



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



School Name Hirst Wood Nursery School
Clarence Road
Saltaire
Shipley, Bradford
BD18 4NJ

Head/Principal Ms Jayne Taylor

IQM Lead Ms Jayne Taylor

Date of Review 24th April 2024

Assessor Ms Nichola Russell

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group IP NW

Ambassador Sylvia Cramp

Next Meeting 6th June 2024

Meeting Focus TBC

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Summer 2023	19th June 2023	N/A
Autumn 2023	26th September 2023	Yes
Spring 2024	26th February 2024	Yes
Summer 2024	6th June 2024	

The Impact of the Cluster Group

Hirst Wood Nursery School has participated in two of the Cluster Group: Inclusion Pioneers using aspects of the related training shared within the cluster sessions within their daily routines. The foci of each session often shared with their own staff and used as valuable Continuing Personal Development (CPD) opportunities to further develop staff knowledge, understanding and ultimately support all staff in meeting the needs of the wonderful community of Hirst Wood. The Specialist Teacher for Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) spoke with enthusiasm of the impact of each session attended and how beneficial and important it has been to have the opportunity to network with professionals from other settings. In the future, a range of staff will have the opportunity to engage in the Cluster Group sessions depending on their roles and responsibilities and on evaluation of who will benefit the most from experiencing first-hand the content of each session.



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- Since attending a Cluster Group in September 2023 focussing on Engaging the Community; Digital wellbeing and social media, staff at Hirst Wood have reflected upon the content of the visit and have incorporated additional sections to the school website. The additional sections provide supportive resources for parents/carers of children with SEND. In addition, the school Instagram account has been reintroduced to enable the school to showcase their inclusive practice to an increased number of stakeholders. A range of resources linked to the Local Offer has also been collated on padlet for parents/carers use.
- In February 2024, staff attended a Cluster Group with Attendance and 'Time to' and children's role in school. On reflection, staff have introduced an individualised 'time to' approach for children to personalise responsiveness. During this Cluster Group, the Specialist Teacher for SEND shared the practice of Hirst Wood Nursery with the group.

Evidence

Meetings with:

- Welcome by Administration Assistant
- Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher regarding IQM Review and Action Plan
- Parents/Carers
- Specialist Teacher for SEND
- Governor for SEND
- Staff team to discuss the impact of the Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) priorities
- Key members of staff regarding the impact of participating in IQM Cluster Groups, additional partnerships, and the continued evidence towards the eight IQM elements
- Chair of Governors to discuss the impact of the IQM priorities
- Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher regarding future IQM and COE action plan in relation to the School Development Plan.

Additional Activities:

- Learning Walk
- Woodlands Wednesday -Support group for parents
- Reflection and review of a wide range documentation to support the IQM COE review; vision and values, pupil premium strategy, school improvement plan, Governor annual report to parents, curriculum long term planning, SEND information report,
- Policies
- Website
- Social media



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Summary of Targets from 2022-2023

The deeply rooted vision and values of Hirst Wood Nursery School provide the underpinning thread to every aspect of school life. Everyone in the school is important and included unconditionally, and due to the ethos of care and trust, every member of the school community truly feels that they belong and are valued; their qualities, gifts and uniqueness are recognised.

Target 1:

To ensure the community are supported with emotional health and wellbeing, and staff are trained and equipped to support this.

The Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher actively ensure that the values of Trauma Perceptive Practice (TPP) are used as the foundation of the school ethos embracing compassion, kindness, hope, connection and belonging. The prioritising of valuable Continuing Personal Development (CPD) (Trauma Informed Practice and Attachment) ensures that staff have the knowledge and understanding required to ably support and nurture the emotional wellbeing, of others. Hirst Wood Nursery School is highly proactive in promoting this positive approach to understand and support the social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs of the school community. There is a strong, palpable emphasis on promoting inclusive values and a supportive school culture and ethos, married with high expectations to provide and continually promote a warm, accepting climate that embeds emotional wellbeing.

As observed during the visit, the school culture is one of emotional containment through relationships for all and in providing a safe, secure environment that promotes a sense of belonging. As evidenced during discussions within the day, staff are encouraged to reframe the behaviours they observe to better understand and meet the needs of the children within their care so that the child can make progress in the widest sense. Staff are also encouraged to have healthy and helpful conversations with each other using reflective practice, creating an underlying culture of respect and support; unconditional positive regard for all. To empower and enable all children, Hirst Wood uses effective co-regulation, positive relationships, working towards self-regulation. Appropriate time, space, and financial commitment to providing resources; communication aids for children who require additional support to express themselves, has been effectively prioritised and embedded successfully. Restorative approaches to repair and restore relationships following pressure or breakdown, supporting, and building resilience are implemented well and observed daily.

The commitment and dedication of the Headteacher and stakeholders to ensure that Mental Health and Wellbeing, of all continues to be prioritised is apparent in the fact that the school has a recognised accredited Mental Health Lead and a designated Governor for Mental Health and Wellbeing, who is a regular presence within school, offering support for staff, in addition to the valuable opportunity for staff to engage in regular supervision meetings.



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Next Steps:

Emotion Coaching

- Training planned for 2024-25 academic year. This will be managed by 4 colleagues and disseminated to all.

Curriculum

- Continue the curriculum of psychoeducation to intentionally teach children about their presenting feelings and how this links to their emotional wellbeing; emphasising these feelings are understandable and they can be supported to learn new ways to manage and be supported to reflect on experiences.
- Provide opportunities promote connectedness to enhance everyone's sense of belonging

Target 2:

To further develop inclusive practice and ensure that we impact further on outcomes for children, both internally and externally.

A wide range of evidence strongly demonstrates the commitment, dedication, and determination of the Headteacher in ensuring that children have access to a wealth of expert practice which impacts positively on outcomes. The determined approach of the Headteacher has secured a breadth of professional learning and development opportunities for staff to engage. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities enabling staff to express an interest in particular areas of specialism to enhance their knowledge, understanding and strategies to support children and families have been offered, alongside whole school training in Makaton and the aforementioned Trauma Informed Practice. It is also apparent that in addition to staff attendance and participation at Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) Cluster Group meetings and the visits to other provisions to observe different ways of working in order to reflect and to refine current practice, the qualities and expertise of the staff team is externally recognised, with Hirst Wood offering training sessions to other settings; school, private, voluntary and independent Private, Voluntary or Independent (PVI) providers which are welcomed. The skillset and expertise of staff is recognised, particularly for those children who require a bespoke and tailored curriculum offer, accessing specialist provision as and when required, thus demonstrating a flexible and responsive approach by staff totalised need. There is also an opportunity for staff to undertake accredited qualifications for school leaders, designed to support professional development; National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination (NASENCO).

Hirst Wood Nursery School has a designated Governor for SEND who is a regular presence within school. This Governor provides reports on SEND and disseminates this information to the full Governing Board to ensure that all members are fully informed of practice and provision within this critical aspect of school life.

Next Steps:

Learning Environment

- Changes to the learning environment, in particular the Little Room which is being modified to provide an additional space for children to access throughout the day to reduce transitions. This will include adapted provision to support developmental needs and learning styles.

Disadvantaged and SEND

- Investigate the two-year-old expansion, particularly those who are most disadvantaged (both economically, and with SEND) to ensure that early intervention is provided with maximum impact.
- Explore the extension of Wraparound Care and if this could be exclusively offered to children with SEND.

Target 3:

Continue to strengthen parental relationships and their understanding of child development, emotional regulation, communication, and small step celebratory approach.

During my visit I had the opportunity to experience and engage with parents/carers during the extremely successful and highly popular group session, Woodlands Wednesday. At parental request, the Woodlands Wednesday sessions have been extended to enable increased access to the highly knowledgeable and well-informed Governor for SEND (who attends all sessions), plus visitors from other services; Local Authority Social Communication Interaction and Learning Scottish Improvement Leader Programme (ScIL) team. Governors with other curriculum responsibilities have also begun to attend these valuable sessions. This is a twofold positive as not only does attendance reinforce Governor commitment to the school and the exceptional inclusive provision embedded throughout, it also means that they can support other parents through their first-hand experiences. Positive links with Bradford Inclusive Disability Service (BIDS) toy library ensures parental access to specialist resources for example sensory toys, with an update to the school website providing detailed information for parents/carers to further links to specialist services, equipment, and assessments.

Next Steps:

Woodlands Wednesdays

- Ensure that all Governors have the opportunity to attend the Woodlands Wednesday sessions to support parents and carers.

Internal and external support

- Continue to provide parents with information about internal and external support networks, including respite care/short breaks.

Agreed Targets for 2024-2025

The school's targets for the coming year reflect the wide-reaching ambitions of the school to support achievement and aspirations at all levels.

Target 1 (July 2024)

To achieve Communication Friendly setting status

- Participate in research project with University of York and Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) to undertake Elklan training.
- CPD -Use staff meeting time to disseminate training, strategies, and skills amongst whole staff team.
- Communication -Ensure that equal emphasis is placed on augmented alternative communication strategies to ensure that children's preferred method of communication is not only noted but valued.
- Complex SEND -Investigate the Elklan training for children with complex SEND incorporating aspects such as pre-intentional communication (anticipating the event), Intentional communication (the link between exploratory learning/play and language) and total communication (first messages and linking it all together).

Target 2 (April 2025)

2a Increase opportunities for greater integration between Woodlands and Mainstream

2b Consider if the Early Years Enhanced Specialist provision offer could be extended to incorporate wrap around care.

- Review provision and how this could be relocated to either an existing space, internal changes to current space, or an extension to the building. Work with the Local Authority to review costings and practicalities of workable solutions.
- Consider different options of change and how they best support the needs of the cohort of children.
- Investigate the Government's initiative of 'National Wraparound Childcare Programme' and if this could extend the school offer for the wider community.
- Consider coordination of staffing and charging. Explore different models of Admissions Policy and advertising increased capacity.
- Consider practical adaptations and maximum number of children, transport arrangements and safeguarding.

Target 3 (April 2025)

To further embed emotional literacy

- Emotion coaching training planned for 2024-25 academic year.
- Continue the curriculum of psychoeducation to intentionally teach children about their presenting feelings and how this links to their emotional wellbeing.



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- Ensure that different research influences the school provision and that it is personalised to the individual needs of each child.
- Combine the emotion coaching with existing restorative justice and trauma informed approach, alongside the different sensorial motivators which are demonstrated by children's behaviour, communication, and body language.



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Overview

Hirst Wood Nursery School is one of seven nursery schools in the Bradford Authority. The school has a specially resourced provision for ten children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) with placements within the provision allocated by the Local Authority.

Hirst Wood is a truly outstanding nursery school, rich in history with a strong vision and values underpinned by Early Years pedagogy, driven creatively and resolutely by the inspiring, forward-thinking Leadership of the Headteacher, a Specialist Leader of Education (SLE) who is relentless in her desire that the school is, “a place where children and childhood are honoured, and their ideas and abilities are both valued and celebrated.”

The school has been operating to benefit the community of Saltaire since 1932. The original Nursery was ‘open-air’ and known locally as the Sunshine School. In keeping with this rich historical underpinning, the school has since established the Sunshine Club, an extremely popular, highly valued extended school provision delivering high quality nursery school education and extended school opportunities, in addition to a range of services championing inclusion for children, families and the community. Leaders, staff, and Governors at Hirst Wood are committed to providing aspirational opportunities for every child, with inclusion embedded at its core, and in doing so, provides a curriculum where, “fascination, creativity and endless possibilities for learning are at the core of what we do.”

From arrival and taking my first step into the school building, meeting leaders, staff, and children, it became clear that the whole school vision underpins and permeates every aspect of school life.

“There will be no invisible children here.”

The determined and dedicated Leadership of the Headteacher (truly inspiring), underpinned by a deep commitment to love, support and encourage, ensures that all stakeholders recognise learning in all its forms and are committed to nurturing lifelong learners demonstrating a powerful resilience to ensuring that as a school community, the aspects of daily life they value the most are appreciated and cherished.

“We will value the precious things that cannot be measured in our school. The number of children who found a conker, rolled down a hill, painted with their hands and were fascinated by wind, sun, rain, snow, and ice and saw the wonder in all the world around them.”

This quote epitomises why Hirst Wood Nursery School is exceptional in meeting the needs of their diverse community and why the balance of strategic planning and the rigorous school improvement cycle of evaluation and review of the curriculum offer, alongside high quality Continued Professional Development (CPD) and delivery of training, has ensured the success of targets set in 2022/2023 which have impacted so positively on the lives of the school community.

On meeting with the Headteacher/IQM Leader and Assistant Headteacher, the passion, enthusiasm, and sheer determination for ensuring that the children and families of Hirst Wood were central to any and every decision made was strongly demonstrated. It was clear that this highly knowledgeable and effective Leadership team are willing to do whatever is required to ensure that their community can receive the breadth of opportunities needed for each and every member to reach their potential in the widest sense. Their determined approach to ensure that all parents/carers receive a warm, open and receptive welcome with a continued true open-door policy for all throughout the educational journey of their child/ren and that positive relationships are sustained is seen to be critical to the ongoing success of this wonderfully inclusive school. All partners are key stakeholders in ensuring a deep and rich tapestry of opportunity for all -ALL being the key word repeated in almost every discussion and interaction throughout the day.

At the start of the school day, I had the pleasure of meeting with several parent/carers. A wide range of evidence strongly demonstrates the commitment, dedication and determination of leaders and all staff in ensuring that children, families, and community have opportunities to engage with partnerships and agencies to support the whole child and whole family. Parents celebrated the expertise of the Headteacher and leaders for their support regarding enhanced provision, offset places, support with completion of documentation (DLA) and of the trust they have in working in true partnership with the staff team. Partnership working was ably demonstrated in discussion by one parent who, due to her personal expertise, was invited into school to share her knowledge of Eid with the children and staff. The school works tirelessly to ensure secure relationships are embedded, with parents verbalising strongly their gratitude for all the school does; "they go the extra mile," "cannot think of better preparation," "just outstanding," "such a supportive environment," "my children are happy." Parents value the supportive, flexible, nonjudgemental approach of the school with communication and relationships celebrated, which in turn as unanimously stated, ensure that parents "feel part of the school community." Opportunity to be part of Woodlands Wednesdays was also highly valued giving opportunity for networking with other parents, alongside opportunity to share experiences whilst also having opportunity to engage in presentations led by external professionals. The support of the Specialist Teacher and Governor for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities was also recognised as being instrumental in the success of these sessions.

The learning walk which followed was a celebration of the unique approach to design and delivery of the school curriculum, constructivist approach. As the learning walk progressed it was clear that each area and space has been utilised to support, inspire, and nurture the children's engagement with specific areas and rooms established to support wellbeing and individual needs, examples being the intervention space where dough disco was being enjoyed, woodlands, sensory room, forest school, wilderness garden, fire and tools area and a lending library for children and parents. What was also apparent and should be celebrated is that learning environments were unique and personalised to each child and their needs ensuring opportunity to develop curiosity, to thrive and feel joy and delight in discovering and experiencing, exploring, and investigating both indoors and out, with reasonable adjustments made to ensure each child can engage with their learning. This is done with the mindset of making sure



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everyone is included and feels part of the collective. The bubbly water play observed in Woodlands demonstrated fully how staff can plan and provide opportunities for children to engage in individualised sensory experiences providing an emotional connection with learning, great elation, and happiness.

“When teaching and learning is relevant, challenging and inspiring, children will develop a true passion for learning.”

A highlight of the learning walk was to be guided by hand to explore the outdoor provision. Confident, articulate children could be seen engaging in a wide range of learning opportunities such as sand, water, small world, tyres and sensory garden where a child was excited by the scent of the lavender growing in the planters. Children could be observed supporting, nurturing and challenging each other with acceptance, tolerance, care, and kindness in a safe and secure environment.

“When a child has the freedom to explore the world around them and share memorable experiences, learning becomes joyful and long lasting.”

During the day I also had the opportunity to see the parent group Woodlands Wednesday taking place, a session facilitated by the Specialist Teacher and Governor for SEND. This was another valuable opportunity to see the home/school partnership in action with discussions around transition, SEND-friendly places to visit, transport support and the wider resources available to families, alongside how these sessions provide support and aim “to make life easier.” It was wonderful to hear parents speak with such enthusiasm, passion, empathy, and honesty about the support school provides for themselves, their children (at times when their child has transitioned to primary school) and families and how valued they feel within the school environment, “an extension of family.”

When speaking with the Governor for SEND there was an overwhelming enthusiasm, determination, and commitment to ensuring that the children and families of Hirst Wood are supported to enable ALL children to participate, engage and realise their personal gifts and talents (whatever this may be). Parents and carers trust and value the personal expertise of this Governor and feel accepted, safe, and secure. A SEND report to the full Governing Board is provided at every meeting, ensuring all stakeholders are fully briefed on current matters. It is highly apparent that stakeholders will work tirelessly to ensure that the voice of the child and parent/carer is listened to, heard and acted upon which ultimately equates to staff having detailed knowledge and understanding in order to be able to adapt the curriculum offer so that the talents and attributes of EVERY child can be realised. It was clear from initial discussions with both the Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher that enriching the lives of all children is critical to the values of Hirst Wood.

Speaking with the Assistant Headteacher and Specialist Teacher was a complete joy! Highly motivated and enthusiastic, demonstrating a real drive to ensure that children have opportunities to develop key skills, collaborate, communicate effectively, build resilience, make connections, having the freedom of choice whilst being physically active. The impact of the well-planned cycle of CPD is highly visible within the setting and accessing such a breadth and depth of training, ensures Leaders and staff are adept



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at developing a curriculum offer including enrichment interventions and opportunities aligned and bespoke to all, for example, sensory circuits, sensory explorer, all aboard, Story Tellers. Hirst Wood Nursery staff have attended a range of outreach opportunities to continue to develop their open-minded, forward-thinking, and reflective practice and can be able to highlight the expertise of staff within the school to lead and deliver pertinent training for other local schools and wider nursery provisions (PVI's).

I was also fortunate to be able to meet with the Chair of Governors during my visit. This was a valuable opportunity to see the supportive yet 'critical friend' aspect of Governance. Discussion focussed upon provision, areas of need, SEND, admissions, staffing/recruitment, sustainability, wellbeing, partnerships, and the prime areas of need within the school community. The Chair of Governors, as a previous Deputy Headteacher and Early Years Leader within the Local Authority is highly knowledgeable of both general Early Year's pedagogy and practice, with an in-depth awareness of the cohorts and classes across the school and of the interventions, CPD and support in place. Governors are kept up to date with regular reports at the Board meetings and partake in regular visits to the school in addition to being involved in aspects of the School Improvement/Development cycle, therefore have a deep understanding of the Centre of Excellence priorities and progress towards meeting each.

The final feedback meeting furthered my understanding of the clarity Leaders have in relation to their place within their IQM journey. Leaders value school improvement and continually strive for holistic excellence for all. Therefore, staff are proactive, keen to share ideas, undertake high quality CPD to ensure they have the skills to lead, teach and impact positively on the development of the whole child. All stakeholders connected to the school uphold the drive, motivation, passion, and enthusiasm for ensuring all children succeed. Therefore, having discussed the progress since the last IQM review and the school's plans, I am recommending that Hirst Wood Nursery School retains its IQM Centre of Excellence status.

Hirst Wood Nursery School is a truly remarkable and special place, "a place of possibilities."

I am firmly of the opinion that the Hirst Wood Nursery School fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark to maintain its status as a Centre of Excellence. I therefore recommend that the school retains its Centre of Excellence status and is reviewed again in 12 months. The next review will look closely at how the school has interacted with its Inclusion Cluster and promoted continuing outreach. Evidence of Cluster working will underpin the capacity for the school to maintain its Centre of Excellence status.

Assessor: Ms Nichola Russell

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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