



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



School Name Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School
Northumberland Terrace
Everton
Merseyside
L5 3QF

Head/Principal Mrs Louise Partington

IQM Lead Mrs C Bowcock

Date of Review 24th March 2026

Assessor Mr Richard Collings

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group Elevate

Ambassador Mrs Sarah Linari

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Spring 2025	6th February 2025	Yes
Summer 2025	23rd June 12025	Yes
Autumn 2025	14th October 2025	Yes (host)
Spring 2026	6th February 2026	Yes

The Impact of the Cluster Group (with details of the impact of last three meetings)

School was very positive about the cluster meetings. Several learning walks had been undertaken, and many ideas had been adopted. Barriers To Learning had been seen at one school and OLI have taken this on board. They have also seen a tracking system in use which shows how to track the effectiveness of interventions. The school has also hosted a cluster where visitors were treated to the Lost Boys project, zones of regulation and mindfulness. Looking forward to the IQM conference at Edge Hill in June.



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Evidence

- IQM CoE Evaluation document
- Learning Walks
- Photos and videos
- School Website
- Discussion with stakeholders incl. staff, parents, governors
- Observation of children
- Discussion with children
- School tour



Evaluation of Targets for last 12 Months

Target 1: To continue to support and enhance our interactions with our EAL (English as an Additional Language) communities to ensure they are made to feel inclusive and safe in our school and community.

As part of their work towards this target, staff are providing targeted language support for EAL students. The school celebrated a Mother Tongue Day where students were encouraged to share their first language. There are flexible timetables for new starters at the school and an adapted curriculum as well as a multilingual staff member to provide additional language support. Early identification and support are targeted at new families via drop-in sessions and home visits.

The school has seen a marked increase in the number of families with EAL (English as an Additional Language). They now sit well above the national average statistically for EAL. (School 26.3%, national 20%). Diversity of language includes Arabic, Romanian, Kurdish, Farsi, and Cantonese. Building upon previous strengths has been a priority over the last 12 months and many effective systems are in place to support children.

Staff can assess general academic ability, not just English, to see if there are any special needs beyond language. They use a buddy system to support students around the school. Parents receive language sessions in a dedicated bungalow on school grounds. It was also impressive to see that the school Family Support Worker (FSW) works in homes to support mothers. This is not just with language but also with access to bank cards, sim cards and other life skills to support inclusivity in the community.

Next Steps: Further support mechanisms already identified such as New To English support packs for families and staff training on adaptive teaching for EAL learners.

Target 2: School interventions for SEND (Special Educational Need and Disability) - To support the children and adults of our school community to make sure they receive high quality interventions.

The school aims to prioritise effective multi agency support and collaboration. They want parents to feel supported and ensure effective Staff CPD (Continuous Professional Development) with a revised lesson structure and integration of Sensory Circuits and a culture of high expectation for SEND Pupils.

The school has an above average percentage of SEND. They sit at 28% compared with a national rate of 18%. It is to be commended that the school has such a commitment to ensuring that everyone receives a strong curriculum offer and that 'nobody misses out'. Ofsted are keen to ensure that schools have high expectations for all groups and OLI certainly embody this. Effective staff development has created a very committed and skilled group of LSAs (Learning Support Assistants) who talk very positively about their roles and give a strong feeling of togetherness and teamwork.



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Strategies such as support plans, sensory circuits and modified lesson structure create an environment in which children with SEND can be ready to learn and flourish. The care and nurture goes beyond the classroom and parents speak of feeling comfortable and 'safe' when talking to staff about the needs of their children. Staff have also taken parents to Sign Along courses to support children with needs.

Next Step: OLI is planning to develop interventions which are bespoke to particular year groups and develop links with the local family hub.

Target 3: EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) – Develop lines of communication with families, support struggling families, visit and assess children before starting school.

The school EYFS Lead works with the local Early Years Stronger Practice Hub in Everton to help promote best practice to nursery staff in their area, allowing for better outcomes for all children and a culture of continuous improvement. They organise Stay and Play sessions to encourage parents and caregivers to learn and explore alongside children and have an Outdoor provision specifically for 2-year-olds, and "Muffins and Maths" sessions. Multilingual Staff are always included in home visits, and the school makes use of play specialist.

Communication language and literacy are a primary focus of the school. OLI has a very strong belief in linking home and school and this is obvious in the approach to Early Years education. Provision starts with 2-year-olds, and they could be observed enjoying school despite any difficulties with language and needs. School have employed a member of staff with multiple languages to support new parents and they liaise with families in the home to break down any potential barriers. They also assess needs and create a smooth and successful transition. These visits are evidenced and recorded in order to create strong and successful partnerships.

Further up the Foundation Stage (3-5-year-olds), children were observed as being very independent, engaged and sociable. Children from families with many needs were apparent in class but there was no evidence of disruption or dysregulation which shows how successful the work with families has been. Children now have an excellent start to their school career and support structures in place to create a positive learning journey.

Next Step: To deepen the support and partnership at these early starting points, school plans to involve new parents and children in school events and involve external agencies in open days.



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Agreed Targets for next 12 Months

Target 1: Improving attendance and punctuality with particular focus on reducing persistent absenteeism.

Comments: The school is committed to improving attendance for the whole school and particularly PAs (Persistent Absentees). There are pockets of good attendance in school so it should be possible to capture successes from there.

Set target for persistent absence. National rate for primary schools is 13%. Use culture of successful family liaison to work with targeted families. Regular contact with families and celebrate achievements. Ensure attendance policy is robust and up to date.

Continue successes to date such as celebrations, sharing of weekly attendance, prizes for good attendance.

Target 2: Ensure children who are higher attainers are given the breadth of curriculum to challenge and develop learning at their level.

Comments: It is good to see this level of inclusion in the school. High attainers should be part of inclusivity. We discussed ways in which high attainers could be challenged and involved in deeper learning. Use as learning mentors for other students, research into extension tasks for deeper thinking, debating club and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) projects were all considered. Greater depth in curriculum should also be prioritised across all year groups. Successful schools often buddy up to create greater depth working groups in maths and writing.

Target 3: To see, feel and hear our school mission.

Comments: The school mission of 'Family, Faith and Learning' is apparent across the school and there is currently a staff champion and student group leading this.

The school has a clear idea of where to go in order to further develop this such as developing play leaders, ensure parental engagement in events (keep a register), pupil led prayer teams and develop an art exhibition around the mission statement.

Interestingly, successes in this area will cross over to other IQM targets such as increasing attendance rates, increasing pupil leadership opportunities, breadth of learning and strategies for wellbeing.



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Overview

Our Lady Immaculate has continued to exemplify inclusivity in its second year of Centre of Excellence. It is readily apparent from the moment you walk in that inclusion is at the heart of the school. Office staff are friendly and engaging with all visitors and displays are welcoming, especially the attractively presented food bank stand which receives donations from Fare Share and families. After a cordial meeting with senior staff, a learning walk/tour of the school was conducted. It was easy to see how the children were used to visitors in the school and were ready to engage in conversation and even the younger children were confident to speak. No raised voices could be heard and all children moved around calmly and quietly. This is such an important feature of inclusive schools as any new children and children with sensory needs could feel vulnerable in noisy or chaotic environments. It is certainly not something that can be 'switched on' for visitors and it is very apparent that it is the culture of the school.

Children in Early Years were very self-directed; choosing whether to remain indoors or out. Staff explained that many children live in flats, so they don't have easy access to outdoor activities. Sensory circuits are used purposefully to assist children with sensory needs, such as those with ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder). Children are also split while in the Early Years to aid those who could make more academic progress and require further challenge, almost like a streaming system.

In Reception class, there are many interventions readily available which children can self-direct to. Pegs to Paper was of particular interest as it develops thinking and proprioception which is vital in today's screen-driven society. Last year, there was a time out room newly developed, but this has now changed into a Transition Room. Staff use this as a means of continuing learning away from mainstream. Further up the school, children were engaged in music, writing and maths. All children engaged with questions and spoke well.

There is a strong sense of aspiration and pride at OLI. Parents and local employers supported an Aspiration Fortnight where barristers, nurses, estate agents and musicians all came and spoke. Children spoke positively about this especially when referring to someone who worked as a diver. It is heartening to see that children are being exposed to a wider range of potential careers.

Work on changing attitudes is continuing as we discussed children who still have low or misguided aspirations, which the school are aware of and working on. It would have been great to learn more about The Lost Boys Project with the Year 6 teacher, but time was against us. This initiative will endeavour to create more purpose and resilience amongst boys as they leave primary school, before they become disenchanted in high school.

Parents are always welcome at OLI and many initiatives have been developed to support this. A strong sense of community and school family exists. The school recognises that strong relationships with parents are a great enabler for pupil development and parents speak very positively about the staff. The school bungalow is well used for drop-in sessions for parents. Parents spoke of 'settled anxiety', 'we are one family' and that 'my child does not like staying home now'. School has run sessions for online safety, death related trauma, Mother's Day and the Muffins & Maths sessions.



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Feedback is overwhelmingly positive. As referenced above, the food bank is well used and OLI have made it available to all parents as the need is not just benefits related, but parents who are 'just getting by' can get help.

The level of support and nurture out of school for children and families is excellent and should be considered for exceptional practice, which the school would welcome. Governors also understand and support the inclusivity ethos at OLI. One governor is a mindfulness coach and the chair of governors spoke of the excellent support for EAL children, the family nature of school and the 'positive vibes' in school. He also mentioned that work experience students have often come from the care system, and it should be mentioned that the school has seen an increase in the number of LAC students (Looked After Children). OLI has done such a good job supporting these pupils that they have been nominated for an award by the head of the Virtual School (Virtual School oversees all children in the care system).

Another significantly outstanding feature of OLI is the sense of family and teamwork amongst the staff. There seems to be a never-ending stream of staff who are past pupils and many parents have had several generations of family at the school. Many past pupils come back to visit. There is a section on the website of 'staff as children' to see if visitors can spot them. Retention of staff can be a real problem in education so creating a working environment that is warm, friendly and somewhere people want to be is priceless. Staff feel valued and professional development is a high priority. Staff spoke of all being part of moderation meetings and other examples of training such as WellComm (Speech and Language Toolkit). The sense of team ethic when talking to staff was very strong. Their commitment to child development is profound. One member said, "When a child gets so much love all around, they thrive."

It was, once again, a genuine pleasure to spend time with staff and children of Our Lady Immaculate school. I feel that inclusion is in the very fibre of the school and staff are very much part of driving this ethos forward. The school have certainly earned their second year of Centre of Excellence status and will be keen to attain Flagship status next year. They will be spoilt for choice on a project to develop further. Many thanks to all staff, parents, governors and of course children for making my day so special. I am firmly of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark to maintain its status as a Centre of Excellence. I therefore recommend that the school retains its Centre of Excellence status and is reviewed again in 12 months. 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 Centre of Excellence status.

Assessor: Mr Richard Collings

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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Joe McCann MBA NPQH
Chief Executive Officer of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd