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Bishopton Centre Pupil Referral Unit
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COE Review Date: 12th July 2019

Summary

Primary children race one another into school to be greeted with warmth by smiling faces. Older pupils start their day with an interactive acoustic session delivered by enthusiastic staff in the free Breakfast Club, with adults on hand to help pupils settle into the school day with the right attitude and ready to learn. Inclusive practices are embedded throughout school and demonstrate the strength of relationships in Bishopton PRU. The uniqueness of the pupils they support is celebrated and the wide range of intervention and provision aims to create confident, happy learners who thrive in an environment where they are safe, cared for and valued. Pupils are encouraged to 'Come with a past, enjoy the present and leave with a future.'

The Bishopton Pupil Referral Unit provides alternative provision for pupils aged 7 to 16 in the Stockton-on-Tees area who have found mainstream school challenging and are at risk of or have been permanently excluded. They also offer provision for pupils who are out of school for medical reasons and a wide range of out-reach and in-reach support in partnership with Primary and Secondary schools to prevent permanent exclusion, promote successful reintegration or refer into the appropriate specialist provision. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. In June 2017 Ofsted judged the school to be good and inspectors stated, "The school is a caring and welcoming place. Staff make pupils' safety and well-being a priority."

The school achieved the Inclusion Quality Mark in September 2018 where the evidence demonstrated outstanding inclusive practices. This is the first Centre of Excellence review and the school has maintained and strengthened its provision in its pursuit of excellence over the last year and to ensure that inclusion remains evident in all aspects of its work. They remain a touchstone for pupils, never wavering in their philosophy of creating a personalised and unique education that meets the needs of all, irrespective of baseline. A key achievement has been the achievement of the SMSC Gold award and a recommendation that Bishopton become a Beacon School, a challenge which will further strengthen their outreach and community work.

Throughout the year there has been a concentrated effort to ensure practice and processes are embedded and this is evident as staff have honed their skills and developed programmes of learning, therapeutic interventions and an exciting

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curriculum which motivates and leads to success. Leadership remains a driving force behind the school's success within inclusion and they have built up a strong and dynamic team over the year, strengthening provision through recent key appointments whose understanding of their individual roles allows them to be autonomous and highly creative at finding pathways to success. Staff have developed their roles to challenge pupils whilst meeting their interests, adhering to the principles of 'Ambition, Aspiration, Accomplish' which encourages high aspirations and leads pupils towards qualifications and career options. "Leaders have demonstrated great drive and resilience to develop an ambitious culture and to raise the expectations of pupils and staff. They are determined that more pupils will realise their potential and gain qualifications." Ofsted June 2017.

There are high levels of care, high aspirations and a holistic approach which is evident in the strong progress pupils make from their starting points. Pupils are encouraged and enabled to thrive, to re-engage and rediscover a love of learning. Staff within have built a culture where pupils strive to achieve and in doing so learn more about themselves and their place in the world. Every child arrives at Bishopton with their own story and they are listened to and nurtured, their uniqueness is celebrated and they are encouraged to find their place, their strengths and talents. Emotion Coaching and Restorative Approaches are at the heart of all they do so that they address root causes and work towards integration. The clear focus is on enriching lives and demonstrating worth, belonging, respect and inclusion so that they can take this out in the world and reflect it in their engagement with others. Pupils here understand that they will be challenged and pushed out of their comfort zone and they actively embrace this. A pupil commented on the range of academic, social, cultural and physical challenges she had undertaken saying, "I never thought I'd ever be able to do this. No one else believed I could until I came here." Pupils talk of "learning our lessons the Bishy Crew way," which means enjoyment, enrichment and engagement with no compromise on standards or behaviour. One proud pupil told of her placement which is allowing her to take vocational qualifications and move on to a career in the hair and beauty industry saying "All they want from me is to do my best. They have helped me through a lot, found what I'm interested in and shown me how I can get qualifications and with their support I can do it." They view the BRAG behaviour and reward system and programmes such as 'Be More Archie' and the Bishopton Passport as having a positive impact and are proud of the way they have developed grit and resilience with one pupil saying "I sometimes look back on my behaviour and can't believe that was me! They've taught me to reach my full potential and given me a chance of going to college."

The Learning Environment and Display policy in place sets the standard for the high quality of pupil work seen throughout school. This helps pupils feel valued but also teaches them to value the work of others and to care for resources and provisions. Bishopton's CASTLE programme encapsulates all the values leaders want pupils to embrace and these are integral to the development of the innovative curriculum. Pupil voice and positive contribution is even stronger this year as evidenced by specific displays created by and for pupils to engage in current debate, express opinion through a range of media and demonstrate their ability and willingness to give back to society. It is clear to see how pupils have helped the school to gain the ECO school award, have contributed to their success within SMSC and are productive members of the community, for example through their Dementia Friendly commitment and democratic

processes. The student council representatives talked of the impact of being heard and of listening to the requests and suggestions of others to further improve their school, commenting that all ideas are considered if they are reasonable, for example Tuck Shop provision, more freedom over lunchtime and contributing to the choices provided within Enrichment. They are taught to negotiate, consider opinions different to their own and be positive about their community and society. One pupil said, "It was my proudest moment to be given a chance to be on School Council."

Parents spoken were keen to talk about how the school has gone from strength to strength. They are overwhelmingly grateful for the support received and the care and attention given by the 'inspirational' staff. They appreciate the therapeutic interventions and support for SEMH which prepares children emotionally and socially and enables them to re-engage with the challenges of education and see a future. They have high praise for the alternative educational pathways which find points of interest but are also rightly proud of the academic successes achieved. As a parent explained, "If you had told me 2 years ago that my son would sit GCSEs I wouldn't have believed it. Now he has aspirations for his future." Parents reflected on the success of the rewards and recognitions which, often after years of negativity focuses on the positives whilst instilling values and firm boundaries. They see their child being happy to come to Bishopton and happy to stay. There are no labels; well-planned routes to success are made clear and the quality first teaching, interventions, alternative pathways and therapeutic support given looks to close gaps swiftly, whilst providing a safety net. Comments included "My child has been a square peg in a round hole, here that's celebrated and they encourage him in every way. He believes in himself now." The regular Parent support and engagement opportunities and outreach is welcomed and the support they give is timely and appropriate, designed to help them help their children, with parents stating, "Bishopton staff helped my son mature and learn to enjoy school again. His life is planned out now" and "I have a different child at school and at home. I can't thank them enough." Over the year there have been more opportunities for parents to engage with the life of the school and they see the new appointments within school as being hugely beneficial to the team which places their child's well-being and academic chances at the forefront of everything.

Induction and staff development processes have been strengthened over the last year. The recently adopted staff well-being policy is instrumental in creating an ethos of achievement where personal development is celebrated and supported. Staff have a relentless drive, supporting one another through clear systems of communication, powerful team work and infectious enthusiasm which adds to the success of its services. There has been a concentrated effort over the year to nurture staff so that they are highly capable of meeting the challenges faced. The whole team has been strengthened through carefully selected appointments, targeted CPD and the ability to engage in self-directed reflection. Leaders are keen for staff to consider their own project actions and training needs which have relevance to their role. This gives individuals the opportunity to develop personally within a strong team and to contribute effectively. The strong and experienced Management Board has recruited well, both in school and as board members, in order to keep abreast of educational change, continuing to challenge and to hold the school to account whilst supporting the creativity and innovation within. This is very much an outward facing school and the range of multi-agency support it brokers for children and young people as well as their families remains exemplary.

This year has seen the provision for anxious and phobic children turned into a vibrant Primary Base. The Primary Lead shows a strong determination to give pupils the appropriate education in facilities which are familiar to them and which allows access to a creative curriculum and the early interventions necessary to help them move forward in their learning. This clearly shows success for these pupils, who demonstrated concentration and engagement, good behaviour and swiftly improving standards. There are ambitious plans here to extend the offer to younger primary pupils and Early Years, thus providing the earliest interventions and team around the family approach which Bishopton is ready and able to implement.

The whole team has maintained and built upon its commitment to inclusion and continues their support for all. Community links are strong and growing as the school develops its reputation, misconceptions and assumptions are left behind as it opens its doors and build relationships with those who can learn from their expertise or who can help further develop their practice.

Good progress has been made on all targets since the last assessment and Bishopton has engaged with and contributed to the focus provided through Cluster Group meetings.

Having discussed the progress made since the IQM assessment and the school's plans for the future, I am of the opinion that the school should continue to hold Centre of Excellence status and be reviewed again in one year's time.

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 COE status.

Assessor: Mrs Lesley Colthart

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:



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



During the visit the assessor met with:

- Head Teacher Deputy Headteacher and IQM Lead.
- Recently recruited member of Management Committee.
- Key staff leads for SEN, Mental Health, Outreach and Parent Support.
- Parent/Carers representatives.
- Teaching Assistants.
- Teachers.
- Pupils from across the key stages.
- Representatives of Pupil Voice.

I also toured the school and its grounds, visiting Primary and Secondary school sites to observe lessons in action, looking at samples of work, viewing resources, displays and provision, both academic and therapeutic.

The school has a thorough action plan for the coming year and has accounted for all the actions undertaken since the original IQM assessment.

Areas for Development:-

- Through the comprehensive Menu of Services on offer from Bishopton, secure further partnerships to target preventative outreach work, supporting mainstream schools to manage inclusion within their own schools and reduce the number of exclusions locally.
- Implement plans to improve the buildings and infrastructure to cope with the increased pressures of local school exclusions and to create purpose-built areas for more therapeutic outreach and vocational interventions.
- Appoint an Assistant Headteacher to lead on Outcomes and Assessment, to allow for more targeted support and CPD and greater accountability from teaching staff in their curriculum areas.
- Continue to restructure staff team to give greater clarity of roles particularly within the SLT to bring expertise to targeted areas such as Mental Health and Well-being lead; Parent Support Advisor; Outreach Lead.
- Launch Bishopton's own Outdoor Education service (COPE), to develop pupil's social, emotional, physical and employability skills and well as promote positive lifestyles, community cohesion and environmental awareness.



- Develop “Big Picture” overviews so that pupils can articulate what they are learning and the context in which their learning takes place to support Pupil Voice.
- To strengthen middle leadership by supporting staff through NPQML in academic year 2018/19.
- Continue whole school re-structure including SLT to provide greater clarity of roles, match skills to specific targeted areas such as Mental Health and Well-being; Parental Support; Outreach Support and provide clear lines of accountability.
- Raise the profile of the PRU within the Borough amongst professional stakeholders, families, employers and the wider community by strengthening public relations and marketing, means of communication particularly around values, vision and school policies.

Progress with targets:-

This year the evidence demonstrates the power of Trust. Staff have been encouraged to develop their skills and gain confidence in sharing these with a wide audience. They engage in research, training and personal study to become experts in their field and are trusted to create highly personalised pathways and intervention or therapeutic programmes that are solution based and meet the interests of children and young people. The SENDCO provides specific interventions which are highly individualised to support pupils to engage in academic and vocational opportunities, providing the additional resources and adaptations of teaching strategy to meet pupils' needs. This year Bishopton PRU achieved the gold standard in the national SMSC Quality Mark with an area of strength being identified as the work undertaken to support inclusion in mainstream schools. Following this they have been offered the opportunity to become a Beacon School of Excellence. Bishopton staff will host twilight sessions to mainstream primary and secondary colleagues including Specialist Provision. The first of these created much interest within the borough.

Since the original IQM assessment the following actions have been taken:-

- Over the last year the school has strengthened its comprehensive menu of Therapeutic Services and has grown its reputation within the local authority and beyond, showing a 50% increase in reach. The Senior Leadership Team have presented at Secondary Heads Partnership Group, Primary cluster meetings and Pupil Inclusion Panel, taking every opportunity to let others know of their strengths. The Assistant Headteacher, although appointed, did not take up her position and the role became financially unsustainable. The DHT has since taken a stronger lead on Outcomes, CPD and staff performance and developed the role of a middle leader to take responsibility for some of these areas.
- CPD at Bishopton has been redesigned to create Pathways for staff to develop themselves along their leadership journey. The Deputy Head has designed four distinct pathways – Aspiring Support Leader; Aspiring Middle Leader; Aspiring Senior Leader; Aspiring Future Leader. They are helped with interview techniques,



presentation, resilience and presence and are challenged to 'become 10% braver.' One member of staff described how SLT had listened to her ideas and have helped her implement these saying "I have made this role my own. I want to lead and be recognised as a leader and I have their trust to do this." Induction processes for new staff has ensured that all policies, vision and values are shared and understood and accountability is strong through clear job descriptions, line management and supervision.

- The Deputy Headteacher presented successfully at a recent Schools North East Conference. This was a regional event aimed at bringing mainstream, special and PRU provision together to share good practice and to discuss what support needs to be in place for 'challenging' learners. The Deputy Headteacher's presentation, entitled 'Developing your curriculum for challenging learners' was delivered to 150 delegates, piquing interest in the work of the school and booking visits to see practice in action. The Headteacher and her Deputy also use Twitter as a means of promoting their practice and sharing ideas.
- The further links developed over the past year through the relentless determination of the school's experienced broker of Alternative Provision has built strong relationships with local and regional providers of vocational provision, all of which she quality assures. She is working with secondary schools to broker bespoke packages of education to pupils on engagement, appropriate qualifications and educational pathways which are designed to help reduce the increasing number of permanent exclusions across the borough. A member of staff said "Other schools recognise our expertise and specialism. They trust us to help." There is a determination that they will be proactive in removing the barriers that may prevent agencies from joining up to support vulnerable children seeking out links which will support with vocational qualifications and transition. These multi-agency links extend throughout the year so that vulnerable pupils are supported over holiday periods, for example through the Youth Directions and Preventions Team.
- Bishopton's Headteacher will address the Manchester Conference for Alternative Provision to showcase their innovative approach in effectively managing behaviour and improving outcomes for the excluded and vulnerable through sharing the success of their Relationships Policy.
- All subject leaders now submit half termly Big Picture Overviews for their subject areas to share with pupils and provide pupils the opportunity to have their voice heard. This has helped pupils to articulate the context and content of their learning successfully and is now fully embedded. Evidence of contribution could be seen in the range of displays, particularly one entitled "We'll PRU'view wrong!" which shines a positive light on achievement. Pupil voice is integral to the running of the school and over the past year a range of mechanisms to capture pupil voice have been implemented. The Headteacher has personally taken the lead on School Council and as a result, pupils are able to identify for themselves where their impact lies.



- Two staff are accessing NPQML and will have gained this status after successful completion. As part of their middle leadership development they are leading on several key areas within SMSC. A particularly successful project has resulted in a '20 Things to do before you leave Bishopston' Passport, which identifies a range of social, cultural and community activities to participate in aimed at giving pupils life skills, confidence and affording them access to high quality opportunities and experiences. Other areas of staff responsibility have led to success with the Eco Schools Award; innovative practice within reading across the curriculum and development of Mental Health and therapeutic interventions.
- Since last year, both the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher have been designated as Specialist Leaders in Education (SLE) with the Stockton Teaching Alliance and are providing expertise for schools in teaching and learning as well as inclusive practices and behaviour management for both primary and secondary schools.
- The CPD which senior leaders have taken out to colleagues in other establishments including PRUs/AP has received very positive feedback and generated an increasing amount of interest from stakeholders. Bishopston's reputation as a source of support and guidance is growing rapidly.
- A number of developments have taken place within the site which operates over two buildings. The front building formerly known as Redhill, previously the base for anxious and phobic school children, has been relocated to another setting. This provided Bishopston with the opportunity to move Key Stage 2 provision into this building which provides more space to work with more vulnerable children at a much earlier point. Pupils have settled well into their Primary classrooms, with pupil and parent voice being very positive. A parent commented, "This is so different to what I thought a PRU would be. I wasn't ready to buy into it but I have a happy, popular child now who completes every task with the support he's given." There have been a number of meetings with key stakeholders and the Local Authority regarding the possible development of a vocational building for a curriculum offer which incorporates vocational opportunities and pathways. These have been subject to scrutiny and praised by an Ofsted Inspector over a 3-day review with recommendations shared with the Local Authority.
- A dedicated Therapeutic room has been established for pupils requiring sessions of Art Therapy, Thera play, Attachment and Trauma therapy or as a space to calm down and self-regulate if they have gone into crisis.
- The work undertaken by the Deputy Headteacher to improve standards in Reading and its impact on the wider curriculum is demonstrating excellent engagement, enrichment and progress. Her passion, enthusiasm and drive is picked up by pupils and is helping them develop stamina and a love of literature. The recently implemented Library area is well resourced with material covering wide range of interest, curriculum visits and trips to the theatre are regular features of the curriculum. Accelerated Reader is providing the challenge to pupils to read independently and frequently allowing staff to monitor progress.



- The new COPE (Castle Outdoor Programme of Education) developed within Bishopton provides a sustainable, innovative service for the school's own pupils as well as other schools, providing engagement in a range of outdoor activities that improve pupils' confidence, self-esteem, mental and physical well-being, social skills and life skills which are aimed at helping them remain in mainstream and develop employability skills. Pupils spoke with pride about the qualifications in water skills they had achieved through COPE placements with Teeside Nautical College and The Arts Award. COPE has allowed pupils to experience success from being a part of community projects for example the work undertaken at Preston Park Museum, then rewards them with certificates and qualifications. Local companies and businesses have contacted the school, after seeing the work pupils have completed, and have given public thanks and rewards, promoting the school via social media.
- Pupil voice has been well coordinated over the year, with pupils having a clear understanding of how to contribute and School Council having clear roles and responsibility. As a Rights Respecting School, opportunities are given for pupils to campaign on local, national and global issues and the school facilitates respectful debate. The Rights Respecting School Charter agreed is displayed in every classroom. Bishopton Values inspire and encourage pupils to contribute positively, for example providing experience over the year of becoming "Dementia Friendly". They have visited residents in a local care home, playing games and having lunch together. Pupils have also taken part in recent staff interviews.
- Over the year the school has established a dedicated Outreach Team consisting of an Outreach Manager and an Outreach Worker who have successfully engaged with primary and secondary pupils on an early intervention basis and also to support pupil reintegration back into mainstream school following a Bishopton placement. The Outreach worker is also part of the Early Help team, has strong networks and works with other agencies to support teachers and pupils in primary and secondary settings. Her qualifications, experience and skills are fundamental to the success of this role.
- There is a strength of skills within the team of Mental Health and Well-being Lead, SENCO and Primary teacher who take outreach programmes into local mainstream and secondary schools. Their work is well coordinated, highly focused on success and targeted for maximum impact.
- The position of Attendance and Parent Support Officer has also been recruited from within drawing on the skills of an experienced staff member who has a strong working knowledge of the aims of the school. This support given to improve communications, build relationships with families, explain and signpost what is available and provide Parent Programmes have had a positive impact on the well-being, behaviour, academic outcomes and attendance of pupils. Coffee mornings, open events and parent drop-ins have helped normalise parent experiences.
- A successful way of demonstrating the success of their work and of encouraging the next generation of teachers to consider taking up positions within a PRU has been to link with the local SCITT programme. As part of their teacher training, students will



shadow the work of professionals and engage with pupils, gaining first-hand experience of life in a Pupil Referral Unit. Student teachers are helped to view the inclusive practices and strategies employed with highly vulnerable children and their families as being transferable. This has gone a long way towards removing any misconceptions about working in Alternative Provision, helping students consider their future career path. Bishopton has recognised the particular skills of a 'home grown' TA who has gone on to complete a teacher placement within the primary unit.

- The Deputy Headteacher has been brokered to work with a local mainstream school, developing their curriculum for challenging learners in KS4 in support of reducing Permanent Exclusion in Y10 and Y11. The school has a clear strategic vision for careers and post 16 education moving forward. Assessment has also been strengthened over the year with 'Even Better If' statements which pupils respond to and demonstrate immediate progress.
- Senior Leaders, along with the school's Lead for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare are designing and delivering a bespoke package of training to a local mainstream secondary school, around de-escalation techniques to promote inclusion within their school thereby helping to reduce exclusion.
- Bishopton has recently recruited a new Business Manager to begin in September 2019. A key focus of this work is to further strengthen partnership working with key stakeholders and increase the amount of "buy in" the school receives from mainstream schools. The role is to manage budgets and actively fundraise and bid to generate additional income and provide extra resources, thus helping the school move forward with its ambitious future development plans. They have also raised the profile of the PRU via a variety of means including the website, school brochure, Facebook page, Linked In and through regular 'Tweets' from the Head and Deputy Head. They have also invested in School Zine which promotes better home/school communication using smart phone technology.
- The headteacher and deputy have looked outwards to other similar provisions across the country and have visited COBS PRU in Birmingham, and Bolton Impact PRU in Bolton to share good practice and market their vision. This has opened up the possibilities of wider partnership working to share strengths.

Developments for The Future:-

- Continue to develop a strong mental health focus and free mental health trained staff up to work on early intervention on an outreach basis and provide therapeutic interventions to pupils identified as in need to further promote inclusion.
- Further develop an Early Intervention Services targeting primary and early years settings as a way to promote inclusive practices in schools and prevent exclusion.



IQM Centre of Excellence Review



- Develop Parenting Support Programmes to strengthen the work carried out in school to promote pupils' mental health, attendance, academic outcomes and behaviour. A suggestion was made to consider parent Thrive programme.
- To work tirelessly to break the link between school exclusion and social exclusion and improve the trajectories for excluded children on leaving the PRU and going into post 16 provision.

Assessor: Mrs Lesley Colthart

COE Review Date: 12th July 2019