



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



School	St William's Catholic Primary School Ince Green Lane Higher Ince Wigan WN2 2DG
Head/Principal	Mrs Emily Ellis
IQM Lead	Mrs Danielle Walls
Date of Review	25th March 2026
Assessor	Ms Lydia Gibbons

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group	No Limits
Ambassador	Mrs Sarah Linari Ms Siona Robson

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Autumn 2024	9th September 2024	Yes
Spring 2025	12th March 2025	Yes
Summer 2025	23rd June 2025	Yes
Autumn 2025	13th November 2025	No
Spring 2026	5th February 2026	Yes



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The Impact of the Cluster Group

The Inclusion Lead has actively engaged with the IQM cluster network, attending meetings and booking onto the summer conference to further strengthen inclusive practice. These opportunities have supported professional dialogue, collaboration, and the sharing of effective strategies across school.

A visit to St Peter's Farnworth provided valuable insight into behaviour systems and the strategic use of teaching assistants. The school's focus on fortnightly behaviour themes, such as expectations around movement and care for the environment, offered a structured and proactive approach to behaviour management. Reflection on this visit has prompted leaders to consider the deployment, status, and leadership opportunities for teaching assistants within their own setting and how they can revisit behaviour expectations regularly to keep standards high.

Time spent observing the specialist provision, known as "Sparkle," highlighted effective approaches to supporting pupils with complex needs. A particular strength was the balance between targeted provision and maintaining a strong sense of belonging within the child's mainstream class.

Following engagement with the IQM network, leaders at St William's have also booked external training with "Show Racism the Red Card". They opted for the biggest package which included pupil workshops, parent engagement, and staff training, further embedding inclusive values across the school community.



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Evidence

This review was informed by a wide range of evidence demonstrating the school's continued commitment to inclusion and progress against its IQM priorities.

- SEND provision documentation, including provision maps and SEND support plans
- Pupil voice
- Staff voice
- Parent voice
- Learning environments and classroom practice
- Floor books
- Pupil learning books
- PowerPoint presentations

Meetings were held with:

- Headteacher and senior leader
- SENCo
- Teaching staff
- Early Career Teacher
- Pupil leaders
- Governors
- Parents

Additional Activities

- Key Stage 2 assembly observation



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Evaluation of Annual Progress towards the Flagship Project

The Flagship project is developing well. The work on retrieval and explicit vocabulary teaching is highly consistent and is already having a positive impact across the curriculum. Expectations are high, and learning is carefully scaffolded to ensure all pupils can succeed. Over the past year, the school has implemented a strategic whole-school project focused on the explicit teaching of vocabulary to strengthen inclusion, raise attainment, and improve pupils' confidence in communication. What began within the Humanities, teachers shared, is increasingly evident in other subjects as they have seen a noticeable impact. This work has been driven by high-quality professional development, collaborative planning, and developing a strong shared belief that vocabulary is central to equity, academic success, and pupils' ability to articulate their understanding.

Staff have adopted a consistent approach to vocabulary instruction, centred around structured modelling and the use of the Frayer Model. Each lesson introduces a carefully selected focus word, with teachers guiding pupils in exploring meaning, morphology, examples, and non-examples. Medium-term plans have been refined to include Tier 2, Tier 3, and disciplinary vocabulary, ensuring progression and coherence across the curriculum. Teachers have autonomy in selecting vocabulary that aligns with conceptual learning, and leaders recognise that vocabulary choices will evolve as pupils' knowledge deepens. Teachers now routinely and consistently introduce and revisit key vocabulary at the start of lessons, ensuring pupils have the language required to access new content. This consistency is supporting deeper understanding, improved communication, and increased confidence.

The success of the initiative is underpinned by sustained and meaningful professional development from leaders. Staff have engaged in peer observations, reflective dialogue, collaborative planning and training with a clear focus on vocabulary. Leaders have responded promptly to staff voice, including providing additional modelled lessons for Key Stage 1 when requested. As a result, teachers report increased confidence and clarity in delivering explicit vocabulary instruction, and there is a strong sense of shared ownership across the school.

Lessons showed that classroom practice is highly consistent. Teachers deliberately revisit vocabulary to strengthen retention, model full sentences and subject-specific language, and provide structured opportunities for speaking and listening. Scaffolding is used skilfully to support pupils who require additional help, ensuring that all learners can participate meaningfully. Pupils are increasingly confident in retrieving and applying vocabulary in context and vocabulary progression was clear. Examples of strong practice can be seen across the school. In Reception, children used visual supports to explore habitat vocabulary, with the teacher sensitively modelling alternative vocabulary when a pupil struggled to describe the texture of sand. In Year 2, pupils used vocabulary cards with visuals to construct sentences, engaging in purposeful talk that helped refine their ideas around words linked to the Victorian Era.



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In Year 4, pupils confidently used subject terminology during retrieval tasks, rehearsing new words such as “heptarchy” through the “my turn, your turn” technique. In Year 6, pupils retrieved prior vocabulary, used signing to recall definitions, and applied sentence stems to structure explanations, drawing on dictionaries to define the word such as “migrant” before generating examples and non-examples.

Book scrutiny reinforces these findings. Vocabulary is clearly taught, revisited, and embedded across subjects. Staff report that pupils are using in their written work and retrieval activities help reinforce sticky knowledge. Importantly, all learners, including those with SEND, have equitable access to key vocabulary with the same high expectations. Leaders have used Alex Bedford’s Pupil Book Study to track improvements in practice, with evaluation matrices showing a consistent and embedded approach across classes.

The explicit vocabulary approach has become a powerful tool for inclusion. Through the “I do, we do, you do” model, all pupils—regardless of need—access core language and concepts. One teacher described the impact as transformative, explaining that every child can now access the key language and that “it opens doors for them.”

Curriculum enrichment further strengthens this work. Leaders design trips, workshops, and in-school experiences that deepen learning and broaden pupils’ cultural capital. Educational visits are carefully aligned with curriculum content, “learn and perform” days boost oracy and confidence, and choir collaborations with Wigan Music Service provide opportunities for performance and community engagement. Mindfulness and meditation support wellbeing, and diversity is woven through the curriculum so that every child can see themselves represented. The recent RE inspection highlighted pupils’ confidence in articulating their ideas as a strength.

Overall, the whole-school vocabulary and oracy project is developing strongly and is having a clear, measurable impact on teaching, learning, and inclusion. Evidence from learning walks, book looks, pupil voice, and staff feedback demonstrates highly consistent explicit vocabulary instruction, improved oracy and increased teacher confidence and collaboration. Strong modelling and scaffolding enable inclusive participation, and pupils’ confidence in using the subject-specific terminology. Vocabulary practice is now embedded across Humanities and the school is in a strong position to extend this across other subjects, with a coherent, shared approach that continues to evolve as pupils’ language proficiency grows.

Agreed Actions for the Next Steps in the Flagship Project

To further refine the intentional teaching and revisiting of vocabulary across all curriculum areas, ensuring depth of understanding and retention. To embed the pupil book study approach as a consistent model for monitoring teaching and learning, and to develop subject leaders’ expertise in this area. To continue strengthening assessment and tracking systems for vulnerable groups, ensuring a precise understanding of progress and impact.

Looking ahead, leaders have identified several clear priorities that will strengthen the impact of the vocabulary and oracy project and ensure that the gains made so far



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continue to deepen. The first area of focus is the further refinement of the intentional teaching and revisiting of vocabulary across other curriculum areas. Although explicit vocabulary instruction is now well-established in humanities, leaders recognise the importance of ensuring that vocabulary is not only introduced effectively but also woven meaningfully throughout the lesson sequence by carefully designed tasks. This next step is driven by the understanding that depth of understanding and long-term retention require repeated encounters with new language in varied contexts. By refining task design and ensuring that vocabulary is revisited through retrieval, application, and structured talk, teachers will be able to strengthen pupils' conceptual understanding even further and support them in transferring language confidently across subjects.

A second priority is the embedding of the pupil book study approach as a consistent model for monitoring teaching and learning. Leaders have already begun to use Alex Bedford's methodology to evaluate the impact of vocabulary instruction, and early findings have been highly positive. The next phase involves developing subject leaders' expertise so that they can use pupil book study with precision, confidence, and consistency. This will enable leaders to gain a richer understanding of how pupils experience the curriculum, how effectively vocabulary is being embedded, and where further refinement may be needed. Strengthening this approach will also support leaders in triangulating evidence from learning walks, pupil voice, and planning, ensuring that monitoring is both rigorous and developmental. By building this shared evaluative language, the school will continue to cultivate a strong professional culture in which staff feel supported, informed, and empowered to refine their practice.

The third target focuses on continuing to strengthen assessment and tracking systems for vulnerable groups. Leaders are committed to ensuring that the impact of vocabulary instruction is understood not only at a whole-school level but also for pupils who may face additional barriers to learning. By refining assessment processes, leaders aim to develop a more precise understanding of progress for all vulnerable groups. This work is essential in ensuring that the school can identify patterns, respond swiftly to emerging needs, and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

Together, these next steps reflect the school's commitment to deepening the quality of teaching, strengthening leadership practice, and ensuring that the vocabulary and oracy project continues to evolve in ways that directly benefit pupils. They demonstrate a clear understanding of what is working well, what needs to be refined, and why these refinements matter for sustaining high-quality, inclusive provision. The level of consistency already achieved within the humanities subjects has laid a strong foundation for the next steps.



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Overview

The school continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to ensuring that inclusion is the responsibility of all staff. Leaders have embedded a culture where high-quality, adaptive teaching meets the needs of all learners through well-planned, inclusive classroom practice with a focus on vocabulary. There is a clear focus on quality first teaching, supported by strategies such as live marking, same-day or next-day interventions, and targeted support. Learning is carefully scaffolded and chunked into small steps- a strategic approach which supports learning in response to pupils' attention skills.

The SENCo works closely with, and is supported by other leaders. Together, leaders are developing the ethos where everyone knows they have a role in, and a responsibility for inclusion. They are refining their approach to identifying barriers to learning through detailed analysis of school data and are going to develop their recording and tracking of this using provision maps. This includes developing cohort-level understanding and ensuring that knowledge of vulnerable learners is shared across staff. SEND support plans are in place, incorporating both parent and pupil voice, ensuring a holistic and personalised approach.

The school demonstrates a strong commitment to supporting the whole child. This is evident through the use of a multi-sensory therapist, a calm and trauma-informed environment, and a range of personal development opportunities including first aid training, financial education, water and road safety, Bikeability, and Forest School provision.

This is a school where inclusion is clearly embedded across all aspects of practice. There is a strong commitment to ensuring that every child is supported, valued, and able to succeed. The school environment is calm, purposeful, and focused on learning. Relationships between staff, pupils, and families are warm and respectful, creating a strong sense of community.

Parents are highly complimentary about the school, valuing the nurturing approach, strong communication, and support for the whole child. Staff are dedicated and reflective, and leaders demonstrate a clear vision for continued improvement. Pupils and staff were a pleasure to meet, and it is clear that the school makes a significant difference within its community. School staff work hard to build strong, positive relationships with parents, recognising this as a key driver in improving outcomes for pupils.

Staff are highly visible and approachable, with a strong presence at the school gates each morning, contributing to high levels of parental engagement.

Parents spoke very positively about the support they receive. One parent shared that the school has been a "massive help," particularly in accessing external support such as Riding the Rapids. They described how their child is now thriving, enjoying learning, and participating in a wide range of opportunities including after-school clubs, cooking club, and swimming.

Another parent commented, "If I could keep him here forever, I would," reflecting the high levels of trust and satisfaction within the school community. Parents value the nurturing approach, the speed at which concerns are addressed, and the consistent



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support provided for both children and families. The school offers a wide range of parent engagement opportunities, including workshops on sleep, mental health, phonics, and the curriculum. Additional initiatives such as stay-and-pray sessions, coffee mornings, and celebration events further strengthen relationships with families.

The school also works closely with external services, including the school nurse and mental health support teams, to support pupils with needs such as emotionally based school avoidance.

Attendance across the school is improving, including a reduction in persistent absence. The school has invested in an attendance officer, which has had a positive impact, particularly for targeted pupils where notices to improve have been issued.

The school's nurturing ethos is evident in its approach to wellbeing and regulation. Initiatives such as "Mindful Mondays" at the start of each half term and regular mindfulness sessions after lunchtime support pupils in settling into learning and maintaining emotional readiness throughout the day.

Governors are highly committed and well informed, with a clear understanding of the school's inclusive ethos and priorities. The Inclusion Governor has been involved with the school for a number of years and plays an active role in both support and challenge.

Governors engage regularly with school life, including visits focused on key areas such as English and writing. They demonstrate a strong understanding of the school's context, including the needs of pupils with SEND and those with English as an additional language.

The school demonstrates a strong commitment to staff development at all levels. Many staff have engaged in National Professional Qualification programmes, and teaching assistants have accessed specialist training such as Specialist Knowledge for Teaching Mathematics.

An Early Career Teacher shared a very positive experience of professional development within the school. Having progressed from a teaching assistant role, she described how the school has supported her confidence and development through structured induction, mentoring, and collaborative working.

Pupils were proud of their pupil leadership roles in school. A wide range of leadership opportunities enable pupils to contribute meaningfully to school life and develop confidence, responsibility, and communication skills. Groups such as the School Council, Eco Council, Sports Council, Digital Leaders, and Faith in Action team all play an active role in shaping the school community.

Pupils spoke confidently about their responsibilities, including organising events, promoting sustainability, supporting online safety, and contributing to charitable work. Opportunities such as robotics competitions, choir performances in the community, and a wide range of sports activities further enrich pupils' experiences and contribute to their personal development.



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I strongly recommend that the school retains its Flagship Status in recognition of its continued commitment to inclusive practice. The school continues to move from strength to strength in terms of its superb inclusive practice and 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 Flagship School. I therefore recommend that the school retains its Flagship 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 Flagship status.

Assessor: Ms Lydia Gibbons

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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Director of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd