Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM CoE Award

School Name	Ellergreen Nursery School and Childcare Centre Ellergreen Road Norris Green Merseyside L11 2RY
Head/Principal	Ms E Doran
IQM Lead	Ms Laura Pattinson
Date of Review	14th October 2026
Assessor	Ms Lydia Gibbons

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group	Elevate
Ambassador	Mrs Sarah Linari
Next Meeting	TBC

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Summer 2025	23rd June 2025	Yes
Autumn 2025	14th September 2025	Yes
Spring 2026	6th February 2026	Yes
Summer 2026	8th June 2026	Yes
Autumn 2026	16th October 2026	Yes

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

The visit to **Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School** provided staff with the opportunity to observe how approaches such as mindfulness, wellbeing and therapeutic practices are embedded within a primary context. This was particularly valuable in helping leaders consider how the nurturing approaches established at Ellergreen prepare children for the next stage of their educational journey. Following this meeting, the school arranged additional staff training focused on mindful activities and therapeutic play, refreshing staff knowledge and encouraging greater integration of these approaches within daily practice. The session also introduced leaders to the

Concept Cat language intervention programme, which subsequently influenced the school's decision to undertake training in this approach. In addition, discussions regarding the use of WellComm led to refinements in how language development information is shared with families, ensuring parents are better informed and more actively involved in supporting their child's communication development from the outset.

The cluster meeting at **Wellesbourne Primary School** had a particularly significant impact on the school's work around inclusion, belonging and family engagement. Learning about the school's welfare screening procedures prompted valuable discussion amongst leaders about how best to identify and monitor vulnerability within the Ellergreen context. While a large-scale tracking system was not required, the meeting directly inspired the development of the school's vulnerable children list, which now provides a clear overview of children's individual circumstances and supports the timely implementation of appropriate interventions. The session also encouraged leaders to review their induction arrangements for families with English as an Additional Language. As a result, a more personalised admission process has been introduced, enabling staff to gain a richer understanding of families' backgrounds, experiences and support networks. This work has become an important foundation for the school's wider Belonging Project, helping to ensure that all families feel welcomed, understood and represented from their first interaction with the school.

Attendance at the cluster event hosted by **Edge Hill University** further strengthened the school's commitment to belonging and inclusion. Sessions exploring student leadership and pupil voice reinforced leaders' belief that every individual should feel valued, important and able to contribute meaningfully to their community. These principles align closely with the school's vision for creating a culture in which children, families and staff experience a genuine sense of belonging. The opportunity to share practice with a wide range of settings also provided practical ideas for supporting children with complex SEND. In particular, leaders were inspired by examples of guidance materials linked to assessment frameworks that support practitioners in identifying and celebrating small but significant steps of progress. This has informed future thinking around the development of assessment systems and inclusive provision for children with more complex needs. Overall, participation in the cluster programme has had a tangible impact on practice at Ellergreen.

Evidence

- Meeting with staff group
- Meeting with parents
- Meeting with leaders
- Walk round the provision
- Meeting with specialist teacher
- Meeting with speech and language therapist
- School Instagram account
- School Famly account
- School website

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Evaluation of Targets for last 12 Months

Target 1: To identify all vulnerable children, ensuring that all staff are aware of who they are, what their needs are and how these needs can be met.

Leaders have strengthened the school's approach to identifying and supporting vulnerability through the introduction of a comprehensive vulnerability overview. Rather than simply identifying children as vulnerable, the system considers the impact of each vulnerability on learning, attendance and wellbeing. The colour-coded document is maintained as a live working resource on the school's shared drive, ensuring that information can be updated promptly and accessed by relevant staff when circumstances change. Dedicated class team meetings provide regular opportunities for staff to discuss vulnerable children and agree appropriate support strategies. Staff were able to share how they use the document and how it helps them plan the next steps for children carefully.

The school's approach reflects a culture of early intervention and shared responsibility. Staff have received training in a range of inclusive and trauma-informed approaches, including Zones of Regulation, Emotion Coaching, PANDA, Total Communication and neuro-inclusive play. Neuro-inclusive play interventions were taking place during the visit and the young children were successfully turn taking in an adult supported game. Leaders have ensured that professional learning is reinforced through coaching, modelling and regular review, helping staff to translate training into effective practice. This is particularly strong with the speech and language therapist where quality first provision is clear and consistent across the setting in a way that benefits all children.

Partnership with families is central to this work. The introduction of the Famly app has strengthened communication and enabled parents to share concerns, updates and changing circumstances more readily. Parents and staff alike shared how this channel of communication allows them to share more about things they have seen or done at home- giving staff a greater understanding of the whole child and also creating visual connections for the child linking home and school.

The school has also adapted its admissions procedures to create more meaningful opportunities to get to know families from the outset. Smaller information sessions and personalised meetings have helped to establish relationships, identify potential vulnerabilities earlier and ensure that support can be tailored from the point of entry. Parents shared how much they valued this and staff felt they received a wealth of information from these meetings which allowed them to adapt provision for the pupils and families in a way that best removes barriers.

The school's successful Early Education Partnership bid demonstrates its commitment to supporting vulnerable children beyond its own setting. The planned transition project involving local schools and services has the potential to strengthen equitable transition experiences and improve long-term outcomes for children across the community.

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Next Steps: Implement the planned half-termly reviews of the vulnerability overview to evaluate impact and identify emerging needs. Continue refining admissions processes so information is gathered collaboratively with families. Further embed CPOMS as a central system for recording and monitoring support for vulnerable children. Progress the transition partnership project and establish a shared development plan with partner organisations.

Target 2: To engage EAL families so that they feel a sense of belonging and are fully involved and informed in school activities.

The school's work with families who use English as an Additional Language demonstrates a thoughtful and increasingly personalised approach to inclusion. Leaders have moved away from relying solely on written questionnaires and have instead prioritised meaningful conversations with families. Informal meetings provide opportunities for parents to share their experiences, needs, cultures and aspirations in a supportive environment, helping staff to develop a deeper understanding of the communities they serve.

This information is used effectively to ensure that children and families are represented within the environment and curriculum. Families have been encouraged to contribute actively to school life through sharing stories, languages, festivals and cultural traditions. Such opportunities reinforce the message that diversity is valued and that every family has an important contribution to make.

The Famly app has further strengthened engagement. The translation function has helped remove communication barriers and enabled families to access information in their home language. Leaders recognise the importance of making information accessible and ensuring that all parents can participate fully in their child's education regardless of language background.

Throughout the review process it was evident that belonging is becoming an increasingly important theme across the school. Leaders are creating opportunities for children and families to see themselves reflected positively within the curriculum, environment and wider school community. The parents spoken to felt connected to the staff and school and praised the time they spent getting to know their family.

Next Steps: Continue to develop the curriculum around the overarching theme of belonging. Evaluate the impact of the revised induction process and refine it further where necessary. Strengthen admissions procedures to identify families who may be new to the country but not currently identified as EAL. Create additional opportunities for families to contribute resources, experiences and artefacts that reflect their cultural backgrounds.

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Target 3: To ensure a consistent whole-school approach to delivering ordinarily available provision and a Total Communication approach that benefits the majority of learners.

Communication is a notable strength across the school and is embedded throughout everyday practice. Building on the Ordinarily Available Provision Checklist, leaders have worked to ensure that inclusive strategies are consistently available to all children. Staff have been supported through training, coaching and professional dialogue to develop confidence in using visual supports, communication boards, signs and gestures across a range of contexts.

Following monitoring activities, leaders responded proactively to identified areas for development by providing additional sign-a-long training and introducing a successful "Signs of the Week" initiative. This practical approach has increased staff confidence and promotes consistency across the setting.

The partnership with Language Box has been particularly effective in strengthening provision. Communication supports are highly visible throughout the environment. Curriculum vocabulary is reinforced through signs, symbols and communication boards, helping to ensure that learning is accessible to all children regardless of communication profile or developmental stage. Staff lanyards have been redesigned to include comprehensive communication tools, while visual supports such as now-and-next boards and wait/go symbols promote independence and understanding of routines.

Parents spoken to praised and thanked the school for their communication support and shared how they had seen a noticeable improvement in their child's development with some children starting the setting as non-verbal and beginning to use meaningful words in context. This support is making a notable difference to children and families alike.

The school's commitment to collaboration extends beyond its own setting. Participation in local networks, including the Neuroinclusive Network and Resourced Provision Network, enables staff to both learn from and contribute to developing inclusive practice across the city. This outward-facing approach ensures that provision continues to evolve while supporting wider system improvement.

Next Steps: Continue to monitor and embed the Total Communication approach, with particular focus on the consistent use of sign. Ensure communication strategies are fully integrated within curriculum development. Further strengthen curriculum accessibility so learning opportunities are meaningful for all children. Extend the "Signs of the Week" initiative to include key vocabulary identified through curriculum texts and themes.

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Flagship project title - Belonging for All: Creating a Fully Inclusive Nursery Community Where Everyone Thrives

Comments

A key aspect of the Flagship Project will be the review and development of the school's values, beliefs and aims to ensure that belonging is placed at the heart of all practice. Leaders intend to establish a shared understanding of what belonging means within the context of Ellergreen and how it can be consistently promoted across both school sites.

The project began with whole-school training during the September INSET programme, where staff from across the school explored the importance of belonging and reflected on what it currently looks like within their setting. This professional dialogue provided an opportunity to identify existing strengths and consider areas for further development.

Following this, staff have participated in a core values consultation activity designed to gather views from across the workforce. The process has encouraged colleagues to reflect on the values, behaviours and beliefs that contribute to a strong sense of belonging and inclusion. Leaders will use this feedback to shape a revised set of core values that reflect the aspirations of the whole school community.

Subsequent staff meetings will provide opportunities for colleagues to collaboratively draft, refine and agree the school's new core values. Through this shared approach, leaders aim to develop collective ownership and ensure that the values genuinely represent the school community. The theme of belonging will be woven throughout these discussions so that it becomes a central feature of the school's ethos and culture.

Once agreed, the new values will be embedded within school systems and processes. In particular, they will form a key part of the induction programme for all new staff, helping to establish consistent expectations and ensuring that the culture of belonging is sustained over time.

Through these developments, leaders aim to create a clear and shared vision across both sites, underpinned by agreed values and a common language around belonging. The project is intended to strengthen relationships, promote inclusion and ensure that pupils, families and staff feel welcomed, valued and connected as members of the wider school community.

The school aims to ensure that belonging is not simply a concept but something that can be seen and felt throughout daily life. Through staff training, reflection, learning walks and monitoring activities, leaders are working to establish a culture where all members of the school community feel seen, heard and valued. This strand focuses on ensuring that staff understand the importance of relationships, representation and inclusion and that these principles are evident in all interactions and experiences across the setting.

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Leaders recognise that a strong sense of belonging among staff is essential if this is to be successfully fostered for children and families. Opportunities for collaboration between the Nursery School and Childcare Centre are being expanded, enabling staff to share expertise, develop joint initiatives and contribute actively to school development. By increasing staff voice and ownership, leaders aim to strengthen professional relationships and create a culture where everyone feels valued and empowered to contribute to the school's future direction.

A significant strand of the project focuses on developing an ambitious curriculum that reflects the identities, cultures and lived experiences of all children. Leaders are working collaboratively with staff to ensure the curriculum is responsive to the needs of SEND, EAL, disadvantaged and vulnerable learners. Through the use of inclusive teaching approaches and a continued commitment to total communication and neuro-inclusive practice, the school is striving to ensure that every child can access learning, experience success and see themselves represented within the curriculum.

The project places considerable emphasis on developing meaningful partnerships with families. Leaders are committed to ensuring that all parents and carers feel welcome, informed and able to participate fully in school life. By improving communication, providing accessible information, enhancing transition processes and creating opportunities for families to share their experiences and cultures, the school is strengthening the sense of belonging experienced by families and ensuring that they play an active role in their children's education.

The final strand recognises that belonging should continue beyond a child's time at Ellergreen. Leaders are strengthening partnerships with local schools, family support services and community organisations to improve continuity and support successful transitions. Through the Early Education Partnership transition project and closer collaboration with local stakeholders, the school aims to ensure that children and families continue to feel supported, connected and valued as they move into the next stage of their educational journey.

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Overview

Ellergreen Nursery School and Childcare Centre continues to demonstrate a deeply embedded commitment to inclusion, belonging and equity. Since the previous review, leaders and staff have maintained a relentless focus on ensuring that every child and family feels valued, understood and supported. Inclusion is not seen as an additional aspect of provision but as the foundation upon which all decisions, systems and practices are built. This ethos is evident throughout the school and is reflected in the warm relationships between staff, children and families, the highly nurturing environment and the school's determination to remove barriers to participation and achievement for all.

A strength of the school is the way leaders have developed systems that enable staff to identify and respond to vulnerability quickly and effectively. The approach goes beyond the identification of children within specific groups and instead encourages a holistic understanding of individual circumstances and their potential impact on learning, wellbeing and attendance. Staff demonstrate a strong awareness of children's needs and work collaboratively to ensure appropriate support is provided at the earliest opportunity. The development of systems for monitoring vulnerability has strengthened consistency across the school and reflects leaders' commitment to ensuring that no child is overlooked.

Relationships with families remain a defining feature of the school's inclusive practice. Leaders recognise that effective partnerships with parents and carers are essential to achieving positive outcomes for children and have continued to explore ways of making communication more accessible, meaningful and responsive. Families are welcomed as partners and are encouraged to share information about their children, their experiences and their aspirations. The school's work to engage with families from a wide range of backgrounds demonstrates a genuine commitment to understanding and celebrating diversity within the community. Parents are increasingly able to contribute to school life and are supported to feel confident in accessing information, sharing concerns and participating in decision-making processes.

The introduction and development of more personalised admissions and transition procedures have further strengthened this work. Leaders have shown a clear understanding that successful inclusion begins long before a child enters the classroom. By creating opportunities to meet families, listen to their experiences and gather meaningful information about children's needs, interests and strengths, staff are able to establish positive relationships from the outset. This proactive approach helps to ensure that children experience a smooth transition into school and that support arrangements can be implemented at an early stage where necessary.

Communication continues to be one of the school's most significant strengths. Throughout the review, there was substantial evidence of a well-established Total Communication approach that is understood and utilised by staff across the setting. Communication support strategies are embedded within everyday practice and are available to all children, ensuring that learning environments are accessible and inclusive. Visual supports, signing, symbols and other communication tools are used naturally and consistently to promote understanding, participation and independence. Staff demonstrate a strong awareness that communication is fundamental to learning,

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emotional wellbeing and social development and work hard to ensure that barriers are minimised.

The school's commitment to professional development has played an important role in the success of this work. Leaders have invested in high-quality training opportunities that reflect the needs of the school community and the evolving profile of learners. Staff engage positively with professional learning and demonstrate a willingness to reflect on and adapt their practice. Training is not viewed as a one-off event but forms part of an ongoing cycle of development, monitoring and review. This has helped to establish a culture where inclusion is everyone's responsibility and where continuous improvement is both expected and embraced. External professionals shared how effectively staff act on advice and feedback.

Another notable strength is the school's growing emphasis on the concept of belonging. Leaders have recognised the importance of ensuring that all children and families see themselves reflected positively within the life of the school. This commitment is evident in the curriculum, environment and wider community engagement activities. Opportunities are provided for children to learn about and celebrate their own identities while also developing an appreciation of the diverse experiences and cultures represented within the school community. This work not only promotes inclusion but also helps to foster self-esteem, mutual respect and a sense of connectedness.

The school's developing Flagship project, Belonging for All: Creating a Fully Inclusive Nursery Community Where Everyone Thrives, is a natural extension of the work that is already taking place. The project demonstrates a clear understanding of the relationship between belonging, wellbeing and successful learning outcomes. Leaders have carefully considered how systems, environments and relationships can be further strengthened to ensure that every member of the school community feels recognised, valued and included. The project is ambitious yet rooted firmly within the school's existing strengths and values, providing a coherent framework for future development.

The review also highlighted the school's positive engagement with external organisations, professional networks and collaborative partnerships. Leaders actively seek opportunities to share effective practice while also learning from others. Participation in local networks supports professional dialogue, encourages innovation and helps to ensure that the school's provision continues to reflect current thinking around inclusive education. The willingness to contribute to wider system development demonstrates confidence in the school's practice and a desire to improve outcomes not only for children within the setting but also for those across the wider community.

There is a strong culture of reflection evident across all levels of the organisation. Leaders evaluate the impact of initiatives carefully and are willing to refine approaches in response to feedback and changing needs. Staff contribute thoughtfully to discussions about provision and demonstrate a shared commitment to achieving the very best outcomes for children. This collaborative ethos ensures that developments are sustainable and that improvements become embedded within everyday practice.

Overall, Ellergreen Nursery School and Childcare Centre remains a highly inclusive setting where children and families are at the heart of all decision-making. The school's strengths lie not only in the quality of its systems and provision but also in the values that underpin its work. Relationships, communication, early intervention and belonging are woven throughout all aspects of school life and create an environment in which

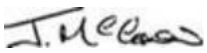
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children can thrive. Leaders have successfully met the review targets through thoughtful strategic development and a steadfast commitment to inclusion.

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 by the Inclusion Quality Mark to pursue Flagship School status. I therefore recommend that the school moves to 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 Lydia Gibbons

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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