



## Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



**School** Micklem Primary School  
Boxted Road  
Hemel Hempstead  
Hertfordshire  
HP1 2QH

**Head/Principal** Mr Josh Swift

**IQM Lead** Ms Kelly Palmer

**Date of Review** 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025

**Assessor** Ms Karen Coxon

### **IQM Cluster Programme**

Cluster Group Schools in Search of Excellence

Ambassador Ms Debbie Shirley

Next Meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025

Meeting Focus To be arranged.

### **Cluster Attendance**

<b>Term</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<b>Autumn 2023</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	Yes
<b>Spring 2024</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> February 2024	Yes
<b>Summer 2024</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> July 2024	Yes
<b>Autumn 2024</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	Yes
<b>Spring 2025</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	Yes
<b>Summer 2025</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2025	



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### **The Impact of the Cluster Group**

The Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) cluster group meetings are looked forward to by Micklem Primary School's Inclusion Lead/Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo). They feel it is a great opportunity to share day to day experiences with colleagues from a great range of schools from Hertfordshire and other county councils or local authorities. The cluster group meetings enable the sharing of ideas, strategies, and solutions, which is appreciated.

Due to the areas of provision being discussed at the recent IQM cluster group meetings, Micklem Primary School has released the school's Mental Health Lead to attend these meetings with the Inclusion Lead/SENDCo. This has enabled them to reflect on their practise and organisational implications in a collaborative way. The school has used this time to further consider the focus of their work and the timings within the day to maximise learning support assistants targeted support sessions, planning and preparation. They have reflected on alternative learning strategies and lunchtime provisions. The cluster group meetings helped initiate discussions regarding other school's Wellbeing Team's drop-in sessions and how these were managed.

The most recent IQM cluster group meeting was extremely insightful as the host school had similar demographics to Micklem Primary School, and their plans to develop internal alternative provisions and specialist alternative provisions matches Micklem Primary School's development plan. The host school shared their inclusive practise, partnership links and journey with the IQM cluster schools. Micklem Primary School's Headteacher and Inclusion Lead/SENDCo have planned a return visit in a few weeks' time to explore their journey in more detail. Micklem Primary School will continue to develop the Internal Alternative Provision (IAP) in their next Flagship project but are also exploring the possibility of supporting the Hertfordshire Country Council to provide a Specialist Resource Provision (SRP), something the IQM cluster group host school has achieved.

### **Evidence**

- Annual Evaluation of Flagship Project and Next Steps form.
- School website and Ofsted Report 2023.
- Government School Data reports.
- Internal Alternative Provision (IAP) pupil's workbook scrutiny.
- Planned 2024-2026 Internal Alternative Provision (IAP) -Engagement Curriculum.
- Outcomes and comparison data taken from surveying pupil voice before the Internal Alternative Provision (IPA) was in place (pre-Sept 2024), compared with pupil voice after the IPA's set up and operation (April 2025).
- Survey outcomes of parents, carers, and guardians whose children have accessed the Internal Alternative Provision.



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- Micklem Primary School Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Register 2024-2025.
- Assess, Plan, Do Review (APDR) assessment and progress records for a range of pupils with SEND.

### **Additional Activities**

- Discussions with Headteacher and Inclusion Lead/SENDCo.
- Observed soft start entry of pupils into school 8.45 am-9.00 am.
- Learning walk across all classes Nursery to Year 6.
- Observed a Key Stage 2 learning activity in the 'Sunshine Room' where the Internal Alternative Provision and Engagement Curriculum is being delivered in the morning.
- Observed an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1 learning activity in the 'Sunshine Room' where the Internal Alternative Provision and Engagement Curriculum is being delivered in the afternoon.
- Discussions with teaching staff, learning support staff, pastoral support staff and Mental Health Lead.
- Discussions with pupils from the mainstream classrooms and the Internal Alternative Provision.
- Visited the 'Quiet Room' during learning time and lunchtime.
- Learning walk outside at lunchtime observing pupil's play and use of the playground's quiet area- wooden cabin.
- Discussions with parents, carers, and guardians whose children have accessed SEND support or the Internal Alternative Provision and Engagement Curriculum.



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### Evaluation of Annual Progress towards the Flagship Project

Micklem Primary School's Senior Leadership Team, whole staff team, and Governors are passionate about providing appropriate and effective learning which raises the life skills, emotional stability, and attainment of all their pupils. In 2022-2023 the school worked hard to create an inspiring curriculum and an effective, proactive Pastoral Support Team to achieve their goals. Ofsted (Nov2023) reported that 'Leaders have prioritised improving the quality of education. They have thoroughly revised the curriculum and its delivery.' Ofsted (Nov2023) also reported 'Senior leaders are thoughtful and reflective. Their decisive and determined action means that the school is improving rapidly.'

Senior Leaders at Micklem Primary School know their pupils well as they constantly review attainment, behaviour, and SEND needs. They identified a small group of Key Stage 2 pupils with SEND and attendance issues, who were struggling to engage in any learning in their mainstream classrooms despite the use of a scaffolded curriculum and pastoral support input. Provision had been modified and assess, plan, do, review cycles had been put in place, but the pupil's planned outcomes were not being achieved and secondly, the wider cohort's attainment and safety was being impacted. The highly effective pastoral team were also recording an increase in their caseload. The monitoring and tracking of needs, coupled with the school's mobile population indicated that SEND needs were growing, so a permanent change in school provision was needed. Micklem Primary School Senior Leadership Team knew they could meet all their pupils' needs in a more effective way. Following a thorough analysis of needs, Education Endowment Foundation research, consultation with outside agencies and a review of the school's existing provision, the Senior Leadership Team concluded that the significant needs within school required a permanent change of provision. The plan to use the Engagement Curriculum Model to create an Internal Alternative Provision (IAP) was presented and agreed by Governors in Spring 2024.

Micklem Primary School staff were consulted regarding the creation of an Internal Alternative Provision (IAP). Discussions about how it would work to ensure pupils' progress as well as inclusion in their mainstream class groups was undertaken. A qualified teacher was appointed to run the Internal Alternative Provision and the plan to deliver a Key Stage 2 'cognition and learning' focus group in the morning and a Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1 'communication and interaction skills', focus group in the afternoons was agreed. This is all being funded by school budget.

The parents of the pupils selected to access the Internal Alternative Provision were consulted about the plans on an individual basis and they were overwhelmingly positive about the proposal and consented to their child accessing the provision. When the IQM Assessor spoke to the parents whose children have accessed the new provision (IAP), they all spoke about how their children had benefitted and how small changes have a hugely positive impact on their child's emotional regulation. One parent said that the school is "pretty good at what they do."

Micklem Primary School's Internal Alternative Provision (IAP) has had a huge impact directly or indirectly on all pupils, staff, parents, carers, and guardians. Pupil voice surveys highlight this impact. When Year 3 pupils were asked 'How easy was/is it to



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focus on your learning,' the results show that last year (before the IAP) 26% felt that their focus on learning was good. This year (with the IAP) 78.3% report their focus on learning is good.

When Key Stage 2 pupils accessing the Internal Alternative Provision were asked the same question about focusing on learning, last year 50% reported they could not focus at all. This year 75% report that it's very easy to focus on learning now. This same group were asked how happy they felt before the IAP and 37.5% reported they were happy but with the IAP this increased to 87.5%. These figures are matched when this group were asked about how they felt about coming to school. One Internal Alternative Provision pupil said that last year (before the IAP), "I can't concentrate because it's too hard. I felt scared and nervous about coming to school because it was hard."

The focus pupils using the IAP (called the 'Sunshine Room') like it. These quotes were collected in the school pupil voice survey; "I like the Sunshine Room. I want to keep learning there." Another focus child said, "I can focus and put my hand up. I am happy in this class; it helps me everywhere. I feel safe and calm and composed at playtimes and lunchtimes because there are lots of teachers."

All parents and carers whose children have been supported in the Internal Alternative Provision report that their children are happier, feel safer, have a changed attitude to school, are having their needs met, and are making progress. One parent reported their child "is so much more positive (aside from his wobbles). His behaviour to learning is better. He actually wants to go to school and gets excited about going to school."

School data indicates that attendance has increased due to the Internal Alternative Provision. The average attendance of pupils accessing the IAP has increased from 79.31% last year to 85.09% so far this year. One Key Stage 2 pupil has increased their attendance to full time attendance, increasing from 42.6% attendance last year to 79.2% so far, this academic year. Pupils who were unable to access a full-time school provision are now in full time attendance due to the Internal Alternative Provision.

Teachers reported to the IQM Assessor that the Internal Alternative Provision (IAP) has had a positive impact on all pupil's attainment and pupil's and staff wellbeing, as the IAP has made the mainstream learning environments more settled. They also reported that the pupils in their class who attend the Internal Alternative Provision sessions have slowly increased their engagement with the curriculum in the mainstream classroom. One pupil, accessing the Internal Alternative Provision, was permanently returned to the mainstream class learning, as their focus and engagement had improved so much.

The attainment of the pupils using the Internal Alternative Provision have been regularly tracked, monitored, and analysed using CAPPS (Collect, Assess, Pupil Progress System) points. This group's average points scores in seven areas of learning are higher compared to last years. Significantly, the progress with personal social development subset-independence, has doubled. This increase in independence has facilitated the pupil's greater success at accessing the engagement curriculum in the mainstream classrooms.



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The continual professional development (CPD) programme regarding the engagement curriculum, the alternative provision input, and strategies to support a range of learning and social, emotional, mental health needs has been accessed by all school staff and is key to the whole school curriculum development and inclusive provision. Liaison with the IAP staff and Inclusion Lead is paramount to the overall success of the pupils. Staff commented that they felt privileged to have such an approachable, hardworking, patient, and dedicated Inclusion Leader to guide them.

Micklem Primary School's linked school advisor (SEA) visited in Spring 2025 and reported, "This provision, which provides a highly adapted curriculum and pedagogy, is resulting in progress for pupils. There is also clear evidence of improved engagement, attendance, and attitudes."

### Agreed Actions for the Next Steps in the Flagship Project

Micklem Primary School have identified a high number of SEND pupils moving from Year 2 to Year 3 in September 2025 who would benefit from the support in the Internal Alternative Provision. These pupils are all working at a pre-key stage standard. The school plan to build on the success of this year's Internal Alternative Provision 'cognition and learning' group. The newly identified group for September 2025 will also access a foundation curriculum using the Engagement Curriculum Model in the afternoons. Alongside this, the school are carefully planning provision for an identified Key Stage 1 group.

In view of the National, local, and school picture of increasing numbers of pupils with SEND needs and the higher levels of needs within these groups, Micklem Primary School would like to develop their provision to support a wider group. They are exploring the idea of developing an Inclusion Hub in collaboration with Hertfordshire County Council. The Senior Leadership Team are liaising with outside agencies to propose a model which would not only maintain their Internal Alternative Provision but would also provide a Specialist Resource Provision for pupils with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). The pupils in the Specialist Resource Provision would be placed via the County Council following a consultation process.

Alongside this proposal, the school wants to further develop their Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision to include 2-year-olds. Opening their provision to 2-year-olds would give children with SEND a better start to their education and life outcomes.

The Leadership Team have arranged several meetings to pitch this plan, and they have support from local Family Services and the Local Education Support Centre. The school has had agreement for the old double mobile classroom to be replaced (Summer 2026). This old mobile currently houses the small nursery and the IAP or Sunshine Room. Thinking long term, and with ambitious plans, the Senior Leadership Team is keen to ensure a more permanent and well purposed new building to enable the school to create an extended nursery provision with a regenerated outside learning area, the IAP but also an additional Specialist Resource Provision. Micklem Primary School would be able to deliver high quality education in an appropriate environment to meet all these pupil's needs.



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### Overview

Micklem Primary School is a single form entry school with a small nursery, located in a residential area of Hemel Hempstead. The current Headteacher has been in post since September 2022 and has a tireless drive to improve the quality of education and pastoral support throughout the school. The Senior Leadership Team is forward thinking and is ambitious about the provision for Micklem Primary School pupils and the provision on offer to pupils within the wider County Council.

The whole school curriculum was rewritten and introduced in 2023-24, with an Engagement Curriculum Model to enhance the engagement of all pupils. The curriculum is closely monitored and tweaked to ensure progression, so that pupil's knowledge and understanding are built upon systematically. The classrooms and the Internal Alternative Provision are calm, and pupils are focused on their learning. There is a clear understanding across the school about the impact of cognitive overload and so displays are clear and purposeful in all areas of the school. Strategies being used to support pupils with SEND are evident across all learning environments these include, visual cues, colourful semantics, working walls, visual timetables, communication books and Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS), quiet areas in every classroom, and zones of regulation support.

Micklem Primary School have worked hard to ensure that the lunchtime provision continues to support all pupil's needs. The playground and lunch hall are overwhelming environments for some pupils. Some pupils with high SEND needs access adult support and a 'quiet room' where they can have their lunch and play in small groups. The lunchtimes have been staggered for different year groups, this ensures that there are not too many pupils in the lunch hall or playground at the same time and so these areas are less stressful for many. The playground also has a new wooden structure (shed) with an open side for pupils to read, draw or chat in. This has helped some pupils to independently manage playtime better.

Liaison between the Senior Leadership Team, staff, outside agencies, parents and carers is good. Regular monitoring and evaluation are embedded. Pupils who attend provisions are planned for by all who input their education. The Assess, Plan, Do and Review (APSR) documents and plans are devised with all who support the pupil, the pupil and their parents, carers, or guardians on a termly basis. During the soft start and the beginning of the school day, the IQM Assessor observed pupils happily entering school, being welcomed by staff, who encouraged them to get a bagel for a breakfast if they wanted to. Parents and carers were able to leave messages with the pastoral support team who are in the playground every morning. The parents report that they know their messages are transferred to the relevant people which helps reduce any worries.

Micklem Primary School have three 'rules for life' that they expect all members of their school community to attain, they are 'Be Kind. Show Respect. Aim High.' Pupils told the IQM Assessor that these rules are explored in assemblies and are talked about in the daily life of the school. One pupil wanted the IQM Assessor to know that we respect people and property. The pupils also talked about the 'No Outsiders' initiative in school. They recognise that everyone is different, and everyone belongs in their school. The pupils said, "No one is left out and everyone knows not to be a bully."



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Pupils, parents, and carers talked about the trips and visiting speakers the school arranges to support pupil's learning. The pupils talked with excitement about the 'Science Fair,' which is held in school. They shared the exciting, active learning they demonstrated to others and shared on the day, digging for fossils, coke and mentos in the playground, to name a couple. They also talked about the school's cultural day when families share food, stating that "Romanian bread is lovely, and we got the recipe to take home." All the classes experience trips which support the curriculum, and which gives pupils opportunities they may otherwise not experience, such as learning to play the cornet. The school has a high number of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, and some of this is used to ensure all pupils access learning and experiences they may otherwise miss. (Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals at Micklem Primary School in April 2025 was 38.3%. The National Figure in June 2024 was 24.6%).

Micklem Primary School has an afterschool provision provided by an outside company. Parents can pay to access this provision. In addition to this, the staff at Micklem Primary School are committed to the pupils and offer extra curricula activities or clubs which enable the school to provide a wealth of opportunities for the pupils. All activities run for an hour after school and are distributed on a first come, first served basis.

Micklem Primary School provides evidence of continuing to meet the standards for the Inclusion Quality Mark in all the elements. There is a continuous and evolving culture of critical reflection and action which is evident at every level of the school. This ensures that Micklem Primary School remains inclusive, highly effective, and progressive.

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 maintain its status as a Flagship School. I therefore recommend that the school retains its 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 Karen Coxon

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

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Joe McCann MBA NPQH

Director of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd