



## Annual Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



**School:** Meadowside Community Primary and Nursery School  
Clough Avenue  
Warrington  
Cheshire  
WA2 9PH

**Head/Principal:** Mr Stuart Wright

**IQM Lead:** Mr David Clay

**Date of Review:** 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021

**Assessor:** Ms Sarah Linari

### **IQM Cluster Programme**

**Cluster Group:** Northwessians

**Ambassador:** Ms Sandie Isherwood

**Date of Next Meeting:** 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021

**Next Cluster Group Meeting Focus:** Early Years curriculum and resources

### **Sources of Evidence during IQM Review Day:**

- IQM Flagship review documentation
- Ofsted Report
- School website
- Performance Tables
- School tour/learning walk
- Pupil voice
- SEND quality first outline

### **Additional Activities:**

#### **Meetings held with:**

- Headteacher
- IQM Coordinator/SENDCo
- Deputy Headteacher
- Class Teachers
- Teaching Assistants
- Pupils (Student Council Reps)
- Maths Lead
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Lead
- Welfare Coordinator
- NHS Education Mental Health Practitioner
- Nurture Lead



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### Summary of Targets from 2020-2021

The school's Flagship project from the last academic year was designed to address the significant gaps in language development which the pupils have already acquired before starting school. The leaders recognise the importance of developing children's oracy skills to support them in having successful futures.

The oracy and vocabulary project has been fully implemented and successfully embedded. Vocabulary learning is integrated into the school's daily practice and is central to all lessons. Language and vocabulary are key foci in all classrooms, across all subjects. The Deputy Headteacher describes oracy as being "at the centre of everything," which was certainly evidenced during the learning walk on the review day. A further example of the high-profile oracy presented, is the Headteacher's welcome on the school website which explains how "the importance of language is central to our school curriculum and a significant emphasis is placed on oracy and vocabulary acquisition from Early Years to year 6. We have created a curriculum that helps our children learn to talk and learn through talk, ensuring opportunities to acquire a rich and varied vocabulary, delivered in language-rich classrooms. We encourage our children to become 'Word Warriors', constantly searching for new words they can read, write and say."

Over the past twelve months, the school has been tenacious in implementing the oracy project, despite the disruption to learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Curriculum Policy is built around the central oracy and vocabulary aims. They have successfully embedded the 'Word Aware' and 'Word Warrior' programmes in EYFS and across all year groups.

The extended periods of lockdown provided the opportunity for further staff training sessions. One area of training was the Voice 21 masterclasses, which ran across four sessions with a focus on the Oracy Framework and embedding the four strands. Voice 21 "is a national charity that exists to enable teachers and schools to provide a high-quality oracy education so that all young people can find their voice for success in school and life" ([www.voice21.org/about-us](http://www.voice21.org/about-us)).

Staff also undertook training around 'Effective Classroom Talk' and home learning oracy tasks. Additionally, they have trained to deliver the 'Word Aware' approach whereby tier two vocabulary is taught explicitly each day and word lists are sent home at the end of the weekend to promote consolidation. Tier three vocabulary is taught during subject-specific sessions, which the children self-assess their knowledge of at the start of topics. The vocabulary lists are then reviewed at the end of each topic through a 'Pitstop' review strategy.

As part of the home learning provision during periods of lockdown, the school provided weekly oracy tasks "to encourage families at home to interact with each other and create a feeling of wellbeing." On return to school following lockdown, the leaders identified five areas for development as being of "crucial importance": routine, structure, friendship, opportunity and freedom. This led to a further redesign of the curriculum to ensure coverage of the five areas.



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To support pupils with reading, the school implements a range of interventions which are in place from Early Years through to year 6. Progress in reading is measured and tracked from aged two. All interventions are mapped using the school's insight tracking system which also allows them to monitor progress and evaluate the impact. In the Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS), they employ the WelComm screening tool to identify any speech and language developmental needs. For those identified as requiring further support, they run the Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI) programme and Talk Boost speech and language intervention. In the older year groups, children are supported through Lexia, a literacy intervention, the Fischer Family Trust Lightning Reading Squad Intervention, and the Accelerated Reading programme.

In summary, the oracy project is fundamental to provision at Meadowside. The focus on language and vocabulary development is particularly pertinent given the pupil demographic. Especially in the nursery provision for two-year-olds, where the effective oracy strategies are closing the disadvantaged literacy gap. The focus on developing pupils' reading ability, and the subsequent interventions in place to support those who require it, promotes equality of access to the wider curriculum. Oracy is a real strength of the school. The curriculum is expertly mapped to ensure every aspect is purposeful. There is a holistic overview with clear links across all strands and subject areas. Oracy is the golden thread which creates a coherent approach and improves the life chances of all the children.



### Flagship Project 2021-2022

#### Outline of Project:

*It is our plan to ensure that all staff (both teachers and teaching assistants) are making conscious educational decisions and being able to articulate the reasons for the decisions they are making within the classroom. For this to happen, staff need to continue to develop their understanding of the way children learn in terms of cognitive science, research-based practice, researching the barriers to learning for all pupils, and, more specifically, gaining an understanding of the issues faced by those pupils with SEND. We believe that pursuing this course of action will have great impact for all the pupils in terms of progress made in learning.*

*Our project is going to ensure that staff receive specific and appropriate CPD that informs their decision making at all levels. This needs to be good quality, providing a springboard for practices to become embedded in individual lessons. We are aiming for strategies within well researched curriculum pedagogy to be consistently applied, reflected in the teaching approaches adopted for individual curriculum areas. This will also ensure that individual decisions that are being made for pupils with SEND are made to have a maximum impact in terms of their learning and retention of key information.*

*Once staff are secure in their knowledge of cognitive science, it is our plan to then develop the children's understanding of their own cognition, enabling them to articulate how they learn and what is helpful for them on their learning journey. They will be able to discuss what helps them and discuss their struggles with their learning.*

*Training in cognitive science, alongside the application of Rosenshine's Principals of Instruction; Oracy 21 Research; growth mindset; self-efficacy and the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and further research will ensure that we continue to make progress for all of our pupils.*

The staff have been researching the cognitive science behind learning with a focus on Rosenshine's principles. Leaders have been encouraging staff to think carefully about all teaching decisions, informed by the cognitive science research conducted. Their aim is for all staff to have a thorough understanding of appropriate cognitive science and apply this to the teaching and learning. They also want pupils to gain understanding of and be able to articulate the science behind the ways in which they learn. Leaders intend to embed Rosenshine's principals of instruction into daily teaching and learning with a continued focus on modelling and scaffolding for all pupils. Oracy will continue to be at the heart of the curriculum, but research will inform all decisions. To ensure all pupils are supported to be successful, the SENDCo will lead staff to ensure that all barriers to learning are identified early, with specific action taken to support a child in making progress whilst also developing the independence to succeed.



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### **Agreed actions for the Flagship Project include, but are not limited to:**

- Continuing professional development (CPD) for all staff. (For all staff to complete Seneca training and achieve the Level Two certificate).
- Staff to partake in joint monitoring and evaluation activities to encourage a reflective culture of improvement and measure the impact of all strategies introduced.
- Embed Rosenshine's principals across all lessons.
- Explicit teaching of cognitive learning to all pupils.
- Implementation of the new EYFS curriculum.
- Promotion of the Meadowside Mindset (growth mindset, self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation).
- Implementation of the new phonics programme (Little Wandle).
- Ensure all pupils are given the opportunity to read daily in school.
- Ensure that there is a consistency of approach to teaching children with SEND in all areas.
- Effective and efficient approach to screening the needs of children with SEND.
- Devise a clear path to early identification of special educational needs with support effectively put into place.
- Improve the consistency and impact of interventions and catch-up programmes.

### **The Impact of the Cluster Group**

The IQM Coordinator attended the online Cluster Group meetings in the last academic year. They shared Meadowside's approaches to supporting wellbeing in lockdown with the other schools. Following the November meetings good practice share, Meadowside introduced more regular assemblies via Zoom to keep the connection across the bubbles. They also introduced the staff wellbeing packs, which are distributed each half term and include items such as facemasks, chocolate, and candles to promote wellbeing. Due to the previous IQM Coordinator, who was also the SENDCo, leaving the school, the new IQM Coordinator sought support via the network and Ambassador to help the school maintain the Flagship Status. The IQM Coordinator is looking forward to further engagement with the Cluster Group this year and the opportunity to visit other settings.



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## Overview

The Senior Leadership Team began the review visit with an overview of the school's journey over the past twelve months, and previous five years. They spoke of their bespoke growth mindset model named the 'Meadowside Mindset,' which encompasses growth mindset, self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation. Having heard about the additional challenges the school has faced over the years, particularly last year with the flood which forced them to leave the building and be rehomed across three sites, coupled with the global pandemic, it is clear that the Meadowside Mindset underpins the determination and resilience of the leadership team, staff and pupils. Leaders are solution-focussed and have unwavering ambition for their pupils. They have not let any unforeseen challenges prevent their continued improvement drive.

In 2015, provision at Meadowside was judged to be "good" by Ofsted, recognising that "the school provides an inclusive environment. Pupils in the designated provision, and those with disabilities and special educational needs, thrive during their time at the school." There was a subsequent change in leadership, with the current Headteacher joining in January 2016. The leaders found that although there were strong inclusive practices, the expectations and standards across the school were inconsistent, which resulted in lower outcomes at Key Stage Two and poor behaviour in lessons and around the school building. This led to a shift in culture, with a drive to improve standards and raise the expectations across all areas of provision. Behaviour was the first area to be addressed, followed by the pupils' oracy and literacy levels. Previously, the children were unable to express themselves due to the well-below national average levels of language development. The Headteacher described their verbal communication as "monosyllabic." Due to the implementation of a new behaviour system, all routines and systems are now embedded and consistent. Where there are any issues, the senior leaders collaborate with staff and coach them to improve practice. Vocabulary is a whole-school priority area, and their strategy is implemented consistently from the nursery provision for two-year-olds through to year 6.

In December 2019, the school converted to Academy status and joined The Challenge Academy Trust who supported the school through funding some of the building work, which was desperately needed. Being part of The Challenge Academy Trust has led to the development of a wider support network for the school, with a clear strategic infrastructure. The leaders meet regularly to review school improvement and share best practice. There are high levels of accountability including regular 'deep dives,' and a full annual review of provision. The Trust provides opportunities for the children to collaborate with pupils in other Trust schools, through projects such as the Reading Project and Student Parliament. Academic Hubs offer support, training and moderation to subject leaders across the Trust. The year 5 teacher from Meadowside is the Trust's Maths Hub Lead. He is currently developing a mastery project which will be rolled out across all Trust schools.

The school environment and building have been, and continue to be, a priority for improvement. When the current senior leadership team accepted the post, the building was in desperate need of repair. The Trust funded the new roof shortly after the school converted. The school also secured Department For Education (DfE) funding to rebuild



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the indoor provision in Early Years. Following the flood last year, one positive to emerge is that the flooring and walls have had to be completely refurbished and all rooms and corridors have been freshly painted. Teachers have worked swiftly to create the vibrant and purposeful displays in their classrooms, with a consistent approach evident across the school. The next steps in terms of the building are to decorate the corridors. The Deputy Headteacher is currently sourcing funding to create wall art and inspirational displays. The main corridor will accommodate displays for the school's priority areas including the 'Meadowside Mindset,' inclusion, School Council and Oracy. There is a newly refurbished sensory room with a soft play area. The work to install an immersive sensory learning space has already been started and will provide an additional area for the Designated Provision pupils to use therapeutically daily but also for the mainstream classes to use to enhance the learning experiences.

At the start of the review visit, the senior leaders described the "energy and enthusiasm of the children" they see in classrooms every day as a complete contrast to five years ago, when pupils were angry and communicated through extreme behaviours. Having observed lessons and toured the school, I must endorse their reflection. All behaviour observed during the review day was excellent. The students were all engaged in the learning and were enthusiastic to share what they were doing. There was a real joy of learning evident, particularly in the year 4 class where the pupils were reciting a poem, accompanied by actions. In all lessons, the children seemed excited to be in school. They are nurtured and well cared for through a consistent inclusive approach, combined with high expectations. Pupils' levels of articulacy are good. The students I spoke to during the visit provided a comprehensive response and used a good range of vocabulary. A year 6 Student Council representative, who attends the Designated Provision, was particularly impressive with her use of complex vocabulary.

