



Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd

1st June 2015

Mr Geoff Fitzpatrick
Head teacher
Newfield School
Old Bank Lane
Blackburn
Lancashire BB1 2PW

Dear Mr Fitzpatrick

Flagship Review Date: 22nd May 2015

Further to your recent reassessment and Flagship review I can confirm your school's on-going IQM Flagship status. Please find below your report for your information. Your school will be reviewed again in 12 months' time.

We are very keen to share good practice with other schools and would ask that if you have any resources/videos/photographs/case studies etc. showing inclusion in practice in your school please forward these to us for use on our website.

If you have any questions at all, or if we can be of any help, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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

School: Newfield School, Blackburn

Head teacher: Geoff Fitzpatrick

Flagship Review Date: 22nd May 2015

Assessor: Dr John Hill

School Context:-

Newfield is a mixed gender 2-19 aged Local Authority maintained special school that caters mostly for pupils who have severe or profound, learning and physical difficulties as well as providing for a significant number of pupils with autism. All those on roll have or have had a statement of special educational needs, though these are gradually being replaced by Education, Health and Care plans, which the deputy head teacher is leading on. Whilst all pupils are referred through Blackburn Local Authority, quite a number travel from outside the city. Currently there are 137 pupils on roll, though this varies throughout the year, and of these over a third meets the criteria for pupil premium funding. The pupil population at Newfield also reflects the ethnic diversity of Blackburn with over half of those on roll coming from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Newfield School's successful Inclusion Quality Mark review in June 2012 was followed by the gaining of Flagship status for inclusion in 2013 and maintaining it for 2014. The school also had a 'good' inspection report in November 2012. Whilst, over recent years there has been a period of change within the school, both in terms of staffing, resources and ideology, the school is now settled internally and is looking to extend its scope in terms of linking more closely with other schools in Blackburn and expanding to manage a much larger autistic provision, adjacent to the school site. There remains, however, in all the school does, a very clear emphasis on the inclusion agenda and this is central to the school's aims and aspirations. Indeed, the structures and systems introduced by the head teacher and senior team all relate to the central inclusive goal of supporting all pupils to achieve their best and to do so in a dignified and constructive way. As such there is consistent and critical dialogue amongst staff, governors, parents, carers and pupils about how the school can be best run and managed given the set of beliefs the school works to.

As a consequence the 2015 inclusion Flagship Annual Review and the additional review of all 8 aspects of the Inclusion Quality Mark highlights what has been achieved over the past year from the agreed targets of 2014 and what may be further expected during 2015/16. Following the

reading of the documentation, therefore and during discussions with the inclusion coordinator about the assessment agenda the following will be provided:-

- An overview of the school's progress against the 8 elements of IQM.
- A review of the outcomes of each of the Flagship targets for 2014/2015.
- An agreed set of Flagship targets for 2015/2016.
- Sources of data.
- Appendix 1 – Newfield Flagship submission 2015.

An overview of the school's progress against the 8 elements of IQM:-

Newfield School continues to excel in all aspects of the inclusion agenda. Since being involved with the school as the inclusion and Flagship assessor it has been evident that they have moved forward significantly as a school and as a staff team in providing an inclusive framework from which all can benefit. Thus, from a starting position some years ago of an **inclusive agenda** (IQM Element 1) linked to outreach provision whereby the school's main aim in this respect was to expand opportunities for all pupils external to the school, the school has expanded its ideological and practice position to take on a much wider understanding of what is meant by inclusion. Thus, whilst maintaining its links with other schools, these partnerships have become more focused to provide a range of positive outcomes for pupils as well as accepting that the experience of mainstream is indeed a goal in itself.

A consequence, and as part of a much bigger review of what is meant by being an inclusive school, Newfield has continued to develop and excel in a number of key areas. Thus, in terms of the **learning environment** (IQM Element 2) the understanding that positive interventions need adequate resources has been a central aim. Thus, the use of specialist equipment and training for staff has been impressive with a full range of communication aids in use across the school and links with external agencies (e.g. ACE) to make sure the school is at the centre of technological changes in the areas it specialises in.

In terms of **learner attitudes, values and personal development** (IQM Element 3), and from a pupil perspective, the school continues to enhance opportunities for pupils to express themselves and be heard. Thus, the gaining of the Unicef, 'RRSA' award is linked with each class now having its own personally developed class charter as well as having a whole school steering group and a further initiative to create an 'ambassador' role external to the school. The school council who retain a powerful voice in the school, continue to be robust in their views and meet on a very regular basis. Behaviour around the school is clearly outstanding and from an assessor perspective it has been a pleasure to walk around the building. Both staff and pupils are always busy, engaged and friendly.

As part of the IQM process the school has provided clear evidence of **learner progress** (IQM Element 4) and they are now very proficient in the use of 'B Squared,' and CASPA as well as now being in a position to compare data at a regional and national level. These understandings have been successfully built on over the past three years, and especially since the last Ofsted inspection. Moreover, the notion of pupil progress has been extended to include a whole variety of therapeutic and practical interventions that aid pupils to become successful in the long term. Indeed, the school employs and has access to a whole range of specialist staff to provide for the needs of different groups of pupils in the school and all staff members are expected to expand their skills through comprehensive CPD opportunities.

In respect of **teaching and learning** (IQM Element 5), personalised and 'B Squared' targets are written into all planning, which is kept on the school network. All staff are aware of these and regular feedback is provided to pupils. The school continues with a whole range of celebrations in class and during assemblies and appropriate photographic evidence is kept, which is often on display around the school. The newly developed thematic arrangements for curriculum coverage ensure that pupils get the best opportunities to develop their knowledge and improve academically. The promotion of ASDAN at post 16 also means that all pupils, whatever their needs are able to engage in external accreditation.

Although unable to meet with **parents and carers** (IQM Element 6) during the Flagship review, evidence provided by the school highlights the continuing excellent links with them ranging for example, from home to school books, to the school website and a number of workshops, multi-agency meetings and consultation opportunities. Moreover, the transition from statements to Education, Health and Care Plans has led the school through its 'all About Me' process to link with parents and carers in a long term and productive way, ensuring that both they and their children are fully involved in the process.

In fully engaging with the inclusion process, the **Governing Body and Management** (IQM Element 7) of the school have made a firm commitment to move the school in a specific direction. Thus, after an initial review following the appointment of the current head teacher, Newfield has systematically engaged with this ideology and has, without doubt put its views into practice. The head teacher and senior managers are clearly of a shared view and are very proud of their achievements. They are very well supported in partnership with the governing body that approve and endorse and work closely with both staff and other professionals linked to the school to understand and influence key decisions. Moreover, governors are responsible for the external monitoring of all elements of the School Development Plan.

Finally, the school is able to succinctly highlight its continued **links and involvement with the community** (IQM Element 8), not only through its continued partnerships with mainstream schools but also in providing a range of community opportunities for all pupils. These include, for example, involvement with local swimming pools and sports centres, Witton Country Park, Stanley Grange, Youth Zone as well as residential opportunities etc. Within school they also have a number of visiting specialist to support sports' and leisure activities and there are regular celebration and annual events for parents and carers. Finally, staff at Newfield have successfully built links with local agencies, including

charities, food banks, cygnets (autism awareness), a local hospital and sports' teams. Taken together, it is clear that the school has continued to build on its extensive community links ensuring both that the school and its community are not isolated from the wider environment.

An overview of the school's progress against the Flagship targets:-

The following are the 5 targets agreed as part of the successful IQM Flagship Assessment during 2014 and each will be commented on in turn.

Target 1 - Coordinator: Jenny Riley

To ensure all pupils have a comprehensive Education Health Care Plan, which encompasses 'high aspirational outcomes' that support the development of communication and independence (Equality Duty).

Target 2 - Coordinators: Julie Jones, Linda Cowie

To develop and embed provision, curriculum offer and accreditation for all pupils at Post 16 which secures progression routes through to Post 19 development (Equality Duty).

Target 3 - Contributors: Jenny Riley and Laura Holmes

To develop partnerships with other providers and professional colleagues/agencies to positively promote the school in the community as a 'first' choice (a. focused on links with other professionals and b. focused on links with Early Years' provision).

Target 4 - Contributors: Vicki Clements, Jackie Starkie

To develop and implement provision mapping, resources and curriculum (including the new National Curriculum) to secure achievement for all pupils according to assessed needs (Equality Duty).

Target 5 - Contributor: Jenny Riley

To develop and embed the impact of additional support and specialist interventions to improve outcomes for all pupils (Equality Duty).

The assessment of all the above was planned very constructively by the school and the information and evidence provided was very detailed with named staff attached to each target. In order to complete the IQM assessment each target will subsequently be addressed.

Target 1 - To ensure all pupils have a comprehensive Education Health Care Plan, which encompasses ‘high aspirational outcomes’ that support the development of communication and independence (Equality Duty)

During discussion with the Deputy Head teacher during the IQM assessment review of 2014, she highlighted the plan for her to liaise with Blackburn Local Authority in transferring the pupils at Newfield from statements to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC). Subsequently, although the deadline date for this to be achieved is April 2018, the school has embarked on an ambitious plan to make sure that all pupils, parents and carers are fully prepared for this change and that it is achieved gradually and with their full involvement. Thus, during the current academic year the ‘All About Me’ documents have been successfully introduced during the annual review meeting for pupils who are in the initial stage of converting. An important element of this, especially in terms of the inclusion agenda, is the way that the ‘pupil voice’ is included in all the sections of this document, including a ‘Wellbeing’ counsellor to support pupils to contribute effectively to this. Following the completion of the annual reviews the key issues from the ‘All About Me’ document are now in the process of being transferred to the EHC Plan, and subsequently these will be worked into each pupil’s personalised learning plan and inclusive of their short term targets.

Overall, this successful first stage is leading the school to promote family centred EHC plans for each pupil, and as indicated to me in discussions with the deputy head teacher, the majority of the outcomes centre on communication and independence skills. Finally, though not uncommon in most special schools and local authorities, there is not always joined up thinking between agencies on the process. Thus, although the school is working closely with social care, including the deputy head teacher attending appropriate family or paediatric meetings relating to a pupil going through the EHC process, links with health are less advanced.

Overall, however, evidence provided by the school highlights the fact that all the appropriate evidence is fully in place to make successful outcomes and that the parents and carers, class teacher and pupil are fully involved in the process and the outcomes so far have been both very inclusive and productive.

Target 2 - To develop and embed provision, curriculum offer and accreditation for all pupils at Post 16 which secures progression routes through to Post 19 development (Equality Duty)

During the 2014 Flagship review Newfield had aspirations to extend their provision for some pupils beyond the age of 19, and potentially up to age 25. This was in line with government legislation surrounding SEN and disability. However, the reality of such a significant change meant,

like many schools nationally, the cost and legal difficulties made this very difficult to achieve. As a result this initiative is now on hold, pending further consultation.

In terms of post 16 the school has very effectively moved forward in two main areas. Firstly, in terms of student accreditation the school is in the process of supporting all students through the 'ASDAN Transition Challenge,' which leads them onto qualifications in personal progress at the end of year 14. The expectation is that all post 16 pupils in the school will gain this award, with most students achieving the diploma and those with more profound need attaining the certificate. Clearly, the school is on track to achieve this and, as such, provides an equality of opportunity for all students to attain up to their potential.

In order for students to be better prepared for future life beyond school, the second major area of updated provision is in terms of the community curriculum offer. Here, the individual needs of pupils, and possible future direction are considered when making work placements. Thus, there are now a number of very successful work placements, including at ASDA, The Range, Pets At Home, Tesco, Halfords and a local nursery. In addition effective placements have also been made with Stanley Grange, a post 16 external provider who offers opportunities, for example in dance and gardening activities and Futures, which amongst other things, provides opportunities for animal welfare. Further, in terms of established links, the school is expecting an improved offer from Blackburn College in terms of their provision for Newfield pupils. Finally, whilst in school the post 16 cohort still benefit from the full range of curriculum and leisure opportunities, including, for example, functional skills, creative arts, physical leisure, personal independence and leisure pursuits.

Target 3 - To develop partnerships with other providers and professional colleagues/agencies to positively promote the school in the community as a 'first' choice

During the Flagship reviews of 2013 and 2014, there was some concern in the school about the potential for falling pupil numbers. Whilst this is not the case now, there remains an under representation in the Early Years' provision within Newfield. In particular the fact that very young children with profound difficulties are not always referred to Newfield as a first choice means that the school's expertise in this area is often overlooked. Indeed, most young children do not get a placement at Newfield until the age of 4, though this is not a school policy. By seeking to make this an inclusion issue, therefore, the school has embarked on a process, within Blackburn and Darwen of engaging and supporting mainstream foundation provision to seek to become a 'first choice' for referral in the community for children with significant needs under the age of 4. As such the school has engaged with a number of Early Years' nurseries and settings, providing free training and workshops for staff and presenting a positive image of Newfield. In addition, the school planned and delivered a Foundation stage open day for such settings, including highlighting what was available at Newfield for very young children. Finally the school is seeking to hold 6-week play sessions for children with SEN to attend the Foundation Provision at the school.

Clearly, Newfield has a significant commitment to offer the best for very young children with profound difficulties who live in the district and have embarked on a long-term commitment to persuade others of the opportunities and expertise the school can provide for very young children who fit the suitable criteria. Whilst numbers in this grouping is rising for September 2015, the school rightly assumes that there remains a lot to do.

Whilst the efforts to provide more comprehensively for very young children remains a significant target, the issue of the status of Newfield in the wider educational community may be seen as a much broader issue. Thus, whilst special schools generally may become isolated from the wider educational provision, Newfield, geographically placed on the outskirts of the city is vulnerable both in terms of the generic nature of its pupil population (i.e. not seen as a specialist school), and where it sits in relation to other schools. In order to address this issue, the deputy head teacher has worked extensively with the Local Authority to create a 'local offer,' surrounding the expertise of the school in supporting a whole range of vulnerable pupils. In addition, together with the head teacher they have sought to reach a wider audience of mainstream leaders and other professionals in and external to Blackburn to highlight the value of collaborative working with Newfield. Further, the range of expertise available is highlighted on the updated school website.

Taken together, the initiatives behind the 'first choice' initiative sits firmly within the inclusion agenda surrounding the school. Thus, this is a logical next step in a changing educational environment that is seeing schools working more in partnership and with a wider audience. For Newfield to extend its scope at this stage is very positive news for the inclusion agenda it seeks to promote.

Target 4 - To develop and implement provision mapping, resources and curriculum (including the new National Curriculum) to secure achievement for all pupils according to assessed needs (Equality Duty)

Since being involved with Newfield as their IQM assessor it has been evident to me that much consideration has gone into seeking the best and most inclusive ways of ensuring that all pupils were able to benefit for the expertise of its staff group. Thus, over recent years the school has sought to link a range of Well-Being and other specific interventions into pupil timetables alongside the academic curriculum. Whilst the first two are now secure, the changes in the National Curriculum orders have given an opportunity for the school to review what is taught and how this is planned.

Thus, the school has been working towards the implementation of a thematic way of delivering the curriculum with Science and Foundation subjects grouped into themed areas. Subsequently each theme is linked to levelled assessment and teachers are thus able to monitor progress. In this way the assessment coordinator is in a position to oversee the progress that individuals and groups of pupils are making set against the 'B Squared' descriptors, CASPA end of key stage levels, and where appropriate, Ofsted progression guidance. Moreover, in order to ensure that

progression is effectively and accurately monitored the school links with a Lancashire special school moderation group. In this way the school is secure in terms of school, regional and national comparisons of pupil achievement.

In seeking to ensure that all pupils get the best possible support at the school the provision during each day of curriculum provision, Well-Being support and additional specialist interventions, e.g., reading, Lexia, hydro-pool, music etc., is not an easy task. However, every effort is made to ensure that all pupils get the same opportunities to engage with each of these for the very best outcomes. Some discussions, during the day of the assessment, did however, centre on how a sample of pupils may be tracked to ensure that everyone gets their full entitlement.

Target 5 - To develop and embed the impact of additional support and specialist interventions to improve outcomes for all pupils (Equality Duty)

As part of its inclusive ideology, and like the best mainstream schools, Newfield monitors all pupils to ensure that they are making progress in all aspects of their schooling. From this perspective, if pupils are not maintaining progress then discussions will centre on what can be done to boost this. This indeed, may subsequently mean that some form of academic, pastoral or therapeutic interventions are considered. The majority of interventions are carried out by Higher Level Teaching Assistants and may take the form, for example of activities surrounding communications, music therapy, mobility, counselling, travel training, Lexia, HI strategies etc. Moreover, in order that such interventions are fairly shared and do not cut entirely over the curriculum entitlement, teaching staff in charge of the class manage the timetable for this. These 'catch-up' up interventions thus ensure that there is equity of opportunity for all pupils to achieve to their best and that no child is disadvantaged because of their individual need.

Targets for 2015/16:-

In discussion with the head teacher and inclusion coordinator the following were also discussed as those major areas that the school considers need further development and have been highlighted in the next stage of the inclusion planning:-

- To embed communication across the school curriculum to ensure pupils' communication skills are prioritised in all aspects of the school day.
- To ensure pupils' therapy needs are addressed, throughout the day, as part of high quality classroom provision.
- To develop the use of specialist assessment to ensure all pupils' progress is measurable and can be celebrated.

- To develop support to mainstream colleagues by offering training and professional development opportunities.

Finally, and in order to support the IQM process, Newfield remains in a very strong position to support other schools who wish to go through the IQM process and to offer a range of expertise in the areas outlined in the assessment report.

Sources of Data:-

In undertaking this Flagship assessment I received and have referred to the following documentation:-

- The June 2014 IQM Flagship Renewal Report.
- The May 2015 IQM Flagship Renewal Report.
- The May 2015 IQM evidence document for the 8 IQM standards.
- The last Ofsted report of November 2012.
- Evidence of the school's outreach programmes.
- Displays around the school.
- Up to date curriculum planning, monitoring and evaluation strategy documents.
- Criteria for pupil interventions.
- 'All About Me' document as part of EHC plans.
- The head teachers' 'blog.'
- The school website.

- Evidence of post 16 provision and plans for post 19.
- Workshop and information sessions for early years' professionals outside of the school.
- School Development Plan.

In addition I had interviews and discussions with:-

- The head teacher.
- The coordinator for inclusion.
- Discussions with pupils at lunch-time.
- All the staff involved with the implementation of the inclusion targets.

Recommendation:-

I am of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard to be accredited as an IQM Flagship School. I have discussed the outline plan for the next academic year and a copy is included in this report.

Assessor: Dr John Hill

Date: 1st June 2015