Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award

School Name	Sturry Church of England Primary School Park View Sturry Canterbury CT2 0NR
Head/Principal	Mrs Michelle Mannings
IQM Lead	Ms Jennifer Bailey
Date of Review	6th October 2026
Assessor	Ms Rowena Hicks

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group	24 Carat / Kent 3
Ambassador	Dr Kenny Frederick
Next Meeting	24th Nov 2026

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Autumn 2025	14th Oct 2026	N/A
Spring 2026	12th Mar 2026	Yes
Summer 2026	8th July 2026	No

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

The school were only offered 2 visits between assessments. One visit they were doubled booked. They attended St Nicholas school, which they noted, is very different to theirs. They found it very helpful to see an SRP in action and took away ideas for their inclusion base.

Evidence

- An extended tour of the school, to include all sensory and therapeutic areas, forest school, ukelele lesson and worship picture news.
- Observed the "Introduction to the school" meeting.
- Meeting with the CEO of the Trust.
- Meetings with SLT (HT, DHT, AHT, Inclusion lead) both together and on their own
- Meetings with teachers, support staff (TAs, admin assistant, after school club, PSA),
- Meeting with parents and pupils from all ages.

Evaluation of Targets for last 12 Months

Target 1: Expand & Diversify Alternative Provision

Sturry has a range of provision available, and they respond to the needs of each child. This means that what might work one term, may be adapted the next. As the CEO put it "We started replicating what worked in another of our Trust schools. So, we set up our inclusion base due to need. However, we now have a flexi model to meet current need. Sometimes a provision solves a problem, so we move on."

The team at Sturry are very proactive to need. They look at the current need, provision available, transition needs and make changes appropriately. To meet need, forest school has been increased this year. Moving from bushcraft to having a qualified forest school lead has led to additional support for a wider number of children. Parents say that this motivates their children to come to school.

Since last year, the Willows room has been adapted. It is now also used for sensory circuits for children to come and use as and when they need it. It is particularly used after playtimes as the children recognise this helps them to regulate and be ready to learn.

There is a cognition and learning room, set up to build language with tough trays ready for use, alongside other resources to support children having interventions in this space.

The inclusion lead put it this way "We have very careful management of the provision for individual children which is why they've been so successful back in class." I would add that every space in school is carefully planned. There are cushions on the floor in corridors, high tables like a coffee shop in intervention spaces, displays with questions in hallways. No space is unused. Even cupboards are used for children to access quiet and creative spaces.

Next Steps:

- Lead TA to undertake L3 TA course.
- Embed Boxall profiles into everyday provision.
- Further training for Lead TA.

Target 2: **Embed Inclusive, Trauma-Informed Staff Development.**

Following staff training at the start of the year, staff now know the signs to look for as to the reason for behaviour. It is accepted that behaviour is communication, but staff now feel better trauma informed in their practice.

As part of the link to the community of schools, the nurture TA received emotional coaching training from the educational psychologist.

There is an emotional wellbeing team who support the school. This is a practitioner from CAHMS who support the parents to then support their children. A practitioner is

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also coming into school to support one class for a term and also to support with Y6 transition.

Next Steps:

- Training for newly joining staff , Senco Kent DT training
- Audit TIP in classrooms , SENCo monitoring of adaptations

Target 3: Strengthen Inclusive Leadership & Pupil Voice.

Children as leaders, led by the deputy head is very popular with the children and covers so many aspects of school life, including faith leaders, art, safeguarding. The children were so proud to tell me about these, along with their school council. The deputy head explained that she is taking the school council to parliament to meet one of the children's health ministers.

The headteacher noticed that the children were really keen on drama, especially out of school clubs, so she investigated opportunities. The school now has a Royal Shakespeare association accreditation, which the children are rightly proud to have received.

There is an inclusion council. The children asked for more play items, so this has been acted upon. One pupil put it this way "I'm a leader so I can share creative ideas." Another told me, "We turn the impossible into the possible!"

I spoke with a mixed age group of pupils for about half an hour and from age 4-11 they all wanted to share how proud they are of what they do at the school. They are encouraged to come up with new ideas. They can contact staff or the headteacher in a range of ways, including via a QR code or Teams message, or knock on the door!

Next Steps:

- Audit classrooms every 'big' term
- Further develop pupil voice

Target 4: Transition & Continuity of Support.

Transition support came up in every meeting I had and in the tour of the school. The staff put a huge emphasis on every transition, including between terms and at the start of the day.

Support staff were proud of the support children and families receive at the start of the day. Children can come in early, into different entrances and use a variety of rooms. Support staff are at different gates and are often called upon to support children coming into school that day. Different spaces are set up to meet needs of children, such as a wellbeing nook that has a feel of a sitting room at home.

There is a rising 4's transition that has been set up from January each year. This is a weekly drop in, and I heard stories of children starting anxious and being settled by the time they started in EYFS. In addition to this, there is a soft landing for those children

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needing support to start term, where they come in to see their teacher before the first day of term. A parent explained the impact of this on her child as so helpful. The child helped the teacher to decorate the classroom so there was ownership for the first day of term.

TAs explained their approach this way "All children are given an equitable opportunity. This may look different for each child, because every child is valued." Another TA explained that "It's like a family here." The support staff agreed that they seem to know all the children, and they get on so well as a staff team, so anyone can jump in to support where needed.

I was told "We love our children, we know them. That's the basis of everything."

Next Steps:

- Develop sensory spaces, including therapeutic ones, both indoors and outside

Target 5: Inclusive Curriculum & Adaptive Teaching.

Little Wandle has become an area that the school rightly celebrate as an inclusive tool. There is so much detail covering the focus on inclusion within the set up of these sessions. No child misses the main input with the class, so they aren't made to feel different. However, seating has a focus "L" to ensure whose needing extra support are near the teacher. In addition, planning and assessment happens every three weeks with the team, ensuring keep up is specific. Gaps are seen straight away and cards made so that even within main sessions, these can be addressed.

Everything that is set up within classes is inclusive. Interestingly, when I asked leaders and staff what they do that is inclusive, they struggled to answer me. As I continued to press them, it became clear that for everyone, inclusion is a given. Adapted and flexible seating looks different in every class, according to the needs within in. One class has mostly desk seating, while another has a large wobble cushion on the floor, a standing desk, floor chairs and a sofa.

One child explained that they work together to find what works for them. He explained "I told the senco that my teacher found the fidget toys really noisy and distracting, so she brought us some quiet fidget toys."

I walked into one classroom that looked quite dark. I then saw how calm the learning was, as lamps lit the desks and the children worked quietly and purposefully on a task together.

Next Steps:

- SENCo to support/monitor 1 EHCP pupil at a time to track progress
- Training for the leads of the teaching and learning groups
- Training for new staff

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Target 6: Middle Leadership for Inclusion.

There is an ethos of developing staff skills and passions. One member of SLT is currently completing her NASENCO demonstrating the importance the school has on inclusion. This means three members of SLT are qualified sencos. Three others are currently working on NPQs.

As one teacher explained "We are openly encouraged to develop as leaders, and we get support to do so." SLT has widened this year to include some middle leaders to extend growth and increase capacity.

An example of extending leaders is that the mentorship of ECTs has moved to a previous middle leader, who is now enjoying the challenge added to her role. Another has been given oversight of the Royal Shakespeare accreditation received by the school.

The CEO is passionate to develop new leaders. She explained that "We do a lot of leadership development, so leaders don't always stand at the front. Middle leaders are given time and support to complete training, which encourages them to develop their skills."

Next steps:

- Evaluation of impact, evidence, and the coaching model

Target 7- inclusive assessment pathways

Staff are trained to identify gaps in learning early, so assessment for learning is a focus, with immediate positive feedback where possible. Children are encouraged to self-assess where appropriate, for example in maths.

Arbor has been extended so staff can all closely monitor small steps of progress. This means both children and parents can celebrate success.

TES provision mapping is embedded, and parents can see and track this. Live plans and reviews are available.

Microsoft forms as set up for each intervention, with carefully selected targets which the TA can complete after each session. This means it is easy to oversee, and targets can be updated as needed rather than just termly. This also cuts workload for both the TAs who track the sessions and the Inclusion lead who has an easy overview.

Next steps:

- Little Wandle training to other schools

Target 8: Child Talk & Inclusive Behaviour Culture.

I witnessed children being so polite to each other and to adults. There is a culture of collaboration and respect. I watched as one pupil asked another to stop banging their

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feet on a chair and they quickly stopped. Thank you, was the immediate response. Another explained "We do collaboration maths. We swap over who we go with, it's not always about going with friends, its more about how much you learn. We can learn from anyone."

The pupils I spoke to were reflective and aware of the impact of their words and behaviour on others. "In worship, we have learnt how to persevere, and I know I'm getting better." Another told me, "We do have rules of course, but it's also fun here, it's about being safe."

The behaviour policy has just been updated as a response to feedback. The restorative conversations remain. The deputy head explained that "It's about empowering adults and reminding us all that behaviour is everyone's responsibility. We all have high expectations. We all sing from the same song sheet."

One pupil told me, "If I feel angry, I've learnt to breath, pause and stay calm till I can find an adult."

The new reflection system, with time given to complete work and a comic strip style of conversation is working well. The children know they have choices. The red bean bag system is also proving effective as the headteacher sees fewer pupils sitting on these. As she puts it "Children are taking more responsibility for their behaviour and they are becoming more reflective."

Behaviour incidents are dealt with swiftly by a team, and adaptations put in place immediately in response. It's about ensuring every child is successful.

There is a Makaton choir and a TA well trained and confident to both use and teach. Staff have seen older children teaching younger ones Makaton signs in the playground. They love it.

Next steps:

- Reflect must feed directly into the Nurture groups provision
- Continue to implement the new Behaviour policy and adapt as necessary

Target 9: Family Partnerships & Digital Communication.

Parents praised the level of communication from the school. This is both via email, dojo, certificates as well as face to face. Parents like the way Tapestry is used as such an effective communication tool in KS1.

They praised the number of fun events the school runs like a recent visit from an Olympian, fetes, teddy bears picnic, and worship to which parents and carers are invited. "These help us feel a bit included in our child's day."

The parents commented on how welcoming the school is for both them and their children. "They pay a lot of attention to what a child needs." They went on "So many

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little things the school does really well, even like SLT being on the gate in the mornings. They know everyone's names; make us all feel included."

Parent forums are regular as well as transition support events. The website has live updates about what is happening and classes have newsletters. One parent explained why these are so important saying "My child doesn't tell me much about what's gone on during the day, so recently I discovered they had seen the Gruffalo in school. This helped me have discussions about it."

Next steps:

- Deliver the new format for Coffee afternoons to increase attendance and engagement – this will mean activities such as Christmas wreath making.

Target 10: Community & Global Inclusion Work.

The school is partnered with Pilgrims Hospice. They take part in local events and children recently coloured sunflowers to be put up within the hospice. There is a Santa run coming up and the hospice attend the summer fare.

The school is holding a firework event for the community in November. As the headteacher explained "We want to be at the heart of the community." The school has the Green Flag eco award. Their recently acquired Little Wandle status means that now the school holds training and information events every term for other schools to attend. The school also holds the Courageous Advocate award from Christian Aid and is hoping to have this renewed.

Next steps:

- Strengthen Global Partnerships

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Agreed Targets for next 12 Months

Target 1: To ensure all staff accurately and regularly use Small Steps to support tracking of progress and next steps.

Comments:

Little Wandle obviously stands within this target. The tracking, monitoring and evaluation is three weekly and very small steps. The team working with each child discuss and adapt the input regularly to ensure every child is successful. The next steps are to ensure all staff, especially new ones, become confident, especially as new children are added.

Pupil progress meetings are seen as a priority. To this end, many or all of SLT will attend these. This ensures all areas of curriculum, wellbeing, behaviour and attendance are covered.

Target 2: Further Develop the impact of assessment to meet the needs of all children.

Comments:

Arbor is embedded and working effectively yet the team can see that there is always more to be added and fine-tuned. On top of this, Dynamo is used to track maths. Further coaching for staff is to be offered to ensure consistency in all areas of maths, including fluency and confidence being monitored.

Over the last few years, work has been done on fluency of tables. Reasoning and applying is still a focus for the team.

The inclusion lead is aware that now forest school is up and running, further work is needed to look at how to monitor impact and assess progress in these sessions. The inclusion lead plans to visit other schools to see how to enable a larger number of children to access it each term.

The inclusion lead is also learning how to monitor early talk boost intervention as this is still quite a new introduction.

Target 3: To enable all children to access exciting curriculum opportunities to embed learning and create memorable experiences.

Comments:

From my visit, especially talking to the pupils and parents, it seems there are already a wide variety of opportunities offered that are creative, exciting and some quite unusual. However, the headteacher is always looking to move things forward. She wants to create a music area outside and also a Tiny Town. She has been to visit the Tiny Town set up in another Trust school and sees the potential to develop skills such as speech, language and communication.

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Forest school is to be extended and used more widely as the year goes on. In addition, the school is on a journey to develop therapeutic classrooms, with a more homely feel. I saw these in action in some classes as mentioned by the CEO "When children feel psychologically safe, they will be happy and learn."

On top of these, there are plans to develop the playground, in response to pupil requests.

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Overview

This is an unusual school for so many reasons. As soon as I walked in the door I was made to feel as if I was in some way contributing to the good of the school community. As I waited near the door and listened to staff speaking to parents and carers dropping off children with the usual array of concerns, each person left feeling seen, heard and knowing their child mattered and was safe. Having walked in anxious, they all left with smiles on their faces. Certain words shout out to describe this school. Good, healthy and safe relationships underpin everything that is done here. Everyone is part of what one TA described as a "big family". There is a focus on developing skills of both adult teams as well as the skills and passions of the pupils. This love of learning, growth and curiosity spreads through the corridors that stimulate interest to the CPD offer for the wider staff team who seem hungry to learn.

The CEO of the Trust emphasised the importance of psychological safety within every area of school. For her, it is clear that if this is in place, then creativity, autonomy and risk will work. Members of staff explained that the team ethos means that if you don't know something, if you need help, you can ask anyone – anyone! Everyone is approachable and happy to help. The Christian distinctiveness of the school permeated the day. One child explained "Like Jesus, we know to do likewise. So, if a child is unkind to us, we show kindness back to them." Another put it this way "Like the good Samaritan, we help others and be kind."

Collaboration was evident among pupils, staff and across the Trust, and is an area appreciated by many. Walking round the school, from EYFS, children were problem solving together, waiting for each other, building together and confidently talking about their tasks. Staff explained they share tasks. The PSA explained she isn't worried about her workload as "If I'm not here, others can step in and take my place. If I need support, I always get it. There is a shared responsibility." And across the Trust, schools work to support each other and share ideas. As we were looking at the Forest School space, the headteacher mentioned to the inclusion lead that at another Trust school they have a resource that might work out here. The Inclusion lead immediately responded, as if it was usual practice, that she would go and see that school to get ideas from them.

Walking round all the classes, no child stands out as different. As the headteacher explained "Any child can use headphones or sit in a different place." The flexible seating, use of technology, range of adaptations means no child feels different. There are such a range of alternative spaces to learn and regulate. These range from a sensory room and therapeutic spaces, to cupboards transformed into individual, quiet workstations. The staff team are proactive to need, supported by hearing the voice of the child alongside working closely with parents. A teacher explained that if there is a behaviour incident, they meet with SLT at the end of that day, trouble shoot together as a team and then make sure adjustments are in place for first thing the next morning to ensure the child is successful. In EYFS and Y1, staff noticed children were struggling with the transition, so they introduced continuous provision into Y1 which has helped the children to settle more quickly.

Transition was celebrated in many meetings. Staff reflected that due to the emphasis on ensuring safe transitions, children are much more settled. A parent explained that her

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child had been invited in the day before term started to be with her new teacher. The impact of decorating the classroom together had had a profound impact on her child and she was so grateful for this. It took the anxiety away. CPD is clearly a focus for the Trust. The impact of this is felt across the curriculum and into wellbeing. One TA recently received training in emotion coaching. She learnt how to work through the emotions, not just of the child, but also herself and also for the parent. She explained this has reduced emotional turmoil for children and parents.

The school has a happy, relaxed and creative atmosphere. Independence is encouraged and curiosity a core value seen in displays and in books. Children are confident to share and celebrate their school. They are proud that they get to lead in many areas such as art, faith, music. The Sturry team are rightly proud to be the First Little Wandle champion school in Kent. The training received by all staff is exceptional. Results are already good and improving. The assistant head, who is driving it forward, trains, equips, monitors, re-trains and encourages the team of teachers and TAs. It is seen as an exciting project, valued by all contributors and given priority that is resulting in wonderful impact for the children. The CEO explained that the Trust model is to empower and equip the wider leadership team. She has set up an inclusion-based champion group. This has 70+ members across the Trust, led by her. She facilitates sharing and celebrating best practice across the schools. This is a supportive group. She explained her staff are supported and seen and therefore there is less likelihood of burnout in her team.

The meetings that were set up for me and the relaxed nature of the tour confirmed to me that the school is proud of all they do in the name of inclusion. The support staff team were a varied group from front desk to specialist TA to after school club. I met experienced leaders and an ECT. They all spoke the same language of every member of the community being valued, being seen and heard. Everyone matters here. A parent explained it this way "When my child started here with no English, they discovered someone in the kitchen spoke our language. How lovely is that!" One story summed up the ethos of this school for me by a TA. "Recently a child took me to a regulation station, sat me down and asked how I was feeling. That's how embedded the ethos is!"

I am firmly of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark to maintain its status as a Centre of Excellence. I therefore recommend that the school retains its Centre of Excellence status and is reviewed again in 12 months. The next review will look closely at how the school has interacted with its Inclusion Cluster and promoted continuing outreach. Evidence of Cluster working will underpin the capacity for the school to maintain its Centre of Excellence status.

Assessor: Ms Rowena Hicks

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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

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