



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



School Hove Junior School
Portland Road & Holland Road
Hove
Sussex
BN3 1JY

Executive Headteachers: Maddie Southern
Lorna Cummings

IQM Lead Ms Charlotte Wallace

Date of Review 14th November 2025

Assessor Ms Vicky Stevens

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group Cosmos Learning

Ambassador Ms Fiona Robinson

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Autumn 2023	7 th November 2023	Yes
Spring 2024	27 th February 2024	Yes
Summer 2024	11 th June 2024	No
Autumn 2024	13 th November 2024	Yes
Spring 2025	4 th March 2025	Yes
Summer 2025	10 th June 2025	Yes

Evidence

- IQM self-evaluation document (SER)
- School Website
- Visit to both school sites
- Observation of School Mental Health Ambassadors training session



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Additional Activities

Project review meetings with:

- Inclusion Manager
- Mental Health Lead
- Executive Head
- Head of School
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) Team
- Mental Health Ambassadors
- Parents and carers

The Impact of the Cluster Group

The IQM journey has been transformative for Hove Junior School in embedding inclusion as a long-term priority and ensuring it remains central to strategic planning.

The evaluation process has provided a robust framework for reflection and continuous improvement, keeping inclusive practice at the forefront of decision-making.

Participation in the Cluster Group has amplified this impact by offering rich opportunities for collaboration and professional growth. The school adopted a deliberate strategy of sharing cluster visits across the Inclusion Team to disseminate learning widely. This approach reflects a clear rationale: striving for excellence requires staff to step beyond their immediate environment, engage with diverse contexts, and access high-quality Continuing Personal Development (CPD).

The cluster group has functioned as a catalyst for innovation, enabling the school to benchmark practice, adopt new strategies, and refine its flagship project priorities. These meetings have directly influenced strategic planning particularly in leadership, mental health, environment, and parent/carer engagement, thus ensuring that the school's inclusion model is dynamic, evidence-informed, and outward-facing.



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Evaluation of Annual Progress towards the Flagship Project

The school demonstrates exceptional practice in creating an inclusive and creative ethos and embedding mental health into its culture and curriculum. The three-year Flagship Project has been strategic, research-informed, and community-driven, with clear evidence of impact on parental engagement and pupil wellbeing. This is a model of exceptional practice for breaking down barriers and fostering equity.

A Mental Health Lead oversees provision across the federation, ensuring that wellbeing remains central and integral to whole school strategic planning. In the third year of the school's project, the focus has been on bringing the community together in meaningful ways, underpinned by a culture of collaboration described by staff as "a massive team effort."

The school has embedded a comprehensive whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing, recognising the importance of pupil voice and peer support as central to its strategy. A key element of this work is the Mental Health Ambassador programme, which empowers pupils to take an active role in promoting emotional wellbeing across the school community.

Mental Health Ambassadors are carefully selected from different year groups and receive structured training to develop their understanding of mental health concepts, active listening skills, and strategies for signposting support. Their role is highly visible within the school environment, ensuring that pupils know who to approach for informal support. This visibility, combined with their accessibility, fosters a culture of openness and trust among pupils.

The pupils are rightly proud of their work. One ambassador explained; *"It means a lot to me, as I am trusted."* Another added; *"It's an important role to ensure everyone is welcome."* These comments reflect the sense of responsibility and pride associated with the role.

Pupils also spoke about personal growth; *"It helped me learn how to keep regulated, it helps me work hard."* Others highlighted empathy and care; *"I can see what everyone else is feeling."* and *"I make sure my friends and the whole school are happy."*

Such statements demonstrate that the programme not only benefits the wider school community but also builds resilience and emotional intelligence in the ambassadors themselves.

The initiative is closely aligned with the school's PSHE curriculum and wider wellbeing activities, reinforcing key messages about resilience, emotional regulation, and the importance of seeking help when needed.

Ambassadors contribute meaningfully to school life by leading discussions during themed weeks such as Mental Health Awareness Week, delivering assemblies, and supporting restorative conversations where appropriate. Their involvement strengthens the inclusive ethos of the school by normalising conversations about mental



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health and reducing stigma, reflecting the school's commitment to "raising each other up" and creating a safe space for all voices to be heard.

The impact of the programme is evident in increased pupil confidence in seeking help, as shown through pupil voice surveys and informal feedback. The presence of ambassadors has enhanced peer-to-peer support networks, reducing reliance solely on adult intervention and promoting a culture of empathy and resilience. This initiative is a significant contributor to the school's wider mental health strategy and demonstrates how pupil leadership can be harnessed to improve wellbeing outcomes.

Looking ahead, the school plans to formalise ambassador training into an annual programme with clear progression routes, ensuring sustainability and depth. Leaders also intend to develop impact measures, such as tracking referrals and wellbeing indicators, to evaluate effectiveness more systematically. Extending ambassador involvement to parent engagement events is another planned development, strengthening the link between home and school wellbeing.

The school has established a parent-carer anti-racism group, creating a safe space for open dialogue and shared experiences. Meetings occur termly and are research-driven, often in collaboration with secondary schools. Staff articulate a clear ethos; "*Making the time to make it happen,*" reflecting the deliberate, thoughtful planning behind every initiative.

Staff visibility and restorative justice practices underpin the school's response to prejudice-based incidents. A structured five-step process empowers victims, restores balance, and prioritises re-education for perpetrators, focusing on intent, impact, and underlying trauma.

Leaders are relentless in their pursuit of equity, embedding anti-racism into curriculum design through decolonisation efforts, reviewing texts, art, and music to ensure representation and diversity. Entry and exit music in assemblies now reflect a broad range of genres, reinforcing inclusion at every opportunity.

The school actively leverages parent and carer expertise through initiatives such as 'Bowls of Belonging,' a community food event where families share traditional dishes. Attendance of 30 to 40 families demonstrates strong engagement and pride, transforming negative lived experiences into positive, celebratory moments. Similarly, partnerships with asylum seeker communities such as inviting them to cook and contribute, reflect the school's ethos of inclusion and mutual respect.

Symbolic projects, such as the school silhouette filled with flags representing the entire community, reinforce belonging and identity. Nurture groups for Black and minority ethnic pupils further highlight the school's commitment to wellbeing and inclusion.

The school's vision of community engagement extends beyond parents and carers to include siblings and grandparents, recognising that a holistic approach enriches children's experiences. While the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) continues to play a vital role in fundraising, organising four major events annually and several playground



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sales to support trips, resources, and inclusive opportunities, the school has gone further by establishing a Parent and Carer Working Group.

Formed after the Ofsted and IQM review in November 2024, this group operates strategically across three strands: Strategic Direction and Sustainability, Community Engagement and Partnerships, and Learning and Enrichment. Unlike the PTA, which predominantly focuses on generating income for enhanced experiences, the working group seeks to position the school as a community asset.

Projects initiated by this group demonstrate creativity and impact. Examples include creating a volunteer rota for the Safer Streets initiative, auditing the school website for accessibility, developing plans for pupil-led videos to amplify pupil voice, and compiling a grants list to support sustainability. The group has also tackled challenges around digital visibility, liaising with the Department for Education (DfE) to ensure accurate representation of both sites online. Physical improvements, such as decorating the outside classroom at Holland Road to create a quiet wellbeing space, further illustrate the commitment to inclusion and emotional regulation.

Engagement with parents and carers has moved beyond traditional roles, embracing opportunities to lead and shape the school's future. This shift is supported by a clear framework for involvement, offering three levels of participation: *"turn up and help,"* *"turn up and join in,"* and *"turn up and lead."*

Impact is evident in tangible outcomes: increased parental confidence and ownership of school initiatives, enhanced visibility and accessibility of resources, and the creation of physical and cultural spaces that promote wellbeing, inclusion, and creativity. The school has moved beyond fundraising to a model of shared leadership, embedding collaboration at every level.



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Agreed Actions for the Next Steps in the Flagship Project

Hove Junior School now looks ahead to deepening its commitment to inclusion by embedding neurodiverse practice and implementing a whole-school oracy approach. These priorities will build on the strong foundations established over the last three years and will be driven largely through participation in the Partnership for Inclusion and Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) project.

The school has identified five key domains to shape this work:

Leadership, Culture and Values

Leaders will develop a deeper understanding of neurodiversity, recognising both the strengths and challenges associated with different profiles. This will ensure that neurodivergent children remain visible, valued, and central to the school's vision and decision-making.

Mental Health

Building on the robust mental health provision already embedded, the school will enhance strategies tailored to neurodiverse pupils, ensuring that wellbeing remains integral to every aspect of school life.

The Environment

Staff will further develop their knowledge of sensory environments and explore how physical adaptations can positively impact neurodiverse learners, creating spaces that further reduce anxiety and enhance engagement.

Communication

The school will champion a wide range of communication styles, ensuring that every child has the tools and opportunities to express themselves confidently and effectively.

Parent and Carer Partnerships

Sustaining co-production will remain a priority. The school will continue to collaborate closely with parents and carers to shape its Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) offer, strengthening trust and collaboration across the community.

Through these domains, Hove Junior School aims to create a culture where neurodiversity is celebrated, communication is inclusive, and every child feels empowered to thrive.



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Overview

Hove Park Junior School demonstrates a strong commitment to community cohesion and pupil wellbeing through a federation-wide approach that operates as one unified school (Infants and Juniors) with shared leadership. Despite national challenges and declining birth rate in the city, the leadership team has responded proactively by prioritising initiatives that strengthen community ties and enrich pupils' experiences.

Hove Junior School is a vibrant, inclusive learning community committed to providing high-quality education for every pupil. Guided by its child-centred vision, the school embraces the principle that learning is a magical journey *"from the depths of the ocean to the furthest reaches of the galaxy."* This ethos underpins a culture where every child is supported to be brave, take risks, and approach challenges with enthusiasm, determination, and perseverance.

Leaders articulate a clear strategy that prioritises equity, belonging, and mental health for all pupils.

This vision is brought to life through well-planned initiatives and a culture of collaboration, underpinned by its vision of *"a family of friends who learn together."*

The school's values Love of Learning, Equality and Inclusion, Aiming High, Respect and Kindness, and Nurture and Safety are embedded across all aspects of provision. These values are not only aspirational but actively lived through policies, curriculum design, and daily practice.

Leadership is relentless in driving inclusion and wellbeing, ensuring that every decision is purposeful and aligned with the school's values. As a result pupils speak incredibly positively about the school eagerly sharing, *"You can make friends", "Teachers are really supportive", "Teachers keep us safe", "The school helps people to learn in different ways", "The school makes sure that everyone is happy, all of the people."*

These comments reflect a deep sense of belonging, safety, and opportunity. Pupils clearly value the supportive relationships with staff, the inclusive learning environment, and the breadth of experiences available to them. The language they use *"incredible," "amazing," "everything is the best"* speaks to the impact of the school's ethos on pupils' daily experience and emotional wellbeing.

The curriculum is intentionally designed to provide concrete experiences that broaden horizons and break down barriers for children. Activities such as visits to local bookshops, parks, and museums are embedded into learning. These experiences are purposeful, aspirational, and poverty-proofed, with initiatives like 'Love Local' ensuring accessibility for all families. Reception pupils visiting museums for the first time exemplifies the school's commitment to raising aspirations.

Annual PSHE action plans incorporate anti-racism objectives, supported by systematic reviews and deep dives to ensure excellence. The school's approach to enrichment is inclusive and research-informed, with regular visits into school and out of school every half term.



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Hove Junior School strives to ensure that every pupil feels proud of who they are, that their voice is heard, and that their unique qualities are celebrated, thus preparing pupils for a life full of opportunities and choice.

This inclusive philosophy extends beyond the classroom. Hove Junior School fosters a warm, welcoming environment for families, actively promoting equality and respect while challenging discrimination and inequality. The school recognises that differences should never become barriers to participation or learning and works tirelessly to create inclusive processes that meet the diverse needs of its community.

One example of this is the school's "Spooky Disco" event which illustrates this commitment through the event's meticulous planning and thoughtful adjustments. This year the disco moved away from unhealthy food choices, offering options that catered to all dietary needs, ensuring no child felt excluded due to allergies, cultural preferences, or health requirements.

Recognising the diverse sensory needs of pupils, the school created quiet spaces where children experiencing sensory overload could relax, colour, or use face paints in a calm environment. These adaptations demonstrate the school's deep understanding of pupil needs and its proactive approach to reducing anxiety and promoting participation.

Parent and carer engagement has been a particular strength, with active working groups influencing both SEND and wellbeing provision. The school has embraced co-production through its partnership with the Brighton Parent and Carer Council, hosting workshops, and steering groups to shape inclusive practice.

Accessibility has also been a priority, demonstrated by the use of multilingual surveys and interpreter support to ensure families with English as an additional language can fully participate.

Pupil voice and leadership have also flourished. Mental Health Ambassadors, now in their third year, are established across both sites and have collaborated with external organisations such as YMCA and Blatchington Mill to develop Mental Health Champions. These initiatives focus on transition anxiety and community outreach, empowering pupils to lead wellbeing conversations.

In terms of therapeutic support, the school has embedded a robust referral system that includes termly reporting to governors, ensuring accountability and transparency. Children continue to benefit from access to play and music therapy, alongside referrals to external mental health services, maintaining a comprehensive support network.

The school's commitment to community cohesion is evident through successful wellbeing events such as "Bowls of Belonging" and the creation of a community cookbook, which foster connections and celebrate diversity. National campaigns like "Hello Yellow" have been promoted to raise awareness and reinforce the importance of mental health.

The school continues to move from strength to strength in terms of its superb inclusive practice and I am firmly of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required



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by the Inclusion Quality Mark to maintain its status as a Flagship School. I therefore recommend that the school retains its Flagship 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 Flagship status.

Assessor: Ms Vicky Stevens

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. McCann".

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