



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



**School Name:** Laxey Primary School  
Quarry Road  
Laxey, Isle of Man  
IM4 7DU

**Head/Principal:** Mr Max Kelly

**IQM Lead:** Mr Max Kelly

**Date of Review:** 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021

**Assessor:** Rekha Bhakoo CBE

### **IQM Cluster Programme**

**Cluster Group:** Trailblazers

**Ambassador:** Max Kelly

**Date of Next Meeting:** TBC

**Next Cluster Group Meeting Focus:** TBC

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

Virtual meetings were held during the course of the day with the following stakeholders:

- Headteacher
- Teachers
- Teaching Assistants
- Pupils
- Parents

A virtual tour of the School was also undertaken during the review together with reviewing the evidence base provided by the school.



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### Summary of Targets from 2020-2021

**Target 1:** *To update the IQM 'Centre of Excellence' action plan. This is already partly in place and will just be a case of updating the new targets. To take part in cluster meetings when these become accessible.*

The school has achieved this target as the Centre of Excellence Action Plan has been updated for 2021. Laxey School has participated in all Trailblazer Cluster meetings in the previous academic year. All meetings were held remotely via MS Teams. The Head of School has recently been appointed as an IQM Ambassador and will lead some cluster meetings in the future.

**Target 2:** *To continue to develop communication and develop learning and teaching through online platforms.*

Laxey School has excelled in the area of communication and teaching through remote platforms. The school ran several remote surveys through lockdown with parents and pupils, to take temperature checks their lockdown response. The school developed a Plan A and Plan B for remote learning which were shared widely with parents and pupils. The school has won an award for Excellent Remote Tuition through the Corporate Vision Awards.

**Target 3:** *To explore, plan and cost a Sensory Garden. The Eco Committee to have input to ensure it becomes a growing and wildlife area for everyone to enjoy with an element of relaxation and mindfulness.*

The Isle of Man experienced two further national lockdowns since the previous IQM review. The second lockdown was extremely severe, and no schools were allowed to open, not even to vulnerable and KW children. As a result of this disruption the school were unable to develop the sensory garden.

**Target 4:** *To enhance transition by giving pupils further independence in their learning by trialling continuous provision and optional homework in Year 6.*

The school has undertaken a homework survey with both pupils and parents. A task and finish of staff was convened and asked to review current homework provision against the survey feedback and review and research of best practice in other schools. A new homework policy has been agreed and will be going "live" at the start of next month.

**Target 5:** *To focus on standards of tidiness and consistency in workbooks.*

Regular "book looks" were introduced and standards have improved across the school. The Head of School has planned staff training linked to "high expectations" based on the work of Mark Burns.

**Target 6:** *For representatives from the Parents' Forum to be able to meet and welcome new families. To invite parents to workshops to explain new marking and feedback initiative.*



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Due to the restrictions post lockdown, and because of the lockdowns themselves, the school has not been unable to progress plans to have visitors and parents physically inside the building for long periods of time. However, the school has made use of Zoom Webinars to hold regular “briefings” with parents. Whilst the school is yet to hold a webinar on the specific notion of marking and feedback, leaders did include this as part of the talks around lockdown expectations, and the concept is the same for speaking to parents around all the other themes in our webinars.

**Target 7:** *To have the opportunity to be part of a team undertaking a social media survey.*

The Governors and Parent Forum have good links and have met to discuss the school's positive use of social media.

**Target 8:** *To forge links with other schools who are keen to develop inclusion.*

Laxey School has participated in all Trailblazer Cluster meetings in the previous academic year. All meetings were run remotely via MS Teams.

### Agreed Targets for 2021-2022

**Target 1** - To explore, cost and plan a Sensory Garden. The Eco committee will have input to ensure it becomes a growing and wildlife area for everyone to enjoy with an element of relaxation and mindfulness.

**Target 2** – For representatives from the Parents' Forum to be able to meet and welcome new families.

**Target 3** – Full review of the current school curriculum. This is a big project and will take place across both Laxey School and Dhoon School. It will involve research, school visits, stakeholder engagement, and a variety of task and finish groups. The new curriculum will need to be fully inclusive and remove as many barriers to learning as possible.

### The Impact of the Cluster Group

The Executive HT is the Ambassador for the cluster group and Laxey Primary School has benefited from the meeting which have been held during the academic year. The foci of the meetings have been based on remote learning, the Recovery Curriculum, pupils' mental health and well-being and the role of the SENCo. The sharing of good practice within the cluster has had clear benefits for all members as it has supported schools in developing their curriculum and provision to support pupils when they returned to school after the lockdowns.

### Overview

Laxey Primary School is a popular one-form entry school located in the heart of Laxey Village. The local community play a big part in the school and the school strives to be an active contributor to the local community. The schools serves pupils from the ages of 4 to 11 and there are currently 214 pupils on roll and 34 pupils on the school's SEN



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register. The school serves a mixed catchment area consisting of owner-occupied properties, local authority housing and some farms. Laxey School forms part of a Federation with Dhoon School. The school was opened in 1929 and it is housed in the original building with an extension which was opened in 1999. There are a large number of classrooms, kitchens and dedicated dining room, sports hall and a substantial playground area with recreational equipment and a climbing frame.

The school is a happy and welcoming school providing a safe and supportive environment that enables pupils to flourish and reach their potential. Everyone is valued as part of the school's friendly learning community. Everybody is treated fairly and expected to work hard and to always do their best. There is a real commitment from all staff to ensure that every child leaves Laxey on to the next stage of their education with high aspirations and an enduring enthusiasm for learning. The Executive Headteacher demonstrates high expectations of all pupils in the school and works relentlessly to continue to bring about improvements within the school. He is both passionate and ambitious in always striving to do the best by all groups of pupils and is ably supported by a strong Leadership Team. There is a firm belief that every child can make progress and achieve and that it is the job of the school to make sure this happens. The school actively strives to promote pupils' independence, confidence and team work based on the belief that the pupils at Laxey Primary will be future leaders. Inclusion is given the utmost priority and is at the very heart of the school's vision. This was evident in the conversations that were had with parents, pupils, and staff whose relationships are built upon trust and respect. What lies at the heart of Laxey's inclusive ethos and practice is a strong, cohesive group of Senior Leaders, who have shared values and a pro-active approach to inclusive education at all levels.

The school takes pride in their vision to create an environment where everyone feels valued and has equal opportunities to thrive. The school is committed to growth mindset teaching style and encourage children to instil these learning habits into their daily life. All members of staff believe in this philosophy, understanding that every child can learn and succeed with the right attitude, guidance, and support. The school believes that courage, tenacity, and self-belief are crucial and can be developed by how we recognise and reward success. Directed effort alongside is valued and children are encouraging to take risks and not to fear failure. The curriculum focusses on the principle that there are thinking skills as well as subject specific skills which they develop in a range of contexts. The school teaches key literacy and numeracy skills in small focus groups which allow teachers to cater for the pupils' ever-changing needs as they develop their skills and progress. Pupils play an active part in assessing their learning so that they know what they need to learn next. The curriculum is both creative and engaging with the pupils taking part in the planning of many of the learning activities. There is a careful balance between teacher-directed learning and time for the pupils to investigate their own lines of enquiry through independent, self-chosen challenges. The school upholds clear learning habits which are promoted throughout the school, and these include: being brave, challenging yourself, smiling, being honest, sustaining effort, failing, and learning from mistakes, being positive and making time to reflect on learning. Every class has displays of learning zones, for example, the comfort zone, the stretch zone, and the stressed zone. Pupils are encouraged to place themselves in the stretch zone where they are challenged but have the resources to overcome these



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challenges, extend their learning and achieve higher standards through perseverance and self-belief.

Teachers provide high quality learning experiences and pupils are actively engaged in their own learning. Rigorous monitoring, evaluation and observations ensures that there is a consistency in the quality of teaching across the school. Teachers and support staff have high expectations and deliver challenging work with aspirational targets for all groups of pupils. During the lockdowns resulting from the pandemic, the school ensured that there was a consistent and robust approach to remote learning for those pupils who were not in school making sure that they were still able to access their right to a broad and balanced curriculum. From meetings with staff, it became clear that they take great responsibility in ensuring that any barriers to learning are overcome and that all children experience success in different contexts. The staff at Laxey Primary have created a learning environment that stimulates interest and discussion to challenge children's knowledge and understanding of the world through the provision of a range of engaging resources to meet all learning styles.

Evidence provided by the school, photographic evidence from the school website and the virtual tour all show that classrooms are well organised, and the vibrant displays celebrate the pupils' learning and progress. Pupils' work is valued, celebrated, and shared through the displays throughout the school. The teachers plan their lessons carefully considering their pupils' needs and desires. Each lesson has a clear learning intention with steps to success. 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 to 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 in their classes. Classroom displays and resources are used to support learning and teachers and support staff use a variety of teaching methods and strategies to minimise barriers to pupils' learning. Interventions and planned adult support are used to develop and enhance pupils' learning from their individual starting points, and this allows for progress to be made by all groups of pupils.

The school hosts a Celebration Assembly, which all pupils and staff attend. During the assembly the pupils are presented with "Learning Hero" or "Magic Moment" certificates and these certificates are linked to the school's vision and learning habits that are used daily. "Magic Moment" certificates are awarded to pupils for one-off magical moments in relation to their learning. For example, a child may have sustained effort for a long term with some really challenging maths work. "Learning Hero" certificates are awarded to pupils for demonstrating a consistent attitude towards learning over a period. For example, a child who always challenges themselves with tier learning, becoming a positive role model with a great attitude towards learning.

At Laxey Primary School, all members of staff are proactive, flexible, and motivated and their ideas are valued. In classes teachers and support staff work in close collaboration, supporting the different needs of pupils in small groups. Support staff greatly value the supportive nature of the school and how they can access advice and guidance through the very open and positive staff relationships in the school. Strong teamwork is a key



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strength with every pupil's needs being a key priority and the staff going out of their way to think creatively about what might work for each individual. Leaders ensure that teachers receive focused and highly effective professional development. Teachers' subject, pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge consistently build and develop over time. This consistently translates into improvements in the teaching of the curriculum. High quality professional development is available for every teacher, Leaders and support staff which ensures that practitioners are constantly reviewing their own work and improving their practice to support pupils in their classrooms. Both teachers and support staff value the open-door policy that Leaders have and feel comfortable to talk to them should the need arise. One member of staff stated that, "The school is really inclusive and has a positive learning environment. There is a real feel that this a community school with parents and carers being involved in the life of the school.

The pupils at Laxey Primary are fortunate to belong to such a highly inclusive school. They are clearly proud of their school. Mutual regard and respect are evident throughout the school, with warm, positive relationships evident both in the classrooms and around the school. Pupils have a high regard for their teachers and want to achieve, they are keen to learn and have high expectations of themselves. Conversations with a group of pupils demonstrated how mature and articulate they are in understanding the value of their education and the clarity with which they spoke about how their learning is sequenced. Pupils are quite clearly resilient and demonstrate independence and an intrinsic motivation to improve their work in and out of school. They are very aware of the community and world in which they live as they spoke about how they raised money for Remembrance Day, and they were very proud of the fact that they raised a total of £230.70 for Children In Need.

Parents speak very highly of the school, staff, and school Leadership Team. They feel that they are listened to, and the school has fostered a real partnership ensuring that both parties share the process of educating their children. Parents commented that the communication between home and school is excellent. They praised the school for ensuring that they are kept informed through regular newsletters, the informative website and formal and informal contact with teachers. This has been especially during lockdown when teachers and teaching assistants have been in regular contact and parents felt that all members of staff were very approachable and really cared about their children's welfare as well their education. Parents reported that if they had any concerns, they felt confident that teachers and Leaders will take them seriously and that they act with immediacy to resolve the situation. One parent said, "The school is brilliant, they believe that every child is an individual and every child is made to feel special." Another stated, "The school nurtures the children's' talents and celebrates every child's personal achievements".

Laxey is continually developing its strong practice on inclusion and is sharing its practice with other schools. There is a genuine sense of team effort within the school, of mutual support, of listening, discussing and of including everyone. Effective features of this school include the strong, collaborative Leadership leading to effective teaching and learning and a complete focus on continuously improving and developing teachers' practice in a fully inclusive learning environment, to ensure that high standards are maintained throughout the school. It was a pleasure to be able to visit the school



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virtually and to have discussions with staff and pupils to experience the drive, enthusiasm and zeal for learning and developing pedagogy. Having discussed the progress made since the last review and the school's drive to keep moving forward with their work on inclusion, I would recommend that the school retains its Centre of Excellence Award 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 targets for 2021-2022.

**Assessor:     **Rekha Bhakoo CBE****

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

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