



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



School Name: St. Michael's Catholic Primary School

School Address: Guion Street
Liverpool
L6 9DU

Head/Principal Ms Alyson Rigby

IQM Lead Mrs Sarah Reilly

Assessment Date 30th June 2025

Assessor Mr David Clay

Sources of Evidence:

- Observation of morning routines
- School assembly
- Learning Walks (KS1 and KS2)
- Book look
- Floor Books for whole school activities
- Planning documents (EYFS)
- Self Evaluation (SER)
- Training Logs
- School development plan
- SEN Plans

Meetings Held with:

- Senior Leaders
- EYFS lead
- SENCo
- Mini Vinnie's
- School Council
- Students who had been part of Children's University
- Subject Leads
- Teachers
- Book look
- Parents (formally and informally)
- Pastoral Team
- HLTAs, LSAs and Mentors
- Admin staff
- Governors



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Overall Evaluation

St. Michael's Catholic Primary School, a vibrant two-form-entry school nestled in the heart of the Kensington area of Liverpool, stands as a shining example of inclusion, diversity, and aspiration. Rooted in Gospel values and driven by an unwavering belief in the potential of every student, the school serves a richly multicultural and multi-faith community. A significant proportion of students have English as an Additional Language (EAL), while many others have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A number of families are also navigating complex life circumstances, including those linked to asylum-seeking and refugee experiences. The school is acutely aware of its context and the support needs of its students and adopts a solution-focused approach to ensure each individual receives the help they require from therapeutic mental health interventions to robust systems that support those learning English as an additional language.

Despite the contextual challenges, St. Michael's exudes warmth, unity, and a steadfast sense of purpose that encapsulates the school's mission: *"With Jesus we can achieve what we dream and believe."* Staff are solution-focused, reflective, and committed to ensuring that every student feels known, valued, and supported. The school's Gospel values are not simply spoken, they are woven into the fabric of daily life, forming a framework that guides its compassionate, inclusive, and aspirational ethos. These values are lived out in every classroom and corridor. Staff and governors spoke passionately about how they instil these principles in the students they teach.

The spirit of inclusion is apparent in every aspect of school life. From the moment one steps through the gates, there is an immediate sense of welcome and belonging. Staff at all levels radiate kindness, empathy, and a deep commitment to their students. This ethos is tangible, it is lived. It is evident in the day-to-day interactions between staff, students, and families, and echoed in the feedback from parents, many of whom described the school as "a family." St. Michael's supports many students with complex additional needs and does so with compassion and care, providing comprehensive and ongoing professional development for staff and consistently reviewing and refining provision to ensure it remains effective.

The school building itself offers a calm and nurturing environment, described by one staff member as "an oasis" amid the bustle of the city. Thoughtful decisions underpin every aspect of the physical space, always with the needs of students at the centre. Classrooms and corridors are well-presented and purposeful, celebrating achievement and proudly showcasing the diversity of the school community, including the 40+ home languages spoken. Staff are empowered to shape and enhance learning spaces, including the recent development of therapeutic classrooms with natural, low-stimulus environments to support vulnerable students in accessing education. Staff continually evaluate the impact of such changes and make purposeful refinements, for example, Early Years staff have created an environment that truly meets the needs of the students they serve. There is a clear, school-wide commitment to evolving provision in line with student needs.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Throughout my visit, I encountered a school united by a collective commitment to equity and excellence. Senior leaders demonstrate a profound understanding of their students and have established robust systems for identifying and addressing barriers to learning. Inclusion at St. Michael's is not an add-on, it is a foundational principle, embedded within the school's systems, staffing, curriculum, and professional development. Staff are highly skilled and deeply committed to supporting the holistic development of every student.

The senior leadership team, alongside an equally dedicated pastoral team, embodies a culture of collaboration and care. Their work is underpinned by professional dialogue, high expectations, and a drive for continual improvement. From curriculum design to safeguarding, staff plan with clear intent: to raise aspirations, provide opportunities, and ensure no student is left behind. One parent remarked, *"Students get opportunities here that, when I speak to my friends, their schools just don't offer."*

The "Explore Curriculum" is both ambitious and inclusive. It reflects and celebrates the lived experiences of the students, weaving themes of equality, diversity, and aspiration throughout. Recognising the language gap faced by many, especially those with EAL or from disadvantaged backgrounds, leaders have rightly prioritised oracy, vocabulary, and reading development. Reading is a visible and celebrated thread within the school, supported by a reading spine that champions a diverse range of voices and experiences.

Pastoral care at St. Michael's is exceptional. The SENCo, Family Support Worker, and wider inclusion team demonstrate tireless dedication, providing support that is both targeted and whole school in approach. Staff are empowered to lead initiatives, embed impactful projects, and respond with agility to the needs of families. Whether through Early Help referrals, in-house therapeutic interventions, or community signposting, the support provided is extensive. The Family Support Worker plays a vital role in outreach and is described by stakeholders as "invaluable." The holistic development of students is at the heart of the school's vision, and the pastoral team is instrumental in supporting this.

The students of St. Michael's are its greatest ambassadors. They are articulate, thoughtful, and proud of their school. In every conversation, they spoke confidently about their learning, their school's values, and the supportive relationships they enjoy. Through roles such as School Council members, Mini Vinnies, and student ambassadors, they are encouraged to shape school life and live out the values they are taught. Their kindness, maturity, and inclusivity are a direct reflection of the school's ethos.

Governance is strong and deeply involved. Governors are active participants in school life and share the inclusive vision of the leadership team. Their presence, challenge, and support help to maintain high standards and ensure continued growth. They attend school events, engage with staff and students, and play an active role in the school's development journey.

In every respect, St. Michael's Catholic Primary School exemplifies what it means to be an inclusive, values-led community. From strategic leadership to classroom practice, from pastoral care to curriculum design, the school's ethos of *faith, respect, and aspiration* shines brightly. The collective will to innovate, reflect, and grow is testament



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



to the school's determination, not just to meet the needs of its community, but to empower every student to thrive.

I am of the opinion that the 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 Inclusive School Award 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. 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 forwards. Their contribution to the wider Inclusion Quality Mark community would undoubtedly be invaluable.

Assessor: Mr David Clay

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. McCann", written over a horizontal dotted line.

Joe McCann MBA NPQH
CEO Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Element 1 - The Inclusion Values of the School

Inclusion at St. Michael's Catholic Primary School is not simply an initiative, it is a whole-school philosophy that permeates every decision, every classroom, and every relationship. Rooted in Gospel values, the school champions the belief that all students deserve access to a high-quality education that both challenges and nurtures them. From the school gates to the classroom, there is a tangible sense of welcome, purpose, and compassion.

At the heart of this inclusive culture is a dedicated team of staff who understand and embrace their professional responsibility to meet the individual needs of every student. Whether teaching, supporting learning, managing attendance, or welcoming families, all staff act as role models living out the school's values of respect, love, and service. Every member of the team engages in continuous professional development, ensuring that practice is grounded in current research and designed to meet the evolving needs of the school community. The senior leadership team are proactive and lead with courage, carefully reflecting on pupils' needs to develop and improve the offer that students receive.

A clear example of this is the use of trauma-informed approaches and targeted CPD, including the HEARTs programme, Zones of Regulation, and bespoke SEND training. The CPD offer, particularly around special educational needs and disabilities, has been extensive. This strategic investment in staff expertise ensures that inclusion is not only aspirational but also actionable. Staff speak confidently about how they adapt teaching and learning to enable all students to access the curriculum and thrive. There is a strong sense of ongoing reflection and improvement, evident in provision mapping, adaptive curriculum design, and the way pupil voice informs school improvement priorities.

The pastoral provision at St. Michael's is exceptional and deeply embedded in the ethos of the school. Staff know their students well, and support is always holistic never tokenistic. Whether through therapeutic classrooms, Early Help referrals, or bespoke interventions, the school acts swiftly and sensitively to remove barriers to learning. Students receive the right support at the right time, with all interventions thoughtfully planned and monitored for impact. Knowledgeable Learning Mentors have specialised in specific areas of development and apply this expertise throughout the school.

The school's Relationship Policy underpins a culture of respectful behaviour and emotional literacy. Pupils are empowered to reflect on their choices and are supported to regulate their emotions with guidance from trusted adults. Observations during the assessment confirmed that students are calm, focused, and demonstrate genuine respect for one another. When additional support is needed, it is delivered in a way that nurtures independence and preserves dignity. Despite significant challenges faced by some students, behaviour during the assessment was excellent throughout the school.

Celebration of achievement is central to school life. Assemblies, postcards home, house points, and certificates highlighting values such as faith, joy, hope, and peace help reinforce a positive, aspirational culture. Students take pride in themselves and one another, with leadership opportunities like Mini Vinnies and School Council instilling a sense of agency and belonging. These groups reflect the school's diversity, and different



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



perspectives are welcomed and celebrated. Students spoke passionately about the opportunities they have to celebrate their cultures particularly highlighting this year's transformation of the school picnic, where families traditionally bring food to share, into a full cultural celebration, complete with traditional dress, music, and activities. This approach supports students to be proud of their heritage while promoting appreciation of the community's diversity. Importantly, this is not a bolt-on, but complements carefully considered curriculum decisions that ensure cultural celebration enhances the overall offer.

There is also a clear commitment to recognising and celebrating diversity across the school. Initiatives such as international cuisine menus, multilingual displays, and faith celebrations help students understand and value the richness of their school community. The curriculum reflects this commitment offering diverse texts, promoting British values, and ensuring all students see themselves reflected in what they learn. Communication with families is excellent and inclusive. The use of platforms like Dojo, alongside visual timetables, multilingual resources, and family workshops, ensures that no one is left behind. Parents describe feeling "part of the family," and staff describe the community as one that "looks out for one another." Opportunities for family learning are gratefully received, and throughout the visit, families were seen actively engaging with staff demonstrating the strong, trusting relationships that underpin this vibrant and inclusive school community.

Next Steps:

To further enrich the school's already strong inclusive offer by proactively identifying and celebrating a broader range of cultural and faith-based events, fostering deeper understanding, respect, and belonging across the school community.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Element 2 - Leadership and Management and Accountability

St. Michael's Catholic Primary School demonstrates a deep-rooted commitment to inclusive leadership, with a culture that empowers all stakeholders - leaders, staff, governors, and families to work collaboratively in the best interests of its pupils. School leaders have a clear understanding of the community they serve, including the complexities and strengths of its diverse population. This understanding underpins their strategic decision-making, ensuring that the provision is continuously adapted to meet evolving needs. Leaders put its students central to decisions being made.

The experienced and knowledgeable governing body shares a strong, inclusive vision for the school. In a period of transition marked by the appointment of a new headteacher, governors are united in their determination to maintain continuity, high expectations, and inclusive excellence. They recognise the school's achievements to date and offer both support and challenge, ensuring accountability and strategic clarity. Governors I spoke with were well-informed, passionate, and able to articulate the school's strengths and areas for continued growth. Their expertise spans education, finance, and other professional domains, enabling a broad perspective in decision-making. Governors showed great understanding of the needs of the community and also the strengths of the leadership team that is in place.

The headteacher and senior leadership team model an unwavering commitment to inclusion, which is embedded in every layer of school life. Their strategic direction is clear and ambitious, rooted in Gospel values and responsive to the needs of the pupils. The School Development Plan (SDP) reflects a strong focus on inclusion, and leaders are proactive in refining curriculum design to ensure equity and excellence for all.

A key strength of the school lies in its distributed leadership model. Leaders are trusted and well-supported to lead key areas of development and supported financially to enact these plans. They demonstrate ownership, resilience, and ambition in driving forward inclusive practice and academic improvement. Subject leaders engage actively in self-evaluation and professional dialogue, drawing on pupil voice, book monitoring, data analysis, and collaborative peer review to shape provision.

Staff development is a clear priority. The CPD offer is extensive and highly responsive to need, ranging from trauma-informed practices to high-quality SEND training and leadership development opportunities such as NPQs. There is also a culture of coaching and mentoring that promotes reflective practice and professional growth. This has been instrumental in embedding adaptive teaching and ensuring that all staff have the tools and knowledge required to meet the varied needs of their students.

Safeguarding is robust and deeply embedded in the school's culture. All staff understand their responsibilities and demonstrate vigilance and care. The school's proactive approach includes a strong safeguarding induction for new staff, weekly team meetings, and targeted pastoral interventions. Systems for early identification and support are efficient and impactful, ensuring that vulnerable pupils receive timely and appropriate care.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



The leadership team is also deeply invested in staff wellbeing. Through regular check-ins, workload adaptations, mental health initiatives, and a flexible working approach, the school fosters a positive and supportive working environment. Staff feel valued and empowered, contributing to high levels of morale and professional commitment. Attendance among staff and pupils is exceptionally strong, reflecting the strength of relationships and the school's nurturing ethos.

Next Steps:

To maintain an ambitious and reflective approach to the ongoing development of the teaching and learning environment, ensuring it remains responsive to pupils' needs and supports high-quality, inclusive practice.

To re-establish and embed a dedicated staff wellbeing team that actively informs school policy and practice, ensuring all decisions positively impact staff morale, workload, and wellbeing.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Element 3 - Curriculum – Structure, Pupil Engagement and Adaption

St. Michael's Catholic Primary School provides an inclusive, ambitious, and engaging curriculum that reflects and celebrates the diversity of its community. The school's *Explore Curriculum* is closely aligned with the IQM ethos, underpinned by three core themes: equality, diversity, and aspiration. These values are not only embedded in curriculum content, but are also evident in its delivery, planning, enrichment opportunities, and relationships across the school.

Designed to be both broad and knowledge-rich, the curriculum is bespoke to the needs of St. Michael's pupils and rooted in high expectations for all. Staff across the school adapt teaching and learning skilfully to ensure accessibility and success for every learner. Strategies include pre-teaching vocabulary, the use of Widgit symbols, targeted scaffolding, and the consistent implementation of retrieval practices to promote retention and deep understanding.

The school shows a strong commitment to developing pupils' cultural capital through a wide range of enhancements and enrichment opportunities. From local museum visits to residential trips, forest school, choir performances in care homes, and career-focused activities during "Aspire and Achieve Week," every pupil is exposed to experiences that broaden horizons and deepen learning. Pupils spoke confidently about how these activities enhance their understanding and raise their aspirations.

Reading is a central focus of the curriculum and is championed by the deputy headteacher. It is celebrated through whole-school initiatives such as DEAR time, paired reading, book awards, and class libraries filled with diverse, high-quality texts. The introduction of *Ready Steady Comprehension* and the integration of reading across humanities and science subjects demonstrate a strategic and consistent approach to oracy and literacy, critical for closing the vocabulary gap experienced by many learners. Strategies are applied consistently across subjects, ensuring good practice is embedded throughout the school.

Curriculum leaders and subject coordinators are empowered and well-supported, with time allocated for evaluation, pupil voice analysis, and ongoing refinement. They adopt a reflective approach, responding to formative data, feedback, and contextual needs. The curriculum is underpinned by carefully chosen published schemes that are thoughtfully adapted to meet the needs of pupils, ensuring it remains dynamic and inclusive.

Inclusive learning is especially evident in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where continuous provision is designed to meet a wide range of developmental needs. Students confidently talk about their learning and emotions, using tools such as the colour monsters to support reflection and self-regulation. Staff employ adaptive practices that enable all students to access learning, build independence, and make strong progress.

The curriculum extends well beyond statutory requirements, offering purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop their character, citizenship, and leadership. Initiatives such as the Mini Vinnies, School Council, and *Picnic Around the World* not only elevate pupil voice but also celebrate diversity and promote inclusion. These events are



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



thoughtfully embedded into the wider curriculum to nurture empathy, identity, and community cohesion.

Pupils clearly value their curriculum experience. They are articulate, aspirational, and proud of their learning. Their engagement and confidence reflect the careful design of a curriculum that fosters curiosity, challenges assumptions, and equips them to thrive in modern Britain and beyond.

Next Steps:

Continue to refine and streamline the curriculum to ensure it is coherently designed, inclusive, and fully aligned with the diverse needs of St. Michael's learners, empowering every student to achieve and flourish.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



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

At St. Michael's, teaching and learning are underpinned by a clear, inclusive, and ambitious pedagogical vision that ensures every pupil accesses high-quality, adaptive, and engaging education. The leadership team cultivates a reflective teaching culture, driven by responsive CPD, strategic curriculum design, and a commitment to both pupil voice and contextual understanding. Staff are empowered as professionals and are well supported, resulting in a confident, knowledgeable, and committed teaching team dedicated to meeting the diverse needs of learners.

Quality First Teaching is at the heart of classroom practice, characterised by inclusive strategies, high expectations, and strong relational pedagogy. Adaptive teaching is embedded in daily routines, seen through the use of Widgit symbols, pre-teaching of vocabulary, scaffolded tasks, and flexible grouping ensuring that support is targeted, time-limited, and fosters independence rather than dependency. Practice is reflective and you can see where strategies that are effective in one subject are then applied to others.

A clear focus on language development is woven throughout the curriculum and provision. Strategic interventions such as Wellcom, Flash Academy, and vocabulary pre-teaching are prioritised alongside high-quality classroom instruction. Staff demonstrate a deep understanding of the centrality of language acquisition to pupil success, and this is evident in both planning and delivery.

The learning environments at St. Michael's reflect a strong commitment to inclusion. Classrooms are calm, orderly, and resource-rich, with consistent use of visual timetables, working walls, and designated calm corners. The use of therapeutic classroom designs, particularly in lower Key Stage 2, demonstrates a deliberate effort to reduce cognitive load and support emotional regulation. These spaces, including the *Place 2 Be* provision, were understood and appreciated by pupils, who confidently explained how they help them focus and learn.

Technology is skilfully integrated to remove barriers and enrich learning. Pupils use Chromebooks, interactive boards, and digital tools to engage with content, practise skills, and record learning. Platforms such as Google Classroom and ClassDojo enhance communication and extend learning beyond the school day. Staff use visualisers and modelling tools effectively to support live instruction and interaction.

Support staff are highly valued and expertly deployed. They are included in planning, briefings, and professional development, and deliver impactful interventions across the curriculum, including phonics, SEMH support, and precision teaching. These staff are confident in their roles, visibly proud of their impact, and articulate about the progress of the pupils they work with. The school invests in their development, ensuring consistency and cohesion in inclusive practice across all teams.

Pupils at St. Michael's demonstrate outstanding learning behaviours. They are enthusiastic, engaged, and reflective. Lessons are structured to encourage collaboration, independence, and resilience, with carefully designed hooks, peer feedback, and use of



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



real-world contexts. Strategies such as “I do, we do, you do” are used effectively to scaffold learning and promote pupil ownership. Across the school, pupils could articulate what they were learning and how they were progressing.

Learning opportunities extend beyond the classroom, with access to nature-based learning in the garden, residential experiences, and a wide range of enrichment activities that build cultural capital, resilience, and personal development. These experiences are thoughtfully planned and inclusive of all learners.

Next Steps:

Embed the use of Flash Academy across the curriculum, ensuring consistent implementation and rigorous monitoring of its impact on pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL), with a focus on accelerating language acquisition and promoting confident, independent learners.

Strengthen and extend adaptive strategies to meet the needs of an increasingly complex cohort of learners, by developing and implementing bespoke, non-subject-specific curriculum pathways that ensure meaningful progression for pupils working significantly below age-related expectations.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Element 5 – Assessment

At St. Michael's Catholic Primary School, assessment is a purposeful, holistic, and responsive process that drives high-quality teaching and underpins the school's inclusive ethos. It is designed not only to measure progress but to inform planning, identify barriers, and ensure that all learners, particularly those with additional needs, are supported to thrive.

Assessment is used diagnostically and developmentally, with a strong emphasis on formative strategies that enable staff to respond in real time to pupil needs. Techniques such as live marking, low-stakes quizzing, retrieval practice, and targeted questioning are embedded across the curriculum. These approaches enable staff to adapt teaching effectively, swiftly address misconceptions, and personalise interventions. In science, for example, the use of TAPS (Teacher Assessment in Primary Science) is well established and visibly displayed in all classrooms to support the assessment of working scientifically.

Teachers use a wide suite of tools—SONAR Tracker, NFER assessments, Salford Sentence Reading, and PIVATs to monitor both academic and developmental progress. Regular progress meetings at class and cohort level allow staff to conduct question-level analysis (QLA), identifying emerging trends and tailoring teaching accordingly. These assessments are meaningfully integrated into planning processes and supported by robust internal moderation, CPD, and collaborative dialogue among staff.

For pupils with SEND or those working below age-related expectations, the school offers bespoke assessment pathways, including termly reviewed Learning Plans and use of PIVATs to track small-step progress. These are co-constructed with families and professionals through structured SEND reviews and EHCP annual meetings, ensuring a transparent and collaborative approach to monitoring progress.

The school is forward-thinking in evolving its assessment systems to meet the needs of its learners. A newly introduced EAL assessment model, including the implementation of Flash Academy, is enhancing staff's ability to assess English proficiency and plan targeted language acquisition support which is part of the school's wider commitment to a language-rich curriculum.

The learning environment reflects a growth mindset culture, where assessment is not a judgment but a tool for development. Learners regularly engage with success criteria, articulate their next steps, and collaborate with peers through approaches such as talk partners, peer feedback, and scaffolded learning sequences like *"I do, we do, you do."* Visual working walls, flexible grouping, and calm, focused classrooms further enhance pupils' ownership of their learning journeys.

Parental engagement is a key strength in the school's assessment framework. Progress is communicated through termly parents' evenings, end-of-year reports, and ClassDojo, fostering strong home-school connections. Parents are also involved in reviewing SEND plans and contribute to feedback processes, reinforcing a shared commitment to pupil progress and wellbeing.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Next Steps:

Further embed the use of the Engagement Model for pupils who are not accessing subject-specific learning, ensuring robust assessment of progress in communication, interaction, and personal development.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Element 6 - Behaviour, Attitudes to Learning and Personal Development

St. Michael's Catholic Primary School exemplifies a deeply embedded ethos of inclusion, respect, and aspiration. The school's approach to behaviour is firmly rooted in a set of clearly defined core values: kindness, responsibility, and mutual respect. These values are consistently modelled by staff and pupils alike, fostering a calm, orderly, and welcoming environment. From arrival, pupils are greeted warmly through daily 'meet-and-greet' routines, bolstered by a visible senior leadership presence and the use of therapeutically designed classrooms, all of which contribute significantly to emotional regulation, a sense of security, and readiness to learn.

Behaviour management is both inclusive and restorative, underpinned by Paul Dix's relational behaviour model. Practices such as emotion coaching, restorative language, and 'relentless routines' ensure that expectations are clear, consistent, and supportive. Pupils demonstrate an excellent understanding of expectations and consequences, and behaviour across the school is exemplary. Importantly, a graduated response to behaviour provides effective support for learners with more complex needs, ensuring they are supported rather than sanctioned.

Pupil voice is central to the school's culture. Pupils take on meaningful roles, including school councillors, prefects, and pupil ambassadors, and are active participants in restorative circles and pupil-led assemblies. Their understanding of British Values including respect, democracy, tolerance, and the rule of law is robust and age appropriate. This is promoted consistently through the PSHE curriculum, RE lessons, assemblies, and the No Outsiders programme. Pupils were able to confidently articulate their understanding of protected characteristics and how these are integrated into their learning, reflecting a high level of maturity and insight.

The school offers a rich and broad personal development programme, which includes structured leadership pathways and a well-sequenced PSHE curriculum. Pupils are explicitly taught the importance of tolerance, cooperation, and resilience, with their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development (SMSC) interwoven through all aspects of school life.

Learners at St. Michael's are highly engaged, motivated, and articulate. The bespoke *Explore Curriculum* fosters independence, curiosity, and resilience, with teaching strategies such as "I do, we do, you do" and metacognitive modelling empowering pupils to take ownership of their learning. Positive learning behaviours are consistently evident: pupils take pride in their achievements, collaborate meaningfully, and confidently discuss their learning goals and progress.

Mindfulness and growth mindset are woven into the fabric of the school. Calm corners, mindfulness clubs, and spiritual reflection activities offer daily opportunities for emotional regulation and self-awareness. Pupils are encouraged to embrace challenges and understand that mistakes are part of the learning process. The whole-school ethos of "1% better every day" reinforces this mindset, helping pupils build resilience and confidence. The school provides an extensive and inclusive extra-curricular programme, covering sports, arts, wellbeing, and academic enrichment. One pupil proudly shared his Children's University passport, showcasing the breadth of enrichment opportunities provided by the



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



school. These activities not only foster enjoyment and social development but also broaden pupils' horizons and raise aspirations. Furthermore, the school creates purposeful opportunities for pupils to engage with individuals from a diverse range of professions and career pathways, enabling them to see what they could aspire to in the future and further supporting their understanding of ambition and potential.

Next Steps:

To further develop pupils' understanding of their rights as outlined in the UNICEF Convention on the Rights of the Child, and to explicitly link these to the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Element 7 - Parents, Carers and Guardians

St. Michael's Catholic Primary School demonstrates a deeply embedded and exemplary culture of inclusion that fully embraces parents, carers, and guardians as equal partners in the educational journey of their children. The school prioritises respectful and proactive relationships with families, fostering trust and collaboration through a wide range of inclusive, accessible, and responsive practices. Staff have established strong, supportive personal relationships with parents that has ensured a real trust in the staff and the support they are providing.

At St. Michael's, parents are seen not simply as stakeholders, but as co-educators. Communication is timely, transparent, and multi-modal. From daily face-to-face interactions with staff at the school gates to structured systems such as the Parent App, ClassDojo, emails, letters, and phone calls, families are kept informed and engaged. Importantly, these platforms include translation tools or are supplemented by interpreters, bilingual staff, and translation software (such as DeepL), ensuring equity of access for the school's diverse community, including those for whom English is an additional language. It was notable how the school had employed two translators to support parents during my visit. Support plans are designed with and accessible to parents.

Parents receive detailed updates on their child's progress through termly parents' evenings, detailed end-of-year reports, and SEND Learning Plans that incorporate parental voice. SENCo meetings are available on request or through need-led referrals, and specialist reports are discussed with families in a transparent, supportive manner. Parents are routinely invited to curriculum-related workshops such as phonics, SATs, MTC, and toileting, as well as community-building events like 'Bring Your Parent to Lunch', Stay and Play sessions, and the annual 'Picnic Around the World'. Flash Learn allows parents to support language development at home as well.

One parent commented during the visit, *"This is a school that will welcome you."* This sentiment was echoed in practice during the visit, interpreters were in place to support two families developing English proficiency, ensuring they were fully engaged and understood all communication.

The pastoral care team plays a vital role in safeguarding and supporting vulnerable families. Dedicated staff facilitate EHAT, TAF, and CIN meetings to ensure early intervention and a coordinated approach to care. The school has a Family Support Worker on-site who offers regular drop-in sessions, alongside services provided through established partnerships, including mental health support, bereavement counselling, and speech and language therapy workshops.

Financial, practical, and emotional support is available in abundance from uniform banks and toy sales, to sleep and autism workshops, to extensive food bank partnerships with organisations such as Micah, Nugent Care, and Cash for Kids. Magic Breakfast and Amazon sponsorships ensure students begin the day nourished and ready to learn. The fully funded Gulliver's World trip and summer voucher schemes are prime examples of the school going above and beyond to address holiday hunger and isolation.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



St. Michael's celebrates and actively listens to parental voice through frequent surveys, SEND questionnaires, governor representation, and everyday engagement. There is a clear, respectful feedback loop, concerns are acknowledged, acted upon, and reflected in school improvements. The school's inclusive policies are transparent, easy to access, and written in accessible language. Staff speak in plain terms and are trained to engage respectfully with all families, regardless of background, language, or need.

Next Steps:

To continue to strengthen parent and carer engagement through inclusive community events and initiatives that promote community cohesion across the school's diverse population.



Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



Element 8 - Links with Local, Wider and Global Community

The school offers a comprehensive enrichment programme that connects learning with real-world experiences. Pupils benefit from an impressive variety of curriculum-linked visits, including trips to Martin Mere, Little Crosby, and the M&S Bank Arena, and take part in cultural and historical experiences such as VE Day celebrations and the Shakespeare Roadshow. Residentials like CHET and PGL build resilience, independence, and teamwork. Students shared and celebrated the opportunities that they have been provided by school.

Community partnerships are central to St. Michael's practice. The school works extensively with organisations such as Asylum Link Merseyside, CAFOD, Nugent Care, and the L6 Community Centre. Through initiatives like Refugee Week and the "Picnic Around the World", the school demonstrates its dedication to inclusion, belonging, and mutual understanding. These events not only raise awareness but actively involve families and local organisations in shared celebrations of culture and identity.

Parental engagement is a strength, with a calendar of events including "Bring Your Parent to Lunch", craft sessions, and literacy-focused initiatives such as Book Breakfasts. The pastoral team supports families through practical and emotional support, connecting them with essential services such as Amazon charity support, food banks, and local health partners.

St. Michael's has also established meaningful global connections through the integration of UNICEF's Rights of the Child, the No Outsiders curriculum, and curriculum enhancements such as Picture News and Refugee Week. These initiatives are woven into the daily experience of pupils and promote global citizenship and critical thinking.

Pupils are encouraged to be agents of change through roles in the School Council, Mini-Vinnies, and Liverpool Schools Parliament, with many taking part in fundraising, care home visits, and food bank drives. The Children's University further recognises and celebrates out-of-school learning and aspiration. Students shared proudly of their trips to the school parliament with other schools from Liverpool.

Next Steps:

To further strengthen staff engagement with international partnerships by embedding global themes and perspectives into curriculum planning and professional development, ensuring pupils develop as globally aware and responsible citizens.

To collaborate with and support less diverse schools by sharing inclusive practices and community engagement strategies that reflect the rich cultural diversity of St. Michael's, thereby promoting mutual understanding and cohesion across educational settings.