



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



**School Name:** Outwood Academy Adwick  
Windmill Balk Lane, Woodlands  
Doncaster, DN6 7SF

**Head/Principal:** Mr Andy Scruby

**IQM Lead:** Ms Joy Simpkin

**Date of Review:** 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022

**Assessor:** Sylvia Cramp

### **IQM Cluster Programme**

**Cluster Group:** Inclusion Pioneers

**Ambassador:** Sarah Linari

**Date of Next Meeting:** Autumn Term 2022

**Next Cluster Group Meeting Focus:** TBC

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

- Self-Evaluation Report
- Detailed plans, records, and photographs of reading interventions
- Social media including Website and Twitter
- Tour of academy

### **Meetings held with:**

- Principal
- Vice Principal Deep Support
- Inclusion Co-ordinator
- Associate Vice Principal
- Assistant Principal for Literacy and Numeracy (Y7 and Y8)
- Early Career Teachers
- Vice Principal
- Careers Lead
- Enrichment Lead
- Student Parliament representatives
- Mental Wellbeing Ambassadors



### Summary of Targets from 2021-2022

Outwood Academy Adwick's targets for this year have focused on embedding a culture of aspiration and achievement based on positive relationships and mutual respect. Reflecting the deep commitment from Senior Leaders and staff to supporting every child who enters the academy, every possible solution is sought to overcome barriers and ensure solutions.

#### **Target 1: To further develop the positive reading culture within the academy (listening and reading) that supports a range of students, in particular SEMH.**

An incredible transformation in reading has taken place throughout the academy, inspiring a love of reading, in addition to targeting students with low reading ages. Inspirational leadership has been provided by the Assistant Principal for Literacy and Numeracy, based on extensive primary experience, in collaboration with the Vice Principal Deep Learning. Enthusiasm and passion bubbled over as they shared the achievements of the previous academic year.

Remarkable progress has been achieved by students with very low reading ages – on entry to Year 7 40% of students had a reading age below 9 years. The majority now access most curriculum subjects, increasing their self-esteem and flourishing alongside their peers. Two Literacy Specialists have received training from the Assistant Principal in strategies including Fresh Start Inc, Toe by Toe, and kinaesthetic spelling techniques. A cosy and well-organised teaching room has been developed and a full timetable of interventions are available based on detailed reading assessments.

The Vice Principal proudly shared how “the huge, huge impact” made by receiving over thirty hours of English intervention is changing students' lives. Several have improved their reading ages by 4 and 5 years with many more improving by 2 or 3 years. Average progress of 2.6 levels was made in just half a term. Beneath the impressive statistics are students who avoided reading until they realised, they could actually achieve. Quotes from students on display include “I love reading and I am more confident” and “intervention helps a lot with your confidence and learning. It has improved my reading age by three years”.

A clear structure of phonics is followed up with Reciprocal Reading twice weekly, sharing such books as ‘Wave Me Goodbye’ by Jacqueline Wilson and ‘The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas’ by John Boyne. Due to many students rocketing through the scheme, attention is now being given to those who have plateaued in their reading ability.

The importance of teaching reading throughout all subjects has been emphasised by staff training. Staff have also been made aware of the reality of a student's ability based on their reading age. Heads of Department and teachers now plan for key words and phrases related to each subject to ensure understanding, correct pronunciation and increasing vocabulary. Seating plans ensure a spread of reading ability to enable all students to access reading content and complete tasks. Weekly reading sessions are held in tutor groups and all tutors have access to every student's reading age.



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The Assistant Vice Principal acknowledged the excellent teaching provided by the Teaching Assistants. They have a passion for teaching reading and are amazing staff.

A positive reading culture is spreading successfully through the academy. Accelerated Reader is used in library lessons every week. For more able readers, awards are presented for becoming millionaire readers including Kindles and vouchers. The Assistant Principal shared photographs of the recent Millionaire's Brunch where students were awarded book trophies engraved with their names and a bookmark with a light for cosy bedtime reading.

The library is now open from 7.50am every day and also during breaktimes and lunchtime with 50% more students accessing the library than previously. World Book Day was celebrated with dressing up – as the Assistant Principal explained, her biggest achievement of the year was to encourage staff in the maths department to dress up as Mr Men characters! Great effort is made to share all reading events and achievements via social media, Instagram in particular in order to reach the students themselves.

By providing students with the ability to read, the level of disruptive behaviour in lessons has reduced significantly. The Associate Vice Principal shared how one student who had been repeatedly suspended was now running up to staff to tell them about their increased reading age. She concluded, "Students know they can now access everything else, and they are asking for literacy and numeracy interventions."

Plans are already in place for the new academic year. All Y6 students have had their reading ages assessed during the recent transition days to ensure that no time is wasted in providing interventions where necessary in September. The library is being developed based on student suggestions, a 'Let's Read' web page is well on the way to launching with links to reading software, rewards, and initiatives whilst future events include a Harry Potter Evening with wizarding classes! The reading adventure continues!

### **Target 2: To increase the use of sensory areas within the academy that fosters resilience and personal skills; used Post 16 and into adulthood.**

A sensory area has been developed in a small room inside The Bridge to provide a quiet space for vulnerable students. Designed and painted by a student experiencing challenging issues, this was the initial step in encouraging them back into the academy. Only a few months later they are now attending a college and have a future to look forward to. The Vice Principal is keen to extend the resources according to what the students themselves feel they need.

The academy has invested in making opportunities available for students who are struggling to engage with the academic curriculum and need life skills to function as an adult. One TA is using her previous experience in hair and beauty to provide a Level 2 qualification in hairdressing and there are plans to provide washing facilities on site. Transport and PPE have been provided to enable a student to attend a mechanics course one day a week and they are now flourishing.



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The Careers Lead emphasised how staff are determined to open their students' eyes to the opportunities available beyond the immediate area. Students are going to university in September aspiring to be doctors, pilots, nurses etc Past students complete work experience at the academy and some move on to teacher training within the Trust. Every student has personalised careers guidance in Y11. A Careers Fair includes both local and national providers and employers including graduate schemes and apprenticeships so that students have an end goal to pursue. Y10 students with no family links to Higher Education have visited universities in Sheffield to ensure everyone knows about the available opportunities.

### **Target 3: Continued inclusive support from External Providers; driving forwards positive mental health within the academy.**

The Inclusion Team meets weekly to discuss students across Y7, Y8 and Y9 with a separate meeting to discuss students Y9 and above including Sixth Form. Referrals are completed to external agencies as appropriate. The academy is providing immediate access to counselling sessions from a trained counselling service for anyone experiencing significant challenges with their mental health. As the Vice Principal explained, students need an immediate response.

The academy continues to have excellent relationships with services provided by the Local Authority. CAMHS have provided sessions for students to manage stress over exam time in addition to signposting students and families to specific support. Working in partnership with the School Nursing Team, an appointment system enables students to receive advice on such issues as healthy eating, self-harm, and body image. The Vice Principal Deep Support and the Safeguarding and Lead Learning Manager have become trained ambassadors on the Anna Freud Programme which provides guidance on supporting students experiencing extreme trauma, anxiety, and bereavement.

To build up resilience and personal skills, Forest School is an ongoing project provided by Flying Futures. Established by an ex-PE Teacher and a retired Police Officer who have many years' experience of working at Outwood Academy Adwick, the Second Chance Team provides group sessions in anger management alongside individual interventions.

### **Target 4: Continue to embed the mental wellbeing strategy utilising student Mental Wellbeing Ambassadors and Student Parliament.**

It was a pleasure to meet representatives from the Student Parliament and the recently formed Mental Wellbeing Ambassadors, their confidence increasing as they described their roles. Suggestions for activities are collected from students and discussed by the Deputy and the Prime Minister before presenting their suggestions and requirements to the SLT. A student in Y9 described litter picking and tree planting in addition to joining the Race for Life. They also contribute to presentations in assemblies and tutor group sessions. All the students recognised the importance of helping other students and society. One project has focused on removing plastic from the environment. Sustainable water bottles have been trialled and ranked with the next step to access funding.



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During the recent transition days, tours were given to Y6 students, giving them information about how the classes are organised, the rules and consequence system and collaborative learning structures including Buzz and Go. They enthusiastically shared the excitement of being the Star Student, resulting in an invitation to spend Friday breaktime enjoying hot chocolate and playing games with music on. Students are also encouraged to Thank a Teacher and give out postcards with their message of thanks. When I asked what they thought of getting purple praise stickers, the response was unanimous – “It’s so simplistic but it makes me happy” was a typical response. “We also gave out certificates to teachers and they had to have their photographs taken so now they know what we feel like!”

After hearing about the many achievements of the Mental Wellbeing Ambassadors, I was astonished to hear that they have only worked together for a few months! Their mature confidence was reflected in their feeling that the group was not too big at the moment although they would want to grow. They have started to hold drop-in sessions twice a week when students can settle down to an activity such as mindful colouring and have a drink and snack. “There is always a staff member on hand in case anyone needs additional support,” one ambassador emphasised. At the moment they admitted it was trial and error to find out what worked.

Aiming to help students, they also want to encourage staff to reach out and remove any stigma attached to talking about mental health. All the ambassadors recently organised themselves baking cupcakes which they took to share with staff at an SLT meeting to explain what they wanted to do and what support they would be needing. They have also advertised themselves in assemblies, display boards in tutor groups and flyers. Every ambassador came across as extremely reflective and respectful of each other.

### **Agreed Targets for 2022-2023**

The academy’s targets for the coming academic year continue to offer additional experiences and opportunities whilst re-establishing links with families.

#### **Target 1 To develop and build upon the use of sensory areas within the academy that fosters resilience and personal skills; used post 16 and into adulthood.**

- To fully establish the outside sensory area and garden, providing an outside area to promote good mental health and positive engagement.
- To explore a range of opportunities including animal therapy.

#### **Target 2 To encourage strong positive links with parents and our community following COVID**

- To re-establish the Family Focus Days which offer a wide range of activities for the whole family including designing mugs and creating photo gifts.
- To encourage strong positive links with parents and primaries through transition and Summer School. To promote what the academy has for young people and the community in general.



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- Support and guidance for parents in gaining basic skills in literacy. To offer after school sessions to support parents.
- To encourage understanding of the curriculum by running Literacy and Numeracy Events for parents in the Autumn Term.

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

The IQM Leads have attended two sessions this year as one was cancelled in the Spring Term due to Covid.

#### **November 2021: Reading; Pupil Premium; Behaviour**

This provided additional points for reflection on the developments taking place in reading provision and positive behaviour.

#### **July 2022: Kingswood Alternative provision: Behaviour Policy, Literacy and Reading**

Interesting to hear about the journey taken by an Alternative Provision setting. Discussion points to be shared with Deep Support team.

### **Overview**

Outwood Academy Adwick is changing lives. The Principal aims to transform the academy and transform the community, providing opportunities for every student to spread their wings. Based on deep reflection over every policy and intervention, with the support of a hugely dedicated staff team, this amazing academy focuses on what will make the most impact for each particular student at that particular time.

Outwood Academy Adwick is a large secondary academy with Sixth Form provision in an area of significant deprivation on the outskirts of Doncaster. Over 40% of the students are disadvantaged and 18.9% are on the SEND register. Whilst many students have achieved below the national average on entry, expectations are high, and progress is above national average. The academy has been part of the Outwood Grange Academies Trust since 2009, making good use of shared expertise and resources.

The Principal is determined that the academy responds to students as individuals and is not simply an exam factory. Building on the core Outwood principles of 'Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible', students are welcomed every day by Senior Leaders at the gate and every teacher welcomes students into their lessons. All Y6 students attend two transition days in July and SEND students have an additional day. A free uniform is provided when students join the academy and there are no non-uniform days to place anyone in a position of disadvantage. With the closure of community centres, PE facilities have been used by external agencies as part of a two-week Summer School. The academy now plans to fund this annually to support the most vulnerable students.

To promote the best possible start to the new academic year, students have already moved up to the next year group to begin their new curriculum. The Principal explained



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how this approach reinvigorates both staff and students, provides a clear focus and everyone is ready to begin straight away in September.

Policies are adjusted to meet the context of the academy community. A huge emphasis is now placed on Positive Discipline to develop a sense of belonging which aims to ensure that students are in school as much as possible following a period of high exclusion rates. Suspensions and sanctions have been reduced to 6% over the Autumn Term from 73% two years ago and there have been no permanent exclusions this last year, even though behaviour has become even more challenging following the Covid-19 pandemic. The Principal acknowledged the continual need to retrain students in the high expectations of behaviour expected every Monday morning and especially following holidays, with reminders to take pride and develop self-belief.

A major alteration has taken place in the Reflection Room where students disrupting lessons would previously spend the day completing their own work in silence. This is now taken as an opportunity for Senior Leaders to reinforce learning strategies and teach basic skills, following a shared breakfast. The focus is on students still needing to know they are wanted and will be given the best life chances.

Effective structures continue to be in place to support any student finding lessons challenging. The Bridge offers a safe space for a student when they need to regulate whilst the Personalised Learning Centre (PLC) provides bespoke interventions with academic work. Inclusion Leaders and Designated Safeguarding Leads are based between the Bridge and the PLC, which enables effective and immediate communication and the ability to deal with issues. Safeguarding also continues over the holidays with a member of staff always on duty. The Vice Principal explained that they do not refer many students to Early Help considering the context of the school because so much is done by the academy therefore issues do not need passing on.

Many examples of students supported to succeed were shared during the day by both IQM Leads. Each case reflected the depth of knowledge about each individual and their particular challenges. Developing a student's self-esteem is a key priority to enable them to engage successfully. Also providing reasonable adjustments as a matter of course, for example, a student with ADHD working in the library to enable them to concentrate.

Trusting relationships have been developed between staff and students, as was encapsulated during the Y11 assembly. The Vice Principal explained how staff are invited to deliver assemblies on themes of personal significance. Demonstrating a warm relationship with students as soon as they began to file quietly into the hall, the PE member of staff engaged in genuine conversations with individuals as everyone settled down. Several students had specific places to sit to support them joining a large group or used headphones to manage the situation. Aided by a simple presentation to highlight key points, students engaged respectfully in defining LGBTQ+. Sharing a deeply personal journey, the level of warmth and sensitivity was tangible by the end as everyone took in the clear message being openly shared with them.

The academy offers a vibrant mix of academic subjects combined with creative arts and sports. In a music lesson every student was fully involved playing keyboards, guitars



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and drums whilst striking examples of art were on display. Students are also encouraged to take part in extra-curricular activities. The Enrichment Lead described clubs for academic subjects, crafts, and sport. The Robotics Club has successfully created its own robot and are in competition for a national event final in New York. Students now perform in assemblies and have put on a creative arts showcase, as highlighted on Twitter. Sport has also been used to raise motivation to achieve in maths so a student can then attend the Sports Club.

Staff I met were extremely positive about the team spirit and supportive working ethos. Charity events have included fun runs and staff and student challenges. Clips of lessons and events are shared on TV screens around the academy so that everyone can celebrate what is happening. Staff also stepped in to support the community over lockdown, handing out food parcels, wellbeing resources and stationery in a local supermarket.

The Early Career Teachers (ECTs) have both loved their training and appreciate the high level of support from everyone. I was told that "you bump into so many SLT it's a natural opportunity to discuss issues which means they are solved quicker". They have also found in-house CPD sessions really beneficial – 45 snappy minutes which provide practical and realistic strategies based on wider knowledge of the students. For one of the ECTs, Outwood Grange Academies Trust was the only Initial Teacher Training institution which would agree to take them on due to loss of sight. The Principal explained how it was imperative for them to explore from the possible and model inclusion in practice for the students. With access to supportive technology and an additional staff member alongside, this has been a huge success culminating with the ECT recently receiving a Silver Award in the Outstanding New Teacher category at the National Teaching Awards.

Senior Leaders readily praised the whole staff team. The Vice Principal openly stated, "If we didn't have such committed staff, because they truly care, we wouldn't be able to achieve so much." This was demonstrated when staff illness from Covid resulted in Senior Leaders cleaning toilets and staff washing up in kitchens. As the Inclusion Lead commented, "We are a family. We roll our sleeves up and help each other, regardless of role."

The inclusive nature of the academy shines through in every aspect. Behaviour and attitudes to learning are still developing but the calm consistency of staff is clearly making a difference. When I asked students what they particularly liked about their academy, one memorable reply was that "it gives the most support for kids with disabilities and the amount of support staff we have."

Outwood Academy Adwick has many plans for the future. Increasing links are being developed with local primary schools, especially since their main feeder school has recently joined the Outwood Grange Academies Trust. The Principal explained how they can now oversee progress and opportunities from 3 to 19. Primary children are accessing shared lessons in art and science and have joined sports days. There are also plans within the Trust to develop an Outwood Registered Alternative Provision to support students at risk of permanent exclusion. It would offer a range of vocational and





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therapeutic options together with other Outwood academies with a focus on academic reintegration to mainstream education and positive academic outcomes.

The staff at Outwood Academy Adwick strive continually to discover the appropriate pathway for each student. The academy is a wonderful example of what inclusion is about and a worthy Centre of Excellence. The massive impact from the literacy and numeracy programmes on its own should be shared throughout the country as it provides young people with the skills they need to move forward in their lives. The Inclusion Lead quietly stated that "Students arrive treading water and some are sinking. Now they are swimming and have somewhere to get to." Her biggest hope is that students who have not found it easy will drive past the academy in 5 or 10 years' time and think 'it were alright there.'

**Assessor: Sylvia Cramp**

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

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