



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



School Name: St Matthew's Catholic Primary School

School Address: Queens Drive
Walton
Merseyside
L4 8UA

Head/Principal Mrs Claire Sime

IQM Lead Mrs Toni Gaskell

Assessment Date 8th November 2024

Assessor Mrs Heather Whitfield

Sources of Evidence:

- IQM Self-Evaluation Report
- School website
- Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection report November 2023
- Ofsted report April 2024
- School policies
- Learning walk
- Pupils' books
- Pupils' support timetables
- Staff and parental surveys
- Governor meeting minutes
- Single Central Record
- Safeguarding documentation
- Maps and information to demonstrate playground zoning and support at breaktimes

Meetings Held with:

- Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and IQM Lead
- SLT
- Parents, carers and guardians
- Pupils with Leadership roles
- Parent Governor
- Learning Support Assistants
- School cook
- PTFA members



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Overall Evaluation

“Every child and every family are at the heart of everything within St Matthew’s Catholic Primary School, through the strong team and unified vision”. This is evident through the strong, welcoming, positive atmosphere when visiting St Matthew’s Catholic Primary School; from the moment you arrive, you are welcomed warmly into the school’s family. Staff, parents, carers, and pupils interact positively with each other and with visitors.

“We’re a family. We all get together because we’re here for one purpose, the children. We work as a family would, to do what we can to support one another”. A parent told me “Nothing is too much trouble for anyone. Everyone is so happy and willing to help. Regardless of faith, no one is judged”.

St Matthew’s Catholic Primary School is an oversubscribed, larger-than-average primary school which is situated in the Clubmoor area of Liverpool. This is an area of the city which is ranked well above the national average level of deprivation.

In November 2023, St Matthew’s Catholic Primary School underwent their Catholic schools’ inspection and received a grading of ‘outstanding’ in all areas. In April 2024, the school was judged to be ‘good’ in all areas by Ofsted.

The school’s catchment area is becoming increasingly multicultural and multi-faith. This diversity is factored into everyday life at St Matthew’s Catholic Primary School and built upon to support pupils’ understanding of respect and tolerance, preparing them for an ever-changing world. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals (FSM) is above the national average. The percentage of pupils receiving special educational needs support (SEND) is 23 which is well above the national average and 2.4% of pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHCP).

In January 2020, the Headteacher was appointed, and not long after, the school was closed due to COVID-19. The Deputy Headteacher and Inclusion Lead was appointed in 2021. Since 2020, there has been a significant change in staffing. The change in Leadership has seen school Leaders create an “open and supportive environment” where parents, carers, and children can access support, advice, and guidance in a trusting, safe environment. St Matthew’s Catholic Primary School currently has 3 temporary appointments for Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLRs). These staff, some of whom are at a relatively early stage of their teaching career, demonstrate the opportunities for self-growth, not just for the children but for the staff too and a supportive environment where staff can build upon their skills and interests within their educational journey.

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are inspirational in their clear drive and focus for the school and community. The Headteacher has a clear, ambitious vision for the school, placing children at the centre of all decisions. Staff and Governors are aligned to this vision. “At St Matthew’s Catholic Primary School, we want to set an example of what schools should be like. We don’t do or say anything to staff, families and pupils that we aren’t prepared to do ourselves”. “We’re not closed, we’re forward-thinking. We will always be ready to try new ideas and projects. We won’t stand still”.

The commitment of the Senior Leadership Team to inclusive practice is reflected in its close collaboration with the school’s Governing Body and the support and challenge that the Governors provide to the school. A Governor told me “Communication is open and transparent. Governors have a strong partnership relationship with the SLT built on through the regular Governor involvement. We have full visibility of what is going on”.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Classrooms are inviting and purposeful with engaging and consistent displays which promote a positive learning culture. The rooms are uncluttered and don't have teachers' desks or workstations in key stage 1, with a plan to remove teacher desks in key stage 2 at the end of this academic year. Enabling classroom space to be freed up for larger carpet space for the children and encouraging the class teachers and staff to be completely engaging with the pupils whilst they are learning at their desks. "All children are accommodated for without making them stand out". Many adaptive strategies are incorporated into all classrooms enabling all pupils to access learning opportunities. These range from specialist equipment to table arrangements and resources which support children with neurodiverse needs.

There is a strong inclusive ethos within St Matthew's Catholic Primary School, ensuring that all staff support and meet the needs of all children. The Deputy Headteacher and Inclusion Lead's role enables her to work closely with pupils, staff, and families to ensure that the pupils at St Matthew's Catholic Primary School receive the support they need. There is highly effective communication in place for supporting pupils with personalised timetables that outline the support they receive from the Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) and letters to communicate this information with family members. As the Deputy Headteacher is not classed, families can contact the school and arrange meetings during the school day and support is provided swiftly and effectively. She is also able to support pupils and staff in class. Learning for pupils is "accommodated and adapted throughout the day, with manageable targets".

St Matthew's Catholic Primary School supports families not only with the educational needs of their children but also by providing support in other areas including a school food pantry, food hampers, and Christmas dinner hampers ensuring that every child will have a gift at Christmas time, parent workshops, courses, transport, and housing needs. I support the school's request and interest in holding Centre of Excellence status due to the excellent day-to-day inclusive practice which it promotes and supports, not only for its pupils but their staff and families.

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 Inclusive School Award 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: Mrs Heather Whitfield

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

J. McCann

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



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Element 1 - The Inclusion Values of the School

The concept of St Matthew's Catholic Primary School being a family was a common thread which wove its way throughout the day. "We're realistic enough to know that it's not always going to be great, but we're a team, we co-operate. We're sharing life".

Before children start at St Matthew's Catholic Primary School, staff complete home visits. These visits help staff build the whole picture around the child, explore what they have and haven't experienced, and develop a plan to support their next steps. Home visits become the gateway to developing positive relationships with the adults involved in their children's lives based on trust and forming effective lines of communication. Each child receives a teddy bear in a bag, along with paperwork for completion. Also in the bag is a postcard which families are encouraged to complete and return to school during the summer so that when the children start in September, their card has arrived at school.

The inclusive ethos reaches out to all members of the St Matthew's Catholic Primary School community. Staff, parents and children recognise the impact of St Matthew's Catholic Primary School's inclusive nature. Staff share strategies with each other so that all expertise, ideas and solutions feed back into supporting the pupils' needs.

Classrooms are designed to meet the needs of all children. Tables and areas of learning are arranged to support the bespoke needs of individual children and a wide variety of resources, such as wobble cushions, writing slopes, fidget toys and bands are readily available for pupils to access. The school has recently appointed an assistant special needs coordinator (SENDCo). Part of this role is to ensure continuity of practice and provision across the school, such as visual timetables in classrooms. All staff know all children and their targets are managed each day by adapting the teaching and learning to accommodate pupils' needs. "It's the little changes that help". "We deliver targeted interventions to ensure that children are keeping up not catching up, so everyone gets the same level of education". "We are working together to meet children's needs; giving help and patience where it's needed".

The school employs Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) who support children through personalised timetables across the classes, meeting the needs of children and promoting a sense of independence in learning too. "We are a patient, caring school. We bring out the best in our children".

Staff reported that staff morale is high. "We're an extension of the St Matthew's Catholic Primary School family. Everyone gets on well. Everyone is approachable and supportive; we're truly there for each other". SLT supports this too by providing access to a trained Counsellor whom the school employs to support the pupils, but staff can also benefit from access; we don't do this but we signpost to counselling services and support with occupational health referrals, if needed.

School policies are in place to support the work across the school and ensure that everybody is striving towards the same inclusive goals. "We're a very inclusive school. There are lots of opportunities for children to succeed".

Next Steps:

- To extend your inclusion offer and develop new ways to support children with needs in the outside environment.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Element 2 - Leadership and Management and Accountability

Leaders have a clear, aspirational vision and direction for supporting not only the pupils but families and staff. SLT has ensured that there is a supportive, purposeful curriculum that not only meets the needs of the children but also provides high expectations of them too, setting high aspirations for the children to aspire to. The Headteacher and SLT have a very clear focus on what they wish for every pupil within St Matthew's Catholic Primary School, and this is driven through the education that they receive, that they are entitled to and deserve. An education that is rich in experiences and opportunities to ensure that when children leave St Matthew's Catholic Primary School, they are the best that they can be, not only academically but socially and emotionally too. The clear vision of the SLT drives this forward, supported by consistent policies and procedures. Leaders talk very passionately and proudly about the team around the child and their family, and how all staff support every pupil equally.

The SLT were very clear in stating that they value every member of staff and everything that they do for the community of St Matthew's Catholic Primary School. This is driven by the clear communication between all stakeholders, working as a team for everyone within it. This is developing the desire for a positive culture which will drive the school forward, with the children at the heart of every decision. Staff said that they feel supported by SLT. Staff have the opportunity to embrace their learning journey with opportunities built in to support their Continued Professional Development (CPD). CPD opportunities have enabled succession planning to be considered within roles and provide staff with opportunities to drive and develop new initiatives.

Staff meet every morning before the children enter school for a daily briefing. This enables the SLT to provide an update on the day's events but more importantly, provides an opportunity for staff to connect. During a recent focus on staff wellbeing, SLT has been able to reflect on the staff's comments and produced a 'you said, we've done' response. Staff wellbeing is also supported by management by having access to the school's counsellor for support if needed. As evidenced through staff questionnaires, staff morale, over the last 18 months has increased.

The Governing Body plays a supportive, critical friend role to SLT and school staff by reflecting the trust and relationship that flows through St Matthew's Catholic Primary School within their involvement. The Governing Board is inclusive in its practice, ensuring that it is reflective and representative of the community that St Matthew's Catholic Primary School serves. Governors attend the parent forums held within the school, supporting the implementation of actions from these discussions. "What school does, and does it well, is listen".

Next Steps:

- To prioritise reflection, collaboration, and the careful monitoring of our systems.
- To be present and aware of the needs of our students and staff to make informed decisions that enhance our educational environment.
- To foster a culture of Leadership within the school which aims to improve outcomes for all children.
- To develop future Leaders by focusing on succession planning.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Element 3 - Curriculum – Structure, Pupil Engagement and Adaption

Children can talk about how staff support their learning and are aware of strategies that they can use to support their learning. Children talked about how staff help them within the classroom. “If we’re not doing our best, the teachers will tell us and help us to be our best”. As evidenced in the children’s books and during the learning walk, it was clear to see that adaptations are made to support children’s engagement with the curriculum, both with resources and support with recording their learning.

“Subject Leaders have an insight into what their subject looks like in the classroom and how it impacts on our children and community”. “Subject Leaders are a real strength within our school”. Subject Leaders work with the SLT to ensure that the whole curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, engaging and reflective.

Care and respectful behaviour are instilled into all children and children respond positively to this. Within the classroom, children were calm, focused and engaged with their learning. This behaviour was reflected as they moved around the school and outdoors. During outdoor times, all staff are present on the playground. Staff have found this to be very beneficial as any incident that may occur, is addressed there and then and is not brought back into the classroom. Staff wear Hi-Viz jackets and are a very visible presence.

Curriculum subjects are enhanced with offsite learning opportunities and visitors to the school. Children spoke very favourably of the visits that they had experienced and were able to talk about their favourite subjects. These visits include aspirational opportunities such as visiting a courthouse, attending residencies for Years 2 upwards to places including Crosby Hall Educational Trust (CHET), London and a forthcoming ski trip to Italy.

There are many opportunities for students to take on student Leadership roles, including being a member of the School Council, Head Boy and Head Girl roles, Prefect Roles covering many areas of school life including the running of the tuck shop, Wet Play Leaders, and the school’s library. “We have Prefects for everything. Our teachers are trying to find ways to include everyone so that we can all do something”. Within these opportunities is also an inclusion group. This group was especially popular with the children, and they were able to articulately talk about learnings around disabilities and supporting and recognising the needs of others.

Next Steps:

- To expand our English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Special Educational Needs (SEN) teams to better support our learners.
- To remove barriers to all children’s learning.
- To ensure that the curriculum is continuously adapted and tailored to be bespoke for every learner, providing them with the opportunities and support necessary to thrive.
- To create an inclusive and dynamic learning environment that fosters success for all.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



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

Consistency, expectations and respect are evident not only in the classrooms but within the whole school environment. A culture of respect that works between everyone within the building, from the youngest to the oldest, regardless of what their role or purpose might be is clear to see. Consistency is driven by the SLT in supporting all aspects of life within St Matthew's Catholic Primary School. SLTs are a visible presence both within the school building and outside, ensuring that all children are supported and ready to learn.

Across the school, all classrooms displayed a sense of calmness, with adaptations being made to include all learners, no matter what their learning needs may be. Classrooms were free from clutter and distractions and had space to enable children to come together on the carpet for more focused learning opportunities. The absence of staff tables in KS1 and desks promotes staff being fully involved with the teaching and learning within their classrooms, supporting pupils with their learning. All classes contained pupils with additional needs, some with bespoke learning areas. Through carefully thought-out timetables, staff are deployed effectively to support pupils' learning both in the classrooms and within intervention spaces, with all staff modelling a calm and respectful working environment across the school.

SLT has introduced a coaching model for supporting staff development, with staff working closely together and sharing their knowledge, skills and ideas. Staff experience ranges from highly experienced and having been at St Matthew's Catholic Primary School for many years, to those who are at the beginning of their teaching career. Many CPD opportunities have been built to support the development of staff's skills and knowledge, thereby providing opportunities not only for pupil growth but staff growth too.

Pupils are involved in the decision-making process around the types of after-school clubs offered to them. The pupils were enthusiastic when talking about this process and were able to say which clubs they have attended and what clubs they make like for future occasions.

The SLT and Governors at St Matthew's Catholic Primary School understand the importance of children attending school and, over recent times, have been addressing the issue of supporting families in raising the attendance for all pupils.

Next Steps:

- To continue to foster a more trauma-informed environment that is less visually demanding and more conducive to learning.
- To build upon the inclusion of breaks within learning which will allow identified students to reset and refocus, supporting their overall well-being and engagement in learning.
- To continue to enhance the physical learning environment to reflect the school's dedication to creating supportive, nurturing spaces that empower every learner to thrive.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Element 5 – Assessment

The school uses both formative and summative forms of assessment to track pupils' progress and attainment. Formative assessments are carried out throughout the year, providing staff with opportunities to identify and address gaps in pupils' learning. Summative assessments are carried out each term and are used to support SLT's evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching and learning. The results of assessments are used to inform future planning. Within the school's short-term planning, Flashback Four is used to strengthen links with previous learning. Lessons begin with targeted questioning focusing on something learned in the previous lesson, another question focusing on learning from the previous week, one question focusing on learning from the previous term, and the final question revisits something from earlier in the school year. This structured recap helps students consolidate their understanding, make connections across topics, and reinforce key knowledge, ultimately improving retention and deeper learning.

Staff wellbeing has been supported through the introduction of a new marking code which has reduced staff's workload. Pupils were able to describe how staff mark their work and how this supports them in making progress.

Pupil progress meetings are held each term where members of the SLT, including the Head and Deputy Headteacher, the Pastoral Lead and SENDCo attend. These meetings not only cover the holistic view of each child's progress but also focus on attendance and the identification of additional support where appropriate.

Parents are informed about their children's progress through parents' evenings held in the autumn and spring terms and the end-of-year report in the summer term which is accompanied by drop-in sessions with the teacher.

For pupils with identified SEND, ongoing assessment plays a key part in supporting the pupils. Staff at St Matthew's Catholic Primary School follow the SEND graduated approach to continually review and target interventions to address gaps in learning for pupils. St Matthew's Catholic Primary School staff use the speech and language assessment tool, WellComm, for screening and assessing all children in Reception and Key Stage 1's language needs. The identified interventions are then put in place for the children.

Phonics is taught through the Read, Write Inc (RWI) scheme of learning which provides a rigorous ongoing assessment of children's phonic knowledge. A parent volunteer shared with me how she has received training in RWI and now helps to support pupils with their phonics. Learning support assistants (LSAs) deliver specific interventions for individual needs identified throughout the school's robust assessment process.

Next Steps:

- To continue embedding the use of the data program 'insights' and use the reports generated from this into daily practice to ensure continuous improvement in teaching and learning.
- To continue to provide planning and interventions which are evidence-based and reflective of pupils' individual needs.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Element 6 - Behaviour, Attitudes to Learning and Personal Development

The children who attend St Matthew's Catholic Primary School are an absolute delight! The representatives from the school's Leadership roles who represented the school during the IQM day were extremely happy, secure, well-mannered children who could talk confidently about themselves and explain their roles and how they support other pupils. They were all able to articulate what they liked about school. They spoke of their peers and were respectful of them and their needs. They were able to tell me how they can help to keep themselves safe and how the staff work to keep them safe too. The children spoke confidently about their aspirations for growing up and were able to justify their choice of career pathways.

Behavioural expectations are displayed on walls in corridors, outlining restorative practice. Staff act as positive role models promoting the high expectations of all within the St Matthew's Catholic Primary School family. The 'No Outsiders' curriculum which has been incorporated into the curriculum promotes the development of positive relationships and respect for all.

St Matthew's Catholic Primary School is forward-thinking and the support it provides to the community it serves demonstrates that it is constantly evolving to meet the needs of all. This can be seen within the school's behaviour and relationship policy which is constantly being adapted and built upon to support the needs of the pupils and their families. SLT presence is seen throughout the school supporting the promotion of positive behaviour. "Children see that we're all on the same page regarding behaviour". At lunchtime, children can attend quiet or busy lunch clubs. These are opportunities for children to spend time away from the bustle of the playground, catering for their own lunchtime needs.

Pastoral support at St Matthew's Catholic Primary School is very strong with an appointed member of staff to Lead in this area. The Pastoral Team works with pupils and their families to support them through the difficulties that they may be facing, building respect and a supportive environment for all to be part of.

Pupils are included in the structuring of enrichment activities which have been carefully planned and promote personal development and create opportunities for the children to experience clubs and activities which they may never otherwise get the chance to do.

Pupils are encouraged to share their work with other staff at St Matthew's Catholic Primary School. These 'Proud Moments' promote the development of self-esteem and acknowledgement of children's success. When pupils were asked, what the best thing about attending St Matthew's Catholic Primary School was, I was told "Oh, that's difficult. There are too many things to choose from. Everything's fun". A member of staff said, "Our children inspire me. I wish I had started this job earlier".

Next Steps:

- To continue to refine the behaviour and relationships policy supporting the work around becoming a trauma-informed school.
- To create a supportive and nurturing environment that fosters resilience and well-being in all our students.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Element 7 - Parents, Carers and Guardians

Learning Support Assistants and members of the Senior Leadership Team are a strong presence at the school gate and yard at morning drop off and at home time. Children, parents and carers were greeted by name as they came onto the school grounds and parents and carers demonstrated trusting and respectful relationships with staff through their interactions with them. The staff presence on the playground at the start and end of the school day ensures that they can support parents and carers through the strong relationships that are established with any concerns that may arise, in a timely and appropriate manner. Parents and carers also access staff support through meetings and workshops with external agencies.

