



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award



School Name Kingsley Community School
Eversley Street
Liverpool
Merseyside
L8 2TG

Head/Principal Mrs Alison Whittaker

IQM Lead Mr Luke Harrison

Date of Review 2nd July 2026

Assessor Mr Stuart Mycroft-Armer

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group Gardeners

Ambassador Mrs Sarah Linari

Next Meeting TBC

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Autumn 2025	19 th Nov 2025	Yes
Spring 2026	3 rd Feb 2026	Yes
Summer 2026	8 th Jun 2026	No

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

Kingsley Community School continues to value its involvement in the IQM Cluster, recognising it as an important opportunity to collaborate with other inclusive schools and share effective practice. Leaders spoke positively about the professional dialogue within the group and the opportunity to reflect on current research, celebrate innovation and explore practical approaches to inclusion.

Ideas gathered through the cluster have influenced several aspects of school life. Discussions around OPAL have supported the development of play leaders and strengthened lunchtime provision, while sessions focusing on sensory integration, SEND, behaviour and EBSA have informed professional learning and encouraged leaders to continue refining practice. Attendance at EBSA training is one example of how the school has acted upon ideas generated through the cluster.



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Kingsley also contributes its own expertise to discussions, demonstrating a willingness to share successful practice while continuing to learn from others. This collaborative approach reflects the school's outward-facing culture and commitment to continually improving outcomes for all pupils.

Evidence

- IQM Centre of Excellence review documentation.
- School website.
- School Development Plan and priorities.
- Policies.
- DfE school information and data.
- Assessment information.
- Welcome meeting with senior leaders.
- Observation of a Key Stage 1 sensory circuit.
- EYFS and Key Stage 1 learning walk.
- Key Stage 2 learning walk, including Forest School.
- Observation of Lego Therapy.
- Observation of sensory room provision and Bucket Time.
- Discussion around the School Readiness offer.
- Visit to the new specialist provision.
- Meeting with the Attendance Lead.
- Discussion with the Mentor and Enrichment Coordinator.
- Observation of lunchtime provision, including outdoor play and the dining hall.
- Observation of Play Therapy.
- Discussion around EAL provision and assessment.
- Observation of nurture provision.
- Meeting with the school counsellors.
- Meeting with the School Council.
- Final review meeting with senior leaders.



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Evaluation of Targets for last 12 Months

Target 1: Continue to focus on assessment as a development priority and link to appraisal process.

Assessment continues to play a central role in school improvement at Kingsley Community School. Rather than being viewed as a process that happens at fixed points during the year, assessment has become an integral part of teachers' daily practice and professional reflection. Discussions with leaders and staff demonstrated a shared understanding that assessment is used to identify barriers to learning quickly, celebrate success and ensure that every child receives the right support at the right time.

The appraisal process continues to reinforce this approach. Leaders explained how each appraisal includes three linked targets, one aligned to the whole-school priority, one focused on pupil progress through carefully identified focus children and one linked to their own professional development. This ensures that accountability remains purposeful while supporting staff to continually reflect on their own practice. Leaders recognise that, given the children's starting points, expected progress alone is not enough. There is a collective ambition for children to make accelerated progress wherever possible and this ambition is shared confidently by staff across the school.

Assessment information is used intelligently to inform discussion rather than simply generate data. Professional conversations focus on understanding why children may not yet be making the progress expected and what adaptations are needed to remove barriers. During discussions, teachers spoke confidently about the pupils they are tracking, demonstrating detailed knowledge of individual needs and the strategies they are using to support progress. This reflects a culture where assessment drives inclusive practice rather than existing as an isolated process.

The school's inclusive approach is also continuing to evolve. Leaders are beginning to develop alternative approaches to assessment for pupils accessing the alternative curriculum, including those with complex SEND and those following a sensory mathematics curriculum. This demonstrates a clear understanding that meaningful assessment should reflect individual pathways while maintaining high aspirations for every learner.

Next Steps:

Leaders recognise that assessment remains an evolving aspect of the school's inclusive practice. Over the next 12 months, the focus will be on refining assessment approaches for pupils accessing bespoke curricula, ensuring that progress can be captured in ways that are both meaningful and ambitious. Staff will continue to use professional dialogue, moderation and reflective practice to strengthen consistency across the school, ensuring that assessment continues to support high-quality teaching, timely intervention and improved outcomes for all pupils.

Target 2: Continue to introduce elements of Zones of Regulation as a whole-school emotional literacy tool to fully implement in the autumn term.

The Zones of Regulation are now embedded within the daily life of Kingsley Community School and have become a shared language used confidently by pupils, staff and families. During discussions throughout the day, it was evident that this work has moved beyond recognising emotions and is now focused on equipping children with the strategies they need to regulate independently. There are areas of school where this work is further embedded and is a clear example of strong, inclusive practice.

Leaders reflected that, while children have always been able to identify how they are feeling, the current focus is on developing independence so that pupils increasingly rely on their own toolkit of strategies rather than immediately seeking adult support. This represents an important shift from adults regulating children to children learning to regulate themselves. Kingsley have strategically deployed staff across school to support this continued focus for development.

The commitment to consistency is evident across the school. Classroom displays, shared language and regulation resources provide familiar prompts for pupils regardless of their age or phase. Staff understand that the success of the approach relies on it becoming part of everyday practice rather than an isolated intervention. This consistency ensures that children experience the same expectations and support throughout the school day.

Parents are recognised as an essential part of this journey. Workshops introducing the Zones of Regulation have been exceptionally well attended, reflecting the trusting relationships the school has established with families. Leaders explained how parents are increasingly using the same language at home, strengthening the link between school and family life and helping children apply regulation strategies in different contexts. This partnership has been instrumental in embedding the approach beyond the classroom.

The impact of this work can be seen in the calm, purposeful atmosphere across the school. Relationships remain a key strength and pupils demonstrated empathy, respect and an awareness of the needs of others. The Zones of Regulation have become an important part of Kingsley's wider inclusive culture, supporting emotional wellbeing while promoting resilience and independence.

Next Steps:

The next stage of development will focus on ensuring that the approach is consistently embedded across every classroom and that opportunities for pupils to develop independent regulation continue to grow. Leaders are committed to strengthening staff confidence in explicitly teaching regulation strategies, while continuing to work alongside families so that children benefit from a shared approach at home and at school. By building on the strong foundations already established, Kingsley is well placed to ensure that emotional literacy continues to remove barriers to learning and supports every child to thrive.

Target 3: Develop additional sensory provision.

Kingsley Community School has successfully achieved this target and continues to demonstrate exceptional practice in the way sensory provision is used to remove barriers to learning. The school's own evaluation highlights the positive impact of the continued development of sensory provision where carefully designed environments are supporting children to regulate, engage and access learning with increasing confidence. Leaders also report that children are becoming more independent in recognising when they need sensory support, enabling them to manage transitions and sustain engagement more successfully.

During the review day, it was evident that this work has moved well beyond the development of specialist spaces and resources. Sensory approaches are at the heart of the school's inclusive culture and are viewed as an essential part of ensuring that every child is ready to learn and able to access the curriculum successfully.

The learning walk demonstrated how seamlessly sensory provision is integrated throughout the school. Well-resourced sensory circuits provide a calm and purposeful start to the day for children in Key Stage 1, supported by highly skilled staff who understand individual needs and adapt provision accordingly. Children moved confidently through familiar routines, demonstrating increasing independence and a clear understanding of how these strategies help them prepare for learning. Leaders shared their ambition to build on this successful model by extending sensory circuits into Key Stage 2. Equally impressive was the school's creative use of space. Leaders have thoughtfully adapted every available area to meet the needs of pupils, ensuring that support is available when and where it is needed. As mentioned, during discussions with leaders, this is brave leadership. Decisions are made because leaders know their children and community exceptionally well and are prepared to think differently when it benefits their pupils and community.

Observations of both Lego Therapy and Bucket Time demonstrated the quality of adult practice. Sessions were calm, purposeful and expertly facilitated, with staff balancing high expectations with warmth and encouragement. Individual needs remained at the centre of each session, while children were supported to develop communication, attention, social interaction and emotional regulation within safe and low-threat environments. Staff clearly understand that successful sensory provision is about much more than resources. It is about skilled adults knowing when to step in, when to step back and how to build children's confidence and independence over time.

The school's own evaluation rightly identifies the growing understanding of sensory processing across the staff team. This was evident throughout the visit, with teachers and support staff confidently explaining how provision is adapted for individual children and how strategies are explicitly taught, revisited and embedded. Nursery continues to refine this work, ensuring that children learn how to use sensory resources purposefully rather than simply having access to them. Alongside this, leaders are beginning to develop alternative curriculum and assessment approaches for pupils with the most complex needs, including the introduction of a sensory mathematics curriculum where appropriate. This demonstrates a school that continues to reflect, refine and build upon already exceptional practice.



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Next Steps:

Rather than introducing significant new initiatives, leaders are keen to continue refining this highly effective provision. Over the next 12 months, the focus will be on embedding the latest developments within Nursery and the Early Years, extending successful sensory approaches into Key Stage 2 and continuing to strengthen curriculum and assessment pathways for pupils with the most complex needs. Ongoing professional development will ensure that staff expertise continues to grow, enabling Kingsley Community School to build upon what is already an outstanding example of inclusive sensory practice.

Target 4: As a Centre of Excellence, support other schools in building inclusive cultures to support them in working towards achieving an inclusive environment and the Inclusive School Award.

Kingsley Community School has continued to strengthen its role as a Centre of Excellence by sharing its inclusive practice with schools beyond its own community. The school's own evaluation demonstrates that this support has moved beyond informal collaboration and now includes coaching, modelling best practice, supporting staff development and contributing to wider strategic thinking around inclusion. Senior leaders have shared expertise through staff meetings, planning support, coaching following observations and guidance around SEND processes, including Education, Health and Care assessment requests and applications for higher needs funding. During discussions on the review day, it was clear that leaders view this work as an opportunity to learn alongside others rather than simply provide support. The Headteacher's involvement in the Liverpool Headteacher Steering Group is helping to shape an outreach model that will support mainstream schools in developing more inclusive practice. Initial work with Princes Primary School has already begun, with leaders working collaboratively to develop an action plan centred around creating an in-school alternative provision for pupils with the most complex needs. This work reflects Kingsley's willingness to share its expertise while remaining reflective and open to learning from others.

The school's SENDCo and wider leadership team continue to play an active role in supporting colleagues beyond Kingsley. Staff spoke positively about opportunities to share resources, model effective practice and work alongside other professionals to strengthen inclusive provision. This collaborative approach mirrors the ethos evident throughout the school. Inclusion is viewed not as something to be protected, but as something to be shared for the benefit of children across the wider education community.

It was particularly pleasing to see that outreach work continues to be grounded in the same principles that underpin practice within Kingsley itself. Relationships, collaboration and practical support remain at the forefront. Rather than offering generic advice, leaders are in a strong position to tailor their support to the context and needs of individual schools, demonstrating the same thoughtful and responsive approach that characterises their work with pupils and families.



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Next Steps:

Kingsley is well placed to continue developing its influence as a Centre of Excellence. Leaders are keen to build upon the partnerships already established by further refining the outreach model, expanding opportunities for collaborative working and hosting an IQM Cluster meeting during the coming academic year. Sharing the school's expertise, while continuing to learn from other inclusive settings, will ensure that Kingsley remains an outward-facing school that contributes positively to the development of inclusive practice across the wider education community.

Agreed Targets for next 12 Months

Target 1: Continue to develop assessment as a key driver of inclusive practice, with a particular focus on designing meaningful curriculum pathways and assessment approaches for pupils with significant SEND.

Comments:

Purposeful assessment remains a significant strength of Kingsley and leaders are keen to build upon the highly effective systems already established. The next stage of development will focus on ensuring that assessment continues to be purposeful and ambitious for every learner, particularly those accessing alternative curriculum pathways. During discussions, leaders spoke passionately about reviewing assessment models for pupils with significant SEND, recognising that progress should be measured in ways that genuinely reflect individual achievement while maintaining high aspirations.

Alongside this, assessment will continue to be closely linked to professional dialogue and staff development. Leaders intend to use performance management and regular review meetings to identify pupils requiring additional focus, while providing personalised coaching and support for staff where needed. This collaborative approach reflects the school's culture of continuous improvement, ensuring that teachers and support staff work together to review provision, share expertise and respond quickly when barriers to learning are identified.

Building on the work already undertaken, Kingsley will also continue to strengthen curriculum design for pupils with the most complex needs, including the development of alternative curriculum pathways and appropriate assessment measures. By refining both curriculum and assessment together, leaders aim to ensure that every pupil's progress is recognised, celebrated and used to inform the next steps in learning. This work reflects the school's ambition to continually improve outcomes while ensuring that inclusion remains at the heart of every decision.

Target 2: Develop a bespoke curriculum and assessment model for pupils accessing the new in-school provision, ensuring that academic, social, emotional and therapeutic needs are given equal importance.

Comments:

Building on the school's well-established inclusive practice, leaders are now looking ahead to the next stage of development through the creation of a bespoke curriculum and assessment model for pupils accessing the new in-school provision.

Discussions during the review demonstrated that this work has been carefully considered and is rooted firmly in Kingsley's belief that every child deserves a curriculum which meets their individual needs while maintaining high expectations and aspirations.

Leaders recognise that the curriculum for this provision cannot simply mirror the mainstream offer. Instead, they are committed to developing a curriculum that gives equal value to academic achievement, social and emotional development, communication, independence and therapeutic support. Careful thought is already being given to identifying clear outcomes, establishing appropriate assessment systems and creating meaningful ways of tracking progress across all aspects of development. This reflects the school's understanding that success should be measured broadly, recognising the individual journey of each pupil.

The school is approaching this work thoughtfully and collaboratively. Leaders intend to learn from established specialist settings and work alongside colleagues with expertise in specialist provision to ensure that the curriculum is ambitious, evidence informed and sustainable. During discussions, it was evident that this is not about replicating another model but developing an approach that reflects the unique needs of Kingsley's children and community. This willingness to seek expertise while remaining true to the school's own inclusive values is a real strength.

A particular focus over the coming year will be ensuring that assessment and curriculum development progress hand in hand. Leaders plan to establish clear baseline assessments, develop individual provision profiles and introduce systems that monitor academic progress alongside social, emotional and behavioural development. This joined-up approach will provide staff with meaningful information to inform teaching, celebrate progress and adapt provision where needed. The curriculum will also include opportunities to develop functional skills, personal development and therapeutic approaches, ensuring that pupils receive a balanced and holistic educational experience.

This work reflects Kingsley's continued ambition to remove barriers before they become obstacles. Rather than viewing specialist provision as separate from the life of the school, leaders are determined that it will become another expression of the school's inclusive ethos, enabling more children to thrive within their local mainstream community.

Target 3: Continue to develop inclusive mathematics teaching by strengthening the use of manipulatives and adaptive approaches to ensure that all pupils, particularly those with SEND, can achieve success and develop confidence as mathematicians.

Comments:

During the review, it was evident that leaders view mathematics as another opportunity to remove barriers to learning rather than simply raise standards. The next phase of development will focus on ensuring that all pupils, particularly those with SEND and those working at greater depth, are able to access high-quality mathematical learning through carefully planned adaptive teaching and the purposeful use of manipulatives.

The school's self-evaluation recognises the positive impact that manipulatives have already had in supporting children's mathematical understanding and independence. Leaders are now keen to embed this practice consistently across the school through high-quality professional development, ensuring that staff have the confidence and expertise to select and use resources effectively. This reflects the school's wider commitment to equipping staff with practical strategies that improve outcomes for all learners.

Leaders also recognise that effective mathematics teaching is not about providing different work, but about providing the right support at the right time. Planned interventions, targeted teaching and carefully chosen resources will continue to help pupils working below age-related expectations, while ensuring that those capable of working at greater depth receive appropriate challenge. Early Years provision will continue to build strong mathematical foundations, with further development of children's understanding through approaches such as Numicon and practical exploration.

This target also complements the school's wider work on developing bespoke curriculum pathways for pupils with the most complex needs. Discussions during the review highlighted leaders' ambition to further explore sensory approaches to mathematics where appropriate, ensuring that pupils accessing alternative curricula continue to experience ambitious and meaningful mathematical learning. This demonstrates Kingsley's determination that inclusion and high expectations remain closely connected.



Overview

Kingsley Community School continues to demonstrate why it is recognised as an Inclusion Quality Mark Centre of Excellence. From the moment of arrival, there was a strong sense of warmth, purpose and belonging. The school is calm, welcoming and purposeful, but above all it is a place built on relationships. Those relationships are evident in every part of school life and underpin the decisions leaders make, the way staff work together and the experiences provided for children and families.

The school's vision, 'Learning Together, Respecting Each Other', is much more than a statement displayed around the building. It is lived every day through the interactions between children and adults, the care shown for families and the inclusive culture that has been carefully nurtured over time. Throughout the review, staff could be seen taking time to talk with children, listen carefully and provide support in ways that maintained children's dignity while encouraging increasing independence. Expectations remain high, but they are balanced with compassion and a deep understanding of the community the school serves.

Leadership continues to be a significant strength. During discussions, the assessor described Kingsley's approach as brave. Leaders are prepared to make decisions because they know their children and families exceptionally well, not because they are following convention. This is reflected in the investment made in bespoke roles such as the School Readiness Worker, the continued development of sensory provision, the creation of a new specialist provision and the determination to remove barriers before they become obstacles to learning. These are thoughtful decisions, rooted firmly in the needs of the community and driven by a genuine belief that every child deserves the opportunity to thrive.

Relationships with families continue to flourish. Leaders recognise that successful inclusion begins long before a child enters the classroom and extends well beyond the end of the school day. The work of the School Readiness Worker and Attendance Team has become an integral part of the school's inclusive offer, supporting attendance, transition, parenting, early intervention and family wellbeing. Parents are welcomed as genuine partners and staff work tirelessly to build trust through regular communication, practical support and a willingness to listen. The philosophy of "don't do it for, do it alongside" is clearly evident and has helped create a school community where families know they will be supported rather than judged.

Pupil voice is another notable strength. The School Council spoke with confidence, pride and maturity about the role they play in shaping school life. Children explained that "everyone's voices matter in our school. No matter what," and that they "listen and don't judge." They talked enthusiastically about influencing decisions, from increasing the range of clubs available to changes in the school meals through the anonymous pupil voice box. They were equally proud of their fundraising work, supporting charities and taking on responsibilities such as Play Leaders. One child simply summed the school up by saying, "Our school is very, very kind." Another reflected on the school's vision by saying, "Our motto... is true. We actually do that." These conversations demonstrated that children are not simply aware of the school's values. They



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experience them every day and understand that they have a genuine voice within their school community.

A clear strength of Kingsley is its ability to identify barriers quickly and respond creatively. During the review, sensory circuits, Lego Therapy, Bucket Time, Play Therapy and nurture provision were observed, each delivered by highly skilled staff who understand that successful inclusion is about much more than resources or interventions. Staff know the children exceptionally well and carefully adapt their practice to meet individual needs while maintaining high aspirations. The continued refinement of sensory provision, together with the school's plans to develop bespoke curriculum pathways and assessment models for pupils with the most complex needs, demonstrates a school that never stands still and is always looking for ways to improve.

The quality of relationships between staff is equally impressive. There is a strong sense of teamwork and mutual respect, with colleagues speaking openly about supporting one another and sharing expertise. Professional development is viewed as something that is done alongside staff rather than to them. Coaching, reflection and collaborative problem solving are embedded within the culture of the school, creating an environment where staff feel valued and confident to develop their practice. This was evident throughout the review, with staff speaking honestly about both successes and challenges while remaining relentlessly focused on achieving the very best outcomes for children.

Staff wellbeing is not treated as an initiative or a token but as an essential part of the school's inclusive culture. Conversations throughout the day consistently returned to the importance of looking after one another and recognising that staff who feel supported are better placed to support children and families. Leaders have created a culture where people feel comfortable asking for help, sharing ideas and celebrating success together. Staff described a workplace where support is available at every level, whether through coaching, counselling, wellbeing initiatives, flexible leadership or simply colleagues taking time to look after one another. As one member of staff said, "We're all about support. Support at all levels." This philosophy extends beyond the staff team and into the wider community through fundraising, charitable work and shared wellbeing initiatives, reflecting leaders who genuinely understand that caring for people is fundamental to creating an inclusive school.

The school's commitment to enriching children's lives is another notable strength. Leaders spoke passionately about addressing what they described as a "poverty of experience" by ensuring that every child has access to opportunities that broaden horizons and build confidence. The children recognised this too, proudly explaining that "We do lots of things that lots of primary schools don't. We have many opportunities." Whether through Forest School, sporting activities, the Adventure Roadmap, the Bike Library or the extensive range of enrichment experiences, there is a determination that every child should discover new interests and experience success. One comment from a member of staff particularly resonated with me. Wherever possible, "we say yes to everything." It is a simple statement, but it perfectly captures the school's determination to open doors rather than place limits on what children can achieve.

Kingsley also continues to look beyond its own gates. Its growing contribution to the IQM Cluster, local partnerships and wider outreach work reflects a school that is



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generous in sharing its expertise while remaining committed to learning from others. Leaders recognise that collaboration strengthens practice and are continuing to build partnerships that will benefit not only Kingsley but other schools working to develop inclusive cultures.

Overall, Kingsley Community School is a school where inclusion is lived every day through relationships, high expectations and an unwavering commitment to removing barriers to learning. Children are known, valued and celebrated as individuals and, perhaps most importantly, they know that their voices matter. Families are welcomed as genuine partners. Staff feel trusted, supported and empowered to make a difference. There is a tangible sense that everyone is working towards the same goal and that every decision begins with a simple question: "What is best for this child?"

Kingsley Community School has continued to build successfully on the strengths recognised during the previous Centre of Excellence review and demonstrates a reflective culture that is committed to continuous improvement. Inclusion is not viewed as a destination but as an ongoing journey, one that is continually strengthened through courage, compassion and a relentless commitment to doing the very best for every child.

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: Mr Stuart Mycroft-Armer

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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