education and communication support, dental health input and educational visits, to local theatre links, and tapping into the wealth of experience and skills in the parent and family population.

Enrichment opportunities here are second to none, with a truly impressive and extremely well-attended suite of lunch time, in-school and after-school offers. Staff all run a club, so there is a huge range to choose from, and alternative timetables are devised to ensure equality of access to children with other after-school commitments.

The PE leads considered that school's attendance at local sports events and festivals was lower than ideal, and in their words, "have tried to do something about that this year". I would say their attempt has been successful, looking at the Excel spreadsheet which was needed to record all the events they have been to! A particular highlight was a win in the Table Cricket tournament, after adaptations were made to the equipment – lowering costs to make the sport accessible – and the St William team came home with the trophy after successfully making the switch to the specialist apparatus.

Links within school are strengthened in a range of ways. The UKS2 Gift team take on added responsibilities, after succeeding in a rigorous selection process, and are very proud of their roles. They have helped with distributing food donations locally, and contributed their ideas to making up the parcels for particular meals or families whose needs they knew. They explained their role to me as, "about prayer life, helping other children attend gospel assemblies. You take care of the school and make it a better place – spreading kindness. All our backgrounds are welcome and valued." They also identified integrity as an important attribute, defining it as, "doing good things even when nobody is watching".

This led us to defining inclusion, which they said was to, "make sure everyone has a part. Make sure everyone is happy to join in. When you always let people have a turn and let them feel like they are part of something. Everyone can contribute to something. Making sure everyone gets a part in a thing. Make sure nobody is sad because you are leaving them out." They were proud of doing this for each other, younger children, and reflected that they see it done for them by staff too. They visit other schools in the Diocese and make links with peers across the local Catholic community.

Staff CPD is provided in part through Lancashire Local Authority (LA) cluster training and the Parent Training and Information (PTI) – formerly the Prince's Trust – with staff encouraged to attend as much training as they can. The music subject lead described an inspiring PTI course, with a lecture about music, one about vocal cords, listening to what practice looks like in an outstanding school, and time to work collaboratively with colleagues from other settings. The Headteacher has protected the budget for CPD and is also good at protecting people's time so that training does not become an overwhelming workload. Their effort and commitment is recognised, for example with wellbeing days after an Ofsted visit, or paying back time spent doing extra preparation.



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Fundraising is done year-round for well-chosen relevant charities, for example local foodbanks and Emmaus, which offers support with getting back into work. Donations are taken by the 'Gift team' with staff, so that children can see where they go and build links with the recipients.

Global links are intrinsic to school life, both through celebrating the diversity of families and through staff's links used to support teaching. For example, in a recent topic about New York, staff used a transatlantic friendship to forge links with American schools so that pupils could gain direct knowledge of and from their peer group. Even on holiday, the Headteacher was inspired by a conversation with a Sri Lankan man, who when asked to show her important local sights, took her to see a church, saying, "it is important to you, so it is important to me." This is a story she has shared with the whole school, and staff have adopted it. One teacher said, "we also use it vice versa, to say, "it is important to me, so I hope it is important to you." This helps children understand and respect others.

As the Headteacher has said, enough times for staff and pupils to quote her to me more than once, "the trophies don't make you stand out; it is the little things you do that matter". However, I am sure that everyone at St William of York, their local community and wider and global partners will all join in celebrating the achievement of their first IQM award.

Next Steps:

- Recommendation for Centre of Excellence status will open access to the cluster groups, to share and benefit from the good practice in place here and at other IQM schools in the North West. The school will be able to set its COE targets in line with its ambitions for further development, for example, the continuation of the Voice 21 project and the changes to the assessment and reporting arrangements.