Meadowside has built a strong reputation locally as a school who support SEND pupils well. 30% of the children who attend Meadowside have special education needs or disabilities (SEND). As per the Local Authority model, the school has a Designated Provision for pupils who have higher level needs and for whom a mainstream setting would not be appropriate. During the last academic year, there was further changes to leadership with the appointment of a new SEND Coordinator. The SENDCo is based in the Designated Provision classrooms but regularly conducts learning walks of the mainstream provision to quality assure that all strategies are in place for each pupil who has a 'Pupil Passport.'

This academic year, there is a focus on how to best support all pupils through the effective deployment of teaching assistants (TAs). The SENDCo delivered training on how TAs can effectively support the class teacher to help all children access the learning. The majority of TAs' time in classrooms is spent "working the room." The whole-class support strategies entail the TA observing pupils and providing intervention when required. The intervention strategies include prompting the pupils, giving clues, modelling, and correcting. All pupils who have additional needs have a bank of resources available to them throughout the lesson. The TAs will encourage independence by reminding pupils of the resources. At times, the TAs are deployed to work 1:1 or with small groups. Following direct teaching input with the small group of targeted pupils, the TAs will then facilitate an independent activity, which they monitor.



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The focus is always on supporting the children and equipping them with the necessary skills to become independent learners.

The inclusive practice at Meadowside centres around “value” and “everyone in the school community feeling valued.” This relates closely to their UNICEF Rights Respecting School approach, particularly article 12, which states that “every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously”. This also correlates with the whole school focus on developing oracy and giving each child a voice. During the review, I was guided around the school by three exceptional year 6 leaders. They were enthusiastic when talking about the teachers and learning experiences. In lessons, there were consistent approaches to teaching with some excellent examples of differentiation, especially in a year 5 maths lesson. All children were able to tell me what the ‘Word of the Day’ was with most being able to define the word and use it in a sentence. Meadowside pupils love language and clearly enjoy expanding their vocabulary.

Mental health and wellbeing are a priority for the school and there is a comprehensive structure and support system in place. The Welfare Team is led by the non-teaching Welfare Coordinator, who is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and a mental health first aider. She leads parental support and works with external agencies to support the young people’s mental health and wellbeing. The Nurture Lead is a trained Children’s Mental Health Lead. They both work closely with the NHS Education Mental Health Practitioner who is based in school one day a week. She works with the young people directly but also supports the staff. She describes the Meadowside children as “comfortable with the members of staff and they are happy to talk to people.” She describes the staff as “very nurturing and inclusive, with a deep sense of care.”

There is a whole-school mental health strategy for supporting the children, with graduated waves of intervention. A group of year 6 pupils have been trained as Mental Health Champions to offer peer support. Pupils from years 1 – 6 are assessed using the Pupil Attitudes to Self and School (PASS) tests to identify which children may require additional pastoral support. The Boxhall Profile assessment is also used. The results of these assessments determine the interventions. Teachers and parents can also refer individual pupils to the Welfare Team for support where there are any concerns. They are currently piloting a whole-school approach to wellbeing, the School Breathe programme, which provides breathing and mindfulness techniques to use in the classroom to promote a calm learning environment.

Staff wellbeing is also a priority. The school has provided whole staff training to equip them with techniques they can employ to support their own wellbeing. There is a positive Affirmations Board where the leaders and the welfare team write messages to praise and recognise staff members but also promote a positive mindset. Every half term, the Welfare Team prepare a ‘wellbeing bag’ for all staff which includes treats such as cake, eye masks, mindfulness colouring books and breathing activities booklets. This has proved to be a huge success and is valued by the staff team.

It is clear from the review process that the staff at Meadowside Community Primary and Nursery School continue to be fully committed to inclusive education, with many areas of excellent practice. I therefore recommend that the school retains its Flagship Status



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and is reviewed again in 12 months' time. I am confident their Flagship Project will continue to have a hugely positive impact on providing exceptional provision. Thank you to all for such a well prepared, enjoyable and informative day at Meadowside Community Primary and Nursery School.

**Assessor: Sarah Linari**

**Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. McCann".

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



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