



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



**School Name:** Academy 360  
Portsmouth Road  
Sunderland  
Tyne and Wear  
SR4 9BA

**Head/Principal:** Rachel Donohue

**IQM Lead:** Laura Smith

**Date of Review:** 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Assessor:** Rheka Bhakoo

### **IQM Cluster Programme**

Cluster Group – Trail Blazers

Ambassador – Max Kelly

Date of Next Meeting – TBC

Next Cluster Group Meeting Focus: TBC

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

Academy 360 is an All-Through school catering for pupils from primary to secondary and is part of Laidlaw Schools Trust. It currently has 880 pupils on roll with 513 pupils on Pupil Premium and 4 pupils who have English as an additional language, 188 on the SEND register and 38 pupils have Educational Health Care Plans. There are currently 5 Looked After Children and 5 EHCPs are pending approval.

Prior to the review, the Assistant Principal (Inclusion & Support – SENCO) submitted comprehensive documentation of the school's evaluation of progress since the last review. A detailed timetable for the day enabled me to review evidence linked to the areas of development. During the time of this review the country was facing a global pandemic in the form of COVID-19, therefore, all meetings and discussions with key stakeholders took place in on a virtual platform.

### **Virtual meetings held with the following:**

- All-Through Principal
- All-Through Assistant Principal/Director of Inclusion & Support
- Head of Primary School



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



- Strategic Lead for English
- Teachers leading new transition group in Year 7
- Assistant Principal for Teaching & Learning (Secondary Phase)
- HTLAs
- Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Standards
- Discussions with pupils
- Assistant Principal for Behaviour and Attendance

### Summary of Targets from 2019-2020

**Target 1 - To develop a Year 5 to Year 8 curriculum which will further strengthen the smooth transition between primary and secondary phases and develop the capacity of teaching staff with the aim of accelerating progress for the pupils in the core subject areas (Core Project).**

School leaders and Governors have worked diligently since the last IQM review to continue the school's journey to embed the All-Through principles which underpin the school's approach to all aspects to learning. All stakeholders consider the school as a whole unit incorporating the primary and secondary aged pupils. The school has an established a Senior Leadership Team who meet every third week for All-Through Senior Leaders and have a phase specific meeting on the alternate weeks.

The school has established a working party through English and Humanities to introduce two sets into Year 7 where students are identified as not meeting the expected standard at the end of Key Stage 2 when exiting Year 6. These 2 groups are small in number (12 students) and these pupils work with a teacher and Support Assistant. Pupils in these groups also have contact with this teacher as their tutor to provide continuity of provision, this ensures an extension of the primary classroom and a reduction in the number of staff and lesson moves whilst focusing on literacy skills.

The Curriculum is based on a topic-based approach which the Key Stage 2 and 3, the team have worked together to ensure there is progression from the end of KS2 outcomes and the English Team have ensured that the pupils are working towards the GCSE outcomes. As a result of the success of the Progress Pathway for Year 7 and 8, students with high needs who required support with transitioning into Year 7 has been continued in new academic year 2020. In addition to this, a group has been introduced into Key Stage 2 which is led by a SEN Specialist.

Much of this academic year and the closure of schools due to COVID-19 has been targeted at embedding a teaching and learning model across the secondary phase and preparing teaching materials across the secondary phase to be in line with the TSI Teaching and Learning Model. This model is underpinned by a gathering, processing and applying stage in each. The TSI builds on the foundations of the 7 Pedagogical



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



Principles of Teaching which form the basis of the primary phase lessons. The monitoring of Teaching and Learning is quality assessed in the same way with an All Through monitoring calendar using the Lesson's Learned System.

All pupils in Year 7 are required to complete a CAT Test after a period of 4 weeks, to ensure their ability set is correct and all students from Year 3 to Year 9 have completed a reading test as part of the all-through literacy strategy. This is a Trust Wide strategy with all pupils being tested and being placed into a 3-tier intervention strategy for Literacy and this is made up of 3 levels of targeted intervention. Tier 3 – Reciprocal Reading, Tier 2 – Lexia, Tier 1 – Phonics. All pupils from Year 2 to Year 11 access Accelerated Reading as a strategy for teaching reading in addition to the targeted reading intervention above. Pupils within Key Stage 2 and the secondary phase now all have the same format used for their SEND support plans. These were introduced in the early summer term, ready for transition into Year 6 to ensure that there was consistency in approach.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, transition experiences have been different and limited in terms of on-site experiences for students who were not primary pupils in Academy 360. However, the school did offer remote transition via the website by sending out transition projects with meetings during the summer to ensure students were ready to start Year 7.

### **Target 2 - Development of PSHCE curriculum offer within the secondary phase, building on the primary and hub offer.**

The school has moved forward since the last review by introducing a PSHCE curriculum into the secondary phase. The introduction of an extended tutor session on a Monday has ensured the explicit teaching of the subject, this has been developed through sessions throughout the week with a PSHCE focus, covering all of the standards including the newly introduced RSE.

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, assembly is not completed as a year group but within the tutor set with each pupil in the school accessing breakfast. In addition to this, the All-Through Academy celebrate and recognise a range of charitable days. The school has also continued to build on its welfare support structures with the team now being an All-Through team and offering a range of targeted interventions to support the development of pupils' personal social and emotional targets.

In addition to this, the school has added capacity to the welfare support team through counselling offered from Washington Mind, Gram Seed Mentoring Choices Programme and Martin Gray Football Academy who are targeted at supporting pupils with SEMH needs to channel their energies into how sport can support their mental health whilst also supporting in the development of social skills and the development of resilience.

### **Target 3 - To make reasonable adjustments to Pathways for learners with significant needs.**

School leaders have strengthened this area significantly with newly appoint staff for the following posts: HLTA Progress Pathway, HLTA English Department, HLTA Maths



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



Department, Teaching Assistant in the Maths Department and a Teaching Assistant Apprentice. This has ensured that the needs of the students across the secondary phase can be targeted to support students from vulnerable groups. Each HLTA/TA has a timetable within their department where they support in class or target groups of individuals to team teach as required. In addition to this, there has been the introduction of specific tutor group provision for more targeted nurture session within the secondary phase.

External providers offering Forest Schools and Cookery into KS3. Targeted support for students with SEMH needs from MGFA, Mentoring and Washington Mind. Welfare Support have offered SEMH sessions. The range of interventions to support pupils within the primary phase has increased in the form of Lego therapy and Friends programme through training provided by CAMHs.

The success of the Key Stage 3 Progress Pathway has supported the transition of learners from Key stage 2 to 3. This has facilitated opportunities for student needs to be identified and assessed early and has ensured that students with significant needs are accessing a curriculum which is appropriate to meeting their needs whilst allowing for opportunities to develop social communication skills, speaking and listening whilst building confidence and resilience of learners. This has been built on further this year, with more opportunities for music, drama and continuing with the outdoor learning opportunities.

The model implemented for the Progress Pathway has been introduced to Key stage 1 and Key Stage 2 with a Learning Hub being introduced to each phase, this ensures that throughout the All-Through Academy, there are pathways of provision at each key stage for students with significant needs. Within these provisions the school is able to offer a personalised learning pathway to meet the needs of learners. The progress of these groups of pupils is monitored using the B Squared Assessment System, in English and Maths and this year the school is hoping to introduce the outcomes for ASD, in order to measure impact of provision for social communication needs. Due to the introduction of the SEND Ranges into Sunderland Authority the school has introduced a baseline system into the Academy to support early identification of need. Staff within the secondary phase have improved significantly in their ability to make reasonable adjustments and in recognising the impact of communication and interaction difficulties and social emotional mental health needs within the classroom.

### **Target 4 - To develop transition from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4.**

Options are chosen within the summer term of Year 8 with students (pre COVID-19) experiencing taster lessons, presentations from departments and careers advice in relation to their subject choices. Meetings are also held with parents. The Year 9 timetable is classed as a bridging year, it is made up of the core subjects plus the students' option choices. All students do Geography and History with them then making a decision at the end of the year which subject they would prefer to continue.



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



### Agreed Targets for 2020-2021

**Target 1- To continue to develop a Year 5 to Year 8 curriculum which will further strengthen the smooth transition between primary and secondary phases and develop the capacity of teaching staff with the aim of accelerating progress of the pupils in the core subject areas (Core Project).**

Actions included are to continue to embed the newly introduced TSI model for improving the consistency of Teaching and Learning across the secondary phase; explore opportunities within the summer term for projects and focussed teaching of KS2 team by the KS3 team; offer a week transition experience, primary transition project and summer school to support with KS2-KS3 progress.

**Target 2 - To continue to develop the PSHCE curriculum offer within the secondary phase, building on the primary and hub offer.**

Action to include embedding and reviewing the impact of the PSHCE curriculum offer as it was just being introduced in September.

**Target 3- Begin to plan and establish an alternative education resource on the Academy site to support the reintegration of students classed as PA.**

Actions to include continuing to review the PA students across the Academy and deciding on the primary barrier which prevents attending school.

**Target 4 - To develop the expertise of support staff within the primary and secondary phase to support with building on provision for particular groups of pupils.**

Actions to include continuing to embed and develop staff understanding of the SEND Ranges and develop primary phase in their understanding on the impact of C&L/SEMH in the classroom.

**Target 5 - To explore the introduction of ACES as an all through intervention for SEMH.**

Actions to include Liaising with the schools in the IQM Cluster who already use the ACES Intervention.

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

The school were unable to send any representatives to attend the Cluster meeting which was scheduled to take place in March 2020, due to national lockdown as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



### Overview

Academy 360 is a highly inclusive, welcoming, warm and friendly All-Through school. The Academy opened in September 2008 as an All-Through Academy for pupils aged 4-16 and is part of the Laidlaw Schools Trust. In 2019 the Trust appointed a Director for SEND and Inclusion in order to implement an Inclusion strategy for the All-Through Academy. The Academy also includes a Local Authority Curriculum Access Provision (The Hub), for pupils from across the city with complex learning difficulties. Pupils in The Hub have an Education Health Care Plan recognising the severity of their SEND requirements. Academy 360 has undergone a considerable period change over the years and there has been positive changes and a strengthening of leadership, teaching and learning, curriculum offer and provision over time as the school has developed as an All-Through Academy.

There is a calm, nurturing and purposeful learning atmosphere that permeates throughout the school leaders and all staff strive to meet the needs of all learners and continuously adapt, adjust and reframe provision to meet the needs of all pupils in their care. The school offers alternative means of provision through setting arrangements, directed adult support, outside agency support and established welfare and attendance officer systems. The pupils attending Academy 360 are fortunate to belong to such a highly inclusive school, they are happy, respected and valued by all the staff.

The Director of Inclusion and Support ensures that the Academy's interventions for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils are effective in supporting pupils to maximise their potential. She is an integral part of the Senior Leadership Team with a wealth of expertise in this area. She successfully co-ordinates and delivers targeted support and intervention to disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils who are at risk of underachievement.

It is clear that all the staff at Academy 360 recognise that all pupils are entitled to a quality of provision that will enable them to achieve their potential. There is a firm commitment to positive intervention, removing barriers to learning, raising expectations and levels of achievement and working in partnership with other agencies in order to provide a positive educational experience for all our pupils, including those with a special educational need and/or disability.

The Senior Welfare Manager leads a team of six to offer bespoke and timely support to pupils across all year groups. The team provide crucial support to pupils who require social and emotional interventions. The embedded welfare staff systems and the nature of the All-Through school promotes staff getting to know learners very well. Transition arrangements across the Academy, whether it is between year group to year group or key stage to key stage is carefully planned, with some pupils requiring enhanced transition.

Academy 360 provides a broad and balanced curriculum that encourages all learners to develop as informed, astute, confident and responsible citizens. Curriculum design and delivery enables pupils to develop talents and interests; to research; to explore opinions; to debate; to consider alternative viewpoints; to develop ideas and concepts and raise awareness of the ever-changing world in which they live. The provision of a



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



'Literacy-Rich' Curriculum ensures that all pupils including the most vulnerable and those facing social and emotional challenges, receive consistently high-quality literacy provision and develop sophisticated age-appropriate vocabulary across all year groups and curriculum areas. Personal development and wellbeing are at the heart of all aspects of learning. Pupils are encouraged to recognise the impact of their choices, challenge prejudice and raise personal awareness of their own health and wellbeing.

Staff are invested in learners and go above and beyond to make them feel at ease. Pupils with special educational needs or behaviour concerns have plans developed with the pupil and their families which are shared with all staff. Staff weekly briefings ensure that all staff are given an update on particular issues affecting individual learners so the entire Academy is fully informed. It is abundantly clear that Academy expectations are clear and shared by all members of staff. Staff at all levels nurture positive relationships, caring for students throughout their education, to ensure that they emerge from secondary education as dynamic individuals who are well-prepared for the 21<sup>st</sup> century world of work and the challenges that it presents. Inclusion is an integral part of school life, this was evident in every conversation with leaders, teachers and support staff, without exception. Relationships are positive and built upon mutual trust and respect. Staff are committed to ensuring that every pupil matters and that every pupil is treated as a unique individual.

The Headteacher and other Senior Leaders are ambitious for all the pupils and they have a shared vision for improving the quality of education further. Leaders have a clear focus on raising standards in all aspects of the curriculum at the same time as ensuring that all pupils develop the personal and social skills, they will need to become life-long learners. The Principal speaks with great passion about improving the life chances of the students in the Academy and the leadership has clear and robust strategy to improve teaching and learning across the Academy, with plans to do this already underway. The introduction of the IP@360 has a clear rationale in terms of ensuring that there is consistency in the quality of teaching from the primary right through to secondary. There is a real commitment to challenging low expectations, raising aspirations and raising standards across the school with inclusion being an integral part of this vision. There has been a concerted drive on recruiting high quality professionals within the Academy and a focus on developing staff with a comprehensive suite of continuous professional development opportunities. All staff feel very well supported by leaders and they know that leaders consider their wellbeing equally as important as the pupils'. They appreciate the training opportunities they receive to improve the quality of their teaching and this has contributed to a school community where all staff are both respected and highly valued.

The learning environment at Academy 360 includes large indoor and outdoor learning spaces. Classrooms are well organised and the vibrant displays celebrate the pupils' learning and progress with a good balance of pupils work and displays to encourage independent learning. The Early Years have a large learning space, with both indoor and outdoor learning opportunities lending itself to play based learning. Within primary classrooms are spacious with room for group, paired and independent learning opportunities with several whole class branch out areas. Secondary is organised into departments with well-resourced learning areas. Being a setting with All-Through provision has its benefits, in that pupils within the primary phase can access specialist



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



teaching from various departments. In the same way, students from the Hub access many subject specialists as part of their curriculum offer. Secondary have art and photography studios, several computer suite open space, several science labs and a school kitchen.

Through the school's inclusive approach, pupils are taught to respect, value and learn from other cultures and faiths. All members of staff encourage the pupils to have high expectations of themselves and aspire to be the very best they can be. It was clear from discussions with teachers during the day, how supportive they were of each other and how passionate they are about making a real difference to the life chances of young people they teach.

Students at Academy 360 value the opportunities and experiences they are given, they respect their teachers and take on a range of roles to support the school and develop their skills for future life. Pupils are polite, friendly, self-confident and enthusiastic, they respect the staff and know that they are listened to and cared for and appreciated for their individuality. The voice of the pupils is valued and contributes to their provision. Personal development is a priority as is the development of pupil aspiration. Due to the lockdown as a result of COVID-19, the school team has worked effectively to ensure that their pupils have received a continuous education with access to online learning programmes.

Governors play a full life in the role of the Academy and ensure that their statutory duties are fulfilled, they provide sufficient support and the correct amount of challenge to the Senior Leaders to ensure that the school continues to be fully inclusive.

Parents are highly appreciative of the support that is provided by the school to their children. They feel that they are listened to and the school has fostered a real partnership ensuring both parties share the process of educating their children. My conversations with parents during the review demonstrated how supportive the school has been for families especially during lockdown, with one parent saying, "I am 100% happy with the school. All the staff go the extra mile for the children from Reception to Year 10. When I get a phone call from them, they always take the time to ask how I am as well as supporting my son".

The staff across the school have a very real and positive impact on pupils' ability to access appropriate learning and timely interventions, allied with an unwavering ambition for all they serve including disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils. The staff are rightly positive of what everyone achieves at the school and as a matter of course, go above and beyond to ensure that the pupils' needs are met. They are committed to develop pupils as confident life-long learners. This is achieved through ensuring that the school is fit for purpose, safe, secure and caring and fosters relationships based on respect.

It has been clear during the review day that at Academy 360 inclusion is a natural part of the very fabric of the school and a place where care, nurture and support naturally occur, within a calm and purposeful learning environment and through helping students to develop the skills they need to be effective, independent learners and positive members of their community and society. There is a continuous and evolving culture of



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



critical reflection which underpins the work of the school at every level. Existing strategies, programmes and projects monitored, evaluated and refined to ensure the school, its staff and pupils move forward, developing its inclusive practice.

Having discussed the progress made since the last review and the school's drive to keep moving forward with their work on inclusion, I am of the opinion that Academy 360 continues to hold the Centre of Excellence status and be reviewed in one year's time. The next review will look closely at how the school has continued to develop its practice based on the new and revised targets for 2020-21.

**Assessor: Rheka Bhakoo**

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

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