



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



School Rainham Mark Grammar School
Pump Lane
Gillingham
Kent
ME8 7AJ

Head/Principal Mrs Agnes Hart

IQM Lead Mr Andy Smith

Date of Review 12th November 2025

Assessor Ms Sarah Tinker

IQM Cluster Programme

Cluster Group 24 Carat

Ambassador Dr Kenny Frederick

Next Meeting 12th March 2026

Cluster Attendance

Term	Date	Attendance
Autumn 2023	15 th November 2023	No
Spring 2024	12 th March 2024	No
Summer 2024	26 th June 2024	Yes
Autumn 2024	14 th October 2024	Yes
Spring 2025	13 th March 2025	Yes
Summer 2025	5 th June 2025	No

The Impact of the Cluster Group

Cluster time is valued by the school with leaders using the networking opportunities to gather information to support their inclusive practice strategies in school. The Head of Year 7 gathered some valuable information around transition from Kingsnorth School, and with some modification has incorporated this into her transition programme. Rainham Mark Grammar School are leading the way in the summer term by hosting a Cluster Group themselves, which I believe schools will really value and take away some exceptional inclusive practices.



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



Evidence

- IQM Flagship Review Documentation.
- School Website.
- Rainham Mark Grammar School Personal Development Strategy.
- The Mark – School Magazine.
- Rainham Mark Grammar School DA Strategic Plan.

Discussions held with:

- Senior Leaders.
- Flagship Project Leads.
- Student Council.
- Parent representative.

Additional Activities

- Tour of the school with Sixth Form Prefects



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



Evaluation of Annual Progress towards the Flagship Project

Project Title: Strengthening and improvements to the school's inclusive provision for DA and SEND students.

The purpose of Rainham Mark Grammar School Flagship Project continues to focus on strengthening and improving their inclusive practices and provision for DA and SEND students, minimising the gap in attainment and progress compared to students with no disadvantage of Special Educational Needs.

The strategic approach introduced last academic year to strengthen provision for Disadvantaged Students and those with SEND has already contributed to a measurable narrowing of the achievement gap. Central to this approach were the ARCH values and a renewed emphasis on Responsive Teaching, with staff increasingly prioritising adaptive, evidence-informed classroom practice. This shift has been further embedded through regular departmental reviews and climate walks, ensuring consistent monitoring, targeted support, and high-quality feedback for staff, led by the Deputy Headteacher for Teaching and Learning.

A core element of the school's drive has been the repositioning of "Adaptive Teaching and Learning" to "Responsive Teaching," reflecting leaders' commitment to aligning language with current evidence and practice. This approach is now widely understood by staff and students as the "RMGS Way of Learning," reinforcing the school's inclusive ethos and the clear expectations modelled by leaders. Although Responsive Teaching is still in its preliminary stages of embedment, leaders have a well structure programme of Continuous Professional Development in place to ensure all staff continue to progress on this improvement journey. Early impact is already visible, with increased staff confidence and emerging consistency across several subject areas.

During my tour of the school, I was able to see first-hand the positive correlation between this strategy and classroom practice. Staff were seen tailoring instruction to meet the diverse needs of learners, while students were engaging confidently with the approaches being used. This responsiveness is clearly strengthening inclusive classroom practice and fostering greater engagement among targeted cohorts.

There is a strong and shared commitment among leaders to ensure staff are well supported in their developmental journeys, a theme consistently reflected in conversations across the leadership team. School Leaders belief that "all students have a right to learn" is clear in both the evolution of classroom practice and the well-sequenced programme of staff development, which aligns closely with appraisal processes and focuses on personal development alongside responsive practice. This is underpinned by a rigorous quality assurance programme, including regular climate walks led by senior leaders, ensuring that high expectations are sustained and that practice continues to improve.

There is an embedded comprehensive pastoral support infrastructure in place to support all students, its integrated approach ensures that all aspects of student need are supported, be it, academically or pastorally. Part of its success could be contributed to the exemplary methods for communication. Leaders provided opportunities for staff to



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



review and discuss students' needs through a variety of methods, all with a critical lens on supporting and removing barriers for vulnerable groups. This integrated approach is exemplified through their "BASS" meeting, prioritising time to bring all required professionals together in one room to review students' progress and pastoral development. This enables quick identification of need and responsive approaches to support at a multifaceted level.

Mentoring is now becoming firmly embedded as a support mechanism for targeted students. Although this is integrated through the Pastoral Support Assistants and Learning Support Assistants daily practices, you could see across the school clear evidence of how Trauma Informed Practice is now recognised not as a discrete initiative but as an underpinning philosophy that informs all aspects of school life. These principles are now integral to classroom management and pastoral approaches. The most recent update to the school's behaviour policy has been explicitly shaped, creating a more empathetic and restorative culture that prioritises understanding and support over sanction. As a result of this work, there is clear evidence of improved staff awareness and confidence in supporting students affected by trauma. The schools exceptionally low suspension rate is a measurement the empathetic and reflective culture across the school.

The mentoring strategy is clearly becoming a well-received intervention for a minority of students experiencing significant barriers to learning, and those requiring some targeted intervention. The Kings Reach mentoring programme has proven invaluable to the success of several Pupil Premium students and although there isn't enough data to show the full impact, students' engagement in learning significantly improved when accessing the programme. Due to this The Kings Reach Programme has now been extended to a wider range of Disadvantaged Students and further supplemented using My Tutor, which has also proven to be a successful support strategy for a small number of students at risk of not achieving core outcomes.

The ARCH values are clearly embedded in the fabric of school life, guiding both behaviour and reward systems. The revised ladder of reward explicitly links all points and recognition to these values, ensuring coherence between ethos and practice. The term "ARCH Learner" is now commonplace across the school, reinforcing a shared language of character and aspiration and could be seen at every given opportunity. You could visually see how this initiative has strengthened students' sense of belonging and understanding of how these values underpin both academic success and personal development through the language used and visual emphasis placed across the school.

To summarise the impact of the previous Flagship Project, leaders have started on a journey ensuring that Disadvantaged Students and Students with SEND are not left behind. Through the sustained focus on "Responsive Teaching," targeted mentoring, and Trauma Informed Practice, the school has created an environment where students feel supported, valued, and motivated to achieve their best, all underpinned by the Rainham Mark Grammar Schools Learning Culture and ARCH Values.

This is testament to the school's ongoing journey to strengthen inclusion, through belonging and identity, and excellence for all learners.



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



Agreed Actions for the Next Steps in the Flagship Project

New Project Title: Strengthen and improve the school's inclusive provision for DA students.

The Headteacher and school leaders have decided to refocus the Flagship Project to concentrate specifically on Disadvantaged Students, in alignment with the School Improvement Plan. While the primary emphasis will be on Disadvantaged Students, SEND students and other vulnerable groups will continue to be considered as part of the school's strategic approach. Leaders articulated that this refined focus would allow the project to reach a larger cohort of Disadvantaged Students and further reduce the attainment and progress gap, while naturally encompassing all vulnerable student groups through strategic crossover.

Building on the now embedded practice of "Reflective Teaching Practice," Leaders are keen to further utilise NFER research alongside insights from the first year of the Flagship Project to further enhance staff ability and professional practice. Leaders have mapped out a comprehensive Continuous Professional Development programme, focusing on responsive teaching strategies, distilled into three clear expectations that will be made visually explicit in classrooms and planners. In addition, leaders have recognised that assessment and feedback are fundamental to this approach and will dedicate Continuous Professional Development time through a working party over the coming year to strengthen these elements of responsive teaching.

The Headteacher and IQM Lead have also reflected on wider contextual challenges affecting the school community and incorporated these as part of a more defined approach through their "Belonging Strategy." This strategy is expected to underpin the school's ARCH values, with the intended outcome that every student feels valued, heard, and recognised as an integral member of the school community. Swift actions have already been implemented through Continuous Professional Development and initiatives to strengthen student responses to national issues and events. For example, the recent Remembrance Day event was planned and led by the student body and involved the entire school community. This was well received by students, indicating an improved understanding of the events meaning.

Data has been identified as a key resource and will be used more critically in the next phase of the Flagship Project. All staff will reflect on the progress and outcomes of vulnerable groups, with a particular focus on Disadvantaged Students. Leaders plan to use the transition to a new Management Information System (Arbor) to support this work, integrating previously successful resources with enhanced data analysis. This will enable staff to adopt a more initiative-taking approach to intervention, using exam data to show which disadvantaged students are not making expected progress and ensuring access to targeted mentoring and support, using established programmes such as The Kings Reach and My Tutor.

Mentoring remains central to the project, and with the more refined use of data and explicit expectations for its application across all levels of meetings, leaders are confident that this strategy will enable the school to target a wider cohort of students



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



and continue to close the attainment gap between Disadvantaged and Non-Disadvantaged Learners.

Having listened to Leaders and Staff, this coordinated approach, which integrates teaching and learning with targeted support, is well-positioned to have a demonstrable impact on the learning outcomes of Disadvantaged Students.

I felt very privileged to visit the school and experience first-hand the passion for this project from leaders, staff, and students. There is a wealth of practice to share about their Disadvantaged Student Strategy, and hosting a future cluster day would provide valuable support and learning opportunities for other schools.



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



Overview

As soon as you enter the school gates of Rainham Mark Grammar School, you sense the pride that all stakeholders have in its inclusive community ethos. Leadership is strong, they value staff and student voice, strategies are well thought through with a strong consensus to ensuring that no student is left behind. What stood out more than anything was the explicit core values that underpin the academic and personal development of every member of the school community.

Leaders actively engage with student, staff, and parent voice, ensuring their views are taken into consideration when reviewing strategy and practice. This ensures all stakeholders are a part of school development and feel involved in the school improvement journey.

All leaders talked about vulnerable groups and could show how data was being used to inform strategic direction and through the creation of collaborative approaches Leaders were collegiate in their approach, ensuring not to overload staff with improvement strategies, but rather aligning them to refine and build upon already established inclusive practices. The “Belonging Strategy” and “Personal Development Strategy” are clear examples of this. Aligning and responding to data and wider contextual information.

Leadership is a clear thread throughout the school. Student Voice is exceptional, this was shown through my meeting with Student Council and during my tour of the school, conducted by two Sixth Form representatives. This summed up beautifully the Inclusive nature of the school and its ARCH values. Students were articulate, had immense pride in their school, felt valued and safe, but what stuck out most was the privilege they felt in being a Rainham Mark Grammar School student.

Student governance is still a strong part everyday school life through a well thought out Student Parliament and Cabinet Structure. It was clear that Student Council was diverse and accessible to all students and that success was recognised through displays of work, student run magazines, rewards, champions day, all of which was demonstrated with pride by all students I had the privilege of talking to.

Transition is a fundamental part of the school's success; there is evidence of strong communications during the year 6 transition phase and the year 7 transition phase. Leaders have ensured that the right support mechanisms continue during each transition and that early support measures such as relationship building, support plans and sharing of key information is central to any transition.

The curriculum is still broad and balanced with middle leaders an integral part of ensuring their curriculum is inclusive and reflects diversity, culture, and local representation, for example in humanities subjects conducting work around Medway to ensure a deeper understanding of where students live. The impact of a successful curriculum is one that is accessible and relatable for all learners, the curriculum at Rainham Mark Grammar School is designed to cater for this and is recognised by young people.



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



During the tour Sixth Form representatives spoke highly of the newly introduced Law course and could talk passionately about the improvements to the curriculum during their extended time at Rainham Mark Grammar School.

The curriculum is enhanced through a well thought out Personal Development Programme, which has been refined further by the appointment of a committed Senior Leader. The programme encompasses a more consistent and aligned approach under the core banner of ARCH. Leaders are keen to ensure that personal development is integrated rather than bolted on or taking away from learning opportunities. This year sees the trial of the ARCH diploma which is designed to ensure students have a tangible outcome as recognition of their development.

The curriculum is purposefully designed to equip students with the skills and knowledge required for success, both throughout their education and into later life. Literacy and Oracy strategies are intended to cultivate lifelong habits, supporting students to become confident communicators and independent learners. A clear, well-structured plan is in place to expand wider reading opportunities and further embed literacy across all subject areas, ensuring that reading becomes a habitual practice rather than an activity undertaken only when needed.

Middle leaders play a pivotal role in driving literacy within their subject areas. Through the clear literacy strategy in place, texts are regularly reviewed to ensure diversity, relevance, and alignment with the needs of the student body. Leaders shared a recent example from English, where the text *My Name is Leon* was introduced to better reflect these priorities.

A dedicated working party has also been established to develop a more inclusive and responsive literacy programme, underpinned by a coherent writing and marking framework. This work aims to ensure greater consistency in literacy intervention across the curriculum and to further strengthen the school's Responsive Teaching Strategy.

Fully embedded in their breadth of opportunity is an established educational visits programme. Leaders understand the positive impact local, national and international experiences have on a young person's development but are also fully aware of the financial burden it has on families, in particular students from disadvantaged families. Leaders are keen to ensure all students have the same opportunities and are mindful of how they support families. The enrichment programme is carefully costed, tracked, and managed with a tired approach in place for using Pupil Premium money to ensure disadvantaged students have the same opportunities as non-disadvantaged students.

The well-structured enrichment programme not only enriches student's academic knowledge but also provides meaningful experiences that broaden their cultural understanding.

Leaders' responsive approach to reviewing strategy is evident in the development of a noticeably clear and comprehensive careers programme. Drawing on feedback from students, parents, staff, and external stakeholders, leaders have evaluated and refined the successful programme implemented last year. The resulting strategy is fully aligned



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



with the Gatsby Benchmarks and ensures that all students have access to high-quality, targeted careers information, advice, and guidance.

An active alumni network provides students with opportunities to reflect on achievements of former students, thereby fostering diversity, inclusivity, and aspirational goals. This is further reinforced through structured careers guidance, including external advisory services, individual meetings with a career's advisor and participation in organised career fairs.

There is a strong and deliberate emphasis on the quality of teaching and learning, underpinned by an approach informed by Rosenshine's principles of instruction. The recent introduction of the "GPS" strategy, which requires staff to implement systematic learning checks to ensure that all students have consolidated their understanding before progressing, is expected to benefit not only vulnerable learners but the whole student body.

Leaders remain committed to ensuring that staff continue to enhance their inclusive classroom practice through a well-structured and purposeful Continuous Professional Development programme. Since the last assessment, teaching staff have already engaged in training focused on "Executive Functioning," further strengthening their capacity to support diverse learners effectively.

During the tour, I was able to observe firsthand the positive impact of the ARCH values and behaviour expectations. These were clearly embedded in daily practice and contributed to strong, respectful relationships between staff and students. This reflected staff's deep understanding of individual learners and demonstrated the early impact of the revised responsive teaching approach.

The inclusive and nurturing ethos of the school is valued by parents. When meeting with a parent, it was clear how the school goes beyond to support students with both diagnosed and undiagnosed needs. Communication was noted as a strength of the schools, and how staff listen to the voice of the young person when implementing support. This is received well and evidence in by the statements "Rainham Mark Grammar School cultivates a very inclusive team" and that "teachers are exceptional at being inclusive and adapt as much as possible to support as much as possible."

Inclusivity is a consistent thread throughout all aspects of school life, with leaders, staff, students, and parents working collaboratively, extending positively into the wider community. The school's strong commitment to ensuring students are active participants both within the school and beyond is a clear strength. Students engage in a variety of projects, with Charity Week forming an integral part of the curriculum; this initiative is highly valued by students and provides opportunities to collaborate meaningfully with the local community. Each house has its own charity, selected through a democratic voting process, fostering a sense of responsibility and empathy while promoting student-led support for others.

Students value the opportunity to run events themselves and feel part of the school and wider community because of this. They mentioned how much they enjoy events which include working with staff, which aligns with the school's commitment to fostering



Assessor's Evaluation for the IQM Flagship Project



positive relationships. This year the school are moving to a more global approach and raising money for Children in Need.

An outstanding example of students feeling empowered to make a difference in the local community is the campaign and petition they organised to persuade the local council to appoint a crossing supervisor for the school. The campaign was successful, resulting in the position being filled, demonstrating the students' agency, leadership, and commitment to effecting positive change.

The school breathes inclusivity in every aspect of school life and the commitment to strengthen this is evident from the moment you cross the threshold. The school community shows its ARCH values in every interaction. It was an absolute joy to visit Rainham Mark Grammar School and experience the successes of their inclusive practice journey first hand.

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: Mrs Sarah Tinker

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

.....
Joe McCann MBA NPQH
Director of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd