



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



School	Forest Academy Bridle Road Croydon Surrey CR0 8HQ
Head/Principal	Ms Swabra Lloyd
IQM Lead	Ms Leanne Billard
Date of Review	25th January 2023
Assessor	Ms Emma Skipper

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group	Cosmos Learning
Ambassador	Ms Fiona Robinson
Next Meeting	17 th March 2023
Meeting Focus	To be confirmed.

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Spring 2022	N/A	
Summer 2022	29th June 2022	Yes
Autumn 2022	11th November 2022	Yes
Spring 2023	17th March 2023	

The Impact of the Cluster Group

The SENDCo reports finding the cluster meetings very valuable and is grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with other schools. The cluster group prompts positive discussion with colleagues and has led to the SENDCo reflecting on how to involve pupils more in decisions that are made in school with regard to club offers. The cluster have spent some time discussing the emotional well-being of pupils and how to ensure that they are regulated and ready for learning – this has supported the SENDCo in further developing her practice in this area.



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Evidence

Discussions with:

- Head Teacher and SENDCo.
- Inclusion Team – Associate Head/DSL, Deputy Head/DSL, Pupil and Family Support Worker, Admissions and Attendance Officer, Chair of Governors – to discuss inclusion provision across the school and the support given to pupils and their families.
- Class Teachers – to discuss supporting pupils and adapting the curriculum for children with SEND and offering stretch and challenge, development of Zones of Regulation within the classroom.
- School Led Tutors – impact of interventions, Zones of Regulation within interventions.
- Pupils – use of Zones of Regulations and general discussion about their school.
- Chair of Governors.

Additional Activities

- IQM Self Review and Action Plan
- Learning walk in and around the school
- Children's books
- School website
- Ofsted report – February 2022



Evaluation of Annual Progress towards the Flagship Project

The focus of Forest Academy's Flagship Project is 'Introducing Zones of Regulation to support Mental Health and Wellbeing'. The project was chosen to help support pupils with understanding their emotions and to allow them to express themselves in a safe environment. Staff at Forest Academy are keen to empower their pupils to have the skills to regulate their feelings, energy and sensory needs in order for them to effectively manage the demands of a range of situations both in and outside of the school environment.

This is the first year of the project and staff are at the initial implementing phase. All staff have had de-escalation training and training around Zones of Regulation. Supporting pupils in understanding and responding to their emotions is not a new concept to Forest Academy but one that is being further enhanced by the introduction of Zones with a greater focus on pupils taking the lead. Children have been taught the meaning of the different zones and the feelings and behaviour associated with each zone. On entering the classroom each day and throughout the course of the day, children attach their name label to the zone that most represents how they are feeling. Teachers can use this as an opportunity to support those pupils who have not entered school in a zone that means they are ready to learn and can offer early intervention to improve their emotional state and ensure that they are regulated.

All classrooms and intervention rooms have regulation stations set up in them. Pupils can take themselves to the regulation station at any point during the school day. The regulation stations provide pupils with an opportunity to regulate themselves by implementing appropriate strategies such as breathing exercises and to reflect on how they are feeling. The stations also provide sensory resources such as fidget toys and colouring activities to further support de-escalation. With the aid of visual prompts, pupils have the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and how it may have impacted others. It encourages pupils to think beyond themselves and consider who else has been affected and how they may put things right. Once the child is regulated there is the opportunity for a restorative conversation to take place. Despite only being introduced in Autumn 2022, the SENCO and Head Teacher report they have noticed children are already realising the importance of talking through their emotions and are willing and able to regulate themselves more effectively. Teachers have also been very receptive to the introduction of Zones of Regulation and confirmed that pupils as young as Year 1 are beginning to be able to explain their feelings in relation to the colour zone that they feel they are in.

When discussing Zones of Regulation with pupils they spoke confidently about the different coloured zones and what each zone means. Pupils also demonstrated a good understanding of how and when to use the regulation station in their classrooms and shared some of the breathing techniques they had been taught. They were positive about having the opportunity to talk through their feelings and knew that once regulated a fresh start would be given. Pupils felt that talking through their emotions had led to them experiencing less consequences, although pupils are aware that negative behaviour may lead to a consequence.



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Zones of Regulation are further embedded in the school through Zones of Regulation lessons, staff training and assemblies. During assemblies, staff and pupils reflect on which zone they feel they are in and the whole school participates in breathing activities. The assemblies are an opportunity for adults to model the language used around feelings and how to use the suggested strategies. Staff have had training on de-escalation techniques and continue to receive training on Zones of Regulation in the half termly SEND staff meetings.

It is true to say that the evaluation of the Flagship Project for 2022-2023 has been achieved. The Head Teacher and SENDCo have taken the steps to ensure that they have reached the targets to introduce Zones of Regulation throughout the school. They have evaluated the use of Zones and have identified the next steps for ensuring it becomes embedded throughout Forest Academy.

Agreed Actions for the Next Steps in the Flagship Project

To continue to embed Zones of Regulation across the school.

- During Spring 2, the school council will monitor the use of zones and the regulation stations in each classroom and intervention space. Council members will collect feedback from pupils as to the effectiveness of the regulation stations and the resources provided. The results will be shared with the SENDCo.
- Adult led regulation sessions will be established after break and lunch for those pupils who find the transition from unstructured times to structured learning time a challenge.
- Zones of Regulation lessons and assemblies will continue to take place to ensure pupils have a good understanding of each zone and are able to use appropriate vocabulary to explain their feelings.
- De-escalation strategies and Zones of Regulation to be built into the school behaviour policy as well as being included in personalised behaviour plans for targeted pupils.
- Continue to ensure that all staff are trained in de-escalation strategies.



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Overview

Forest Academy is a one-form entry school situated in Croydon, Surrey. Forest Academy is one of nine schools in the Inspire Partnership, based in Croydon, Medway and Greenwich. Staff across the partnership work collaboratively and support each other by engaging in shared personal development and planning opportunities for subject leaders. At Forest Academy there are approximately 197 pupils on roll from Reception to Year 6. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to the Pupil Premium Grant is above the national average at 67%; 17% of whom are also on the SEN register. At 16%, the number of pupils with Special Educational Needs is also above the national average. The most common areas of need are speech and language and social, emotional and mental health needs. Forest Academy is situated in an area of high social deprivation and experiences high levels of mobility for a variety of reasons.

It was evident from the first meeting with the Head Teacher and SEND Co of Forest Academy that the inclusion of all pupils, regardless of background or need is a fundamental priority of the school. The school ethos of 'no child left behind' was clearly demonstrated by the Head Teacher's commitment to ensuring all children feel supported and that early intervention is in place to identify any barriers to learning. The SENDCo is very outward looking and works closely with a range of partners to reflect on and further develop her practice. As part of the Locality SEND Forum, the SENDCo presents individual pupil cases and advise other colleagues on how best to support pupils in their schools. Opportunities to secure funding for early interventions, therapies, staff training and resources are also available through the forum. The Head Teacher and SENDCo are aware of the importance of getting transition to secondary school right. To support smooth transition, Forest Academy hosts local primary transition days where teachers from local primary and secondary schools meet to discuss the needs of individual pupils. Pupils also have the opportunity to visit their new schools on transition days. In addition to the general transition days the Family Support Officer organises SEND and safeguarding transition days to ensure that all information regarding pupils' additional needs is shared. The Family Support Officer has positive relationships with the Family Support Workers at the local secondary schools, adding an additional layer of transition support for all families.

The tour of the school that I was taken on not only highlighted the excellent behaviour for learning demonstrated by all learners but also the range of adaptations and support put in place for pupils who have additional needs. Personalised workstations, time out spaces and the use of visual supports were evident throughout the school. Greater depth groups for year 6 pupils in maths and English demonstrated the ambitious nature of the curriculum, ensuring that no limits are placed on children - rather pupils are offered opportunities for stretch and challenge. The importance of supporting the mental health and wellbeing of all pupils was demonstrated by the high profile given to 'Zones of Regulation' and the regulation stations in each classroom. Bespoke spaces for counselling sessions delivered by the mental health support team who offer 1:1 counselling and 'Place 2 Be' counsellors was also evident. A self-referral system for pupils to book a time and place to have a session with the 'Place 2 Be' counsellor further supports pupils in becoming independent in recognising when they may need support with their emotional wellbeing.



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The tour displayed the outward looking nature of the school and the importance it places on being an integral part of the local community. The school has a community room which provides a space for training courses, workshops and a meeting place for parents. As well as individual pupil support, 'Place 2 Be' offer family support work for identified families. A storeroom packed with food supplies that can be taken for a donation of whatever you can afford, is available for parents and staff alike. The food is provided as part of the 'Felix Project' which collects fresh food that cannot be sold and redistributes it to schools and charities. The school also offers a breakfast and after school club.

It must also be noted that the standard of displays around the school was exceptional. It was lovely to see the positive recognition given to work of such a high standard created by pupils.

The Chair of Governors confirmed that Inclusion is at the heart of Forest Academy, with all staff being passionate about ensuring the best outcomes for all pupils. She stated that relationships are strong and that Forest Academy staff know their pupils and families well; meaning they are very well equipped to support them effectively. The governing body is a well-established and active team with a range of skills who keep up to date with what is happening in the school through regular meetings with the Head Teacher and wider leadership team. They are informed of the inclusion needs of the school by the SENDCo who regularly reports on the school context and the provision in place for pupils. Governing body meetings take place half termly and follow a governing body monitoring plan that is aligned with the School Development Plan. Monitoring takes the form of learning walks, book looks, discussions and feedback from staff and subject 'deep dives'.

From meeting with the inclusion team, it was clear that relationships are key at Forest Academy. Staff have worked hard to build positive and trusting relationships with their families and wider school community. Members of the inclusion team are on the school gate daily and offer a warm welcome to all visitors – including myself on the day of my visit. These daily interactions with parents often provide an informal starting point for discussions and can offer an insight into the needs of families. Staff are regularly approached by parents who feel comfortable to share their needs or concerns with them. These positive relationships allow the inclusion team to offer timely support for parents.

The Pupil and Family Support Officer supports parents with a range of needs including completing paperwork, sourcing white goods, facilitating meetings with professionals, food and housing to name just a few. The Family Support Officer often advocates for parents in meetings with external agencies and regularly hosts these meetings in school. Established parents now feel so secure in their relationships with the support worker that they will refer each other to the school for support. Further evidence that the school know their families well is the fact that The Family Support Officer sits on the local ward panel and therefore is well informed of the community's needs, and is able to share this information with relevant parties.



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Attendance is high on the agenda for the Forest Academy team. Currently at 94% staff are keen to improve the attendance and punctuality rates of all pupils. Certificates for improved attendance are given to pupils in celebration assembly – a parent was also recently awarded a certificate to celebrate the improved attendance of her children. When children do not attend, the Attendance Officer carries out regular check-ins – weekly, daily or hourly as necessary. Staff work hard to ensure that pupils attend school and support parents by collecting pupils if they are unable to bring them to school themselves. The Attendance Officer liaises with the 'Missing in Education' team regularly to ensure that all pupils are accounted for – an important strategy where there is high pupil mobility.

Class teachers shared how being part of the Inspire Partnership supports them with the planning and delivery of the curriculum. Working in hubs to plan, scrutinise the curriculum, reflect on stretch and challenge and how best to support pupils with SEND is considered valuable by staff at Forest Academy, particularly as it is a one form entry school. Staff confirmed the ethos of Forest Academy is to ensure that every child is included and children are kept at the centre – both in terms of their learning and relationships. Teachers aim for pupils with additional needs to become independent learners who can go onto secondary school with confidence. Staff work hard to adapt learning to meet the needs of all learners and where necessary additional interventions are in place, some of which take place before school in the form of a master class with breakfast provided.

LSAs offer a wide range of support across the school including behaviour support, drawing and talking intervention, SALT and NELI. They also work alongside pupils who have an EHCP to access personalised curriculums. The impact of interventions is measured and shared with class teachers through robust monitoring systems. LSAs understand the need to be flexible and are willing to work across the school, wherever the need is. LSAs are part of the school personal development programme and receive training in weekly meetings, as well as accessing training that takes place across the hub. LSAs feel valued at Forest Academy and those that I spoke with stated that the management door is always open to help with any issues no matter how small. One LSA stated: "All staff go above and beyond to create a safe and secure environment." Another said, "We may not have outstanding on the banner on the fence, but we are outstanding with our relationships in here – we all care."

Forest Academy have employed School Led Tutors to work with targeted groups of pupils. Both tutors have been previously employed by the school so already have firm relationships established with pupils and staff. The tutors work with children who need support to close gaps in their learning as well as those who are targeted for greater depth – further evidence of staff being relentless in their ambition for pupils to excel. The tutors regularly feedback the progress of their groups to class teachers and together they reflect on which pupils would benefit most from their additional input. The tutors are aware of the school's priorities and direction as they are included in staff meetings, weekly online briefings and INSET day information is shared in a central place accessible for all.



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Pupils at Forest Academy spoke positively about their school. They confidently described how to use the regulation stations in their classrooms and shared that there are lots of opportunities to talk and get things 'off your chest' – such as the 'Place 2 Be' sessions. Pupils also described how assemblies are used to explore feelings and practice breathing exercises as well as celebrating successes. Reading is given a high status at Forest Academy and regular reading is encouraged. The children spoke proudly about their reading passports. The reading passports have different achievement levels and pupils can aim to become 'Reading Ambassadors'. 'Reading Ambassadors' have important roles within the school such as helping with book corners in classrooms, supporting at the school book fair and leading other activities for reading. The pupils were enthusiastic in their descriptions of the wider opportunities that are on offer for them such as being part of the Junior Pupil Team, playground leaders, gymnastics and football clubs, chess club and swimming lessons for Year 6. When asked what they would like people to know about their school they said the following: "Teachers and everyone here behave really good.", "If anyone is stuck there will always be someone willing to help.", "Learning here is fun and challenging too."

It was an absolute pleasure to visit Forest Academy and to meet their welcoming and committed staff. Every single member of staff spoke with enthusiasm and commitment to improving outcomes for all pupils and supporting the wider school community. Staff are aspirational and ambitious for all learners. Forest Academy is a school that endeavours to be outward looking and continues to be an integral part of support to the local community. Forest Academy is an excellent model of an inclusive school and does indeed meet the criteria of an IQM Flagship School.

Assessor: Ms Emma Skipper

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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Director of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd