



## Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



**School Name:** St James' CE Primary Academy

**School Address:** Pokesdown Hill  
Christchurch Road  
Bournemouth  
Dorset  
BH7 6DW

**Head/Principal** **Alastair Brown**

**IQM Lead** Ms Charlotte Price

**Assessment Date** 16th March 2026

**Assessor** Mr Ian Potter

### Sources of Evidence:

- Self-Evaluation Report
- School website
- Introductory slide deck
- Display boards
- KS1 Learning walk.
- KS2 Learning walk.
- Tour of intervention spaces and forest school provision
- KS1 Book sample and Tapestry evidence
- KS2 book sample with particular attention to case studies of learners
- SIAMs report
- Ofsted report



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### Meetings Held with:

- Inclusion Manager
- Headteacher
- Deputy headteacher
- Assistant headteachers
- Trust representative - DCAT Director of Education
- LSA on an internship
- Director of local special provision
- Local authority representative - BCP Lead advisory teacher for LAC.
- Head of Racial Justice, Church of England
- Chair and vice chair of governors.
- Year 6 teacher and lead for curriculum
- Foundation teacher and lead for English
- AHT/KS1 teacher and lead for assessment
- Group of KS1 pupils
- Group of KS2 pupils
- Year 6 junior leadership team
- Group of teachers
- Group of teaching assistants
- Group of parents



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### Overall Evaluation

St James' CE Primary Academy has just over four hundred pupils, with an approximate 50/50 gender split, and a quarter on the SEND register, with twenty-four having EHCPs and sixty-five on SEN support. A fifth are categorised within the wider disadvantaged classification, including service children. Hence the school has a proportion of youngsters with special needs that is significantly higher than national averages. The school has made adaptations to its building and created four intervention and breakout spaces, each with its own name: the Sunshine, the Rainbow, the Lily pad and the Harbour. These provisions are staffed by specialists who work with teachers to meet need. One pupil is educated offsite and 30% have English as an additional language.

St. James' CE Primary Academy joined the Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust (DCAT) in May 2021 following the dissolution of its previous Trust, the Portsmouth, and Winchester Academy Trust (PWDAT). The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher came into post in January 2022. There have been five exclusions in the last year, none of which were permanent and four of them a repeated fixed term suspension.

The evidence that outcomes at St James' CE Primary Academy are higher than national averages is an indication that it is succeeding in its inclusive endeavour. The leadership state in their School Evaluation Report (SER) that a "Christian ethos and distinctiveness flows through all we do. The vision of the school is *Learning as a family in Jesus, through Love, Hope and Forgiveness* (inspired by Matthew 19:26). Leadership explains that "this vision runs through the curriculum, giving pupils pride, aspiration and a resilience to learn from mistakes." They contend that they, "have constructed a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life" (SER).

The headteacher described the whole school collective worship on a Monday sets the agenda for the week and re-iterates weekly, "what the school's all about...it sets the tone." The children lead the Thursday collective worship. As you enter the school, in addition to the photos of staff in the reception, is the banner, "Let the little children come." The headteacher explained the Christian values of love, hope and forgiveness are all that was needed in determining the vision of the school. He talked about how, "church schools were set up for the poor of the parish", which the assessor found to be core to the Christian witnessing he saw happening at St James' CE Primary Academy; it is a truly inclusive mission to value all regardless of their gender, colour, creed or faith. This non-exclusive mindset in this proudly Christian school is important, particularly considering the data where, "Arbor says 276 pupils are from Christian families and the remainder of the 402 on roll are of all other faiths or none", stated the headteacher.

The school is located right next to the Church, and the assessor welcomed an interesting conversation with the headteacher considering whether the school was annex to the Church, or the Church was to the school. The conversation was a significant illumination



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of how mindful leadership is in achieving the inclusive intent of the school in serving all, regardless of any formal connection with the Church. The DCAT Trust leader described to the assessor that the way St James' CE Primary Academy achieves its inclusive endeavour is, "its whole school culture, where inclusion is woven through everyday practice...and its belief that everyone is loved and is uniquely created...the school works in genuine partnership with its families." The Trust leader spoke about the way the school enables its staff to flourish, with excellent initiatives related to staff well-being. She also commended the school on how professionally generous it is in supporting schools within the Trust as well as across Bournemouth, working with the local authority. The assessor agreed that the professional generosity is exemplified in the amount of outreach the staff do beyond the school.

The chair of governors described the ingredient that sustains the inclusive endeavour at the school is, "the commitment to the best for every single person." The vice chair talked about "making sure in governance meetings we are thinking about the child behind the data...it is not just a matter of looking at spreadsheets." The chair described how governors walk-the-talk of this inclusive espousal by having a presence in the school and she confirmed that she meets the headteacher every week. The chair spoke of the relationship she and the governing body has with the Trust and the inevitable navigation of centrally made decisions and the decisions they can make locally about needed resources. Who is best located to really understand the priorities of spending became an interesting discussion, and the conundrum was identified regarding balancing needs elsewhere in the Trust and the needs of 'one's own' at St James' CE Primary Academy. The assessor commends the governance for holding the paradox of a passion to serve its local community whilst keeping a wider inclusive mindset in being part of the Trust, with its wide geographical reach.

My recommendation is that St James' CE Primary Academy meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark's Inclusive School Award. There is a strong culture existing at the school that drives a relentless ambition to ensure every child matters. The underpinning Christian ethos, coupled with a mindset of continual development, led by a thoughtful, reflective, and conscientious team across the whole school, is changing lives for the young people who attend the school, including their families. Based on my findings, I additionally recommend that St James' CE Primary Academy consider applying for Centre of Excellence, considering its success in making every young life matter through how the adults in the school inter-relate. If the school chooses to pursue this status and it were to be awarded, the school would be subject to annual review from this point forward.

**Assessor:** Ian Potter

**Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:**

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**Joe McCann MBA NPQH**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd**



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### Element 1 - The Inclusion Values of the School

The inclusion values at St. James' C of E Primary Academy are grounded in its Christian vision, articulated as, "Learning as a family in Jesus, through Love, Hope and Forgiveness." Leadership highlighted their "positive behaviour policy" (SER), which the assessor found has impact; there is a calm, friendly, loving ethos underpinning the management of behaviour. Thus, the assessor found that the espousal of the leaders to emphasise, "the importance of relational practice embedded in our behaviour values of Ready, Respectful and Safe." (SER) is conducted in practice across the school. In emphasising the relational goal, children and parents are consistently welcomed at the gates each morning, thus increasing familiarity with staff at the school. Engaging in "ongoing professional development related to inclusion" is another stated priority of the leadership for embedding inclusion into the fabric of the school.

Training staff to expand a range of interventions and provisions to respond to pupil needs has resulted in a pastoral team with a wealth of experience including ELSAs, a Lego therapist, a TIS practitioner, a Forest School lead, two nurture leads working with a couple of support assistants and a Family Support Worker. Furthermore, the school has someone leading on music nurture lead, someone being a communication champion, two colleagues leading on sensory circuits lead and a cognition and learning Champion. In addition, the introduction of the 'Harbour class' to support needs related to neurodiversity, which has a lead teacher and two assistants, all adds to the compelling evidence that the intent to be increasingly inclusive is driving decision-making at the school. Indeed, investment in the continual development of all staff is very evident at the school, where teaching assistants are on an apprenticeship programme with the University of Brighton.

The Inclusion manager explained that "Inclusion is just not me, it is the role of everyone." And, although she is officially the SENDCo in the school, supported by a colleague with SEN responsibility and an admin assistant, the assessor found that the school is not reductive in interpreting inclusion as only about the pupils with special needs or disadvantaged. There being a grammar school system in the area brings an additional dimension to serving all pupils. She also explained about the changing demographic in the intake of the school, becoming far more diverse, as well as its growing intake of youngsters with needs and disabilities. "Our vision is very similar in the leadership team," stated the Inclusion Manager, "in that we believe we must do what we can to give every child the opportunity to thrive...within our Christian ethos, we love them all... They are all amazing...they teach us so much."

When the assessor asked year 1 and 2 pupils what it was that made the school feel inclusive, a year 2 girl's answer was, "kindness" and that she has been allowed to dance. A year 1 boy said, "it's because everyone is friendly and really do love me." A year 2 girl described how the school cares for her saying, "I can tell them about anything", and another girl spoke of how "they all figure it out" when talking about the teachers in the school.



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A wonderful exemplification of the inclusive intent at St James' CE Primary Academy was a teaching assistant the assessor met who himself had been a student with special needs, and he talked about how when he was at school he felt that he was seen as, "being a burden, a pain" and he argued that he never feels that at this school. Indeed, he foresees a career trajectory towards becoming a teacher because of the way he is valued at this school. He said of the school that "it is the family feel that makes the difference...it's the warmth of the school, and I don't mean the heating!" The sense of humour and needing to enjoy work is an element of the environment at the school that the assessor found and he commends the evident permission given by the leadership for enjoyment to prevail. It is something prevailing among both children and adults at St James' CE Primary Academy.

### **Next Steps:**

*To examine in greater depth how we might address further the potential for pupils who feel less included during unstructured time.*

*To deepen the level of accountability all adults feel towards achieving the interdependency vital in having the inclusive environments also prevailing beyond the classroom.*



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### Element 2 - Leadership and Management and Accountability

The assessor found in the leadership an evident commitment to inclusion and high expectations for every pupil regardless of their background and need. As leaders themselves expressed their ambition in the SER: "This is realised through strong, shared values, policies, and practice. We strive to ensure every child reaches their God given potential." Governors play an active leadership role in both meeting as a board every term and personally visiting the school every term. The chair of governors meets weekly with the Headteacher doing a tour and pupils attend governors' meetings every other term. This evidence of the voice of the pupil at St James' CE Primary Academy is another positive indicator of how the leadership walk-the-talk of inclusivity and signalling that every person's voice in the organisation matters. Evidence on the school's website within the pupil premium strategy, the sports premium action plan and the Equality and Diversity statement illuminates a leadership commitment to achieve an inclusive provision at St James' CE Primary Academy. Additionally, leaders state that, "Safeguarding is the school's highest priority" (SER) and use a helpful mantra of "identify, help and manage" when responding to pupils potentially at risk.

Leaders at St James' CE Primary Academy influence beyond the boundaries of the school, including an AHT supporting Trust schools with CPD on maths pedagogy and practice.

The headteacher described to the assessor the triad of 'governance' bodies that they work to the Trust, Bournemouth local authority, and the Diocese of Winchester; the leadership of this school manage their responses to all three through the lens of their guiding principle, which is about enabling all to flourish. The assessor found considerable excellence in the importance given in the school's leadership to there being a relational approach between adults - and it is adults within the school and adults beyond the school - especially with those in settings external to St James' CE Primary Academy and how those relationships are perceived as crucial to the school's inclusive endeavour. The recognition that all children belong to the school, even if they are no longer attending it, is realised in practice through the relationships forged and sustained with players beyond the boundaries of the school.

The KS2 pupils told the assessor about their confidence to talk to the leaders of the school, with one saying, "they're very good at helping us, because they are often in our classrooms." Another said, "our headteachers think of ideas to help us feel included...the buddy bench idea that they came up with is really good for people who feel a bit lonely." A further pupil added, "I've noticed that they help you when you feel upset...they take you out of class and ask you what they can do to help you."

The TAs spoke about how leadership "trust us as professionals...it's never: 'you should have done this'...but it's them listening and we discuss it." "In my previous school I was constantly being watched, and you never felt you were doing it right," expressed one TA. A long serving TA talked about the high level of care that pervades the whole school, and how they "care for each other...including the children caring for us." The TA mentioned how pupils come up and ask her how she is. These staff recognise that the



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leadership at ST James' CE Primary Academy model the ethic of care, and one TA praised the deputy head who always has time for pupils, "and she's the busiest person I know...she's busy leading an assembly and often has the looked after children around her". Another cited how the Inclusion Manager has inordinate time, care, and love for the pupils. Of the leadership a TA expressed it as, "they are good role models and that feeds down to the children.

### **Next Steps:**

*To build the leadership capacity to lead on inclusion through a deliberate strategy of broadening ownership of the endeavour*

*To expand the school's monitoring activities to sharpen the focus on inclusion*



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### Element 3 - Curriculum – Structure, Pupil Engagement and Adaption

The curriculum at St James' CE Primary Academy is designed to embody the school's Christian values of love, hope, and forgiveness. The leadership articulate the purpose of the curriculum, "is to provide an engaging, relevant education within a Christian environment, where everyone flourishes academically, socially, physically, morally, emotionally and spiritually" (SER). The assessor confirms that from his observations, the pupils he saw were flourishing and the faith ethos prevails in what is taught. The creation of a definite sense of belonging to this church school was evident and what the assessor found is captured well in what the school wrote in its SER: "Our curriculum aims to give them the 'equipment' for life's journey but know that we'll always be here, they can always come home (to the family at St. James'")

Clarifying the journey taken by pupils through the curriculum at St James; CE Primary is work that a curriculum, formed in 2024, focuses on. The formation of this team followed on from work done since 2022 on developing and refining curriculum maps. Leadership evaluates that the impact of this work, "is evident in pupils' strong retention of knowledge, supported by daily and weekly reviews, extensive modelling, and clear mapping of vocabulary and sticky knowledge." (SER). The plan now is to focus on revamping the curriculum subject-by-subject with the intent to establish clear points of assessment in the longer term. The assessor commends the disposition he found to continually build on previous learning and consequently the school is engaged in ongoing improvement.

The recognition of the value and importance of an enrichment programme to enhance the curriculum was also evident. Pupil premium funds are used to enable all vulnerable pupils to take part. Enrichment events include trips, clubs, music provision and residential. Additionally, there are enrichment activities provided by teachers to encourage experiential learning in such things as food tasting, cookery, drama, sport, and the inclusion of themed days/weeks into the school calendar. Exploiting the school's location in Bournemouth is managed well from what the assessor observed. As the headteacher said, "we've made the curriculum relevant to the children...the pupils see themselves in it."

The Head of Racial Justice for the Church of England, said of the school how she, "Was impressed by how invested the children were in the Difference Project (that she led) ...and the thinking that the pupils showed about toxic masculinity." She praised the school for including into the curriculum materials exploration of language related to masculinity and for not shying away from incorporating into their curriculum the unpacking of racial awareness. The impact of the engagement of St James' CE Primary Academy in this global enterprise is that "these children in Bournemouth are now featuring around the world," as she put it. Not only has the decision to include the Difference Project materials into the curriculum at this school had impact locally, but the outcomes for the pupils are also influencing schools globally.



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The year 6 teacher who is the lead for curriculum in the school explained that the lens she applies to how inclusive the curriculum is, "whether the content is appealing to the children...and if the creative hooks personalised for the learner". The Inclusion manager explained that enabling the curriculum to be inclusive is, "giving space for the teacher to personalise the curriculum delivery in their classrooms."

### **Next Steps:**

*To evaluate deeply how robust are the adaptations in classrooms being deployed, with a particular focus on PE.*

*To enhance motor skill acquisition in the EYFS programme ensuring pupils readiness to learn.*



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

St James' CE Primary Academy has drawn on the writings of Rosenshine and Sherrington in bringing consistency to their pedagogy. Teachers are sensitive towards there being cognitive overload, whilst strengthening pupils' recall and ability to connect learning. Being mindful of how learning is structured and sequenced is how teachers think about supporting the learning of all learners. CPD is therefore a vital part of the school life, including, involving, "collaborative activities such as teaching triads and research reading" as explained by the leadership in the SER. Planning time for teachers is facilitated and teaching assistants receive training alongside teachers to generate greater consistency in, and across, all classrooms. Leaders explain in the SER, that the "leadership team plays an active role in monitoring and modelling throughout the process." The assessor also saw evidence of modelling happening by a range of teachers and teaching assistants, and elements of peer monitoring.

Evaluating the impact of teaching and learning happens "through lesson observations, book scrutiny, pupil conferencing, and analysis of summative data" (SER). When doing learning walks, leaders are keen to reinforce teaching where tasks are broken down into small steps, there is scaffolding, and techniques like think-pair-share, cold calling, and the use of manipulatives. Teachers and teaching assistants' model to pupils such things as use of vocabulary and 'sticky knowledge.' Technology is deployed where this is identified as helpful to pupils' learning, with iPads, Talking Tins, and Times-table rock stars being particularly of help to several pupils.

The book sampling the assessor did evidenced that expectations of learning did not vary in response to current level of performance; instead, what was evidenced is the way learners are supported through adaptation. The school has evolved the adaptations it is using in workbooks and is now applying some adaptations for all pupils, rather than just those perceived as needing the adaptation. Books seen by the assessor in relation to pupils who had considerable need on entry, presented evidence of the impact of the teaching and learning in the clear progress pupils have made. In the same way pupils with EHCPs are not easy to identify within the classroom, because of the success in integrating them, the same becomes the case, later in their time in the school when looking at their books.

A teaching assistant explained how her journey for helping pupils with their learning has been enhanced by professional development, saying, "It has increased my impact...it makes you feel confident that you are doing the correct things with the children." Another TA said, "because things change so much it is good that anything we ask to learn about, the school supports us to do so." A further TA talked about how she 'shares' a pupil who has needs with another TA, saying "I love the way I can discuss what I am doing with her."

The ELSA told the assessor that the emphasis in creating the learning environment is that the vulnerable children have a trusted adult. The colleague providing nurture intervention explained that it is about "getting the child into a place where they can



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access the learning.” The SEMH interventionist talked about being trusted to have the time to ‘weave some magic’ with the children. The assessor found a confidence in the school to give the time and resources to enable the child to be ready to learn, “without the pressure of having to deliver the perfect child in time,” as one interventionist specialist described it. The team described how they work hard to carefully match the child with their support worker, “because it’s important that we like the child.” “We work well together, and tag-team each other, so that we swap in-and-out who changes the nappies!” The tag team element is vital in looking after both adult and child in facilitating a break when necessary. Indeed, they mentioned that the senior leaders also are part of the tag-teaming.

### **Next Steps:**

*To increase the amount of purposeful talk opportunities for all in their learning*

*To focus on improving the early years environment to better facilitate play-based learning.*



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### Element 5 – Assessment

In 2023 St James' CE Primary Academy adopted the Insight assessment system, improving their tracking of all pupils and capability to analyse data. A particular focus in using the tool is to track the progress of pupils with working more than two years below age related expectations. It has also been impactful in the process of transition and informing the next teacher that pupils have. The Trust has an assessment schedule that the school adheres to. The learning from assessment processes informs CPD activity to support teachers in making accurate judgements. Diagnostic assessments and targeted interventions are integral to how the school supports disadvantaged pupils. Pupil progress meetings happen on a termly basis for identifying gaps and reviewing the effectiveness of strategies. Marking in books is seen as an opportunity for pupils to reflect on their learning. Lessons start with an approach called Flashback Four to assist real time AFL.

In a more long-term structured way, PUMA Maths papers enable gap analyses to take place every two terms and learning plans are renewed three times a year, which are shared with parents. Parents evenings take place twice a year.

The assessor commends the school, when giving evidence about assessment within the SER for including mention of swimming proficiency and sports activities on pupil participation and achievement. Including these assessments is an indicator of an inclusive mindset existing. The leadership recognises that monitoring is an essential element in its equity endeavours, and that is why the importance of assessment and monitoring features in the Equality and Diversity statement at St James' CE Primary Academy.

The AHT with responsibility for assessment explained to the assessor the journey the school has been undertaking in assessment in the foundation subjects. They are trialling various approaches, designed to be ongoing assessing and bespoke assessments to the children, rather than relying on snapshot assessments which can be reductive in just stating progress in relation to expectation. These novel approaches engage the pupils in self-assessing their work where the introduction of 'the hexagon' has become universal at St James' CE Primary Academy. The assessor saw the implementation of this initiative in his book sample and the impact it is having.

In reflecting on the use of assessment in her classroom, a year 6 teacher talked about how she gives feedback to her learners within a positive frame, saying, "I give a learner the gold star in order to increase their confidence so that they become receptive to what they actually need to do to improve their work". The KS2 pupils explained to the assessor the ways the school lets them know they have made progress, and a year 5 girl talked about the "golden hand that we have to help us with our handwriting...and the class cup that we get every week". A year 6 girl talked about how in "maths if you are really struggling...they put you in smaller groups...at the start I was really nervous and I get tutoring, extra learning in the morning". A year 6 boy said, "every term there is assessment week and we track our progress." The assessor was impressed by the boy describing how he participates in the data



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collection and analysis about himself. A year 4 girl, explained about the English targets in the back of her English book and was articulate in how it has helped her focus in improving her use of paragraphs. A Year 6 girl, who has been at the school for seven years, spoke about the values of mastery maths partners (mastery mates), where peers give each other feedback. As she said, "it is like being the teacher...it makes me feel like I know the answer!"

A foundation stage teacher admitted how hard it is to not allow the imperative to assess to hinder the learning process and potentially lead to a categorising of a child that is unfair to that pupil. She reconciles the issue by finding ways to evaluate performance that 'celebrates what they can do.' The example of the pupil new to the school who is new to learning English was described and how capturing her marginal gains is the assessment approach. The school works hard in maximising access arrangements for pupils.

### **Next Steps:**

*To finalise our model of assessment in foundation subjects that will refine AFL tools used by teachers.*

*To embed the use of our improved tracking analysis of SEN learners for informing planning.*



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### Element 6 - Behaviour, Attitudes to Learning and Personal Development

The code of conduct at St. James' CE Primary Academy is Ready, Respectful and Safe, complementing the strong Christian ethos in the school. The school took part in a Church of England run initiative called the Difference Project, which the leadership explained is, "a transformative initiative designed to help pupils develop habits of curiosity, presence, and imagination" (SER). Pupils learning to appreciate and value different perspectives has strengthened relationships within the school and conflicts are resolved more now through empathy, resulting in a continual improvement in behaviour at the school. Leaders describe the impact of being involved in the Difference Project as having, "enriched our curriculum and supported personal development, equipping pupils with skills that extend beyond the classroom." The main ingredient has been the fostering of curiosity, with pupils becoming more engaged learners and reimagining possibilities.

Involvement in the project led to the school presenting at Lambeth Palace last year about the experience and outcomes, which the headteacher described as one of the times he has been most proud of his pupils and the school.

Furthermore, the school, as part of the Bournemouth, Christ Church and Poole Intern Programme, has employed 'Junior Support Staff.' These 'support staff' were themselves considered SEND pupils and have experience of the SEND system, they bring that knowledge to support the most vulnerable children at St James' CE Primary Academy. This is alongside the school's, "instigation of forgiveness and reconciliation within policies and procedures," (SER), which is reported on within the SIAMS report for the school, and which leaders feel has been instrumental in driving positive pupil behaviour. The assessor certainly found that there is a calm environment in the school driven by respect for one another.

The voice of pupils who are persistent absentees is sought to unpick the reasons for their absence. Emails about attendance are sent to parents as well as letters and personalised texts. Pupils who have attendance of 90% or less are tracked closely and the deputy headteacher overtly celebrates those classes with the highest attendance and doing this "on the staff bulletin every week to motivate teachers to prioritise attendance". The assessor also found evidence of how committed the school is to safeguarding pupils. Additionally, the inclusive endeavour includes consideration towards the wellbeing of staff, who can take a well-being day per year and can take time off for appointments and family events. All staff have access to a Trust provided counselling service.

In meeting the Junior Leadership Team, the assessor was told by a year 6 boy about "the reading buddy and buddy bench", which a year 6 girl said, "is really nice... it can make those you are buddying feel they belong". A boy was able to articulate that going to an inclusion room to get extra help is not making you feel different because staying in the classroom and not being able to do what everyone else is doing makes you feel different. As one of them said, "everyone needs a bit of help sometimes." A year 6 girl spoke of how group work is an



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important ingredient in the way the school develops an ethos of equity, “when we can help each other”.

The local authority adviser for looked after children in the area said of St James’ CE Primary Academy that, “the school is remarkable in the care the school offers its looked after children...particularly in the attention to detail I find in their knowledge of children.” The adviser also spoke of how autonomous the school is in making things happen for the children, getting on with exercising its agency on behalf of children.

She also noted that, additionally, the school develops the independence and autonomy of the youngsters. Her comparison of St James’ CE Primary Academy with other schools was that “we never have to challenge St James on their response to a graduated approach.” She also stated that, “the school takes the SEND code of practice incredibly seriously...as well as all the softer cultural elements that reside in abundance at the school.” The adviser's comments resonate with the assessor's findings that the litany of practices he observed at the school creates a disposition in all to promote and sustain an inclusive environment alongside its judicious and conscientious attention to guidance and compliance.

### **Next Steps:**

*Effective implementation of the recently installed sensory pod.*

*To dive deeper in understanding what the attendance data can tell us about designing additional interventions*



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### Element 7 - Parents, Carers and Guardians

The school recognises the importance of including parents in how it operates and leaders mention prioritising the building of, “strong relationships with families, particularly those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged” (SER), and also saying that, “regular communication and involvement in school activities help to foster a sense of community and partnership”. Indeed, the SIAMS report identified this being a strength at St James’ CE Primary Academy. The school conducts parent surveys and the data indicate high levels of satisfaction, because as the leadership stated, “parents appreciate the support provided by the school and the positive impact on their children's development” (SER).

The provision of parenting courses is something the leadership considers to be important and these “have been run in conjunction with Care for the Family and a parent workshop run by the Mental Health Services Team on managing child behaviour” (SER). These have been well attended, in part, due to targeted invitations by the safeguarding team. The Family Support Worker (FSW) at St James’ CE Primary Academy is a vital person in the success the school has in engaging with its parents, working closely with the safeguarding team. Giving parents a ‘listening ear’ goes a long way to creating the culture at the school and, where appropriate, signposting them towards support. Furthermore, there is a group of parents who work with the family support team, providing ‘Grab bags’ for children who are taken into care or are evicted from their homes. The assessor commends the inclusiveness that this illuminates, in how particular care is given to children and parents at a traumatic time, when these members of the community may be out-of-sight for a time.

The Deputy Head and Family Support Worker explained to the assessor how they are a double act in interacting with parents, along with the Inclusion Manager, and as the Family Support Worker described it, “we feed off each other in how we respond to parents.” The deputy head talked of how the FSW is the “friendly face on the gate” and the first responder. The FSW narrated a particular case study of serious child protection matter where now the child is flourishing because of the investment that went into building the relationship with the family. Another story shared was about the school finding themselves having to take court action over attendance, following all the support they could manage.

The ‘tough love’ exercised has led to increased attendance and a ‘ripple effect’ on others with poorer attendance! The deputy head pointed out that it takes time to build the trust of families to transform attendance and transform families, “feeling confident to ask us for help, which in time they do.” The increasing challenge the school is finding is in the increasing cases of neglect. In addition, the team has the stress of making referrals and the damage that that can bring to the relationship the school has with the family. Furthermore, getting the ‘right’ parents to engage with the workshops they arrange, with charities such as Escape Line, who input on child exploitation and county lines, is another tricky endeavour.



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There is a boys mental health club on a Wednesday where they sit in the garden with a couple of male staff and a 'cup of tea.' The increasing prevalence of drug-related issues in the area has meant that the team is doing what they can to raise parental awareness, including online safety.

A carer of children in years 3 and 5 admitted she only chose the school "because it was the only one with spaces, but it has been a godsend". She went on to tell the narrative of the children who she fosters, saying, "when one of the girls started, she was so stressed she didn't even know if she was a boy or a girl and now, she confidently arrives at school calling out to her friends." The carer described the transformation as phenomenal. Another parent spoke of how the school goes way beyond saying, "I didn't realise how inclusive the school is, I just wanted my son to go to a Christian school." The parent described how happy her disabled boy is about the way the school includes him, saying "he is joining in, getting out of his wheelchair - sports day was amazing."

The parents all spoke of how much support they personally receive from the school. A further parent explained how she cried after visiting another school as she didn't want her child to go there and the contrast with St James' was in how they made her daughter feel about herself, saying "I am so impressed with the culture of the whole staff and it oozes out to everyone." A mother spoke about when they emigrated from Australia and said "I have never seen anyone so welcomed and that can only come from the way the teachers are...St James' is like a family...they were welcomed into a family...teachers follow through on what they promise...it's not just words... integrity is very high".

A parent who also now works at the school said that she does so because, "at St James' love is a verb;" she wanted to get a job at the school. She has previously worked in secondary schools and is nervous about her year 6 son transitioning to secondary school as she is not sure he will have the fun and sense of belonging in his schooling that he has enjoyed at St James' CE Primary Academy.

### **Next Steps:**

*The Family Support Worker completes her Parenting Coaching course and systematises her direct Early Help to families.*

*Increase the numbers of parents engaging with our parent focussed activities.*



## Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



### Element 8 - Links with Local, Wider and Global Community

Links with the local community are strong, including with other primary schools in the locality and particularly other church schools in Bournemouth. Events are also run with the school's local church, and its own 'Glee' club has the pupils entertain the elderly within local care homes. Another community activity that the school participates in is 'Cakes of Kindness' where these baked delights are distributed to the homeless who attend local support centres. More regionally, the Trust links St James' CE Primary Academy with schools across the DCAT geographical area. As previously discussed, the school was part of the Church of England's nationwide Difference Project. Leadership consider that this initiative also fostered, "a sense of belonging to the wider and global community" (SER) because of it focussing on developing the habits of being curious, being present and reimagining.

Leaders state that, "these habits encourage children to listen deeply, value diverse perspectives, and approach challenges with hope and creativity." They explain how this project has, "opened conversations about diversity, reconciliation, and inclusion, helping pupils understand their role as responsible citizens in an interconnected world." Indeed, the curriculum at the school contributes to the pupils' understanding of a wider world and their place within it as well as their respect increases for others within it.

The school has a link with one in Malawi, and some of its classrooms are named because of this link. Conversely, St James is the name of some of the classrooms of that school in Africa. The pupils at the two schools write to each other and there is an annual fundraising activity at St James' to support the school in Lilongwe.

The assessor's meeting with a leader at a special school illuminated the lengths the school is prepared to go to support its pupils, and as she said, "this school does more than most in learning about curriculum provision that will support pupils...St James is ahead of the curve....". The assessor learned from her about the openness of St James' CE Primary Academy to link with this colleague, who works in a special provision setting, particularly in providing professional development to its staff. This evidence presents the school as understanding how links with other agencies are crucial in its endeavour to be as inclusive as possible.

The emphasis at the school on continuous CPD leads to it encouraging staff to reach out to examples of practice elsewhere. Furthermore, the mindset that exists of being a 'training school,' which, in part, relates to the school engaging with the South Coast teaching training community, and additionally in the fact that staff are engaging in the suite of national professional qualifications. The assessor finds this to be illuminative of there being permission for the school to be knowledge generating; the school is a learning organisation in every sense. The benefit in seeking to link broadly, beyond the school, is to continually broaden the understanding and learning of adults, which can be a process of both appreciation and affirmation. As the headteacher said, "with the children being the most important people in the school, we start with the adults."



## Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



### Next Steps:

*To expand the global links the school must expose children to more international settings.*

*To develop sustainable links with employers to schedule a programme of employment awareness*