Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project

School	Fourfields Community Primary School Bentley Avenue Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE7 3ZT
Head/Principal	Mrs Sue Blyth
IQM Lead	Mrs Sue Blyth
Date of Review	21st May 2025
Assessor	Ms Alison Merrills

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group	Schools in Search of Excellence
Ambassador	Ms Debbie Shirley
Next Meeting	3rd June 2025
Meeting Focus	

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Autumn 2023	11th October 2023	Yes
Spring 2024	28th February 2024	Yes
Summer 2024	10th July 2024	No
Autumn 2024	11th November 2024	Yes
Spring 2025	24th March 2025	No
Summer 2025	3rd June 2025	

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The Impact of the Cluster Group

Leaders describe how the best practice shared at cluster meetings supports Fourfields Community Primary School in its commitment to inclusion. The Inclusion Lead or a member of the inclusion team attends all cluster meetings and the variety of settings within the group which is spread over a large geographical area means there is a diverse range of schools to visit and share best practice.

The most recent meeting took place in November at Wootton Park School in Northampton. Like Fourfields, Wootton Park School has a forest school, although at Wooton, it is in the early stages of development. A connection was made between schools in the cluster to establish a forest school cluster group where staff can share experiences, ideas and training opportunities.

Leaders were impressed by the school's 'worry box' provision for all pupils and have since launched a similar approach at Fourfields with a 'worry box' in each classroom and in areas where pupils regularly access. Pupils complete a slip where they can select one of three staff to whom they can speak about their concern. There has been a good uptake by the children with support being provided for bereavement or struggling with subjects in class, for example.

Wootton Park School uses 'person centred planning' to listen to the voice of SEND children and their families. Following discussion, leaders have adapted the approach to gathering pupil and family voice at Fourfields. Paperwork used with pupils has been changed and the information gathered is shared and discussed with parents and carers in Team around the Family meetings to help parents and carers to connect more fully with their child.

<u>Evidence</u>

- IQM application document
- School website
- Ofsted report
- Learning walk/tour of school

Meetings held with:

- Headteacher
- Assistant Headteachers – Inclusion and Attendance Leads and SENCO
- Inclusion teacher
- Parents of pupils in Year 6
- Chair of Governors
- Pupils from the Year 6 attendance group
- Well-being teacher

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Evaluation of Annual Progress towards the Flagship Project

Fourfields Community Primary School has continued its work to support all children and families to become successful learners. The focus has been on strengthening the school's policies and practice in attendance and ensuring that these are clearly understood by all stakeholders as well as making sure support is in place for the increasing number of pupils at the school with additional needs.

Target:

To improve the overall attendance rate of pupils in the school, promoting a positive school culture, reducing absenteeism, and ensuring that children have equal access to educational opportunities

Attendance continues to be a priority for school leaders this year. The attendance policy has been reviewed and revised in line with national changes. The Attendance Champion attended training by Inclusive Attendance Ltd and worked with staff and Governors to revise and re-set the culture around attendance to ensure that the school's response to improving attendance with Fourfields children and families was completely child centred. Training sessions ensured that staff and Governors understood the school's data and its context; were clear about the changes to legislation from September 2024 as outlined in the DfE 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' document. Time was also spent discussing the barriers to attendance and how they could support families to overcome these by promoting a sense of belonging, of being connected and a valued part of the Fourfields community. The school mantra is that 'everyone is responsible for attendance'. These changes to policy and practice were also shared with parents and carers and are published on the school's website.

Attendance is improving at 95.3% for 2023-24, increasing from 94% in the previous year and is above the national average. Overall attendance rates for DA pupils increased by 3% in 2023-24 to 93%, reducing the overall gap between overall attendance and PP attendance from 4% to 2%. Persistent Absence has also reduced. It is now currently 20% lower than the previous year at 20%. Requests for term time holidays have reduced by 50% in 2025 from 202 (2024) to 106. Penalty notices have also reduced from 69 (2024) to 4 in 2025.

Although leaders are pleased with the improvements they are making, they are not complacent and are keen for attendance to improve further as when children are not at school, 'they are losing learning time'. The Attendance Champion explained how the persistent focus on developing strong relationships with families and with children, together with early intervention and effective monitoring of data, play a significant part in the school's improved attendance figures. Disadvantaged, SEND and Year 6 groups of learners are the school's current focus groups.

Rigorous tracking and analysis of attendance data is key. The Attendance Champion has a tracker in place which includes key data for each child, and she has refined this data system over time to ensure it is succinct and captures the most useful trends for action. The focus is on the number of days of absence so that intervention is early, and support is identified and put in place swiftly to avoid pupils becoming persistent absentees. By identifying risk factors early, intervention is bespoke to meet and support the needs of the child and their family. The Attendance Champion was able to share a number of individual success stories with the assessor. Leaders cited how these were due to the positive interactions and strong relationship that children and families had with staff and with the Attendance Champion in particular. She regularly provides coaching support and makes herself available for calls and meetings including home visits.

Pupil voice has played a bigger part in the creation of intervention plans than in previous years. Leaders have made sure that pupil responses about school avoidance are at the forefront of support plans and this is paying dividends in improving attendance of the more hard to reach children and their families and is evidenced by the significant reduction in persistent absence figures. Leaders rightly say that identifying 'the right type of intervention' is vital if there is to be an improvement in attendance.

Rewards are not given for good attendance – the Headteacher is very clear that good attendance is an expectation of all pupils at Fourfields Community Primary School and is one of the school's non-negotiables. However, the school is strongly committed to putting in place a range of measures to support parents to overcome any barriers their child may have with attending school regularly. This was evidenced by Year 6 parents with children with low attendance who spoke to the assessor. They were very clear that the school had supported them and their child to attend school with one saying, 'The school could not have done anything more for my child. They go above and beyond'. Positive phone calls to parents and carers are made by leaders where improvements in attendance have been made and/or maintained.

Practice at Fourfields now includes regular 'meet and greet' at the gate/classroom door by staff in the mornings and ensuring that every child is spoken to and 'noticed' by staff in line with the school's 'relational' and community ethos. There is increased telephone and email communication with parents and carers by class teachers and Teaching Assistants. When attendance letters do need to be sent home, changes to the content have been made. A graph is now included which shows parent and carers the attendance of their child in comparison to their peers. Leaders have found that this is more powerful than making a comparison to national data. For reluctant and struggling attenders, breakfast club is used to support children to get ready for their day in the classroom. The Well-being Coach works weekly with a small group of pupils with low attendance and is currently working with a group of Year 6 pupils. This work includes developing pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence as well as engaging them in projects like planning the school's sensory garden to encourage them to enjoy coming to school and to be involved in activities beyond the classroom.

Much support takes place with families to help with children whose attendance is low or who refuse to attend school. The Attendance Team signposts parents to Early Help and to external agencies for support with mental health, for example. The LA inclusion team and EBSA have also been involved. A trip to the pantomime (and a hot breakfast) took place in the Christmas holiday for families in receipt of the pupil premium, funded by HAF vouchers but planned and organised by school staff. This was well attended and a trip to the seaside is planned over the Summer. Activities such as these reinforce a sense of belonging to school and foster/maintain positive relationships with families.

Next Steps

- Continue to develop strong relationships with families of targeted pupils.

- Consider adding the 'Attendance Matters' mantra from the DfE document to staff lanyards and to the school email valediction.

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Agreed Actions for the Next Steps in the Flagship Project

To create and establish a resourced nurture provision (Inclusion hub) for children in EYFS

Fourfields Community Primary School has an incoming cohort of children with significant needs for September 2025. This includes a possible 10 children with EHCPs. To support with the transition into EYFS and to meet emerging needs, leaders intend to set up and establish an inclusion hub. Their over-arching aim is to create a nurturing, inclusive and positive environment that will enable these children to access mainstream education and be successful.

Target One Assistant Headteacher Inclusion and SENCo to continue with visits to schools in Half Term 6 with inclusion hubs and to special schools to observe best practice

- Discuss findings with senior leaders; agree format and practice for use in in-house setting
- SLT to consider and agree best space/area, resourcing including finance and staffing for the inclusion hub

Target Two Establish and set up the Inclusion Hub

- Set up the physical space for the provision including décor, furnishings and resources (End of Half Term 6 2025)
- Provide CPD based on EHCP needs for staff based in the inclusion hub (Half term 6 and Autumn Term Half term 1 2025)
- Assistant Headteacher Inclusion and SENCO to establish and put in place policies and practice for use in the inclusion hub (Half Term 6 2025)
- Assistant Headteacher Inclusion and SENCO to prepare a detailed transition programme for first cohort of children and their families (Half Term 6 2025)

Target Three Welcome first cohort of children into the Inclusion Hub

- Key inclusion hub staff to welcome children into the daily life of the provision through a well planned and executed transition programme for children and their families (Week 1 September 2025)
- Senior leaders to monitor, evaluate and review provision in the inclusion hub on a weekly basis for Autumn Half term 1 and then as a regular part of the school's monitoring schedule (ongoing 2025-2026)
- Senior leaders to provide regular feedback about the work of the inclusion hub to all stakeholders including governors.

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Overview

Fourfields Community Primary School is an over-subscribed, two form entry semi-rural primary school in the fast growing village of Yaxley, near Peterborough. There are currently 452 pupils on roll. The school has a predominantly White British community with 8% EAL. There is a high number of pupils with SEND and the number of pupils with EHCPs is significantly above average. Outcomes at KS2 in 2024 were above average.

The Headteacher is well established, having been at the school for over 10 years. She also shares her expertise through her work as a part time school improvement adviser for the local authority. The Headteacher is supported by three Assistant Headteachers, a SENCo, and by an experienced Chairs of Governors.

Leaders take pride in being an inclusive and nurturing 'family school' where 'no child is passed without being spoken to'. It is a warm and friendly school that celebrates its community and is proud of its 'home-grown' staff at all levels. The Headteacher began the review day by describing the school as 'relational'. Leaders know the local area well and work together to provide 'what works best for our children' so that they enjoy school and make good progress.

The relentless focus on high quality first teaching and on meeting individual needs comes from a 'fantastic' and 'committed' staff team who make sure the pupils at Fourfields receive a full and enriched curriculum. The Assistant Headteachers described how staff nurture each other and that no one works in isolation and the Chair of Governors told the assessor how staff at Fourfields 'feel included and professionally challenged.'

During the learning walk, leaders explained how they continually adapt the curriculum to meet individual and cohort need. This was confirmed by the inclusion teacher and by the Chair of Governors who both described how provision is adapted to ensure it is accessible for all and to ensure identified gaps are addressed. The Chair of Governors went on to describe the inclusive nature of the school as 'children are with their peers, no matter what.' Spaces such as the 'space station' are available for pupils who need time to self -regulate.

In lessons, there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere with all pupils engaged in their learning and keen to take part in class activities and discussion. Adaptive strategies including scaffolding and support from teaching assistants are an everyday part of practice in classrooms at Fourfields. They are used with confidence by pupils and for them, are a natural part of their daily learning.

The breadth of the curriculum is evident from displays in classrooms and corridors and from the school's website and gallery area where photographs display pupils reading with the school's therapy dog, enjoying forest school and a range of visits, including a visit to Westminster.

The Year 5 and 6 pupils who spoke to the assessor appreciate the range of activities available for them including cooking, art club and having the opportunity to be a school ambassador at an event for parents and carers. One pupil said how they had enjoyed 'cooking outdoors at forest school'. Teamwork and creative planning experiences have been on offer most recently during the group's sensory garden project. The children explained their ideas clearly and shared their plan of the garden with its designated areas such as the 'cosy corner', 'work stations', paths with different textures and the pond. The children described how they hope that the garden will provide a 'quiet, calm and relaxing space' for all pupils at Fourfields. They are looking forward to seeing the pond once it has been installed after the half term holiday and to liaising with members of the forest school to make bug hotels to put in the garden. One pupil excitedly shared his experiences of being the project's photographer and was rightly proud of his photographs showing their plans.

The staff at Fourfields Community Primary School feel 'part of a family'. They say they are well supported by their colleagues and by the Headteacher. They undertake regular CPD and this commitment to staff personal development contributes to the positive working environment at the school. All staff who spoke to the assessor agreed that the school is very supportive and 'will go the extra mile to support anyone' in line with its SHINE values.

The parents who spoke to the assessor had no doubt about the high-quality support that they had received from staff at all levels for their children. All agreed the staff were 'very approachable and always ready to listen and to help'. Any concerns were addressed straightaway. One parent told me how her child had suffered from anxiety at his previous school and had been a school refuser but that since arriving at Fourfields, his attendance to school had hugely improved due to the school's 'amazing support', adaptive approaches and 'willingness to listen'. Her only wish was that the school would expand to a secondary school!

Fourfields Community Primary School shows what is possible when a school focuses on engaging the whole community in learning. The clear vision from the Headteacher and her senior team has inspired all staff to work together to ensure every child can access a rich and engaging curriculum that considers individual needs.

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It was clear from evidence seen and discussed during the day that progress has been made with the flagship project. Leaders' future plans for EYFS nurture provision demonstrate the school's commitment to developing further their successful 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 Alison Merrills

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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