



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



School Name: Millthorpe School

School Address: Nunthorpe Avenue
York
North Yorkshire
YO23 1WF

Head/Principal Ms Gemma Greenhalgh

IQM Lead Mrs Merry Norman

Assessment Date 5th March 2024

Assessor Ms Annette Sowden

Sources of Evidence:

- Self-Evaluation Report (SER)
- Learning Walks
- Visit to alternative provision
- National data and performance tables
- Academy Website
- Academy Policies
- Trust Website and Policies
- Academy inclusion and progress data
- Observation of unstructured times

Meetings Held with:

- CEO of Southbank Trust
- Headteacher
- Deputy Headteachers
- Pastoral Lead
- Safeguarding Lead
- Assistant Headteachers
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo)
- Director of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Safeguarding for the Trust
- Diversity and Careers Lead
- KS (Key Stage) 3 and KS4 Pupils
- Parents
- Trustees



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Overall Evaluation

Millthorpe School truly is a school where, as one parent told me, all pupils and staff are able to “find their tribe or people.” The ethos and the day-to-day running of the school illustrate how they respect all who enter the doors, from the pupils who start in Year (Y)7, to those who transfer in as “Managed Moves,” from out of the area or who are experiencing difficulties at other schools. The same courtesy is afforded to the staff.

In order to make sure this ethos is lived out daily, the school sees itself as a solution-finder. The Chief Executive Officer explained that instead of saying, “Woe are us if external services or provisions are lacking or not fit for purpose, we think about ways to solve this in the best interests of our children”. As a result, the school built its own Alternative Provision which enables pupils to stay on the roll and to receive a quality of education that is reducing suspensions and exclusions and enabling the pupils to achieve their GCSEs. This provision is indicative of the “village around the child” approach that the school takes. Working with expert staff, the home school of the pupil, families, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCo) and the Pastoral team, the students are prepared for adulthood with aspirations and a desire to do well. The provision has been creative in its approach to educating pupils struggling with the small class sizes they operate. In response, they offer both very small group and individual teaching that starts later in the afternoon when the other pupils have left.

Speaking to the parents you can hear about the impact of being a pupil at Millthorpe has had on their children and their families. One parent mentioned how she believed the school had saved her child’s life due to their support and acceptance of their child. This had allowed their child and the family to grow and hope for a better future. Another with a different but also somewhat traumatic journey said there was never a day she regretted moving her children into the school. When asked what would make them remove their child from the school and they all agreed that it would be if the culture changed.

It is the creativity in searching for adaptations and support that stand out throughout the school. For one pupil the school has used one of the new IV robots. The robot sits in the class and allows the pupil to access and interact from home. The impact has been amazing with the pupil now wanting to physically be in the lesson. In Humanities they have used Artificial Intelligence (AI) to rewrite texts to enable students with a low reading age access to the curriculum. Key Stage (KS) 4 stated they believed that the school went above and beyond reasonable adjustments and nothing was too much for the school to consider in order for you to achieve.

The Eco Laundry was a fantastic resource. The school took in uniform, laundered it and gave it out. A child transferring in is given a complete uniform prior to starting so that on the first day they could feel part of the school.

Pupils affirmed the opinion of parents in the school, welcoming and embracing all pupils when they mentioned they see themselves represented on the staff. A number of students were keen to share the story of their journey through the school. One student



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mentioned how proud she felt in standing in front of prospective parents on the Y6 Open Evening. As an elective mute in Y7, she would never have envisaged being able to do that but the scaffolded support she had received enabled her to share with parents how their child would be nurtured and supported.

Everyone I spoke to mentioned the processes and procedures that are in place to develop every pupil's individuality, which never allow them to stray from the high expectations. The pupils reiterated how everything was in place and everyone knew what you needed.

Everyone in the Millthorpe family cherished the sense of belonging they had from being at the school.

There were so many examples and statements from the very different groups that I had the pleasure of meeting with that showed their love for the school and the work that the staff did day in and day out without realising that it was not the norm.

Millthorpe was described as a "patchwork school that cared for a patchwork of people"

"You just want people (staff) to see them (children) as individuals... themselves... and not just grades and Millthorpe does that so well."

Thank you for a wonderful two days and an insight into how inclusivity and high expectations can be embedded in a large school and change the lives of all who enter Millthorpe every day when every member of staff and pupil feels valued and respected. This comes from a leadership that drives through the belief that every child has potential. It is backed by excellent but challenging support from the Trust especially the Trust Director of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion who also has a vision for inclusion not only in Millthorpe but for every school in the Trust and utilises the expertise of the staff from Millthorpe to drive the inclusion agenda.

I am of the opinion that Millthorpe School fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark's Inclusive School Award. There are only minor areas requiring development and the school is aware of these. I recommend that the school be awarded the Mark and be reassessed in 3 years' time.

I also recommend that the school should consider applying for Centre of Excellence status subject to the inclusion within its plans of the appropriate areas for development and the completion of the Centre of Excellence documentation. I note your intention to pursue this status and that you have already submitted your Agreement to Participate. As you know this will commit the school to annual reviews for the next 3 years.

Assessor: Ms Annette Sowden

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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Element 1 - The Inclusion Values of the School

The staff has set the framework for inclusion to be central to the school's vision and purpose. The strong links between the Assessment, Pastoral and Inclusion Leads ensure that pupils are fully supported and that the academic, personal, social and emotional needs of pupils are given equal status.

The strong ethos underpins the inclusion values of the school and is evident and visible around the whole school, in all lessons, assemblies and throughout the Personal Development (PD) programme, helping pupils to be Respectful, Responsible and Ready, which are the school's 3Rs.

The SENCO/Inclusion Manager has had a relentless and passionate approach to improving outcomes for pupils who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. She has established strong local networks and is continuously evaluating best practice so that she can offer further support to children and families and work in partnership with the Director of SEND and Inclusion for the Trust, along with Trust SENDCos.

The pastoral support for pupils' Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH) is embedded within the fabric of the school. The school continuously seeks out ways in which they can support the mental health and emotional wellbeing of pupils, using both external and internal providers. The school provides a holistic approach to ensure that families receive the support they need.

Personalised pupil passports highlighting strengths, needs and reasonable adjustments are created for every student on the SEND register. The needs are identified using a variety of information sources, gained through a graduated process of, plan, do, and review.

There has been extensive SEN Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for staff on interventions and identification of needs, following a whole staff SEN audit, along with further CPD on Pupil Premium (PP) students.

In addition, Teaching Assistants (TAs) have been accessing various intervention training including Fresh Start Phonics, Social Stories, Specific Learning Difficulties, Anxiety and Emotional Regulation.

Deployment of staff is exemplary. TAs are well-informed, led by a strong team and appropriately trained. They understand the needs of the individual and can adapt provision to meet learning and emotional needs across the school.

Staff work together creatively to provide an exciting and engaging curriculum which motivates children and values their efforts. They work hard to meet the diverse needs of all pupils and encourage determination and resilience to succeed.

Pupils say they feel valued and are listened to. They are polite and welcoming and behaviour seen in and around the school was good. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to make positive contributions to the life of the school, community and beyond.



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The opportunities for pupils to celebrate their achievements are frequent and varied. Gold Standard Learning is promoted across the school. Students are rewarded in lessons for demonstrating these efforts with stamps in their planners. Golden Tickets and hot chocolate with the Headteacher are greatly sought after. The Golden Tickets allow a pupil and a friend to go to the front of the lunch queue. The pupils wear achievement badges with pride. In Y9 being the “Big Banana is a big deal.” Recognition is a School Improvement Plan (SIP) priority this year.

Parents speak highly of the school and their opportunities for involvement and engagement. Communications across the school and between staff and parents are highly developed to nurture effective partnerships. The school has embraced technology to enable instant communication and to enhance parental involvement. All students receive 3 written reports a year highlighting their progress, learning conduct, attendance and punctuality.

Induction systems for staff new to the school ensure that the inclusive practice is shared, understood and implemented. The SENDCo gives time to be the advocate of individual pupil needs so that all staff share common values and support the emotional wellbeing of pupils as well as ensuring progress for all.

Parents are appreciative of the time given towards transition and the sharing of information which helps their child settle swiftly and sustain progress. Transition with primary schools, across year groups and phases and with receiving further education sites is well planned, taking into account the varying needs of the individual. Enhanced transition is in place for pupils with the highest needs.

Systems for tracking and assessing the progress of pupils are robust. Pupil progress meetings are given a tight focus to help identify gaps and highlight appropriate intervention.

Behaviour policies and practices are implemented consistently so that pupils understand what is expected of them and strive towards high standards. Pupils understand how to stay safe online and are aware of the different types of bullying. They are confident about who to ask for help should they need to and are very supportive of one another. This was reiterated by the parents, one of whom said, “My child feels like they can approach any member of staff.”

Safeguarding is effective. The website provides clear information for parents and the checks and monitoring of systems by the Trust and the Governors is robust. Strategies for tackling attendance are robust and rigorous so that persistent absence is falling, particularly for disadvantaged groups. Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS) is used to collate safeguarding information.

There have been significant reductions in suspensions in certain categories: violence, disrespect to staff and damage. There has been an improvement in SEND attendance in Years 7, 8 and 10. The addition of the Inspire Provision has had a huge impact on exclusions and suspensions. The provision created by the Trust caters for secondary pupils across its own schools.



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Staff and pupil wellbeing is a high priority. QR codes have been set up for all students, parents and staff which signpost to online and in-person support platforms. These are displayed in all staff toilets and are accessible via the staff intranet. For staff who are not comfortable accessing support face-to-face, alternative methods of support are available.

The school embodies inclusivity with staff members having responsibility for diversity and clubs to support Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) through Culture Club and LGBTQIA+. The school and pupils actively support diversity and attendance at these groups is high and students feel safe to express their identity.

The school has an Eco Laundry. This allows the school to take in uniform, launder it and then sell the pre-loved items. Since its inception, they have saved families £17,000 and sold and donated 1,800 items of uniform.

Next Step:

- Continue to build upon the success of both the Inspire and Applefields provisions.



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Element 2 - Leadership and Management and Accountability

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) provide strong and focused leadership. They are committed to excellent outcomes for all students and this is articulated clearly in the school's vision statement and shared values.

Quality First Teaching has been embedded over the past two years due to the strong systems and procedures that have been adopted. These have led to high levels of attainment, better attendance and lower incidents of suspension and exclusion.

The school has a long-standing reputation within the city and Local Authority (LA) for its commitment to inclusion. This is evidenced by the conversations regarding the Inspire Provision. Exclusions and suspensions have dropped significantly since its opening in September and the LA is working with the school and Trust to look at the model and possibly "buying spaces" for pupils from LA maintained schools.

There is an extensive safeguarding team made up of a full-time, non-teaching Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), 2 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) and a further 3 trained DDSLs. All staff have completed annual online safeguarding training.

The Trust Director of SEN and Safeguarding sends a Trust-wide weekly newsletter to staff which provides information, in line with the termly SEN and Safeguarding CPD focus, about specific special educational needs and safeguarding topics alongside strategies.

All staff understand that "it could happen here" and work with this in mind. Posters advertising the QR codes with signposting to in-person and online support, the whistleblowing policy and the Low-Level Concerns process are located in staff toilets.

Following pupil voice, approximately 99% of pupils reported that they feel safe in the school. Those recording a response that suggested they didn't feel safe were supported to understand the reasons behind the response.

Assemblies are delivered by the safeguarding team to pupils with support from School Police Liaison Officers and external agencies.

Part of the wellbeing strategy for staff is the Appreciation Postcard system. Pupils send cards to any member of staff drawing attention to something they have done that is appreciated by the student population. Staff can also send "shoutouts" to colleagues; so far this year 300 shoutout cards have been sent.

The school has in place Trust-wide and internal school systems of self-evaluation. A weekly Pulse document is submitted to the Trust for feedback on our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) relating to attendance, behaviour, outcomes, quality of education etc. This is "the school on a page" document that allows for instant feedback and action.

Pupils highlighted that the systems in school are so well embedded that everyone knows what to do and what support a pupil may need.



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There are termly and more frequent data checkpoints. These enable staff to monitor the progress of all learners and review by class/pupil groups/SEND/PP and by prior attainment and their learning conduct to identify engagement more formally.

Whilst being extensive, CPD is engaged in for purpose and impact. Staff are consulted as to whether CPD has been purposeful, should it be repeated and in what format. The amount of whole school CPD is balanced with faculty time and subject-specific training etc.

Induction for all staff is described as robust and rigorous both by the SLT and also new staff. New staff praised how it enabled them to quickly establish themselves as Millthorpe teachers as they know and are “buddied” to teach the Millthorpe way. During induction, they receive training on the Pupil Passports, the information contained within them and the strategies to use in lessons. They are also shown how to make a referral to the Pastoral and SEN teams.

The Local Governing Body and Trustees are very involved in the life of the school. They fulfil their role of “critical friends” by supporting and challenging robustly and sharing the same high aspirations for pupils.

Governors and Trustees are committed to the school and the community it serves. They attend school functions so that they remain approachable and accessible.

The skills and experience that Governors and Trustees bring have given excellent support to the school. They work with the Head and SLT to add additional capacity to the Safeguarding and Pastoral teams. They were aware of how isolated the SENDCo felt in such a large school so were in agreement to increase leadership in the SEND team with SEN Leads being added to the team.

Governors are kept informed about progress, achievement and attendance through regular reports and presentations from key staff, the weekly PULSE document and reports from the Director of SEND and Safeguarding. They understand what the data is telling them about pupils in receipt of PP for SEN and English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupils and pupils new to school. This helps them identify the school’s priorities and to lead the school forward professionally.

Governors receive up-to-date training which helps them better understand the links between finance, performance management and school improvement. The Governors liaise closely with the inclusion team and speak highly of the work undertaken to remove barriers to learning, supporting readiness to learn, preparing children for the next phase of their education and giving pupils every chance to catch up with their peers.

Trustees have a keen interest in how the school includes all learners and how equal opportunities are promoted. Their rigorous monitoring ensures that practice is continually improved and developed.



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Next Steps:

- To further implement the provision of the innovative use of Information Technology (IT), AI and robots, to enhance access to both the curriculum and attendance in person in lessons.
- Governors and Trustees to continue the level of support and challenge so holding the school to account and ensuring the high expectations and aspirations of staff and pupils.



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Element 3 - Curriculum – Structure, Pupil Engagement and Adaption

There are very clear policies which are understood by all, for example, on behaviour and anti-bullying. This has clearly impacted upon the way pupils behave towards one another. They are courteous, caring and kind.

Staff are good role models for pupils and genuinely enjoy their company. A pupil let me know that the staff never give up on you and “go beyond reasonable adjustments to enable you to succeed” and you can ask them for any sort of help. The school has worked hard at creating a family atmosphere which is one of mutual respect.

Opportunities given towards giving pupils a voice are exemplary with a pupil leadership team having a platform for change. Throughout the school, there are many groups who take on roles of responsibility and are involved in decision-making. Over the day I met with a range of pupils from Key Stages 3 and 4 who were representative of the School Council, and pupils receiving support. They are proud of Millthorpe and are keen to live up to expectations and uphold the values of the school.

The School Council was articulate and able to refer to positive changes they have made because they were consulted and listened to. They understood that they represent the views of others. They are proud to belong to the Millthorpe family and have nothing but praise for the adults in school. More than one pupil explained that they or their friends had started the school later than their peers. They were keen to let me know how they were welcomed and made to feel at home, making new friends easily because everyone wanted to help and everyone was made to feel like they “fitted into Millthorpe.”

The school has a clear understanding of the complexities faced by pupils and families and the potential barriers these may bring. Staff are then relentless in providing access to additional support and to being approachable, open and honest in their communications.

The school operates a Gold Standard Learning Conduct approach that underpins the teaching and expectations of the curriculum. In this, they set high expectations of challenge and engagement in lessons to ensure all pupils are given the opportunity to become Gold Standard learners. At the same time, pupils are taught to understand, encouraged to take ownership and enjoy their responsibility in the learning journey. Gold Standards are displayed throughout the school and in every classroom.

Reading is a priority this year with the mantra, “You have previously been learning to read but now you need to read to learn.” In the week leading up to World Book Day, assemblies were held for each year group re-iterating this message. Staff have received professional development on Reading for Pleasure. Each classroom door has a poster displaying a picture of the latest book each staff member is reading. Interventions such as Lexia and Accelerated Reading along with an age-appropriate phonics catch-up are in place to enable pupils to catch up with their peers.

Throughout Year 11, numerous intervention sessions run for English and maths. Students are also targeted for the National tutoring programme to support their maths



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skills from a range of year groups. Pupils mentioned the additional support they received in the lead up to their mocks in Y11.

All teachers are able to articulate the content of their subject curriculum and how it builds on prior learning. When meeting with the staff they praised the induction they received upon starting the school and how this covered subject development.

There is an extensive range of extra-curricular clubs mentioned both by the pupils and the parents. These are also planned to develop resilience, teamwork, honesty, tolerance, respect, confidence and self-belief as well as sporting and creative arts skills.

Staff communication processes are rigorous and consistent; CPOMS records pupil information but staff also appreciate weekly meetings and informal information sharing conversations.

Next Step:

- There are no additional improvements required; staff are asked to maintain their passion for adapting the curriculum access both in the classroom and through the cultural capital opportunities as this is appreciated by the pupils and their parents.



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

The school has a 3 year KS3 curriculum to ensure it is broader for longer. This and the KS4 curriculum are delivered to be enjoyed, to be challenging and to promote engagement. Pupils earn Gold Standard if they consistently engage in all aspects of the lessons. They must ask and respond to questions and demonstrate how they are developing their knowledge and understanding of the content.

The school is arranged into faculties and professional development and staff meetings balance between whole school initiatives and faculty-specific development. This enhances the impact of the training.

Best practice observed by any faculty is uploaded on the Staff Google Drive and is in the weekly “On One Page” documents for all staff to access.

There is a very strong team of TAs who feel very valued and appreciated. They see themselves as advocates for the pupils and as one said, “we are their voice when they can’t find theirs.” They see their role as being a bridge between pupil and teacher. Both teachers and TAs stated that the relationships between them are so good that they take cues from each other.

Behaviour for learning is good in lessons. Our data from the learning walks tells us that 85% of learning walks state all learners are engaged.

There are 5 expectations for inside the classroom which are embedded and all consequences and rewards are built around them. Staff have worked extensively on a shared language of “listen to learn” and this was heard in every lesson I observed. The demeanour of the pupils changed and they engaged with active listening at these points. It was a method of the teacher highlighting the information pupils were required to know and understand. The SLT report that practice in 87% of the learning walks demonstrates that this is used consistently.

The school seeks out expertise and acts upon external advice. The SENCo also looks towards the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) for guidance on best practice and into programmes which will make maximum impact.

CPD is well planned to address standards, enabling all staff to extend and develop their skills. The good practice of the school in relation to inclusion is also shared with other schools at a local level. Staff have access to and are encouraged to engage with the suite of new National Professional Qualifications (NPQ). This has resulted in staff enrolment on the NPQ for Leading Literacy, and the NPQ for Leading Teacher Development. Pupil books are monitored regularly for consistency of feedback and assessment comments, targets and next steps to improvement.

Staff have introduced “sample marking.” Three books are taken from each class and marked. The trends in good examples or errors are then fed back to the whole class.



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The system allows the staff to record instantly the feedback and who has been sampled to ensure over a period all pupils' work will form the basis for the whole class feedback. The introduction of the sample marking was trialled with a small group to ensure high expectations and standards could still be guaranteed.

The school reviews how it supports pupils through provision maps and Individual Education Plans (IEPs) seeking ways to improve through the implementation of resources, programmes and identifying aids. The SENCo explained, "We will give pupils the time they need and keep looking for the right approach which will help them make progress."

Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and how they can support them.

IT is used extensively and is monitored for impact. In cases where pupils have Chromebooks in lessons, impact is measured. The school has been creative in the use of IT, using AI to produce texts with accessible reading ages in history and geography. They have used an IV Robot with excellent results. The robot allowed a pupil to participate in lessons and social time from home. Over the weeks the pupil has now requested to attend his maths lessons in person, such has been his increase in confidence.

The learning environment is engaging and fully inclusive. Different types of learners have been catered for with specific attention given to SEN, Free School Meals (FSM), EAL, ethnic and ability groups. Displays demonstrate an understanding of other cultures and faiths and a commitment to promoting Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC), Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE), anti-bullying and British Values.

The SEND team has given advice across the school to create classrooms which support SEN learning needs. They are designed to be dyslexia friendly and visual timetables are made accessible to pupils who require them. Resources are in place to address sensory needs, for example, coloured overlays for the visually impaired and provision of Frequency Modulation (FM) hearing impairment system and Step Out Cards for pupils needing five minutes movement to prevent cognitive overload.

The school looks towards innovative ways of engaging pupils in IT, for example, through the use of AI to rewrite texts to the reading ages of the pupils in subjects such as history. The library is a focal point of the school. It is well stocked with exciting and relevant reading material which pupils review and display to encourage other pupils. Library monitors take responsibility for ensuring that it is tidy and appealing. The Librarian runs afterschool and lunch time sessions for pupils which are very popular.

Next Step:

- The school should continue to address the areas for development already clearly identified in its Self-Evaluation Review which aims to improve pupil outcomes and performance and support pupils to work at greater depth.



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Element 5 - Assessment

“Be the Best You Can Be” is integral to the school’s ethos and permeates everything. In order to do this the school has implemented many assessments and target meetings to ensure progress is tracked and interventions are timely and purposeful.

Work has been carried out to ensure there is a climate for and a culture that expects and aids pupils to give 100% to their learning and take ownership of it hence implementing the “Going for Gold” learning descriptors. These are displayed throughout the corridors and in every classroom explaining the importance of hard work, effort, resilience and responding to feedback.

All assessed work includes feedback and students regularly use a green pen to reflect on work and make improvements; self and peer assessment and purple pen work on misconceptions is at the beginning of every lesson, based on sample marking from the previous lesson.

The sample marking system has been instigated following feedback from staff on how to mark to have an impact. A working party of staff analysed marking, – its quality and quantity and produced a system in which three books from disadvantaged, SEND and PP pupils are taken each lesson. The work is analysed and common misconceptions and what makes a good answer are then shared with the whole class. They then rolled this process out across the whole school. Staff were very positive about having greater impact and higher quality feedback using this method.

CPD has been given to all staff on data, how to record it for meaning and how to use it to identify underperformance, SEND and the high fliers.

Every teacher has class and pupil Data on Progress teaching and in teaching files which informs planning and teaching. Formative assessment is used in every lesson to inform Quality First Teaching. Teachers are expected to provide equity by determining supportive strategies including seating plans for SEND and PP pupils. Teachers talked in depth about the use of data to make an impact.

The SLT are line managers to all faculties where pupil progress forms part of their discussions. Monitoring and Intervention reports are shared at Senior Leadership and Head of Year meetings.

The school has extended the RAG Assessment System (Red - cause for concern, Amber - requires monitoring, Green - no concerns at present) by adding blue as a colour for highlighting pupils (BRAG). Blue denotes those pupils working above expected. Challenge can then be monitored to ensure equity of support as pupils marked as blue will be expected to achieve higher results and outcomes.

Additional BRAG meetings are held - Y11 progress meetings of all students held every fortnight including the Headteacher, Deputy Headteachers, SENDCo, DSL, Attendance Officer, Head of Year and Heads of Faculty to determine sharp and focussed identification of any student not making sufficient progress.



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Telephone calls home are made if pupils are showing inconsistency in the attainment across subjects.

Where teachers have concerns or require help with specific students they refer to a SEND Referral. This is picked up by the SEND team and actioned accordingly. The team takes a graduated response approach whereby strategies are trialled and reviewed. Staff received extensive training on how and when to make a referral. The school has installed an online system that allows staff to make quicker referrals to the SEND straight from their desktops.

Staff meet with every Y7 pupil on entry to the school to “get to know them”, look at aspirations and glean information about the child as an individual. They also meet with every Y11 pupil to discuss targets and aspirations for the end of school. This ensures they are able to offer the correct support and career guidance for pupils.

Pupils are aware of their targets and how to improve. They could talk confidently and effectively about the feedback they received on their work and how they were expected and able to respond to this feedback. One pupil stated, “the staff match you with anything you need to help you like coloured paper, Step Out cards, Chromebook or additional support in the support rooms.”

As reading is a focus throughout the school under the banner of Reading to Learn, every pupil has their reading age assessed and additional support and interventions are put in place to narrow the gap and help pupils get as close to the expected reading age as possible.

Next Step:

- Continue to develop the Reading to Learn Strategy to incorporate reading for pleasure.



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Element 6 - Behaviour, Attitudes to Learning and Personal Development

The school has a very calm feeling as you enter and move around the building. Whilst there are narrow corridors and is not a one-way system, the walls have posters outlining the expectations of behaviour both outside and inside classrooms.

The behaviour policy is heavily linked to the school's core values of "to be the best that you can be" and "Respect, Responsible and Ready" and this is evident everywhere and in all interactions with pupils in and out of class.

Relationships built around mutual respect are evident when walking the school. All decisions are explained to students and parents so that everyone is working towards the same shared outcomes.

Two key phrases are used when talking about the behaviour policy. These allow "teachers to teach and students to learn" whilst also "creating a positive community for all."

Permanent exclusions are used as a last resort, this is clear with an average of one per year for the past three years. There are a multitude of other methods to intervene before any life-changing permanent exclusion decision is made. The most recent permanent exclusion decision was made primarily to protect the whole school community from harmful illegal substances. The school reacted to this by rewriting its policies on illegal substances and instigating a comprehensive package of education by rewriting the Culture Curriculum, PD lessons and assembly theme to include under-the-counter vapes and Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) or other substances.

Creating Inspire, their own Trust Alternative Provision, has reduced suspensions and exclusion dramatically. Since September 2023 the number of suspensions has dropped to two.

Training on safeguarding issues and child protection is comprehensive with all staff having to record attendance and completion of training annually.

Attendance figures show a positive increase and there has been significant investment in improving attendance post-pandemic with a dedicated Trust leader focussing on this relentlessly and effective systems developed to track and monitor attendance.

Attendance messaging is clear with an array of strategies: student slips, social media, tutor contact, SLT mentor, early concern letters, attendance panels, assemblies, behaviour curriculum and categorisation for students to focus attention.

The attendance team has expanded to include a Director of Attendance for the Trust, an Attendance Officer and an Attendance Admin.

The school invests a great deal into establishing relationships as this leads to increased attendance and higher attainment and achievement.



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The positive praise system reports 95% praise entries compared to 5% negative entries. The school has developed a re-education system when negative behaviour is exhibited.

The re-education process is proving to have a positive impact when you discuss it with staff. Pupils are less knowledgeable about this. One pupil talked about how support for bullies should be introduced as they need to be taught how their actions have affected others. This apparent lack of knowledge about the re-education sessions could be seen as a positive as the pupil may not have experienced or seen bullying amongst his peers so would not know how sanctions and consequences are used for pupils exhibiting bullying behaviour.

The rewards system is an imaginative mix of simple rewards such as a “Big Banana” for Y8s. All want to be the Big Banana and get to carry the banana, and the Golden Ticket that allows you to take a “mate” and jump to the front of the lunch queue. With over a thousand students this is a “massive deal” as one student explained. Hot chocolate with the Headteacher is also a simple but effective reward as the pupils believed this gave you the opportunity to just talk and not simply be one of over a thousand students.

Badges are given as recognition for points. In the lower years, pupils wore these on the lapels of their blazer for some of the older pupils they still wore the badges but on the inside of the collar, yet it was with pride they would show you the number they had collected.

Tolerance and acceptance are embedded so intrinsically in all that the school does and teaches that in conversation with the pupils when asked what would happen if one of their peers asked to be identified as a different gender, all were unanimous in saying transphobia would not be an issue and from the first moment a pupil mentioned they wished to be called something different then staff would respect that request.

There is a dedicated team of Wellbeing Mentors in Y10 who support students in the younger year groups with drop-in sessions, assemblies to highlight key issues, homework support and supporting form time.

There is also a Wellbeing leader on the staff. The staff interviewed mentioned the level of support that was available for their mental wellbeing should they wish to access it. This was either through scanning one of the QR codes on posters in the staffroom or staff toilets or talking to the Wellbeing Lead.

Next Steps:

- Plan to work alongside the Police Liaison Officer for vulnerable students to organise a support drop-in with external agencies for students, staff and parents to access support and information about areas such as vaping.
- Ensure all SEND students in Y10 will have had a careers interview by the end of the year.



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Element 7 - Parents, Carers and Guardians

The school uses a plethora of means to communicate with parents, carers and guardians both on their children and the community as a whole. A weekly update email is sent out to all families along with a half-termly events calendar.

Parents receive progress and learning conduct reports each term and are invited to parents' evenings twice a year.

The SEND Leads carry out reviews for SEND students each term plus an annual review led by the SENDCo.

SEND parents are invited to regular mingle events led by the SENDCo and incorporating external expert speakers e.g. from the LA SEND team.

Each form teacher is expected to make 3 telephone calls to parents, carers and guardians a week. These cover attendance, and progress. Staff can give feedback where a pupil has made progress in attendance, engagement and attainment; they can also be a vehicle for support.

Prior to pupils transitioning on managed moves or through fair access to Millthorpe staff have meetings with the family in which a uniform is given, information is gleaned about the child's academic progress, what it was like at their previous school and ascertain if there are any SEND or EAL needs. The staff believe that by having these meetings relationships between the SENDCo, Behaviour Lead and Pastoral team and the parents can be established on a positive footing.

SEND parents are invited to regular mingling, referred to as "Nibble and Natter" events led by the SENDCo and incorporating external expert speakers e.g. from the LA SEND team.

Parents and carers were very positive about the school. They were appreciative of the culture and stated if that went or was changed it would be the one thing that would make them consider removing their child from the school.

One stated they couldn't think of a time a concern had not been addressed either on the day it was raised or the next day.

Contact with the teachers, SENDCo and Safeguarding Leads was deemed excellent by parents.

The school website is extremely informative and easy to manoeuvre around.

The SEND officers of both the school and the LA are easily located as are all important policies and complaints processes.

Next Steps:

- Create the parent forum
- Identify Parent Governors that will enhance and complement the skills of the local Governing body



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Element 8 - Links with Local, Wider and Global Community

The school is held in high regard in the local and city community and is oversubscribed. The SENCo and Pastoral team have developed strong networks with the Educational Psychologist (EP) service, Educational Welfare Officer (EWO), Social Services, CAMHS, Occupational Health (OH), specialist teachers and Alternative Provision to make a positive impact on pupils. The Headteacher of Applefields Special School located in the grounds of Millthorpe reports with appreciation the support and inclusion of the students with the provision of lessons and events in Millthorpe.

Networks within the Trust, the local cluster and the York Education support service give access to conferences and training. Links with local and external SEN networks have served to keep the school up to date with provision and give a platform for the sharing of good practice especially around the success of the Inspire Alternative Provision as well as Applefields Special School.

The school diversity champion regularly contributes as a speaker to York St John University (YSJ) Diversity Forum events with pupils also participating in the event. The school makes excellent use of the local community and national opportunities such as the "Big Sing" in Sheffield and the Co-Create drama workshop and performance to enhance the curriculum, to provide extra-curricular opportunities. Educational visits to places such as Poland and ski trips are accessible to all students with support provided for those who would find finance an obstacle.

The school has a wealth of support to draw from which enriches the curriculum and supports its aims to raise aspirations and make career links. The staff plans for ways in which aspects of the curriculum, for example, events in history, faith and cultural events might be remembered, selecting the people, resources and places for maximum impact. Local business and charitable partners contribute towards providing a broad curriculum and appear at a careers fair within the school. This provides pupils with skills for life and prepares them for future employment.

They have strong links with the feeder primary schools and the Trust schools. This enables a smooth transition in Y7 to build on the achievements of their pupils and to showcase emerging talent. A French café was held this year to which Y6 pupils from local schools were invited. This allowed the pupils to see the variety of opportunities available to pupils.

Through pupil voice in its many forms, pupils have a good understanding of their place in being part of their local community and the need to make a positive contribution. The school raises funds to support many charities including those close to home. A Readathon was held this year raising in excess of £1000 with money being donated to local hospitals.

Next Step:

- Try to increase the number of external speakers/agencies invited in to talk to/ work with the pupils explicitly to give insight into local, national and global issues and experiences, for example, people working with different diverse and potentially marginalised groups or to address other challenges and people with relevant lived experience of these challenges.