



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



School Name: St Cyprian's Greek Orthodox Primary Academy
Springfield Road
Thornton Heath
Surrey
CR7 8DZ

Head/Principal: Mr Christopher Vradis

IQM Lead: Mrs Angelina Adrien

Date of Review: 5th October 2020

Assessor: Jane Whitehurst

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group: Cosmos Learning Group

Ambassador: Barry Carney

Date of Next Meeting: To Be Confirmed

Next Cluster Group Meeting Focus: To Be Confirmed

Sources of Evidence during IQM Review Day

The school submitted accurate documentation of their own evaluation of progress including a review of their Action Plan. Other documentation reviewed as part of the process included the class timetables, letters, photographs of garden and outside area, example of ELSA plan and use of outdoor learning area. Other evidence that was used to complete the review included the DFE website, Ofsted Report and the school website.

Discussions with:

- Headteacher
- IQM Lead/Deputy Head
- Teachers
- Governors
- Pupils
- Parents



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



Additional Activities:

A review of the school was undertaken using Zoom as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. From the online meetings, an Action Plan for 2020 was discussed and agreed. The meetings highlighted the commitment and passion that the school has to inclusion.

Evaluation of Annual Progress towards the Flagship Project

The school had identified from the Erasmus trip to Lidkopin and Vars Sweden that Forest School and outdoor learning would be the planned developments for the IQM Action Plan 2019-2020. The suggested developments included:

- The sharing of the vision and philosophy of Forest School Learning.
- Sharing the benefits of the trip to Sweden with Croydon and Borough SENCo's.
- Outdoor learning to take place weekly.
- FOSC fundraising for Forest School Project.
- Organise construction of Forest Learning Environment.
- Provide sporting facilities for the community, in particular vulnerable children/adults in the local area.

The school has undergone a change of leadership with the appointment of a new Headteacher and the Acting Deputy appointed as the substantive Deputy for September 2020. The Acting Headteacher/IQM Lead has retired and the new Deputy has taken on the role of IQM Lead. The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent return to school of different year groups combined with the online learning has impacted on the progress of the original developments. The school leaders focused on operational matters including ensuring pupil, staff and families were safe and well. The evidence shared during the virtual review reflected some of the actions that were able to be completed prior to lockdown and the current school developments led by the new Senior Leadership Team.

Effective progress has been made with regard to the use of the outside environment by staff. Teachers were able to share examples of both timetables with planned outdoor learning time, as well as comment on lessons. One member of staff reflected on accessing the local forest supported by members of the London Woodland Trust. The Trust organised a range of activities for Year 4 children which were linked to their recent Science learning. The children commented that the experience of "bug hunting and using magnifying glasses as well as playing the game about the leaves helped them to remember their Science learning". The confirmation of the positive impact was that the learning had taken place prior to the lockdown and the children were able to explain the outcomes of the visit clearly. The teacher has been able to research further the value of Forest School learning and has planned new visits during the term and is



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



hoping to be able to support other members of the team to develop the use of the Forest School. His enthusiasm for both Forest School, the value of outdoor learning and being able to support other members was very high.

Another member of staff commented on the importance of the outside learning environment with the current return to small internal classroom spaces and the restrictions of meeting the COVID-19 risk assessments. A range of learning opportunities had been planned in the outside environment for Year 6 children including RE, English and Maths. Children had been able to access the newly refurbished Mantilas Garden which the school team have updated as a quiet reflection space. The children were very enthusiastic about being able to act out different stories from the bible, noting the value of a larger space allowing them to act freely and to be able to communicate with each other more freely. The new area also enabled them to have a quiet reflective space to develop their thinking. Although some Mathematics lessons had been planned outside the staff team were recognising that not all subject learning is as effective in the outdoor environment.

Members of the Support Team have also accessed the outside environment using it as a tool to engage individual children. Planned learning has included investigations linked to the seasons such as being detectives and writing stories to understanding emotions using conkers to create emotion faces. Children were also enthusiastic about the chicken (Lady Penelope) who had laid lots of eggs which had been used as part of the Greek Celebration of Easter. The impact of the planned use of natural materials enabled the individual child to remember more clearly the different emotions that had been discussed

The Year 1 Team have been working closely with the Early Years Team to consider how to continue the children's access to the outside environment. The challenge of the school closure and Reception children not being able to complete a full year of the Early Years curriculum, has encouraged leaders to offer a longer transition into Key Stage 1. Staff have been working closely to support each other in offering an appropriate provision that meets the needs of the children. The team shared photographs which showed Year 1 children developing their maths counting and number recognition skills outside. One of the pupils from Year 1 explained that they had been "counting in the playground as well as looking at the tree outside and the leaves on the tree".

Early Years settings have always valued the outside area and at St Cyprian's it was evident that the team were passionate about their outside environment. Members of the Early Years had visited Bologna and Reggio Emilia during a recent Erasmus trip. The impact of the trip had been to review the provision and focus on the "philosophy of encouraging children to be independent and active in their own learning and develop learning behaviours such as resilience and collaboration." The team have adapted and changed their environment developing an Atelier between the two classrooms. The Atelier has a focus on light and shadow, it also encourages independence in learning through the provision of resources that children access themselves. The space has also been developed with the provision of a sensory corner that some of the SEN children within the school have been able to access. The focus on independence and children making their own choices had also been extended to the outside environment. Staff facilitate play and learning by encouraging the children to choose resources themselves



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



and then modelling through sustained shared thinking. As a member of the team commented they now “take the objectives to the child rather than pulling the child away from their play”. As staff commented the biggest challenge has been the provision of “wellies and outdoor clothing” although they have now been able to invest in providing that equipment.

Leaders have spent time working with external consultants reviewing how to develop a Forest School area within the school grounds. Governors have been included in the proposed developments and a number of proposals have been suggested. The team are considering the purchase of a log cabin to support the outdoor learning as well as the development of the landscape, through the purchase of trees and bushes. The proposed developments require substantial fundraising which leaders are beginning to focus on. It was evident from the review that Governors are committed to providing a “facility that promotes outdoor learning that supports the mental health of the children”. The School Business Manager had already managed to acquire a “large number of very small saplings” as an initial contribution to the area.

The new Headteacher and Deputy Head recognise the value of the outside both for learning as well as emotional health and wellbeing. The Deputy had the opportunity to visit Malaga with a focus on wellbeing. The impact of the visit and the appointment of a new Headteacher enables the school to consider its future vision and how to incorporate the outside as an effective learning environment including the development of a Forest School.

Agreed Actions for the Next Steps in the Flagship Project

The school has made progress towards the original actions, however with a new Headteacher the team are keen to develop the project to reflect the new vision of developing children's resilience. The title of the project is:

‘To develop a child centred approach to learning by enabling the children to become resilient learners.’

The focus of the project for the first year will be to review and research how the school can link the forest learning environment to curriculum subjects that are taught in a cross curricular way, which complements classroom lessons rather than detracting from them. Pupils will be encouraged to take ownership of their own learning which will allow them to improve their resilience, problem solving and working with others. The IQM Lead is updating the Action Plan to reflect the planned developments.

The Impact of the Cluster Group

A member of staff attended the cluster meeting in Brighton and Hove last November. The focus of the meeting was PHSE/Wellbeing. The school in Brighton and Hove shared its introduction and development of Zones of Regulation with cluster members as well as sharing some of its key strategies. The member of staff was impressed with the children's understanding of their emotions because of the Zones of Regulation approach commenting that “children really knew strategies they could use to manage their emotions and that they understood the importance of being able to manage those



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



emotions". The school also shared the PSHE books that they had developed with the children in their school. A direct impact of the visit has been the introduction of the PSHE books across St Cyprian's. As part of the review I was able to see some of the examples which demonstrated that the children are able to share some of their PSHE learning and thoughts as a class book and are able to reference it during the day.

The member of staff had also been a member of the Erasmus trip to Malaga which focused on wellbeing. The combination of the cluster meeting and the Malaga trip confirmed the importance of wellbeing. A small tool now used to develop wellbeing has been five minutes at the end of the day to reflect on the positives of the day from 'who made you smile, to draw or write down your favourite moment of the day'. The team are also investigating the introduction of Zones of Regulation as a follow up to the visit.

A suggested development would be to introduce in one class or year as a trial before developing with the whole school next September. The team may also want to visit another IQM school that has been using Zones of Regulation for some time.



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



Overview

Following the school's last review in October 2019 the school has undergone a change of leadership. The implications of the pandemic with the school closed for a number of months except to children of keyworkers and the implications of the team providing learning for children at home rather than in school led to leaders focusing on operational developments. Parents spoke enthusiastically about the incredible commitment of the staff team to providing learning and support to families and children. Parents used words such as "absolutely amazing" to describe the support they had received from the teachers with "weekly phone calls" as well as food parcels. Parents commented that "if we are concerned or need anything the staff are always there to listen or help". The weekly phone calls for teachers had "reassured children that they had not been forgotten". Parents commented that children "love being back and have been more motivated to learn" following a five-month break from the normal routine. The time spent by the school team in planning the return to school was valued by the parents who recognised "the hard work" of the staff during the pandemic.

Governors also acknowledged the commitment of the Leadership Team reflecting on the updates at the Governors meeting that was held virtually including "staff wellbeing and updates about the return to school of different year groups including the risk assessments." Governors had also been informed of the staff phone calls to parents as well as staff working from home to plan online learning. Staff had developed videos to share online as part of the transition programme to introduce themselves with the Early Years Team, also sharing a virtual tour of the environment. It was evident from the website and the meetings that the team at St Cyprian's had continued to focus on their inclusion of all pupils throughout recent events.

The appointment of a new Headteacher is always an exciting development for a school especially a school that has a 'Good' Ofsted recommendation and over a number of years has maintained exceptional academic outcomes. A new Headteacher has the opportunity to evaluate and consider the needs of the school from a fresh viewpoint. It was evident from the review that the new Headteacher is passionate about inclusion and recognises that a school has to reflect the needs of its cohort. The school has changed over time to reflect a more diverse community and therefore the focus of the Leadership Team is to adapt and develop a vision that more accurately reflects the needs of the school. The importance of a holistic approach to learning with children at the centre of learning was a key element of the discussion regarding next steps. Leaders enthusiasm to develop the lifelong skills such as resilience alongside academic skills through a curriculum that focuses on challenge was tangible in all conversations. The importance of wellbeing and a growth mindset approach are all key to the inclusive values the school is developing at this time of change.

Over the last year the school team have begun to make progress on using the outside environments as learning tools for the children. Members of the staff team have been able to access the local area to begin to develop their own understanding of the positive impact of Forest Schools. The support of external consultants has provided members of the team with the early expertise of transferring learning outside for some subjects particularly Science and Geography. The school team have been able to update an unloved garden into a reflective calming space that both staff and children are



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



beginning to enjoy using. The opportunity to “reflect and think whilst sitting in a circle” was a thoughtful comment from one of the pupils. The renaming of the garden as the ‘Mantilas Garden’ also demonstrates the value the school community places on members of staff who have retired after many years of service to the school. Governors and Leaders are committed to developing the outdoor learning with the focus on new planned spaces and again accessing expertise to support those developments. The school is keen to continue to develop its commitment to the community with the access to their Astro Turf pitch.

The commitment and enthusiasm of the whole school team reflects the IQM Flagship expectations of inclusive practice. The new Headteacher’s passion for inclusion and learning has invigorated and inspired the staff team which combined with the excellent support from the IQM lead enables the school to continue as a Flagship school for IQM.

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: Jane Whitehurst

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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