



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



School Name: Bishopton Centre Pupil Referral Unit
Marsh House Avenue
Billingham
Stockton-On-Tees
TS23 3HB

Head/Principal: Ms Emily Carr and Ms Rachel Campbell
(Co-Headteachers)

IQM Lead: Ms Ally Tokat

Date of Review: 20th October 2021

Assessor: Sarah Linari

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group Trail blazers

Ambassador Max Kelly

Date of Next Meeting 17th November 2021

Sources of Evidence during IQM Review Day:

- IQM Centre of Excellence review documentation
- Ofsted Report
- National performance data
- School website
- Policies
- Learning Walks
- School environment
- School improvement plan
- Mental health and Wellbeing overview
- 2021 Brochure



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- IQM evidence file
- COPE evidence file
- Student's work
- Feedback from external visits

Meetings held with:

- Co-Headteachers
- IQM Coordinator/SMSC Lead
- COPE Leads
- Governors
- Parents
- Students
- Attendance and Parental Support Officer
- Careers Lead
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead



Summary of Targets from 2020-2021

The targets from the previous year were based on the school's development focus areas of parental engagement and integrating careers education into the curriculum.

Target 1 - Further develop Parenting Support Programmes to strengthen the work conducted in school to promote students' mental health, attendance, academic outcomes and behaviour.

The leaders explained how the Covid-19 restrictions impacted the extent to which the team could develop this target. However, the Attendance and Parental Support Officer (APSO) has started to establish a programme of services for parents and carers to engage in, including training courses to promote positive mental health, improved attendance, academic support and strategies for effective parenting.

The school has a plan in place for half termly coffee mornings for parents and carers. They were able to host two last year, fewer than planned due to periods of lockdown. The aim of the mornings is to support parents and carers with specific areas such as behaviour, attendance and emotional wellbeing in a non-threatening, friendly environment. The mornings also provide the opportunity for families to get to know each other and share support strategies.

Students' attendance is monitored and tracked robustly. When students are absent, meetings are set up and an attendance plan is implemented at specific points. There is a clear flowchart for intervention of support to improve attendance with achievable targets for those students with low attendance, to allow everyone to be able to succeed.

During the review, two parents and carers kindly attended school to meet with me. They were overwhelmingly positive about the experience their children have had since starting at Bishopton. One parent commented that it was "the best thing that has happened" to her son. Clearly, being permanently excluded from school is not a position any parent or carer wants for their child. However, they feel that their children have flourished during their time at Bishopton.

The Attendance, Safeguarding and Mental Health Team conduct regular home visits to support parents and carers. They develop positive relationships with home to support the children. The staff recognise the need to affect change at home because if a child is receiving intervention at school, yet home circumstance remain the same, there will not be a sustained change. During lockdown, the school provided food hampers for each family. This gesture was not based on income but offered to all families. They also made a Christmas Hamper for each family. With 58% of Bishopton's students in receipt of free-school meals, the staff go above and beyond to help all families. Each year, the children receive Christmas presents via the radio station TFM's Cash for Kids charity. Last Christmas, Bishopton students raised money through the COPE programme to donate to the Cash for Kids charity.

Despite the challenges of Covid-19 restrictions, the school has managed to lead several enrichment experiences to help build relationships with home. The school collaborated



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with the ARC, Stockton Arts Centre, who ran a two-week workshop for students to put on a modern dance show. All staff attended the performances, alongside the parents and carers. To celebrate Victory in Europe Day (VE) Day during lockdown, the school carried out a range of social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) activities. To maintain regular contact with families, they created a travelling library which went to students' homes throughout lockdown. Staff feel that these extracurricular visits and experiences provide the opportunity to build positive relationships with families.

The school's Outreach and Behaviour Support Officer is currently undertaking training in psychotherapy and has joined the local Police Force in a volunteer role. Another member of staff is also completing her training for the same role hence two members of staff will also work for Cleveland Police, outside of school hours. This allows fantastic information sharing between school and the Police to try to prevent issues within the community and support the young people in making positive choices when not in school. The leaders work closely with Cleveland Special Constabulary through the 'Operation CASTLE' partnership initiative which entails Bishopton's staff patrolling the local streets alongside the Police Constables to target antisocial behaviour and keep the children safe outside of school hours. Through the staff's excellent relationships with the students, the public's perception of the students within the community are changing as they observe the positive responses and mutual respect shown by the young people. On the school's website, they share that the aim for this partnership work is that "over time, relationships between the police and local youths will improve and they will see the police as a source of help not just an enforcement agency."

In terms of next steps, the staff see Bishopton as a "Family School." They would like to start to offer qualifications and training for parents and carers as well as career support programmes. Parents and carers have been offered access to the school's in-house mental health service which is provided by the Northern Guild trainee practitioners. They are also looking at the possibility of offering Emotion Coaching to all parents.

Target 2 -There is a well-resourced, innovative and sustainable approach to careers in the curriculum involving the use of a wide variety of extended work experience opportunities to all students in year 11 and an aspirational curriculum offer which includes post 16 pathways to all students.

The IQM Coordinator explains how Bishopton has a "broad and balanced curriculum offer which includes opportunities to gain vocational qualifications with a clear pathway to post 16 destinations". The Headteachers are determined to ensure the students are given a wide range of opportunities which allow them to either be reintegrated successfully back into a mainstream setting or to be fully prepared to be successful in starting a post-16 course or apprenticeship. There is a clear, shared vision for each young person to leave Bishopton fully prepared to take on the future challenges either at college or in the workplace, and flourish.

Students can study GCSE qualifications as well as vocational courses. In year 11, students take part in employability lessons each week. Throughout their time at Bishopton, students complete a range of certificates related to employability skills



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including first aid, food hygiene, manual handling plus the development of skills required to seek, acquire and sustain employment.

There are regular visits to local colleges and post-16 providers as well as visitors in school who talk about future options. Two staff members are completing the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) level 4 and 6 Careers qualification to be able to offer independent careers advice and guidance to students. The in-house Careers Team work closely with Youth Directions to provide support. The CASTLE Outdoor Programme of Education (COPE) offers students the opportunity to take part in work experience and develop their understanding of careers. Bishopton staff are leading the work experience project across the Trust.

Flagship Project 2021-2022

Project title: A 'whole'istic approach - developing the whole child; investing in futures and life beyond Bishopton.

Outline of project:

- To develop and embed Parenting Support Programmes to strengthen the work carried out in school to promote students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC), emotional and academic development.
- To establish clear post-16 pathways by developing strong links with colleges and universities.
- To develop and design a building that is fit for purpose with dedicated learning zones to broaden the curriculum.
- To offer outreach and continuing professional development (CPD) to other settings to support in the inclusion agenda and the importance of a 'whole'istic approach and curriculum.

The Flagship project is aligned with the School Development Plan and will support the leaders in achieving their vision for a 'whole'istic approach. The leaders and staff have undertaken visioning activities to clearly define this 'whole'istic vision which has been used as the basis for all development plans. The vision was shared with governors who have each been allocated specific link roles to support the implementation and evaluation of the strategic plan. The IQM Coordinator has defined actions which will be taken to achieve each of the focus areas and evaluation points will be mapped out.



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The Impact of the Cluster Group

Bishopton staff continue to engage well with the Cluster Group and attended one of the two virtual meetings last academic year. The May meeting focussed on the Covid-19 recovery curriculum. All schools shared their experiences of the students return to school more fully since the initial lockdown and consequential bubble isolations. There was an acknowledgement of the holistic approach being invaluable in re-engaging students. Following the meeting, the school implemented additional 1:1 therapeutic session for Key Stage 3 students with a view to easing what students could feel was another disruption in terms of future transitions. Unfortunately, they could not attend the July meeting due to school isolations.

The IQM Coordinator and Headteachers enjoy supporting other settings and welcome best practice visits. They have offered to host a Cluster Meeting in the future as they are already carrying out a significant amount of outreach work to support schools in the local region.



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Overview

The Headteachers' vision is for Bishopton to be a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) Beacon of Excellence teaching school. In their welcome on the website, the Co-Headteachers explain how Bishopton PRU "runs like a school, but with some differences" as they "place a high emphasis on pastoral support." The IQM Coordinator describes the inclusive ethos at Bishopton as "encompassing as it runs through everything, is a consistent feature, and underpins everything." One of the Headteachers describes inclusion as "aspirational" stating it is "in every strand of everything we do" and "the children deserve this vision and the absolute best. They shouldn't be disadvantaged by coming to a PRU." This mirrors their aspirational motto to "transform lives and achieve success." The School Development Plan is also ambitious and centres around four main strands: developing staff; aiming for excellence; a 'whole'istic approach; investing in futures and life beyond Bishopton.

Bishopton converted to academy status in May 2021, when they joined Tees Valley Collaborative Trust. Joining the Trust has expanded Bishopston's links with post-16 providers and allows the staff to collaborate with colleagues from the primary school, which supports their Key Stage 3 provision planning. The Co-Headteachers are trailblazers for ambitious women who want to further their careers in school leadership. As they both have young families, they work three days a week, with one day crossover to allow them to jointly plan. This leadership model is working effectively; all staff and governors are highly supportive of the model and feel that the two Headteachers complement each other perfectly in the role.

The school benefits from working with governors who directly support the strategic whole-school vision through their own roles and prior experiences. During the review, I met with two governors, one of whom is the Education Sector Manager at the Careers and Enterprise Company, a DfE funded project. The other Governor I met with is Principal at a local post-16 provider, Stockton Riverside College. Both governors feel confident that the Co-Headteachers have established a clear vision and have made sure the school's "aims and values are instilled throughout the young people and staff." The governors describe the school's relationship with the Local Authority as "really positive." The Headteachers are well-respected in the Stockton Secondary Headteachers Network and the school has a good reputation in the local area. When asked to epitomise the inclusive ethos at Bishopton, the governors said "inspirational" as it is "all about the young person" who are "at heart of everything."

The Headteachers recognise that for the young people to be happy and succeed, the staff need to be happy and well-supported. There are progression routes and opportunities for all staff. A restructure last academic year has led to staff being able to expand their whole-school responsibility areas. There is also a comprehensive wellbeing offer for staff which includes: no formal lesson observations, fitness and social opportunities, an early finish on Fridays, wellbeing days, a dedicated therapy room in-house staff session and referral to an in-house and external counselling service, should they require it.

The bespoke CASTLE Outdoor Programme of Education (COPE) is a personal development course for students. Monitoring and evaluation activities show that it has a



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significant impact on improving students' experiences of education and allows them to experience success and a sense of achievement. CASTLE is the acronym for the school's values (creativity, aspiration, self-belief, tolerance, love and enjoyment) which underpin the outdoor curriculum which aims to develop children emotionally, physically and academically. GL Assessment's and Pupil Attitudes to Self and School (PASS) objectives are also woven throughout the schemes of work. The focus is placed on teamwork and personal development. Through tangible skills, students are prepared for the world of work, in particular the work experience programme which is embedded into the year 10 COPE curriculum. 20% of curriculum time is dedicated to the COPE programme. In each meeting with parents, carers and students during the review day, COPE was mentioned as the best part of school life. The young people thoroughly enjoy COPE lessons and the outdoor learning experiences. Last year, the year 10 students built an outdoor provision for the young children at Guisborough Montessori Nursery. They had to complete the design, plan, costing and building work themselves. This project helped to contextualise the learning for students and provided them with first-hand work experience. Students were also given a sense of achievement through seeing a project through from beginning to end. The portfolio of evidence of projects completed as part of the COPE programme is impressive. Participation in this course not only builds students' self-esteem, teamwork and communication skills, but gives them the impetus to attend school and work hard in other curriculum areas.

Due to their excellent reputation in the local area and further afield, Bishopton provides regular best practice sharing with other PRUs and mainstream schools. Following a recent good practice share visit hosted at Bishopton, the Headteacher from New Leaf Inclusion Centre commented that "walking around the school, it was evident that the staff really understand their pupils, knowing what makes them 'tick' and exactly what their needs are, not just from an academic viewpoint, but from the holistic view of seeing the whole child. Pupils are challenged and supported to achieve their best, with many of them clearly flourishing in the environment." The Head of a newly established PRU in the Northeast also visited to observe best practice. In her feedback to the school, she commented that "happiness radiated from both students and staff" and that during her visit, she observed "calm classrooms, purposeful learning environments, engaged students, clear corridors, bespoke support and clarity of purpose."

During the learning walk on the review day, the standard of work in students' workbooks was high, as were the expectations for behaviour and engagement in lessons. The quality of work completed by students in Key Stage 4 is remarkable. The high standard of presentation of work in student's books demonstrates their pride in what they are producing. Due to the personalised support in lessons, students are making great academic progress during their time at Bishopton.

All students were friendly and welcoming. They spoke honestly about their prior experiences of education, which is testament to how the staff at Bishopton have built positive relationships which have taught the students that they can trust adults. It was difficult to hear their stories of how they had been completely disengaged and let down in mainstream settings, but equally heart-warming to hear how their prior experiences contrast with their current experience. Each young person spoken to said that they like attending Bishopton and feel that they are achieving better academically due to the excellent relationships they have with the staff who "get them." One student said how



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“staff have help me loads, from struggling with work to struggles at home, they help me through it.”

Bishopton provides its students with a comprehensive mental health support package ranging from therapeutic interventions such as ‘Draw and Talk Therapy,’ 1:1 coaching and in-school therapy dogs to individual counselling sessions provided in-house by a year three Northern Guild trainee. The universal offer for mental health and wellbeing is fundamental and the staff understand that some of their students “have not had the best relationship with education in the past, so we strive to rebuild their confidence and love of learning through therapeutic intervention.” There are dedicated therapy rooms across the site as well as wellbeing areas.

The displays around the school building are vibrant and purposeful. The staff have maximised the environment to support their inclusive ethos and promote a positive mindset. However, the building itself is not fit for purpose. Fortunately, the school has recently been granted funding for a complete redesign and refurbishment of the site. The exciting new building plans will allow leaders to provide an even more inclusive environment and curriculum through the introduction of a Forest School area, hair and beauty room, construction room, science laboratories, purpose-built design and technology workshops, a gym, a multi-use games area (MUGA), therapy rooms, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) suite and Learning Resource Centre.

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to Bishopton PRU. All staff, parents, carers, governors and students were extremely friendly and welcoming. There is a genuine inclusive ethos, and the school is a safe, happy place for all. It is clear from the review process that the team at Bishopton continue to be fully committed to holistic educational practice. They have proved their expertise over the years of IQM accreditation and I believe they have the passion and capacity to continue to drive the inclusion agenda in their own setting and beyond. Therefore, I recommend that Bishopton PRU is awarded Flagship School Status. The next review will look closely at how the leaders have fulfilled the objectives outlined in the Flagship Project and how they continue to promote outreach work.

Assessor: Sarah Linari

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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Director of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd