



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



**School Name** Phoenix Primary School  
Glencoe Road  
Chatham  
Kent  
ME4 5QD

**Head/Principal** Mrs M Ireland

**IQM Lead** Mrs Jolanta Studniarz-Thring

**Date of Review** 1st October 2024

**Assessor** Ms Louise Simpson

### **IQM Cluster Programme**

**Cluster Group** 24 Carat

**Ambassador** Dr Kenny Frederick

**Next Meeting** 14<sup>th</sup> October 2024

**Meeting Focus**

### **Cluster Attendance**

<b>Term</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<b>Autumn 2023</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	Yes
<b>Spring 2024</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> Mar 2024	Yes
<b>Summer 2024</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> June 2024	Yes
<b>Autumn 2024</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	
<b>Spring 2025</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	
<b>Summer 2025</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	



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### **Evidence**

Pre visit Teams meeting with IQM Lead

Meetings with:

- IQM Lead/Deputy Head Teacher/Inclusion Lead.
- Pastoral Team.
- Teachers.
- Support Staff.
- Phase Leads.
- Pupils
- Senior Leadership Team.

Resources:

- Copies of a range of training materials and resources for Trauma Informed Practice
- Phoenix Driving Excellence Handbook
- Beyond Schools Trust Quality Assurance MAT Peer Review Report
- Review, Reflect and Grow (RRG) Report
- SEND Report
- Examples of Teaching Standards Reports
- Behaviour Expectations Presentation
- Behaviour and Relationships Procedures (replacing the former Behaviour Policy)
- Behaviour Reports
- Equality and Inclusion Policy



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### Summary of Targets from 2023-2024

#### Target 1:

#### **To successfully complete and embed Trauma Informed Practice across the school.**

There has been a significant commitment and investment of time at Phoenix Primary, to ensure that the necessary understanding is in place to develop effective and informed Trauma Informed Practice (TIP). This development has been focused over the last year in a planned coordinated way, to ensure a secure appreciation of the nature of and impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences. The training included the 5 to Thrive approach, Creating Connection and Adaptation and Emotional Coaching. All staff I met with spoke very highly of the training and the follow-up support received.

Staff groups all commented on how the information on individuals has changed for the better in transition meetings with TIP processes in place.

The school recognised that to truly put this knowledge into practice, staff would need to understand and identify issues in their own personal context, before being able to identify situations and support pupils. Senior leaders anticipated this would be challenging and put steps in place to offer emotional first aid, which was widely accessed. This was essential as it was evident that many individuals found elements of this emotionally challenging. Staff did however comment that this insight into their own experiences has made them much better at identifying, empathising and understanding how to create an environment conducive to supporting young people with challenges as a result of trauma.

One individual commented, "I now feel better able to recognise differences between poor behaviour and a trauma response." Another stated that she felt that the input, "was a powerful awakening which means I can now relate differently to be more of a support."

Staff commented that there is more openness between them, and this mutual understanding and support of individual experiences has enhanced an already supportive and cohesive team. The Pastoral Team, for example, articulated how it has informed the decisions at times about who might be best placed to offer particular support. Triggers have also been more readily identified.

Staff report that they are hearing phrases routinely such as, "I am recognising this in a child" now which is triggering earlier support and conversations with families. The introduction of Caesar the Therapy Dog is imminent with all the groundwork in terms of expectations already in place. There is a buzz around the school from all parties. Pupils stated that "we think some people will change their behaviour because they want him in their classroom." They also said the rules for engagement were really clear prior to his arrival. One child said, "We'll need to be quiet like mice or we will upset Caesar. I think everyone will want to do the right thing to see him." They said that they felt privileged that Ms Ireland was kind enough to share her dog with them. This has obviously sent a very positive message. I was also informed that some parents are very excited too and want to share the experience!



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### Next Steps:

There is clearly a commitment to the Trauma Informed Practice approach, which will be monitored and embedded. The Dog Mentor Programmes will enhance the offer with impact being reviewed regularly. One strategy mentioned specifically, is the use of Caesar to help motivate attendance, with him visiting homes to collect some pupils to encourage punctuality and attendance.

### Target 2:

#### **To continue to develop the workforce from within, including supporting ECTs and KMT colleagues.**

To create stability and to ensure succession planning, Phoenix has embarked on a comprehensive plan to retain and develop staff. There has been a significant investment not just in terms of training but in supportive systems following that. There is also a transparent way of recognising expertise and enthusiasm which goes beyond length of service and other common factors. One example of this is when a year 2 Early Career Teacher, (ECT) on completing training, secured the position of EYFS Lead. She feels well supported from other phase leaders and is feeling really fulfilled in her role.

In the last academic year, Phoenix had three Year 2 ECTs and one Year 1 ECT. Another member of staff completed KIT training and another 2 members of staff enrolled on KIT/KMY training, both supported by the school.

The ECTs I met, particularly valued the commitment of the school in employing them at the end of their training. This meant that in term 1 they were familiar with staff, had met the pupils they would be teaching, interacted with them formally and informally, been given a full appraisal of their needs and had a thorough induction in terms of expectations and systems used within the school. The opportunities to team teach were welcomed, and the culture of openness was repeatedly mentioned, with staff genuinely feeling no question was too 'silly.' One staff member stated that, "this approach meant a seamless transition for me and the children which was brilliant."

One staff member also commented that the decision to have Year 1 ECTs stay with the same year group for their second year, "allowed you to practice in year 1 and develop in year 2 enhancing your expertise". They also commented on the quality of the mentoring they received, and the support provided when writing against the teaching standards.

Staff also commented on the value of the revised Pupil Progress Meetings (PPM) where they received practical support, such as how to alter the learning environment to provide learning opportunities to maximise formal teaching time. This has been of benefit for those who are new to the school, those who have attendance issues and also helps with pre-knowledge, all of which has had a positive impact.

The success of the training commitment has enabled changes in school organisation. The HLTA who gained the MELSA qualification, now leads the Pearl Room and another TA has become the FLO/Pastoral Support Officer undertaking ELSA training. It was



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stated that “anyone in this school regardless of position can lead on areas which they have a passion for, with this passion being allowed to grow and be nurtured.”

The newly formed Pastoral Team has undertaken a comprehensive set of continuous professional development training, highlighting the time and financial commitment from the school to this aspect of work. Another Phase Lead was supported to complete the NPQSL taking up the SENCo position with a view to enrolling on the NPQSEN programme in 2025.

Some staff I met again this year had also moved year groups and phases extending their strengths and expertise across the school. This has been well received and forged some new creative partnerships.

### **Next Step:**

Sustain this approach and commitment and review the impact on academic and behavioural outcomes.

### **Target 3:**

**To review CPOMS categories to ensure that data is accurate and presents a true picture.**

At the previous review meeting, we discussed the school's plan to review CPOMS categories, to ensure that data is accurate and providing a true picture. This has taken place with protected characteristics being added along with other categories also. The focus on this area continues, with renewed ongoing training at staff and individual level, so that all staff are equally confident in using it. Staff report an increased confidence in not just using the system, but with the data it provides. Quality assurance activities have resulted in SLT and Phase Leads reporting an improvement with the quality of entries. Staff I met commented on how they had a different appreciation of the impact of these entries, including an understanding of the legal implications of entries they might make. Practical examples of developments shared were the support from SLT on avoiding inference in recording. This is all followed up in Designated Safeguarding Lead Training, regular refreshers and 1:1 support. One member of staff also commented on how she had felt supported with SLT recognising that there were difficulties sometimes recording things after particularly challenging situations and offering solutions and emotional support. A balance was achieved between compliance and sympathetic support.

The Senior Leadership Team report that a more accurate picture of behaviour and attitudes is available. The child's voice is clear and all those who require access to this, do so with all staff perspectives being valued including midday supervisors.

Pupils clearly articulated their understanding of the levels of behaviour and spoke in a positive, consistent and animated way about rewards and consequence systems.



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### **Next Step:**

Although the information quality and context have improved using CPOMS, Phoenix are over the next year investigating the possibility of using only one system to create a holistic digital file for each student.

Regular audits for behaviour and safeguarding will continue, which will support prompt identification of vulnerable pupils and families.

### **Target 4:**

**To continue to develop the use of insight in order to monitor the correlation of progress from Year R-Year 6, in particular, progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.**

Insight is used effectively, and it forms an integral part of Pupil Progress Meetings where there is support and challenge and it informs further planning. The new format of the meetings has been welcomed by staff who say that the required evidence for key groups regarding interventions and quality of education has encouraged them to be more forensic and reflective.

Insight statements are reviewed and amended for each subject accordingly. Teachers and subject leads are clear about gaps and progress of individuals and focus groups. Action plans and next steps are agreed upon during PPM and RRG meetings and communicated to relevant parties.

Staff spoke positively about the move to use FFT to set more realistic but aspirational targets for individuals so that everyone is receiving the right kind of interventions. It has been recognised however that although Insight has many evidenced benefits, it cannot provide specific information regarding national data and comparisons therefore an additional platform FFT backed by the Fischer Family Trust has been researched. Merging both is at the early stage and development of both is a focus for next year.

### **Next Step:**

To develop the use of Insight and FFT in order to track the progress of focus groups and compare outcomes with national data.



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### Agreed Targets for 2024-2025

#### Target 1:

**To further develop the pastoral offer through embedding Trauma informed Practice and Dog Mentor programmes.**

#### Comments

This is a natural progression of the work already started and there is a really unified positive response to the impact that the TIP training and implementation has had. There is confidence that this will be sustained and developed to continue the impact that is already evident. The inclusion of this and the 5 to Thrive strategy will be an integral part of the Relationship policy.

The dog mentor programmes have been well thought out so it will be interesting to see whether this has the intended outcomes for targeted pupils whilst maintaining the access and excitement for others in the school. These aspects alongside the range of other pastoral interventions will strengthen the already established support offered to pupils and families.

The Opal scheme is something that will benefit pupils and their families and will be a welcome addition which should also have an impact on behaviour and peer relationships. The school are keen to visit another IQM school which has embedded this approach successfully.

#### Target 2:

**To further strengthen links with families by enrolling the community curriculum Emotional Support Team (EST) and PINS programme.**

#### Comments

Phoenix is a community-minded school, and the use of the Emotional Support Teams to support individuals and their families who have found that engaging can be challenging will be a positive commitment. In addition, the recognition of the support families of pupils with SEND needs when navigating systems and processes through PINS, is a positive step particularly when resources are limited.

The value the school places on parents is also going to be enhanced, with the introduction of support groups and team's sessions with specialists, with that offer being reviewed in response to needs.



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### Target 3:

**Improve the attendance of every group, closing the gap with national average. Pupils to arrive to school punctually.**

#### Comments

This work will be facilitated in part by the newly appointed Attendance Officer, who has already made inroads with families. This approach coordinated with the commitment from phase leaders and class teachers will hopefully have the desired effect to improve attendance. There is planned closer working with the local authority, a plan to revise information available to parents, and more targeted work with individuals, utilising the FLO and SENDCo. This pulled together in a revised attendance plan will focus the efforts being put in place.

### Target 4:

**To further develop the curriculum offer so that pupils have access to rich and valuable experience.**

#### Comments

There will be clear evidence of this community curriculum development and the implementation of the Phoenix Passports to develop the Phoenix Legacy. We discussed how involving the secondary schools in this delivery, might encourage them to value this work when transitioning to new schools.

### **The Impact of the Cluster Group (with details of the impact of the last three meetings)**

Phoenix School continues to be an active participant in the cluster meetings. They report that visits both affirm some of the practices they have, as well as providing ideas for developments which they could adopt in full or modify for their context where for example these have been observed in a specialist setting. They state that it is especially helpful to link with schools with a similar demographic.

Following the visit to Luton Primary where the Sensory Street idea was presented, a similar sensory experience has been set up outside of the Pearl Room.

Staff stated it was useful seeing two Rights Respecting Schools in different contexts, observing how the rights of the child are clearly promoted through the school and how this is incorporated in curriculum and behaviour.

When visiting Goldwyn School, Phoenix staff commented that their idea of celebrating values is similar as is their rewards system, which was reassuring as it has had so much success.

I believe Phoenix attends these sessions with a very open mind and values the experiences. They will look forward to hosting in the future.





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### Overview

Phoenix Primary School is now one of five schools in the Beyond Schools Trust. Phoenix is proud of its approach to inclusion and hopes to continue to work with other schools in the Trust, to share experiences and drive this area of work further and at pace. Phoenix serves a population very local to the school who experience aspects of deprivation which can have an impact on wellbeing and engagement with services including schools. The school is seen very much as part of the community resource and is responsive and supportive of changing needs.

In recognition of this, experiences provided for pupils are wide and go beyond the traditional curriculum. The introduction of the Phoenix Legacy Passport will reflect this breadth of experience offered whilst pupils are at the school based on values in and out of school. Pupils spoke about how they had been involved in this piece of work, which is to be rolled out soon.

Aspirations are high and pupils are encouraged to see beyond current limitations. Recent work with Chatham Dockyard to promote STEM opportunities is one such example.

The same aspirations exist for staff who have a wealth of recognition and support to develop professionally whilst being supported personally. The commitment to staff development has in part supported the drive to provide as much support as possible from within, as reliance on external services has been problematic and unreliable at times due to constraints on those partners. The school are trying to create as much continuity as they can, whilst retaining the need to be dynamic in their response to changing needs.

Phoenix is a community minded school and the use of the Emotional Support Teams to support individuals and their families will be a positive commitment. In particular, the recognition of the support families of pupils with SEND needs, when navigating systems and processes will be powerful and empowering.

This is my third visit as an assessor to Phoenix and the progress they have made was illustrated in a variety of ways and consistently. On this visit however, I experienced an even greater sense of optimism, energy, enthusiasm, confidence and drive, underpinned by a powerful sense of 'team' both between staff and with pupils, their families and with external partners. It was a really uplifting day.

The creation of the new pastoral team has been very effective already, with staff identifying the benefits of these changes and a real excitement and motivation to see how these develop further. One member of staff commented that "we can see so many changes already, so I can't wait to see what we will achieve by next year." The progression of staff moving into this team brings with it a breadth of experience in different fields, which allows them to look creatively and holistically at issues. The integrated support responding to an improvement in referrals using the trauma-informed practice approach will have a huge impact on wellbeing, relationships, families and learning.



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Safeguarding continues to be a strength, with a child-friendly/accessible safeguarding policy being introduced, along with external partners so that the discussions are mainstreamed and familiar. CPOMS continues to be used effectively with patterns being identified more readily and responded to. There is also recognition that this can be emotionally challenging for staff, and it was heartening to hear staff describe how their needs are understood and supported when dealing with difficult situations. They were incredibly appreciative, a testament to the senior leadership team and the Phoenix family of support.

The Pearl Provision continues to develop and is now taking Year 2 pupils primarily for the 12-week programme. This earlier identification will again hopefully have long term impact. Reintegration rates have demonstrated the success of the provision, which is well run with good oversight from a range of staff who can offer advice and support, as well as maintain the necessary links and relationships to support the reintegration back into classes full-time.

The Trauma Informed Practice developments have been a standout feature of this visit, and I have rarely seen such a unified commitment to wanting to make this work. As well as the initial emotional support provided to staff, staff commented on how they continue to support each other, are more aware of staff triggers and are continually supported with practice through modelling, coaching and other formal refresher sessions. In particular, staff commented on how transitions have been transformed. This was another well-planned and evidenced visit to support the self-evaluation.

I have no hesitation in recommending that Phoenix Primary retain their Centre of Excellence status. They already support schools in the locality, facilitate networks for Family liaison Officers and are involved in Local Authority developments to improve the experience for those young people with SEND and their families. With the aspiration to facilitate developments regarding inclusion within their Trust schools, I hope there will be an opportunity for Phoenix to consider how they might aspire to become an IQM Flagship School after their annual review next year.

**Assessor: Ms Louise Simpson**

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

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