The Pastoral Lead, Inclusion Lead and staff, support parents and carers by signposting them to support for many areas of need, such as housing, domestic abuse, and with referral paperwork. The school makes reasonable adjustments to support pupils' needs daily, liaising with parents and carers to inform them of their child's school day so that parents and carers can make the necessary adjustments if needed when the child returns home.

Communication with parents and carers and the community has been enhanced recently by the appointment of a teaching and learning responsibility in the area of communication. This enhanced communication ensures that parents and carers are kept fully informed and updated on upcoming school events and the celebration of events. Parents and carers who have English as an additional language (EAL), are supported through the Pastoral Team. Parents and carers have access to See-saw, Parent Pay and School Comms as ways of sharing written communication. Recent inspections and school parental and carer questionnaires demonstrate parental and carer confidence in the Leadership and staff at St Matthew's Catholic Primary School.

Parenting courses, topical courses and workshops are provided and assemblies for parents and carers including internet safety and Black History Month. These can often take place in St Matthew's Catholic Primary School church which shares the site with the school. This helps to remove barriers and strengthen links between, school, church and home.

The school's Parent, Teacher and Friends Association (PTFA) is an invaluable, strong link between staff and the community. Members organise and attend school events and fundraise regularly. Members of the PTFA help to oversee the school's food pantry which provides families with much-needed resources, not just food. Staff work with families to provide food for Christmas dinners and ensure that all children will have a gift to open on Christmas day. "Families are genuinely grateful for the support that they receive".

Parent and carer forums are held with staff, Governors and parent and child representatives from each class. These provide parents and carers the opportunity to come into school and discuss 'hot' topics. "These meetings provide parents and carers the opportunity to be included and listened to in school. Parents and carers then have a clearer understanding of why decisions are made".

Next Steps:

- To further develop the Parent, Teacher, and Friends Association (PTFA) and volunteer scheme and to strengthen our connection with the wider community.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Element 8 - Links with Local, Wider and Global Community

The local community is included in the curriculum at St Matthew's Catholic Primary School. During the IQM visit, children were hosting a Remembrance Tea Party for members of the community. The pupils sang, served food and chatted with the community members about their memories. The children were confident in their engagement and the community members presented as having a wonderful time with the pupils.

The area of Clubmoor is a highly deprived area within the city. Working in partnership with 'My Clubmoor', staff and pupils at St Matthew's Catholic Primary School ensure that the community in which St Matthew's Catholic Primary School is situated is supported. At Christmas, over 100 hampers were prepared and shared, not just with families from school, but within the wider community too. "We're giving back in the greater sense". The St Matthew's Catholic Primary School family have worked with My Clubmoor to develop a piece of community land and transform it into an area of purpose. They have planted wildflowers. There is an outdoor classroom. "Although it is a facility within and for the community, at school, we use it as our green space". Staff have worked alongside members of the community to develop this.

Staff at St Matthew's Catholic Primary School work with neighbouring schools to continually seek ways to improve and build upon good practice. This includes working in partnership for an upcoming, ambitious residential for the Year 6 pupils: a ski trip to Italy. "We aim to inspire our children to dream big, showing them that there is no ceiling on what they can achieve or where that can go". Staff at St Matthew's Catholic Primary School also work with other schools in the area of SEND, enhancing partnerships and local universities, and supporting the future roles of teachers during their initial teacher training years.

Staff are encouraged and supported to develop their professional development through Leadership qualifications.

The strong partnership with St Matthew's church and its staff supports and guides the whole family of St Matthew's Catholic Primary School in ensuring the best outcomes are available for all children, families and the community. This is strengthened through the school's links with the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), developing children's understanding of social responsibility and global awareness.

Next Steps:

- To increase community events and foster intergenerational relationships by organising more activities that engage our elderly community members.