



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



School: Heathmere Primary School
Alton Road
Roehampton
London
SW15 4LJ

Head/Principal: Ms Emma Lewis

IQM Lead: Ms Nana Kennedy

Date of Review: 7th July 2020

Assessor: Mr Kevin O'Neill

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group: Shell Cluster

Ambassador: Anne Spencer

Date of Next Meeting: To be Confirmed

Sources of Evidence during IQM Review Day:

- Ofsted Report

Discussions with:

- **Headteacher** regarding the Inclusion Agenda at Heathmere and wider school context/future plans, COVID-19 Response and Outreach.
- **Inclusion Lead** regarding the self-evaluation document, evidence and school interventions.
- **James Howland (Numeracy) and Bea Durston (Literacy)** regarding staff CPD and a strategic approach towards the induction of new teachers.
- **Freya Guinness** regarding the schools Governing Body and overseeing the management of Inclusion.
- **Sarah Cooper (Nurture leader) and Rebecca Beanland** regarding the school approach to implementing nurturing principles and practice.
- **Tim Pitt** regarding the collegiate and collaborative role of mentoring in the school.



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- **Robert Burton and Sheena Ramsamy** regarding transition between year groups across the key stages and from Year 6 to the local secondary school.
- **Matt Gale and Laura Hepworth** regarding the holistic and creative curriculum at Heathmere.

Additional Activities:

- Website and Supplementary RRS Documentation Scrutiny.
- Covid-19 Outreach and Evaluations of Best Practice in Pastoral Care

Evaluation of Annual Progress towards the Flagship Project

The schools' progress from the previous year is based on the project focus of 'Evaluating the Impact of Nurture at Heathmere.' The values of Respect, Resilience and High Expectations are at the core of everything that goes on in Heathmere.

The school is led by a hard-working, charismatic and enthusiastic senior leadership team and the Inclusion agenda is firmly entrenched in the school by Ms Lewis who is extremely proud of their staff and pupils, particularly during these last few months. The team has also continued to develop its whole school approach to nurture, emotional well-being and mental health. Leaders are very aware of the impact the pandemic lockdown may have had on furthering the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. The school have worked front and centre with the Roehampton Response group to ensure that 300 community boxes are being distributed to those families and households that need it the most. Ms Lewis spoke with a strong sense of empathy and a moral purpose of the need for the school to engage and support the children of the school during lockdown. The emotional well-being of the children, staff and parents is something which she takes very seriously.

There is a lot of talk about the negative impact the COVID-19 crisis might have on our children's' education. So, it was refreshing to learn how Heathmere have been focussing on how they can minimise the damage and turn the situation into an opportunity to engage their students through Google Classroom. The distribution of old laptops to those in need has shown that the staff are determined to overcome digital poverty when and where it presents itself in their community. The leadership team have, from the outbreak of the virus adopted an Innovation Mindset. Their approach to managing the school is clearly principled in the belief that they can use their skills, intelligence and characteristics to improve the situation that they and their community found themselves in.

The Inclusion team at the school recognise that the impact that COVID-19 can have on their children's' well-being is largely determined by their attitudes towards the imposed restrictions and how we as adults view and explain the situation to them. The leadership team have supported vulnerable families emotionally with regular check ins, supporting mental health through signposting, sending resources and links to websites for parents and children. The sense of gratitude felt in the community is huge and it has



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allowed staff more in-formal opportunities to 'touch-base' with parents. So much can be achieved by a school community with a growth-mindset and with inclusion its beating heart.

The importance of professional development to improve the quality of teaching has been recognised for many years. The new Ofsted framework identifies that both good and outstanding leadership and management should reflect "leaders ensuring that teachers receive focused and highly effective professional development. Teachers' subject knowledge, pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge build and develop over time." Mr Howland and Miss Durston articulated the schools purposeful approach to pedagogical development. Staff meetings are well-structured, focussed and use a 'stepping-stones' or 'blocked' approach so as to build confidence in teachers and not leave them overwhelmed. A developmental culture of both coaching and mentoring (depending on where a teacher is at in their career path) is clearly existent and this allows for a more bespoke and productive set of outcomes.

Learning at Heathmere is a partnership between children, parents and teachers. The website is very user-friendly and recent home learning documents are easy to navigate. All of the classes in the school are encouraged to find creative new ways for children to learn at home. Children are being given a great opportunity to think deeply about their learning outside the four walls of the classroom. Can they use online resources to better themselves? What about learning to use a new construction set, a home project with dad/mum, decorate an amazing cake, or assemble flat pack furniture? The commitment the team has to improving children's knowledge and skills was evident throughout the conversations during the review.

Evaluating the Impact of Nurture at Heathmere.

Nurture is a short-term, focused intervention for children with particular social, emotional and behavioural difficulties which are creating a barrier to learning within a mainstream class. This is a targeted programme, aimed at pupils who have difficulties coping in mainstream classes, who fail to engage in the learning process and who may otherwise be at risk of underachievement. Children attending the nurture group in Heathmere remain an active part of their main class, spending appropriate times within the nurture group according to their need and typically return full time to their own class when the programme ends. However, this group of Year 2 children will resume in nurture come September and their journey will be assisted in Year 3 by the schools learning mentor Mr Pitt.

The children in the nurture group at Heathmere are assessed for their learning and social and emotional needs and given the help that is needed to remove the barriers to learning. The excellent relationship between the two nurture staff (Sarah Cooper and Rebecca Beanland) is always nurturing and supportive, providing a role model for children. The aim of the nurture is to provide children with a carefully planned, safe environment in which to build an attachment relationship with a consistent and reliable adult. Food is shared at 'breakfast' or 'snack time' with much opportunity for social learning, helping children to attend to the needs of others with time to listen and be listened to. As the children learn academically and socially they develop confidence,



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become responsive to others, learn self-respect and take pride in behaving well and in achieving.

Conversations with Ms Lewis and Mrs Kennedy informed me that nurture support is not limited to the nurture group in Heathmere, as all those working in the school have tried to embed the nurturing principles and practice at a whole school level, providing appropriate support for all pupils attending the school. Nurture staff work alongside teachers to ensure learning in nurture is reflected with the learning in class.

Target 1: To equip and furnish a Nurture room and to provide a safe base so children trust their environment and people around them.

Heathmere have set up and furnished a room within the school as a dedicated nurture room. The Nurture Room offers a commitment to provide children with an intensive experience of a relationship of a kind that is conducive to healthy, emotional and cognitive developments. The children have a room where they go to for their Nurture sessions that is equipped with the resources they need to support them with their learning/nurture sessions. It's a familiar room to the children with familiar adults and is a safe base. There is understanding at Heathmere that children learn most effectively when they are securely attached to responsive and related adults – someone who is in tune with their feelings and interested in their achievement. Care and consideration is given by adults to beginnings and endings, transitions of all sorts and the feelings generated by different situations and experiences are understood.

There is a focus on putting feelings into words and in helping children make sense of the world and make links. Children are taught to use words to describe feelings and opportunities are found to teach the links between feeling and doing. Words begin to replace impulsive actions for some children. Children report being happy in nurture. The children feel safe when they are there with their peers and teachers. Some of the resources in the Nurture room are similar to class resources so there is consistency across both rooms. All children are encouraged to experience themselves as valued members of the school and helped to develop negotiation, collaborative and problem solving skills.

Target 2: To ensure children's learning is understood developmentally.

The school have placed an emphasis on the values of co-operative play. Children play together with shared aims. They start to play formal games, pretend, constructive and board games and puzzles. This brings together social skills which children will use into adulthood. Children are much less likely to develop behaviour/mental health problems if they have good communication skills. Social skills/problem solving/peer support group work is organised for children experiencing difficulties. All teaching and support staff understand the significance of language and of non-verbal communication.

Staff are encouraged and trained to look behind the difficult behaviour and to demonstrate that feelings can be thought about, understood and managed. Troubling/troublesome behaviour is seen as a "symptom" of underlying difficulties. Staff are encouraged/given time to reflect on what the behaviour means for the child and what purpose it is serving. Staff understand the need to communicate clear



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boundaries and limits to children in a way that demonstrates respect for the individual whilst maintaining expectations.

Target 3: To develop children's emotional well-being by developing a nurture style provision.

Nurture groups benefit the school because they encourage all teachers and support staff to have increased awareness of the relationship between social/emotional factors and learning. There has been a significant reduction in the use of school incident forms, since the incorporation of the nurture principles. The approach at Heathmere has resulted children recognising and understanding their feelings better and consequently they have become more adept to handling and expressing them appropriately.

There is an understanding that children need to develop the social and emotional competence that will help them understand the rules that govern relationships between people. The school actively introduces experiences and activities to help children cope with the difficulties and form positive relationships.

The provision discussed with this assessor and the Inclusion Team involved a varied and flexible range of support and interventions for social/emotional/behavioural development e.g. specific focus programmes in anger management/social/emotional competence. Key additional elements to this are the mentoring program and the school taking a child centred approach to transition as identified by Mr Burton and Miss Ramsamy.

Target 4: To develop children's language skills to ensure they can communicate their feelings and understand the feelings of others and to ensure children can generalise the skills learned in nurture to ensure smooth transactions in their daily lives.

Even with the restrictions placed upon their children during lockdown all children in nurture met their end of Yr 2 targets and all made at least expected progress across Yr 2. Mrs Cooper talked about the strong relationships and trust that have been built up between the school and home over the years. This has enabled staff to give parents practical support, including strategies that they could use at home with their children. Parents felt more confident about being able to help their children and they valued the nurture groups highly. I know that in the school's push for The Nurture Credit Mark that they seek to increase levels of parental engagement in the Flagship Project.

In Heathmere I believe that children are carefully prepared for transitions whilst developing emotional resilience so that changes, transitions and endings can begin to be endured. The task going forward is to task continue to achieve a nurturing ethos throughout the school as a solid basis for all education.



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Agreed Actions for the Next Steps in the Flagship Project

The team at Heathmere have successfully met their initial targets for the last year. They are keen to continue to embed their work on Nurture, with the prime focus of the project next year on the successful transitioning of all of their children back to school. New aspirations for the year will be to embed further and with more quantitative data the effectiveness of the group, to further develop staff CPD, increase parental involvement in the project and to successfully transition more children back into class and their daily activities. The team are also very aware of the challenges many of their children have faced during the COVID-19 Pandemic and part of their work will be to address these needs of the children.

The team has developed a detailed action plan that shows the planned developments over the next year. The coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdown is an unprecedented situation in modern times. It is hard to gauge the full impact that the situation is having on children and young people's mental health and well-being. Pupils' experiences of the lockdown period will have been very varied. For some, it will mostly have been a safe and enjoyable time. For others, it will have been challenging or traumatic. Heathmere and the teachers they employ are used to supporting their pupils through challenges that they face in life – the current situation will amplify those situations many times over. However, one thing is clear, schools like Heathmere with inclusive practice well embedded, have a team that is well equipped to deal with any challenges the future may bring.

The Impact of the Cluster Group

Heathmere Primary School are active participants of the Shell Cluster, lead superbly by Anne Spencer. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 the planned cluster meeting for Term 3 this year was cancelled. The Ambassador for the group has signalled an intent to resume the cluster in the autumn. The school have a lot to offer their cluster and should seek to put themselves forward at the earliest available opportunity to host the cluster in their school.



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Overview

Heathmere is a one and a half form entry primary school and serves a large post war estate in the south west London area of Roehampton. It was graded as 'Good' by OfSTED in February 2019. 50% of the children receive Pupil Premium funding which is above the national average. 53% are EAL and 18% of the children are on the SEND register, twelve of whom have an EHCP. The school has the highest mobility in Wandsworth.

The team at Heathmere is passionate about inclusive education. There is a strong sense of teamwork, "we work as a team... we are all involved." There is a strong leadership commitment from the Governing Body to growing the school inclusively "where we can say truthfully that all of our children's needs are being met."

2020 has been a year like no other. Those who work in and with our schools rightly take their place next to our NHS staff and other critical workers as central to our efforts in battling this virus. Ms Lewis and school leaders around the country are taking the lead in supporting families through this difficult time. I would like to express my admiration for the extraordinary measures and efforts that have been undertaken by the team at Heathmere Primary School during this pandemic. Their selfless and principled approach to pupil welfare and pastoral care has been outstanding. Mostly unreported in the media, the staff in school such as Heathmere are our invisible heroes, supporting health services and reinventing the way they provide education. They are achieving miracles in the most challenging circumstances.

Communication with families is strong, frequent and effective. The school ensures that all its communications convey respect and value to all types of family. All stakeholders have a sense of belonging to the school and inclusion is well embraced so that each pupil is valued for their individuality and can develop their enquiring minds and spirit of curiosity through participating in a range of challenging, fulfilling and happy educational experiences in order to reach their full potential.

Along with the pupils, the inclusivity of the learning environment ensures the well-being of the staff is at the forefront of the Head's vision so that staff feel confident to deliver quality first teaching. I was really impressed with the calibre of recruitment in the school. The sense of purpose of those in positions of responsibility towards their leadership roles meant that there is an evident passion and drive to continue to improve. They have successfully created an inclusive environment with the deepest regard for all.

In summary, Heathmere is an excellent example of inclusive practice, energy and aspiration for all members of the school community. Values are important at Heathmere Primary School. This ensures that inclusion at Heathmere isn't just something that the school does, it is something that they breathe. An educationally inclusive school is one in which the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every young person matter.



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Having discussed the progress made since the last IQM review and the school's plans for the future, I am of the opinion that the school should continue to hold Flagship School status and be reviewed again in 12 months' time.

Assessor: Kevin O'Neill

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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