



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



School	St Edward's Catholic Primary School Green Street Upton Park London E13 9AX
Head/Principal	Paul Underwood
IQM Lead	Ms Samaira Naz
Date of Review	25th June 2026
Assessor	Ms Julia Ridley

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group	Drive to Thrive
Ambassador	Dr Kenny Frederick
Next Meeting	Autumn 2026
Meeting Focus	Not yet decided.

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Spring 2025	19 th March 2025	Yes
Summer 2025	10 th June 2025	Yes
Autumn 2025	8 th October 2025	Yes
Spring 2026	20 th January 2026	Yes
Summer 2026	22 nd April 2026	Yes



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The Impact of the Cluster Group

It is commendable that the school has once again attended all of this year's cluster group meetings.

The IQM lead spoke about how relevant and useful she finds the cluster group meetings to be, for her own professional development as well as being reassured that the school is on the same journey as the other Flagship schools.

In the Autumn term, the school that was hosting was a very different setting from St Edward's. Out of London, it has lots of outdoor space without the restrictions of an inner London school. The school has designed a supplementary curriculum called the CUSP access for pupils who may need a little extra support. It is supported by a family coaching programme, bespoke for parents from specific backgrounds. St Edward's are keen to adopt some of the approaches. The school no longer offer pupils 1:1 support and have moved to a different model which the IQM lead found very thought-provoking. They work with an expanding group of therapists which is something for St Edward's to consider.

Another Newham school hosted the second cluster group day where the main discussions focussed around early language development and the over-use of technology. The focus on core vocabulary gave good advice that the school has put into place. They are flexible which is the same for St Edward's.

Due to the tube strike, the next cluster day had to be a virtual meet-up. It was still a very successful and thought-provoking day. The school had prepared a very interesting video of the tour, which included a look at their PMLD provision.

The SEND non-negotiables which are part of the resource provision were present in all classrooms.

We ended the discussion by agreeing that St Edward's make the best of what they have but they do not have the space that the visited schools have.

The IQM lead really values the sessions. She comes back to school buzzing with ideas. All schools know that they have to change and adapt as the children change. Schools are very willing to share resources, and it has helped to build links and contacts.



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Evidence

Discussions were held with:

- Headteacher
- Deputy Head
- Assistant Head
- Pupils (Pupil Parliament, Ambassadors and Chaplaincy team)
- TAs
- SENDCo
- Teachers
- Parents
- Chair of Governors

Additional Activities

- A tour of the school and learning walk, led by the Head boy and head girl.
- Review of documentation



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Evaluation of Annual Progress towards the Flagship Project

The impact of the first year of the Flagship project is already evident in all parts of the school. I was fortunate to speak to pupils, teachers, and other school professionals about the introduction of the Makaton communication system this year and got very positive feedback from all stakeholders.

"It helps us to communicate with children who can't speak." Year 6 pupil

The school were very strategic in selecting which augmentative communication system would suit their needs best, by speaking to other schools in the cluster and the LA SENDCo meetings. The school is part of a seven school Trust, so they worked closely with their partner schools in selecting Makaton, which they feel is most appropriate for their needs.

As the school decided to train the whole school, the financial outlay has been quite considerable, but it is felt to be worth the expense as it allows all pupils to have a voice, particularly those who are not yet able to communicate verbally.

Everyone employed at the school took part in the taster training sessions on a couple of INSET days in September. Each person was given a lanyard with the most useful twenty signs on them. The rationale is that pupils need to be able to communicate with everyone and this gives a good level of consistency throughout the school.

Parents attended a Makaton training workshop in October where they learnt more about Makaton and why it was the school's new communication system of choice. They were also introduced to the first twenty signs so that these can be used at home too. To be fully inclusive and reach all parents, there was a morning, afternoon, and evening session as well as an online session. Parents were told the theory behind signing as well as the benefits it will have for the children.

To be successful, it was agreed that the signing approach needed to be visible everywhere, so staff began to model signs in the classroom, in assemblies and on the corridor and playgrounds. Staff also encouraged pupils to sign to each other as well as using the teachers' lanyards as an additional resource.

The benefits have been great. The verbally communicative children have wholeheartedly taken it on board, and will sign to their peers in the classroom, assembly and in the playground. Pupils told me that everyone can sign. Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) have also benefited. Support staff value their new understanding of the Makaton signs and have found it to be very successful on a day-to-day basis.

They said there is a sense that more people are included. They sign the bucket song and the hello song. They told me about posters displayed around the school as a handy reference guide to the signs.



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The SALT team have just delivered a coffee morning for parents where they made signs available to parents. They had access to a wide range of videos on how to communicate with your child. It was very well attended.

Another part of the flagship project was linked to using staff specialist knowledge, gleaned from their individual professional development pathways, to enhance the whole school communication offer.

The Inclusion lead has successfully completed her NPQH qualification. She benefitted from the collaborative approach, and she has built strong professional networks with colleagues from other schools. Senior leaders have completed the NPQSL with its strong focus on evidence-based research which has also benefitted the school. Support staff have completed their Teaching Assistant qualifications. The new SENDCo is also completing the mandatory qualification and sharing her knowledge with all the staff at staff meetings.



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Agreed Actions for the Next Steps in the Flagship Project

The second year of the flagship project is a continuation of the first year, moving from the introduction of the Makaton signing system to the embedding of Makaton throughout the school. The second year will include more formalised training and have a consistent programme where vocabulary is increased systematically.

In September, Early Years staff as well as the Inclusion Lead and SENDCo will have an INSET day, dedicated to them getting training on the next level of the Makaton training programme.

Work has started on developing a 2-year cycle with signs of the week linked to the seasons and termly themes. This will be completed and will be in operation during the second year.

Subject ambassadors will be asked to support teachers in deciding which signs are most appropriate for each topic. Staff have been positive about this approach and are enthusiastic about their roles in enhancing communication.

Parents will be invited back, to learn new signs and to see how it has helped through the year. Their advice will be sought about the approach, and suggestions will be welcomed as always.

The chaplaincy team are keen to know signs for religion which they want to use more in assemblies.

In other areas, there will be a focus on developing therapeutic classrooms that are not too bright and overwhelming. A more subdued relaxing environment will be key.

The Trust has developed a new assessment tool called i-Track which is able to identify small steps of progress for SEND pupils. This is being rolled out in September so data will be inputted throughout the year.



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Overview

It was a delight to return to St Edward's Catholic Primary school and meet such polite and enthusiastic pupils who love the opportunity to talk about their unique school. Behaviour has always been very good at the school with personal development being a real strength of the school.

The school has a saying: "once a St. Teddy, always a St Teddy!" which sums up the very strong sense of belonging that everyone has to St. Edward's Catholic Primary school.

Staff are also a strength of the school, their commitment and enthusiasm for Inclusion were evident in all our discussions. Support staff are very appreciative of the senior leadership team describing them as being very supportive and that they work hard to accommodate all staff needs. One person told me that she loves working at the school!

Parents were very complimentary about the school. They feel that they are treated as an equal partner and their voice is listened to. Communication is excellent and they have a clear understanding of their child's current progress and next steps. One parent said that the communication book that is shared between school and home is a godsend for her to know what is happening at school. All pupils with additional needs attend all extracurricular opportunities.

The Head Girl and Head Boy from Year 6 took me on a tour of the school. They were excited to show me "Evergreens" - the new provision for 2-year-olds, where the children were fully engaged in their play/learning activities both inside and outside of the classroom. The activities such as water play, playing with miniature figures and listening to a story together were age-appropriate and fun!

The Head girl spoke to me about her weekly prefect duty where she supports the 2-year-olds at lunchtime by joining in with their play or reading to them. She is very proud of the role of the prefects around the school and said that everyone enjoys their duties and being a leader.

The eight school values are displayed around the school. Pupils receive a bookmark for each one in assembly when they have shown the value in action. Once all are collected, the pupil gets a reward. The Christian ethos is ubiquitous around the school with biblical displays in the corridors as well as information about mass, prayers, and other religious facts. It is interesting to note that 45% of pupils who are now in the Early Years provision are non-Catholic. This is a school for everyone. There is a very strong sense of community cohesion in the school.

The two separate playgrounds are very inclusive, with accessible and varied pieces of equipment. The KS2 playground has various textures, artificial grass, and concrete as well as a pebbled area for sensory play. A nature exploration area as well as shaded benches allows relaxation times.

Pupils who want to be more active have access to a large MUGA, basketball court and table tennis tables as well as a green gym.



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The Key Stage 1 courtyard is a mini version of the KS2 playground regarding climbing apparatus as well as pupils having mud kitchens, construction areas, sand etc. There is something for everyone at break times.

The Head girl talked to me about how much she enjoyed the Blessed Mother Mary procession, followed by class photos at our Mary statue. This took place in May and was a whole school activity.

A trip to Zippo's circus, a themed lunch for Earth Day and the Commonwealth choir singing at the Carlton club all took place in May and are an example of the wide range of events that take place throughout the year.

Ten pupils from Year 5 were fortunate to go on a trip to Rome with another school from the Trust, where they saw the Pope, visited the Vatican, and explored the city. This was a highlight of their time at the school, they said.

Children benefit from a wide range of sporting activities and are rightly proud that they have recently achieved the platinum standard for the Sportsmark award. The West Ham Foundation support the school with sports sessions, as well as offering English and Maths support, and a new independent sports coaching team have also added value to the school's offer.

The school has become more of a community hub recently. It is used after school and at weekends by a local dance club; faith meetings and the summer camp is held within the school's premises.

The pupil representatives who spoke to me were drawn from the well-being committee, a history ambassador, a member of the chaplaincy team, a member of pupil parliament and a geography ambassador.

I got a strong sense of the leadership roles they have and their commitment to the school as they told me about the Worry box that they have introduced, their role as playground buddies, how they plan assemblies each week with the RE lead and how they support the catering team with decorating the dining space when they are having themed lunches.

They told me about how they use Makaton signs in assembly and how their pre-verbal peers access the signs. Everyone knows how to sign the school mission statement – Following Christ we reach our goals.

The Chair of Governors is a visible presence in the school and, with all the other members of the Governing Body, is an excellent critical friend to the school. He has a strong understanding of the school and its context. The Governors have done a learning walk to see the use of Makaton in the classrooms which was impressive.

The school has had a very successful first year as a Flagship school and have maintained all the high standards of previous years.



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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 Julia Ridley

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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

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Joe McCann MBA NPQH

Chief Executive Officer of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd