Report on IQM Inclusive School Award

School Name:	Broken Cross Primary Academy and Nursery
School Address:	Parkett Heyes Road Macclesfield Cheshire SK11 6UD
Head/Principal	Mrs Donna Lewis
IQM Lead	Mrs Kate Jones
Assessment Date	20th June 2024
Assessor	Mr Mike Bousfield

Sources of Evidence:

- Self-Evaluation Form for IQM.
- School Website.
- Whole school Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) data, register and example plans and timetables.
- School Development Plan and other strategic documents and action plans.
- Parent feedback and survey results.
- Governor Reports.
- Policies.
- Pupil Premium Strategy.
- Pupils' books.
- Learning Walk and Classroom Visits.

Meetings Held with:

- IQM Lead and Headteacher.
- Governors.
- Pupils.
- Teachers.
- Teaching Assistants.
- Pastoral Lead.

Overall Evaluation

High expectations are the norm at Broken Cross Primary Academy. The Leadership Team reinforces that only the best will do and takes responsibility to ensure that everyone achieves. This is accompanied by a nurturing and caring approach, in which the highest expectations of all are placed on themselves. No one is left behind and no one is alone on their journey. Support is extensive and gaps in that support would not be tolerated by anyone. Staff have an answer to everything, in the nicest possible way! The culture and ethos of the school are very strong but are not overworked into grandiose ideas. The messaging is simple, based on common sense and embraced by all.

The school is in the top 30% of the most deprived areas nationally but is surrounded by affluent neighbourhoods. Not long ago, numbers were low and the school was seen as the school of last resort in the community. This has been completely turned around and the school has developed a strong reputation for meeting the needs of all its pupils. Numbers have grown and the community is proud of the school. The culture created by the strong leadership, especially from the Headteacher, alongside the extensive expertise of the SEND Leader and the ability of all staff to meet the needs of pupils has made the school the first choice for many local families. Pupils from other local schools that are struggling to meet their needs are also welcomed into the "Language Lab", an enhanced provision for pupils with additional needs who do not meet the threshold for specialist provision.

Some Governors and members of staff live within the community and help facilitate the good communication that exists. For example, they have helped to promote the "Food Bus" initiative and signposted it to families, which allows them to buy groceries to the value of £35 for £8 each week. This is a good example of how the school aims to support its families. The plan to increase their independence and dignity by enabling them to run this scheme for themselves eventually, illustrates this also. The PTA, which did not exist a few years ago, now runs successful events and supports the important work that the school does to keep the cost of all activities down. Pupil Premium is also used to ensure that everything the school does is affordable to all and that all pupils have access, yet another illustration of how the community around Broken Cross Primary School is united.

When asked to describe his school, one Year 5 pupil said, "I would choose the Starry Sky picture by Vincent van Gogh [to represent Broken Cross]. Like the spiral in the picture, nothing ever stops here. Fun, learning and our abilities keep growing. Everyone is always finding something new and developing their passion to continue it".

Staff are equally effusive in their praise. Teaching Assistants talk with pride and knowledge of the work they do to support the children in school, particularly those with additional needs. They know that consistency is the key and follow the established structures with repetition. This consistency leads to the good results they get with children. They appreciate the great support they get from each other and all of the staff including Senior Leaders. They say that they would never be afraid or embarrassed to admit that they needed help and they know that they would get it straight away. "This is a second family for me, whatever problems I might be having, I can turn to anyone. I have had advice about my own family from staff here. I wouldn't find anywhere else like

it. We're all about the kids, too. They know that they can come to any member of staff, and they will help", one of them told me.

Parents are full of praise for the school and what it has done for their children. "When we drive or walk through the school gate, we feel happy and safe", one parent wrote to me, "the door is always open for any child, parent or member of staff and [Leaders] put their needs before anything else, they really do listen to what's being said". Another told me, "The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo) has been brilliant, making sure that we always know what support is in place. She takes her time to make sure we have all the understanding and support we need at home too".

"Happy faces are the most important things you can see in a school environment", the Headteacher told me. There are really strong relationships within the school and adults model the exemplary behaviour they expect of the children. The staff is aware of the need to be emotionally available for their pupils and they say that the Pastoral Lead is like gold and strengthens further the strong relationships with pupils and their parents. This strong sense of unity and mutual support is reflected in the participation of families in the Pride Club that has been set up by a member of staff to celebrate Macclesfield Pride. Forty-five children have joined this club and teachers told me that they have the full support of the parents for this inclusive ethos.

The fabulous outdoor environment, which has zones designed to meet the needs of children at each stage of their development, is another outstanding feature. Local volunteers have contributed to this environment through simple day-to-day maintenance. The large equipment that is a feature of the environment helps to develop children's motor skills progressively as they get older. Play time is structured so that risks are reduced for pupils. They can read with their friends or do other quiet activities if they want to. There are Play Leaders and zones within the playground for those who want a more active playtime. As a result, break times and lunch times are seamless, the children are safely occupied and entertained.

No summary of Broken Cross Primary School would be complete without mention of Bobby, the school's beloved dog. He brings joy to the whole school community and children are transformed when they see him. If they've had a wobbly day, a bad weekend or a traumatic event, a quiet walk with Bobby can be just the ticket to help them deal with their difficult emotions and regulate themselves again. He is a really important member of the school community.

This school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils and demonstrates that it holds inclusive values at the heart of everything it does. It was an absolute pleasure to spend the day here.

I am of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark's Inclusive School Award. There are only minor areas requiring development and the school is aware of these. I recommend that the school be awarded the Mark and be reassessed in three years.

I also recommend that the school should consider applying for Centre of Excellence status subject to the inclusion within its plans of the appropriate areas for development

and the completion of the Centre of Excellence documentation. If the school chooses to pursue this status and it were to be awarded the school would be subject to annual review from this point forwards.

Assessor: Mr Mike Bousfield

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:



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

Element 1 - The Inclusion Values of the School

"We want to be a Community School, in the heart of the community, that the community can be proud of". So said the Headteacher during one of our conversations during the assessment. "The success and growth of the school has had an impact on the whole community, pride and confidence have grown not only in the school but in individual members of the community themselves", she elaborated.

The school's success is built on strong relationships at all levels. There are very strong role models within the staff team that embody and enable this culture. Communication is highly effective, timely and to the point. Honesty is seen as important, even when messages are very difficult to deliver. High expectations for everyone are explicit within all of this communication, but whereas these can sometimes arouse resistance in some individuals, the highly nurturing and personal approach that accompanies them here ensures that messages are received positively because recipients know they are delivered with a great deal of care.

According to one member of staff, excellent communication and culture were developed when the school was very small, but somehow this small school ethos has been maintained as numbers have grown substantially. "I know that every school will tell you that they have an open-door policy, but in this school, it is genuinely true. The door is always open to anyone, and there is almost always someone who wants to see me, especially at the start of the day", commented the Headteacher.

Pupils themselves are the best ambassadors for the values of the school. They have a good understanding of what inclusion is and recognise the barriers that some children may have to being included fully and that they must help to ensure that everyone is included. They identify people with behavioural issues, such as anxiety, mental health, autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) as a group that would need extra care and support. "We would make sure that they were OK and not sad, we would offer them a helping hand or distract them", they told me. "I have learned that if people have disabilities, it doesn't define them. They can still do whatever they want in life. Children who have disabilities have strengths as well and they have something to offer everyone", one of them added. They chose the words exception and welcoming as the best words to describe their school. They explained that "it doesn't matter who you are or who you identify yourself as, or where you've come from in the past. You'll be accepted". They added that everyone has friends, and no one feels left out. "I came from another school and this school has been a completely new start for me. The teachers have been the main part of that, and they have made me who I am", one of them continued.

Other examples of the school's inclusive values in action include a card from a student who had just finished her placement, thanking everyone for the ethos within the school and the welcome she had been given, the attitude of Bobby the school dog, who is kind accepting and exceptionally friendly and The Breakfast Club which is open to all from 7:30 AM and free from 8:00 AM onwards.

Next Step:

- The school will broaden the perspective through which its strongly held values can be seen, through working towards recognition as a UNICEF rights-respecting school.

Element 2 - Leadership and Management and Accountability

The Senior Leaders at Broken Cross are very effective and provide strong direction, support and monitoring. Governors have strong trust in the Leadership Team and the information they provide. They feel that there is a robust conversation between themselves and the Headteacher and this prepares them well for conversations within the Trust. They told me that, in the Governors' meetings, there is no such thing as a stupid question and they get honest answers from the staff who attend the meetings. As a result, they feel very well-prepared and well-informed for external meetings. They share the vision of Senior Leaders for the school to be a safe nurturing environment that is based around the whole family. They recognise that many of their children and parents are affected by anxiety but believe that staff has the skills to meet these needs.

The Governor for SEND believes that she gets good information about the kinds of needs the pupil population has and the interventions that are in place to meet these. Governors are confident that interventions are well-chosen and effective because of the thorough reports they receive from the SENDCo. It is important to Governors that decisions are based solely on the interests of the people in school, "Decisions are made based on the needs of the children, not how it will look on the school's performance data," one of them told me.

Governors have easy access to training through the Trust's virtual office. The Trust makes sure that they are active and informs their practice. For example, training on the structure and purpose of Governor visits has had an impact and visits are now fulfilling for themselves and enriching for the staff. The expectations of visits are clear. Governors have also had recent training in Pupil Premium, Special Educational Needs, Safeguarding and Prevent.

Staff training is also prioritised in recognition that it is essential that they have the knowledge and understanding necessary to deliver the priorities of the school. Support staff are paid to attend training and staff meetings where this is beneficial to both them and the children. All staff appreciate the training they have had in mental health support and trauma-informed practice. They give examples of supporting children who have experienced domestic violence and understanding the impact of being born prematurely as indicators of the effectiveness of this training. Teaching Assistants talk about how they have adapted their practice as a result of the training they've had for example using precision teaching for learning tricky words in Key Stage 1.

Governors ensure that staff wellbeing is a high priority. They appreciate the skills of the Headteacher in this regard and, through their monitoring, recognise that low staff absence and good retention are indicators of this. "Wellbeing is about the little things, not grand gestures," said the Headteacher. Staff told me that they feel very well appreciated and supported.

Next Step:

- Governors to play an active part in establishing, communicating and monitoring the Centre of Excellence plan for the Inclusion Quality Mark.

Element 3 - Curriculum – Structure, Pupil Engagement and Adaption

"At Broken Cross Primary Academy and Nursery, we strive to provide a vibrant and exciting curriculum for our pupils to help them grow and develop with the skills that they need in the modern world", states the school's curriculum statement. Building Learning Power is the underlying philosophy, reinforcing the principles of Resilience, Reciprocity, Reflectiveness and Resourcefulness.

Learning within the curriculum supports the values of the school and pupils say that they find new passions and interests which they intend to pursue into their later lives. They love the opportunities that they've been given through their curriculum to learn to play a musical instrument, learn new games, take part in community events and competitions and develop new skills and talents. "I always wanted to be an artist. I love the way that I can express myself through painting and dance. It is something I want to do in the future," one of them told me. "Learning Design and Technology (DT) in school has inspired me to become a mechanic when I grow up", was another example. Pupils also talk with a great deal of pride about the work they did during Mental Health Week. They told me how they learned that each child has their own abilities, and they must show kindness to each other and focus on making themselves better.

There is a tiered approach to the teaching of mental health and wellbeing with the universal for all offer for all children through the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum and my happy mind. Outside agencies have commented on how well pupils understand their own emotions and anxieties and with real understanding. Beyond this, surveys are used to identify needs within the pupil population, any need or gap that is identified is allocated some provision. The Pastoral Lead is trained as an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) and works directly with children. Developing oracy has been a priority in the curriculum. Children come into school well behind their peers nationally.

All staff have been trained in Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) and Words Aware. Activities have been embedded within the curriculum at both the whole class level and for adaptation. Similarly, for Speech and Language Therapy, the universal provision for every child has been adapted so that the needs of those children who are behind can be accommodated. Reading for pleasure has been another high priority and families have been shown how to grow their own home library. A Reading Club, class texts, library visits, reading areas in the outdoor environment, Pupil Reading Leads, and recommended reads have resulted in children reading more widely and more often.

Teachers are very aware of the need to develop the cultural capital of their pupils and plan extensive high-quality learning experiences. This includes visits to galleries and museums, geography field trips and innovative learning experiences within the curriculum, such as the "people library" in which pupils were able to "borrow" visitors to the school and interview them. Learning is really well connected within the planning so that, for example when children learned about the Atlantic slave trade in the autumn term, this was followed up by a visit to Liverpool in the spring term. Not only did this reinforce the learning but ensured the repetition required to make the knowledge stick.

Next Steps:

- To review the PHSE curriculum and specifically strengthen the learning on safeguarding and career aspirations.

Element 4 - Teaching and Learning – Learning Environment, Planning Resources, Pedagogy

"Resilience, Reciprocity, Reflectiveness and Resourcefulness can be thought of as groups of learning muscles and just as our own bodily muscles need exercise to grow in strength, so it is the same for our learning muscles". Pedagogy at Broken Cross aims to "develop the strength and stamina of our learning muscles".

For those pupils who require it, many adaptations are made. The SENDCo has extensive knowledge and helps to plan and monitor the provision for children with additional needs. Much of the scaffolding that is used to support learners is provided by the additional adults in the classrooms or by teachers themselves. Targeted questioning and feedback, prompts, pre-teaching activities, discussions about key vocabulary, the introduction of concrete learning materials in Mathematics and many other devices are used to support pupils' learning.

Taking this support a step further, strategies such as work to reward, specific positive praise or providing green lines in Maths exercise books to guide the pupil to use the correct space were all evidenced in pupils' books. When an additional layer of support is needed, this may involve implementing the advice of external agencies, such as the Visual Impairment Service. All staff members are confident to adapt work for learners as necessary, and this includes Teaching Assistants who can work flexibly and independently using their knowledge of the pupils they support to ensure that all learning time is meaningful.

There is very much a learner-centred approach evident within the school. For example, one pupil who requires a differentiated curriculum but is very keen to remain within the whole class group has had this need accommodated. As much care as possible is taken to ensure that this pupil does not feel isolated from their peers or singled out.

In the Reception Class, I observed a pupil who, at the beginning of the year, would refuse to partake in any activity involving reading. This pupil has a keen interest in trains and this has been used by his teachers as a motivation to read. During one-to-one reading sessions, he can pick one small toy train from a box when he completes a section of text, the trains are happily returned at the end of the session. This has been so successful that this particular pupil now regularly asks the teacher to read.

In the Nursery, Speech and Language is a focus, reflecting the gaps within the children's experience and knowledge on entry. Staff are well-trained in Speech and Language and have high-quality interactions with learners. Personal social and emotional development is prioritised. There is support for parents through stay-and-play and sharing the work experiences; relationships and knowing the children well are key priorities.

Routines and procedures in school are followed consistently, helping all learners to understand and meet the expectations placed upon them. Structures such as "Now and Next", individual visual timetables, class visual timetables or visual cues worn by staff on a lanyard, help pupils follow the routines of their class.

Next Step:

- To fully embed the "Hunting not Fishing" assessment strategy across all foundation subjects (more information in Element 5 below).

Element 5 - Assessment

"At Broken Cross, we assess the whole child, and their development is core to our inclusive ethos. That means that we look not only at their academic attainment and progress, but, their social understanding, their mental health and readiness to learn," says the school's Inclusion Lead.

"Hunting not Fishing" is the school's innovative assessment procedure designed within the Trust, with Broken Cross staff heavily involved. As the name would suggest the principle is that teachers identify the outcomes and key learning, they are looking for pupils to demonstrate and structure activities that will enable this to happen. It is a useful assessment learning tool for teachers, allowing them to gather information from every lesson and collate this information to inform the planning for individual children and for small or large groups. Information at the top of each document identifies the key learning objectives, knowledge and vocabulary that students should demonstrate. A simple mapping grid summarises the achievement of individual pupils.

After a series of lessons, this can be triangulated with book scrutinies and uploaded onto achievement grids, which are then be fed into the school's information management system, allowing Senior Leaders and Subject Leaders to see at a glance the achievement of pupils across the curriculum. There are two points during the year at which data is downloaded and analysed carefully. This allows for the monitoring of the progress of individual children as well as for cohorts and specific groups of pupils. Pupil progress meetings between the Headteacher or other Senior Leaders and teachers take place more regularly, each half term. This ensures that vulnerable learners are monitored carefully and that all pupils make very good progress from their starting points.

The system allows for summative assessment to be formed from the outcomes of assessment for learning in the classroom. This means that for children with additional needs, information gathered from conversations and practical activities can be recorded and used to chart their achievement and progress. Support is given to all children through a variety of techniques, including retrieval practice, cooperative learning strategies and metacognitive techniques.

The school's marking and feedback policy recognises the value of in-the-moment feedback, given as close as possible to the point of learning. Peer marking, live marking, on-the-spot marking and verbal feedback are the normal ways in which pupils receive information that will improve their learning and achievement. Pink pen indicates that feedback has suggested that changes are necessary to achieve the learning goal suitable for that child. A mark with a green pen indicates that feedback has been given where particularly good learning or understanding has been demonstrated. These marks are made by teachers, support staff and children themselves.

Next Step:

- To fully embed the "Hunting not Fishing" assessment strategy across all foundation subjects.

Element 6 - Behaviour, Attitudes to Learning and Personal Development

Pupils respond to the respect they are shown and the high expectations of adults at Broken Cross Primary Academy so that behaviour is excellent, as one would expect. Strong routines and procedures help all pupils to feel safe and negotiate their way happily through the school day. A well-organised curriculum and an emphasis on accessibility for all ensure that engagement within lessons is very high. Pupils also know that they can rely on all adults for a consistent response and that they will be fair. Leaders recognise that this is very important to the families within their community, "We always get to the bottom of problems and ensure that they are fairly resolved, we never give up until we get to the truth", the Headteacher told me.

During my classroom drop-in, in the Reception Class, most of the children had chosen to learn outdoors in the beautiful weather that day. Many were involved in a role-play activity wearing police uniforms that had been inspired by a visit from a policeman the day before. They cooperated brilliantly with each other and demonstrated the learning from other areas of the curriculum such as writing and problem solving. Other children respected this activity and the space the children were using. Older children showed strong concentration and resilience, working independently, for example, to polish their writing. In activities that involved listening to the input of adults, concentration and listening skills were very high. As children were returning to the building after lunch, I could hear that all staff used specific feedback and instruction and very consistent language.

In the Language Lab, the atmosphere is very calm and I observed pupils who were engaged in a group activity talking about the construction model they had built together. This is a very safe space with personalised learning for all pupils and a low-stimulus, low-threat environment. Similar adaptations are made around the school for other pupils that need support to maintain regulated behaviour. Safe spaces have been created for them to calm down. Other interventions, such as 'Zones of Regulation' and 'Mind Mechanics' are also employed. For pupils with anxiety, support is given to understand any triggers and reduce these in the school environment as far as possible.

A visual structure within the classrooms, in the form of a picture of the sun, represents children's behaviour to give them feedback and reward. The SENDCo has consulted with experts, such as the Educational Psychologist, to review the behaviour policy and ensure that it works for all the children. A restorative approach is used to ensure the children understand if any sanctions are applied, and it is explained how they can restore their position. Staff language and their application of the policy were observed to be highly consistent throughout the day of the assessment. They are well supported by the behaviour policy, and they have confidence that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will always be available if they need further support at any time.

Next Step:

- To ensure that all children have the knowledge and strategies to keep themselves safe, through the review of the PSHE curriculum.

Element 7 - Parents, Carers and Guardians

Leaders at Broken Cross Primary Academy recognise that the families of their pupils are vitally important to their progress and development. Support for families is heavily interwoven into the life of the school. Each morning, breakfast club starts at 7:30 AM and it is free for all pupils from 8:00 AM, offering a way to ease into the day for those children who need it, as well as a chance to be social and, of course, for nutrition. When the school day officially begins, staff are outside greeting their pupils and available for parents to talk to. Some pupils benefit from targeted support from a named adult to help them have a smooth start to the day. One parent explained how her anxiety was reduced, "she goes into school happily and I can relax and go to work".

Leaders understand the importance of every interaction with parents. They initiate friendly conversations and show real interest in the lives of their families. They maintain good social contact in the same way that one would in any other context. The behaviour system is inclusive of parents, not only keeping them informed of any incidents or concerns in school but also allowing them to be part of the solution. The Leadership Team told me that many parents used the school's behaviour structures at home, and this has been helpful to them. The school knows families very well and seeks to support them as much as possible in a non-judgemental way. Senior Leaders monitor social media as a way to feel the pulse of the local community. They approach parents as soon as they recognise that there may be a problem and the best possible support is given. Each day is a fresh start. The school has an experienced and trained Pastoral Lead who deals with "anything not educational". This includes parent liaison, family support, support with boundaries and behaviour in the home and liaison with other agencies. She works directly with children within their families, building independence and capacity and self-belief. Parents can self-refer if they wish to engage with this support. Professionals from the Mental Health Support Teams offer direct work with parents. Childcare is provided by the school and the sessions are run during the school day.

Events such as coffee mornings and drop-ins provide opportunities for parents to engage with the school from the moment that child becomes connected.

Parents hold the school in very high regard. A recent survey shows that over 90% think their children are safe, do well at school, that the school has high expectations for their child, is welcoming and does well at letting them know how their child is doing. Some parents are not sure if children are well-behaved in school, presumably because they cannot see what happens during the school day, but the number who do not think children behave well is very small. There is only room for a small snapshot of their views: "X is a different child now; school anxiety is pretty much non-existent at this moment… She's responding really well at school, and now she has interests at home as well".

"The staff are very understanding and inclusive surrounding neurodiversity … my child has never been made to feel different, she feels as though she belongs."

Next Step:

- To widen even further the offer to parents of curriculum workshops, particularly those that will support the school's key objectives for the next year.

Element 8 - Links with Local, Wider and Global Community

Broken Cross Primary Academy ensures that its pupils encounter their local community and the wider world through their curriculum and learning experiences at school. They can see the values that they learn in school in this wider context which enables them to take these values forward into their future lives.

"Our children love to represent the school, and when they do so, they compete very strongly, doing their very best", the Headteacher told me. As part of the Fallibroome Multi Academy Trust, the school has good connections with its fellow schools and opportunities abound for pupils to collaborate with their peers both in competition and cooperation. The Arts Festival appears to be a particular favourite, with many people and staff pointing out the work that had been done for this and how much they looked forward to it. They were rightly proud of the very high-quality visual artwork that they had produced.

Teachers were very keen to tell me about a community event linked with an assisted living residence for older people. Residents were eager to volunteer to come into the school and talk to the pupils. A "People Library" was initiated, in which pupils could withdraw a person instead of a book and seek to learn from them in the same way. The pupils really enjoyed talking to these older members of their community and learning about their perspectives and how things have changed since they were children. They apparently asked some very surprising questions!

During my visit, classes were engaged in activities preparing them to take part in events marking Macclesfield Pride week. Every class was contributing to an art exhibition, with the talent and skills of the pupils again evidenced through their artwork. One teacher had organised a Pride Club for pupils to attend in the lead-up to the event. A total of 45 children were registered for this club, showing their appreciation of the need to support diversity in their community. Parents are also supportive and teachers were passionate about this cause, commenting that they had families within the school, friends, colleagues and members of their own family in this community.

The school engages with local businesses such as Astra Zeneca and charities such as the Prince's Trust to support the education of their pupils. For example, much work has been completed in the school's amazing outdoor environment by volunteers from these two organisations. Some of the volunteers were former pupils of the school, which was very gratifying for all concerned. The community is also supported through projects such as the Food Bus, which visits weekly and allows families to get £35 worth of groceries for £8. The Pastoral Lead also signposts families to community support such as holiday clubs, food banks and the Household Support Fund.

Next Step:

- Work towards the ambition of becoming a UNICEF Rights Respecting school will increase the understanding of the whole school community of their links to the wider world and the values they share.