



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



<b>School</b>	Newfield School Oldbank Lane Blackburn Lancashire BB1 2PW
<b>Head/Principal</b>	Mrs Rachel Kay
<b>IQM Lead</b>	Ms Jennifer Riley
<b>Date of Review</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
<b>Assessor</b>	Mr Matthew Cuss

### **IQM Cluster Programme**

Cluster Group	TEAM NW
Ambassador	Ms Sarah Linari
Next Meeting	23 <sup>rd</sup> June 2023
Meeting Focus	Mental health and wellbeing/SEMH

### **Cluster Attendance**

<b>Term</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<b>Spring 2022</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> March 2022	Yes
<b>Summer 2022</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	Yes
<b>Autumn 2022</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> November 2022	Yes
<b>Spring 2023</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> March 2023	Yes

### **The Impact of the Cluster Group**

Newfield School are very active participants of their Cluster Group and have attended every meeting within their diverse Cluster Group and have hosted a meeting within the last 12 months.

Newfield School have built links with many Cluster schools and have also shown evidence of the benefits of the meetings within this assessment, they have:

- Learned about the Thrive Approach at The Hive and The Hub - pastoral provisions with a focus on behaviour, social or emotional needs. This helped understanding of differing interventions in a safe and relaxing space for all.



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- Learned about the 'Wellbeing Bus' – bus donation presentation and how to set this up as an additional provision.
- Attended meetings about the impact of ACES on development and the impact demonstrated later on in life.
- Newfield also hosted a meeting in order to give a tour of school, then showcase MOVE - they shared good practise as a Gold accredited MOVE (Physical Movement and Development) school and their 2 lead practitioners, as well as teachers in SEND becoming senior MOVE practitioners and explained the benefits of this.
- They have attended really interesting and thought-provoking presentations on Trauma informed schools.
- They have been able to see in action how Visual Impairment is managed in mainstream schools and how resources are adapted.
- Newfield has been able to see a range of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) classes and their varied use of indoor and outdoor spaces.
- They have taken part in discussions around strategies of improving attendance as well as how to develop wellbeing topics in assembly and the use of the 'red carpet' to celebrate successes.



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### **Evidence**

- Headteacher and Inclusion Lead/ Deputy Headteacher/ Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Discussions about the IQM Flagship Project and whole school priorities.
- Meetings with teaching and (SLT) staff and the school's training offer.
- Meeting with staff and Deputy Headteacher (DHT) related to the IQM project and progress made towards autism provision improvement and autism satellite provision, the wider curriculum, community projects as well as the school's Outreach focus.
- Meeting with Family Wellbeing Co-ordinators.
- Teaching Assistants to discuss their multiple roles.
- Discussion with Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) and Counsellor.

### **Additional Activities**

- 'Vision of the day' meeting.
- Tour of the School alongside pupils and meetings with pupils.
- Scrutiny of website, social media, and newsletters in relation to the project focus and meetings focused on the next steps of the IQM flagship project.
- Exit meeting with SLT including the new Headteacher to discuss further development of the project.
- Paperwork and Project Components discussion.



### Evaluation of Annual Progress towards the Flagship Project

Newfield School's progress towards the completion of the 'Strengthening Links to Local Communities.' project has been excellent. There are clear indicators of progress related to their work to ensure the school (Inclusive of all pupils and stakeholders) have had new opportunities to be part of stronger community, linked with events and activities to help have a growing and deeper understanding of the local and global area. All staff have worked hard ensuring that any barriers related to aspirations, people with disabilities may have or feel they have, are removed.

The initial aims of the project around strengthening links in the community continued to be impacted by the pandemic. Subsequent changes to how venues and provisions were run were unavoidable. For example: The Queens Lodge Elderly Person's Home was no longer viable to attend. The school focused hard on the in-school inclusive provision with the targets of the project firmly in mind.

Therefore, with the support of the Temporary Headteacher, the training offer to other schools was temporarily paused to ensure the best quality inclusive curriculum was provided daily within school. This step was reflective and a key element of the school developing in-house provision and training has helped them target their inclusion project towards those that need it the most: the children, families, staff, and the wider Newfield community to actively reach out and support them.

A vital part of looking inwardly by learning within a nurturing community, included taking part in multiple IQM Cluster meetings and leading a Cluster meeting, welcoming over 17 IQM colleagues to the day, providing sessions on MOVE and Disability Awareness. These were very well received and have helped the school clarify areas of strength and celebrate their progress, whilst taking on new ideas. Cluster schools have arranged further visits to build vital IQM community links and mutual support.

Further community success and development was evident when two groups of pupils joined IQM Special Schools at a Penathlon, held at Bolton Stadium. This was described by all as a fantastic day, sharing sporting activities and developing friendships. This has created a new responsibility to a community focused Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) to start to re-develop the similar sporting links with mainstream schools that were such a strength pre-pandemic. She is also working on setting up individual and group placements in local Primary Schools, The Appletrees Respite Centre, and local Nurseries.

With this community role, this staff member is also supporting other Newfield staff to develop their skills and confidence to lead groups out in the community. This leads to strong bonds with other settings. For example, there is a strong link with Stonyhurst College, which has been successful for many years and continues to be! There is a growing interest from their students and Newfield is seeing an increase in numbers of Stonyhurst students who want to participate in wheelchair dancing sessions at Newfield once a week. They are very enthusiastic and have built up some lovely relationships with older and younger students, with a mutually beneficial result.



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The 'Family Wellbeing Co-ordinator's continue to build their roles, supporting parents and families as well as forging new links within the local community. They offer a variety of 'front-line' support including phone calls, attendance at Social Care meetings, home visits, family training sessions, coffee mornings and supporting parents and carers to attend medical appointments for their children. They can also continue to support families in the community when school is not in session, which has proved very successful when trying to have continuity.

These roles go further and support the half-termly Siblings Group, working alongside the Children with Disabilities Social Care Team during each holiday. These steps are all with continued and gap-free family communication in mind. Newfield has also introduced Class Dojo as another means of communicating with parents and keeping them apprised of happenings in class and school – this is proving very popular and accessible.

The Autism provision within a local primary school (Shadsworth – with a TLR that has been appointed to lead on this development) has helped Newfield continue to forge links and opportunities for those children within the mainstream setting and local Blackburn community. This is working well and is a good example of shared resources benefitting both schools whilst working in collaboration.

Creativity of approach related to community support and the curriculum was shown when young people and staff from Newfield worked on an exciting dance project, with The National Festival of Making and The Creative Connection as well as Blackburn's Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP) as part of the festival's ongoing Education and Outreach Programme. The dance work which took place over a number of weeks, resulted in the wonderful 'Waterworld' - a film by film-maker Jake Owen Powell. The children were challenged and engaged by this community work within the expressive arts.

Student confidence and practical involvement within the curriculum and curriculum development continues to be strong. Pupils run Enterprise sessions, Student Council and Steering Group meetings. The school constantly uses creative communication techniques and active listening to encourage pupil voice and it is clear Leaders welcome visitors to school to enhance the pupil experience and support development of communication skills. Parents also form part of the Steering Groups alongside former pupils and staff members, ensuring all stakeholders are heard.

When it comes to community there is no more important opinion than that of the pupils. They guide the choices made by Leaders and have taken part in interviews for new staff, including the new Headteacher. Pupils are now starting to take part in much more of a variety of community visits now the groundwork of the past 12 months is starting to blossom.



### Agreed Actions for the Next Steps in the Flagship Project

**Overall Objective: To increase community involvement, independence, eliminate barriers, increase community links and pride and understanding of Newfield School and children and young people with disabilities. (The Next 12 months to increase the focus on the independence of pupils).**

Develop the independence of pupils and families through strengthening community links.

The next step for this target will be to continue to access and maintain the local allotment as well as accessing local shops. To then build opportunities to work on the farm in Bolton by Bowland. Constant seeking of pupil independence within the community – such as through utilising road safety schemes and pupil use of self-checkout processes and similar independent steps. Support outside staff when visiting and utilising local venues through the use of PECS and Makaton to build relationships. Ensure that the 14–19 enterprise lessons make items for in-school and Blackburn Market stalls. Continue to monitor and build opportunities for residential placement for Year 8 pupils via the Children's Adventure Farm Trust.

**Work with Link Schools to further develop a growing list of partner schools and transition experiences.**

The next step for this target will be work on maintaining existing links such as at Stonyhurst and use this success and methodology to develop and re-establish new mainstream link schools through meetings and creative events. Use of HLTA within school with an existing responsibility for setting up training of staff to lead this initiative. Continue to develop and share the success from the satellite provision for Autism at Shadsworth Primary School.

**To continue to build both local and international links to broaden the understanding of all learners.**

The next step for this target will be to continue to link with Kings Highway School, Kenya and help the children understand it as a school and orphanage, as well as the school context so the children at Newfield are motivated to fundraise for the school. This will raise awareness of similarities and differences, within themed lessons and events as well as underpinning shared values in assemblies. Using this to help pupils and staff understand and support children and their rights across the globe.

**Continued development towards being a Trauma Informed School.**

The next step for this target will be to increase the school number of staff trained as Mental Health First Aiders and develop the whole-school approach to training to become a Trauma Informed School, ensuring all staff are informed around this and how this will impact families. To ensure that this includes an offer of training for parents to understand trauma and to understand the impact of their own behaviours and attitudes on their children. To use this as a way of promoting a 'positive about disability' mindset - to reduce stigma and overall traumatic experiences.



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### **To build on post-COVID successes in building even more Parental Engagement opportunities.**

The next step for this target will be to develop targeted sessions for parents and carers to take part in lessons and learning in school alongside their children. To then use this in examples such as working with children on the MOVE program and building a school MOVE Day festival. To look at the promotion of positive male role models with a development of a 'Dads & Lads' group. This will encompass the creative development of planning for future events linking providers and parents. Then, looking at the needs of the community through a 'food larder' to support families struggling financially and to encourage healthy eating for all.

### **Nurture and create a formalised Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training and development offer from Newfield School.**

The next step for this target will be to further develop in-house CPD support for staff from Newfield and once this is clarified and focused on terms of areas and amount - use this to develop provision alongside other settings. To spend time with partner schools, tour their facilities, spend more time in class observing their strategies and offering helpful visual supports, timetables, and training on specific topics that Newfield thrives from, such as MOVE, Makaton, Communication, Disability Awareness, and varied Autism approaches.





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### Overview

From initial meetings with Leaders at Newfield School, it was clear that this review period has been a time of great change, certainly in terms of Leadership. With this has come an opportunity to clarify the school's foci and attack the IQM project and school priorities with creativity and vision. The school has an enhanced sense of 'self' with the community focused progress and development of the related targets, being both inward and outward facing, in the right measure.

The Leadership Team members spoke of their vision for the next 12 months of their project and how closely the targets tie in with their partnerships in the community. To illustrate this further we met with the manager of a respite setting from the local area. He gave examples of constant professional communication and a long-standing and constant link between Newfield and his setting. Leaders explained that these trust-built foundations are what will be mirrored and re-established with other local settings, particularly with Primary Schools. These bonds allow the children to have familiarity in new places of support and it was agreed that allowing children to visit somewhere and foster new friendships in-person is an irreplaceable first-hand experience.

The tour of the school again showed a diverse, personalised curriculum and engagement methods that are always rooted in practical life-skills and communication. This ties-in with the volume of education focused trips and projects the children take part in. The new outdoor sensory space is in high demand already with children using this wonderful resource to challenge themselves. The scale of communication at all levels is staggering and this leads to confident children supporting and 'buddying' each other, as they reflect the modelled communication from staff. The children take part in hands-on activities constantly and spaces are not necessarily themed but working spaces with a purpose.

Learning spaces are utilised to have real world benefits. The cafe isn't a role play, it's a cafe. The child buddying with younger children is learning what real childcare looks like. (Just two examples!) ICT enhances every learning experience and is used to acclimatise the children to a new topic or a new experience. If you are going to a farm and have concerns, they are addressed by a session in the studio. These examples anticipate trigger points, enhance access to new experiences and lead to self-sufficiency.

All staff are confident in processes which help the children, they all have a drive to develop independence and often this leads to work outside of school. Crisis points are worked through, often in liaison with the family to present a united front and share information. The Assistant Headteacher spoke of the school being dedicated to working with families and reinforcing support within the home. This led to the Family Support Team explaining the sensitive targeting of support to the needs of families. They are supported before, during and after school, including holidays, illnesses, hospital stays and weekends.

Families appreciate and value the advocacy that Newfield provides in meetings and throughout their lives. They translate information, disseminate it for parents with their own specific needs and target events for those most in need. They have a commitment to give every voice room to talk and many staff add value to the work the school does





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when supporting the community through their more challenging moments and through related trauma. The staff I spoke to are excellent at signposting support for their families and aiding communication between stakeholders. All for the benefit of the children.

The action plan for the family wellbeing co-ordinators and the list of community visits presents a bank of examples, evidence and future targets which ensure the children get such rewarding activities as swimming, shopping, caring for animals, work in allotments and visits to local facilities. Building links and familiarity as well as creating understanding throughout the community. The Wellbeing Team 'take the temperature' of families through surveys, face to face discussions and questionnaires. Their advocacy is evidenced in their presence and support during Child in Need meetings and multi-agency team meetings. This must make these meetings much less daunting for families. They share a commitment with all the staff I met, which is to make Newfield a hub for all the family.

The IQM co-ordinator has made the most of Newfield's long-standing and constantly evolving place within the IQM network. She ensures staff with certain expertise and interest attend the correct meetings to share and learn. They are a beacon for disability awareness within their Cluster and open the eyes of many to challenging barriers to learning, through discussion and practical support. They have gained a great deal of experiential value for their children through IQM sports events and have changed resourcing through visits they have taken and equally they have informed other schools in their own choices. Their IQM experience is one of emboldening their own staff and filling them with confidence, as well as sharing in the same values as their peers.

We reviewed documentation and looked how the community focus of the project is adaptable and can be flexible enough to support families with the changing and most prevalent. For example, the 'Newfield Larder' supports the most in need with kind, considered help - when there seemingly is no-one left to help. Leaders choose these strategies and plans carefully, whilst reducing stigma, as well as reaching out emotionally. The targets encompass supporting families with attendance, illness, care needs, accommodation and answer the needs of their families when they ask, 'What can we do?' This cannot be commended highly enough and has been driven by long-standing leaders who know and care for their community immeasurably.

The new Headteacher explained that during times of change, how it will take time to build and empower staff, children, and families through having permission to talk in a place of trust, in a place of psychological safety and within an overall safe community. The children are encouraged to express opinions and they then have their feelings validated, all whilst ensuring that all stakeholders have a solution focus when dealing with challenges. Her alignment with the family involvement planning and seeing the power of the community built at Newfield, will surely lead to exciting and prosperous times.

The Training Lead Teacher has worked diligently on the ongoing targets related to both internal and external training. She has a vital role in supporting apprentice teachers and building their understanding of the complex needs, they are sure to encounter in their careers. She ensures consistency in partner schools by allowing staff to see this work



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in-person and shares information in a range of engaging ways, making new ideas easy to digest and follow. The Professional Profile Newsletter/email allows celebration and sharing in a bite-size and creative manner. The PD profile is also a great document to refer to. Internal training is a strength also as staff are open to new ideas, learning from each other and the training allows staff to follow their own aspirations.

The meeting with the children at Newfield is always a delight! They are happy, friendly, and comfortable. Children often show great bravery through the bonds they build with their peers and the staff they work with supporting them. Children role-played their career aspirations. A world traveller! A geography expert! Children challenging themselves on the standing frame, in hydrotherapy and in Maths. The children are always so diverse and good humoured. It's heartwarming to return and see how their friendships have grown. This is especially challenging when children have physical needs and travel may be hard, but the children have been supported to continue their friendships outside of the school gates. Children have made huge personal progress in areas such as swimming and in a range of vital life skills.

The final meeting with Leadership Team Members and the IQM Lead allowed a professional discussion of the nature of Newfield and its place in the community whilst responding to needs in the area. They see the results of their work within the self-sufficiency of the children taking on roles of work, the bonds built between parents and the countless routes to success the school is providing. Newfield is a community hub full of tireless advocates for their families.

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:** Mr Matthew Cuss

**Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:**

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