



# Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd

25<sup>th</sup> September 2013

Mr N Morris  
Head teacher  
Christopher Whitehead Language College  
Bromwich Road  
St John's  
Worcester  
WR2 4AF

**Assessment Date: 23 - 25<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

## Summary

*"Don't limit yourself. Many people limit themselves to what they think they can do. You can go as far as your mind lets you. What you believe, you can achieve." School Website*

It was a great pleasure to spend time at Christopher Whitehead Language College, the staff believe in the students' ability to achieve and enable them to do so to the best of their ability. It is an innovative, aspirational, inspiring school where the students' learning, emotional wellbeing and safety are of paramount concern to every member of staff. The staff body offer a great deal of expertise both in curriculum and pastoral care. This care extends to the entire school family, pupils, staff and parents interviewed reported that they too feel nurtured and supported and that aspirations are high with regard to the well being and development of all.

Staff are committed to their responsibilities to the students in their care and are consummately professional in their work. The school is a friendly, calm, purposeful, welcoming, supportive environment and is very much at the heart of the community that it serves. The ethos and achievements of the school are highly praised by pupils, parents, staff and external partners such as Health and Local Authority officers. Inclusive practice is backed up by policy and curriculum documents, observation, interview, progress data and anecdotal evidence from all.

The school is a designated as a specialist Language College and as such broadens pupils' experiences beyond the locality. The wonderful Learning Support Centre and staff work with the whole of the staff and also with external services to provide exemplary care for pupils who are experiencing short or long term vulnerability. The school has a superbly resourced Learning Resource Centre which is open to pupils before and after school to enable access to study support.

The Local Authority had designated them an EAL lead school and it continues to provide expertise and a wealth of resources and expertise to schools in the community on request. The school is growing and a newly designated building will further facilitate on site support for vulnerable pupils. An animal and gardening facility, alongside a hair and beauty room has recently been established on site to broaden opportunities for a cohort of pupils identified as requiring an alternative learning pathway.

25<sup>th</sup> September 2013

The leadership team and teaching staff have high expectations of themselves, one another and their pupils. Through clearly defined mechanisms for monitoring pupil achievement and wellbeing, early intervention is planned for and quickly made accessible. The highly effective and valued learning and wellbeing mentor systems combined with quality first teaching and excellent resources ensure that the pupils are given the individual scaffolding and tools they need to enable them to access rich and varied learning opportunities.

The ethos of the school is one of holistic, individualised inclusion. The leadership team, curriculum and directors of studies, class teachers and support staff alongside external providers, have created a consistently caring, inclusive and open environment where informed, positive relationships with pupils of all ages, ability or background are valued, thus promoting excellent communication, self-esteem, self-reliance and a sense of personal integrity and communal responsibility. From my arrival on school premises to departing I was made to feel very welcome and comfortable.

In addition to the standard demands of the curriculum the pupils are encouraged and supported through whole school initiatives, extracurricular activities and exciting developments initiated by expert staff to develop self-efficacy, reflection and independence in their thinking and learning. Co operation and teamwork skills are highly valued. Through practical experience and active participation in a creative curriculum pupils are supported to develop a range of lively, enquiring and imaginative skills and form positive attitudes and relationships.

The school works hard to ensure that all stakeholders, pupils, parents and staff views are sought, evaluated and effect change as is appropriate. The school is helping students and their families to develop good mental health, resilience and healthy bodies through promoting healthy choices.

The pupils at Christopher Whitehead Language College perceive their school to be a happy, safe and secure learning environment which is supportive and stimulating and where adults and peers are mutually respected. The school has a clearly defined inclusive philosophy; rather than the pupil having to fit into one template of a rigidly structured learning experience. It is the school's responsibility to adapt and modify teaching and learning experiences to make them accessible to individual pupils. The sense of responsibility towards the students, their wellbeing and the drive to enable pupils to achieve or exceed perceived potential is exceptional. Observation of practice, scrutiny of documentation and interviews with pupils, staff, Governors, external agencies and parents evidence that Christopher Whitehead Language College is a highly inclusive school.

The school's local education authority's Educational Psychologist stated that she really enjoys working with the school and the school SENCo, stating.....

*'She really knows her students, she understands the whole picture and context. She is passionate, enthusiastic and wants the best for them. The pupils are nurtured and they*

*flourish. In my experience the staff work above and beyond expectation and the school is held in high regard by Local Authority officers.'*

Interviews with staff evidenced that all members interviewed hold a shared understanding of the school's philosophy of outstanding inclusive practice and lesson observation further confirmed a policy of inclusion for all in practice. I am of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark. I recommend that the school be awarded the Mark and be reassessed in 3 years' time.

**Assessor: Sarah Rawsthorn**

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



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

<b>Name of School:</b>	Christopher Whitehead Language College
<b>Head teacher:</b>	Mr Neil Morris
<b>Date of assessment:</b>	23 - 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2013
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.christopherwhitehead.worcs.sch.uk">www.christopherwhitehead.worcs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Assessor:</b>	Sarah Rawsthorn
<b>Successful:</b>	Yes

### Context of the School and Sources of Data

The school is a non selective co-educational Academy school for 11-16 year olds with 1100 pupils on roll. The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for students from service families, and for students known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average. The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The pupils are predominantly white British with a growing population of students from Eastern European, Portuguese and Chinese ethnic groups. The school has been nominated as the EAL hub for the locality.

### Portfolio and Other Supporting Evidence

The portfolio of evidence is an excellent example of good practice and gives clear examples of systems, processes and activities to develop further inclusive practice in the school. There is significant evidence for each of the ten elements which is comprehensive and clearly signposted, making it a very user friendly document. The IQM co-ordinator and Assistant Head and SENCo are to be congratulated for the presentation of the portfolio and for its quality. The portfolio and supporting evidence was collated through a consultative process involving almost all members of staff. All members of the teaching staff contributed to the gathering and sharing of information. This superb level of communication, trust, responsibility and team work is recognised as being standard practice in this innovative school. The careful and appropriate selection of evidence fully supports the IQM process. During the interview process I met with pupils, parents, the leadership team, teaching staff, learning mentors, education welfare team, SEN and Behaviour management coordinators, alternative provision staff, class teachers, EAL staff and the Chair of Governors. I was also able to discuss the school with two members of supporting bodies from Worcester Students' Services, the Speech and Language Therapist and the Educational Psychologist. Every single professional and member of the school community was delighted to share and celebrate the inclusive practice of the school and spoke about the Christopher Whitehead Language College in the highest possible terms.

### Element 1 - Learner Progress

The school caters for students with a wide range of individual need that includes traditionally high achieving academic pupils who do not face complex challenges and students with learning, emotional, behavioural, social, physical or communication difficulty. In all instances the school works tirelessly to ensure that all pupils are fully included within the provision.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and varied and allows pupils to work towards the aim of a love of learning in a creative and challenging way. The teachers have a clear understanding of the importance of individual learning styles and differentiate and plan accordingly.

The school's Assessment and Marking Policy is used effectively to ensure early intervention. There is breadth and depth in assessment procedures at all key stages, progress data is analysed half termly and pupils requiring additional support are planned for, offered appropriate interventions and subsequent achievement evaluated. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for developing their own learning through the target setting process and generally make good progress.

When interviewed on the day pupils demonstrated an excellent understanding of learning objectives and were able to confirm that they are involved in the process of agreeing their targets; it was very clear that at all pupils are encouraged to learn through challenging targets. All parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning and those interviewed commented on the pleasing progress of their children. Parents felt that from the beginning of the transition from Y6 to Y7 Christopher Whitehead Language College staff 'went the extra mile' to get to know the students as individuals and support them. Parents interviewed spoke enthusiastically about the learning opportunities in the school and about their children's increased confidence and skills. They felt well informed and valued the range of strategies used by the school to update parents regularly on pupil progress. They are proud of the achievements of their students and believe that home/school liaison is relatively good. Parents discussed the ease with which they could communicate with school, using home school diaries to discuss lesson content and direct contact through phone, email or face to face contact. In particular there was recognition by the parents of school's endeavours to respond very quickly and effectively to the individual needs of parent and child.

#### Strengths:-

- This is a significant area of strength for the school.

#### Areas for development:-

- Parent Forum – parents could be further involved in the development of the school by regular focussed, themed meetings with rotating representatives of parents from differing year groups.

### Element 2 - Learner Attitude, Values & Personal Development

*'Parents and students agree that students are safe in school. Senior leaders regularly conduct surveys to gauge parents' perceptions. School behaviour records confirm that instances of bullying are very rare. Students understand the dangers of bullying in all its forms, including that based on racism and homophobia. They say that bullying is rare and if it occurs it is dealt with swiftly and effectively by staff.'*

*Relationships between staff and students are always positive. Low-level disruption in lessons is rare, because staff manage behaviour consistently and fairly.*

*Around the building, students manage their own behaviour extremely well. They are courteous, considerate and polite' OFSTED 2013.*

The pupils have high expectations of themselves, the 'can do' solution focussed philosophy of the school is a strong influencing factor. The students and parents that I met were vociferous in the very positive impact that the staff in school have had on their emotional wellbeing and self confidence.

The school has all the relevant policies in place to ensure respect and care for others. Pupil voice is an important part of the process of social development. It is clearly evident from both portfolio evidence and interviews on the day that the school puts into practice its commitment to developing the role of pupil voice at Christopher Whitehead. An example of good practice is the active and effective School Council. This has a democratic based constitution and provides an excellent example of the way in which the students are encouraged to develop decision making skills. The Council representatives from across the age and ability spectrum meet regularly to discuss various issues.

The school has created an effective Induction Programme with everyone playing a full part in welcoming new pupils. Parents and staff interviewed on the day confirmed that there are excellent induction and transition programmes in place. This includes a programme of exciting visit days in the preceding summer term, induction visits tailored to the needs of those considered to be vulnerable and pupils with social communication or mobility difficulties and detailed records transferrable between class teachers and key stages. New pupils and parents receive a warm welcome and in interviews parents stressed that the school takes every care to ensure that transition is smooth whether at the start of a key stage or mid-term. They commended the school's ability to ensure that all students are integrated effectively and are accepted and valued equally regardless of needs. There are well planned programmes for each transition stage. Parents described the ease and confidence with which the students cope with the transitions as a consequence of the support they receive.

The students are very clear about whom they can go to if they have any problems or difficulties. They are confident they will receive peer support or adult help. The quality of communication and mutual respect in the school is outstanding, pupils are enabled to make their own decisions regarding who provides the necessary learning or emotional support and the mentor and counselling services are extremely well run and used. Pupils interviewed demonstrated care and concern for each other; they exhibited confidence and demonstrated a clear understanding of inclusive principles.

The high level of care and the excellent relationships with the adults, together with careful planning by the staff for activities that address curriculum and pastoral demands is evidenced to give the students opportunities to develop a sense of self worth, increase confidence and enhance self perception as capable learners.

Strengths:-

- This is an area of significant strength in the school.

Areas for development:-

- Sharing excellent practice with schools with a similar cohort of pupils.

### Element 3 - Leadership & Management

The Head teacher is a strong leader with a clear vision. There is a commitment to sustain and extend good standards and to continue to challenge existing processes in order to further establish the school as a centre of excellence. The Senior Leadership Team is committed to an inclusive education for all. The pastoral, behaviour and SEN Inclusion Team, based in the Learning Support Centre, has been recognised as contributing to outstanding practice.

External professionals such as Educational Psychology, education welfare officers, Occupational Health Therapists, CAHMS team, Sensory Impairment Specialist Teachers, visit school regularly and a community police officer is on site which has had a far reaching positive impact. The Head teacher, Deputy Head and the Senior Leadership Team are skilled at empowering and coaching others and they demonstrate exceptional abilities to build purposeful and productive working relationships with pupils, staff, the Governors and parents.

Staff are involved in the action planning process and there is clear evidence of shared leadership and responsibility throughout the school. Collaborative leadership ensures that all staff have full understanding of their role and are fully involved in policy making. Staff interviewed felt that their contribution to the school is recognised and valued.

There was evidence of a willingness by all staff to take an active role in the school's development with a clear shared vision of responsibility for not only the pupils' academic and creative achievement but also for the foundation of good mental health, social and emotional wellbeing and teaching self efficacy.

All staff have the opportunity, through the performance management process, to identify their own training needs alongside the priorities of the School Development Plan. There is clearly a strong commitment to developing all staff in line with the key priorities of the school. There are also strong systems in place for delivering inclusion strategies; training activities, CPD and performance management. There are systems to monitor and review processes and procedures in order to ensure consistency and continuity of standards. It is clear that school leadership is built on a vision of shared and collaborative teamwork which enhances the talents of all.

The Head teacher, Deputies and Senior Leadership Team members provide outstanding role models who have recognised the importance of successfully engaging pupils, staff, parents, the wider community and governors to create a sense of team and unity at Christopher Whitehead Language College.

#### Strengths:-

- Ability to turn ethos into practice.
- Ensuring that the staff hold a shared understanding of their roles, responsibilities and are fully committed to the school's vision for its pupils.

#### Areas for development:-

- There are no significant areas for development.



### Element 4 - Staffing System & Organisation

There is a firm belief held by the Head teacher that the running of the school should be collegiate in approach and the staff confirm that they feel that they are a strong team. Structures and systems are in place to facilitate the cascading of information and teaching and support staff report that they feel that there are mechanisms in place to enable a free flow of information and ideas to managerial staff. The staff work together in planning and information sharing. This enables them to make appropriate improvements in classroom practices. There is strong evidence of collaborative planning for identification, target setting, monitoring and review.

Procedures exist for seeking the views of pupils and parents and the school strives to ensure that all stakeholders are involved in policy making. Teaching Assistants, Welfare Assistants and Learning Mentors are very effectively utilised to support learning in a variety of ways. This effective collaboration facilitates the full participation of pupils with specific needs including those with social and emotional difficulties.

From conversations on the three assessment days it is clear that the inclusion team is held in high regard throughout the school community. The team work very effectively together. Excellent communication is evident within the team and with the wider teaching body. There is also a wealth of evidence to demonstrate the breadth of support available through portfolio evidence.

All staff demonstrate a commitment to inclusive practice. Staff interviewed on the day reaffirmed the ethos of equality and spoke warmly of a team commitment to building positive relationships between all staff and pupils in the school community. They articulated the supportive management style of the Head teacher and Senior Managers and were able to describe ways in which staff inform, support and help each other clearly with a shared aim of caring for the pupils and providing creative and challenging learning opportunities. Adults and students speak to one another in a caring, polite and friendly way, demonstrating mutual respect and fostering confidence.

The school ensures that all staff have clear, developed job descriptions which incorporate inclusion. There is evidence that the school provides meaningful continuing professional development. Staff interviewed gave examples of training opportunities facilitated by a wide range of LA and external providers. Policies support and contribute to the implementation of inclusion and are rigorously monitored and reviewed as evidenced in the Portfolio.

Through an induction process, new members of staff are mentored and given training to establish a shared understanding of the practice and inclusive philosophy of school and support for this ethos was clearly evident. All staff have an awareness of the responsibility of their role and act as positive role models as evidenced by the commitment of all staff to monitor and support the well being and learning of their pupils.

#### Strengths:-

- Consistency in practice and shared philosophy.
- Going the 'extra mile' beyond class based responsibilities.

- Mutual respect demonstrated between all members of the school community.

Areas for development:-

- There are no significant areas for development.

### Element 5 - The Learning Environment

The school is very welcoming and friendly to pupils and visitors. The buildings that I toured were light, bright, user friendly and accessible. The school building presents some challenges for students with mobility issues but the more modern buildings are equipped with a lift and easy opening doors where feasible to enable safe movement for pupils and staff with impaired mobility or sensory impairment. There is an obvious pride in the school environment, both inside and outside the building.

A significant strength of the school is the quality and arrangement of stimulating, aspirational, informative displays in the corridors and classroom environment. The stairwells have particularly striking and innovative use of signage which promotes learning and aspiration. Classroom wall displays are vibrant, informative and interactive, supporting learning in a variety of ways. They reflect the abilities of all pupils. There is a strong ethos of celebration of achievement in the school at all levels. This was evidenced through assessor observations and parent and pupil interviews.

Pupils take a genuine pride in their school and through the School Council and Pupil Surveys, students have been eager to share their ideas to improve various aspects of school life. Pupils are encouraged to treat their learning areas with respect whilst at the same time, a school-wide awareness of, and enthusiasm for, re-cycling is fostered.

There was evidence of multicultural materials underpinning the school's commitment to the celebration of diversity and respect for the culture/beliefs of others. There was high evidence of the use of meaningful PHSE within the curriculum in the school.

The outside learning environment is used very effectively with well equipped and marked play areas. The school benefits from a farming area which is the base for innovative animal care activities and there are plans to develop this area further.

The quiet and purposeful atmosphere around the school reflects success in the engagement of all learners in individual study and classroom activities.

#### Strengths:-

- This is a strength of the school.

#### Areas for development:-

- The planned development of the former caretaker's house to provide specialist support to vulnerable pupils and also offer alternative learning experiences for those students on alternative pathways.
- Continued development of the animal care initiative to extend its reach to all pupils in the school.

### Element 6 - Teaching & Learning

*'Relationships between staff and students are always positive. Low-level disruption in lessons is rare, because staff manage behaviour consistently and fairly'. OFSTED 2013*

The school places great emphasis on the individual learning needs of each pupil and a range of strategies are in place to support this. The staff are able to demonstrate that they plan for integrated learning opportunities that allow the child to develop skills through structured, thematic and imaginative activities. They also use a range of organisational strategies such as vertical form groups, peer mentoring, banding and grouping to best facilitate learning in all aspects of school life.

Teachers have access to individual pupil data, to aid lesson planning and school systems ensure that lessons have clear stated outcomes and objectives. There is clear evidence that the students are aware of these objectives and can describe processes such as question and answer sessions that help to support and develop learning. The pupils know to access help from a subject specialist, form tutor or learning mentor if they experience a difficulty with a set task. They also state that teachers use comments in their books or home school diaries to help them know how well they are doing.

A range of teaching and learning styles are utilised and pupils are encouraged to become independent learners. Lesson plans and monitoring procedures are aimed at ensuring inclusion is realised in practice.

Pupils with SEN are supported by learning mentors who are involved in shared planning with teaching staff to ensure that all pupils can fully access the curriculum. Individual members of staff interviewed on assessment day were able to demonstrate excellent inclusive practice. Staff have clearly defined roles and are effectively deployed to support teaching and learning throughout the school.

*'...teachers have high levels of subject expertise and use innovative and imaginative methods to develop students' learning and confidence. Students are motivated by teachers' enthusiasm for their subjects. Relationships are exceptionally positive and teachers know students well. Teachers make sure their teaching and the work they provide challenge all students to do their best. Lessons are thoroughly planned and paced with plenty of opportunities for paired work and discussion' OFSTED 2013.*

The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides equal entitlement whilst at the same time being sensitive to individual and group needs. ICT is also used very effectively to support the development of literacy skills and is used for all subject areas. Pupils are given a range of opportunities to evaluate and record their work in different ways.

Christopher Whitehead is exceptional in continuously initiating and taking up invitations to enable pupils with mobility needs to participate in intra school, inter school and inter county level sports. For example the school has recently invested in a set of wheelchairs so that all pupils can participate in wheelchair basketball

First hand experiences are hugely valued at Christopher Whitehead High. Examples include the residential visits, educational theme days and the opportunities presented in the locality.

Strengths:-

- This is a significant area of strength for the school.

Areas for development:-

- Sharing good practice with colleagues in other schools.

### Element 7 - Resources & ICT

ICT provision is excellent and provides access to an interactive whiteboards and fully supports an inclusive learning environment. There are also wireless laptops available for the students to support their learning across the curriculum and an ICT suite and learning zone. All staff have received training to successfully implement the effective use of IT systems.

The Head teacher and governors have utilised funding effectively to provide resources where all pupils have equal access and entitlement. Students use ICT to support personal skills and are observed to be confident in using the equipment. The portfolio evidences the use of resources and ICT and shows students from across the whole age range effectively using ICT to support the learning.

Staff interviewed were aware of resources needed to meet the needs of the individual pupils which covers a wide range of abilities, from the SEN child to the Gifted and Talented, and were able to articulate how to access support. Pupils interviewed on the day spoke enthusiastically of their use of a wide range of resources and equipment.

Resources are centrally stored and the portfolio evidences the use of Staff Meetings to ensure effective use of all resources. It is clearly evident from portfolio evidence and interviews on the day that careful selection and deployment of resources promotes inclusion at Christopher Whitehead Language College.

#### Strengths:-

- This is an area of significant strength in the school.

#### Areas for development:-

- Continuation of spend on resources such as e-readers to support learning outcomes.

### Element 8 - Parents & Carers

According to data published on Parent View, the OFSTED site, 97% of parents would recommend this school to friends. The school greatly values the role of the parent or carer in supporting their child's learning and therefore policy and practice facilitates a strong partnership between parents/carers and the school. The school offers effective communication and support for parents and staff work hard to ensure that all parents have an easily accessible point of contact if they have any queries or concerns or require additional support. Christopher Whitehead has been designated as an EAL hub and consequently staff are able to offer translation services to those parents for whom English is an additional language.

Where parents are unable to ensure that their students are regular punctual attendees at school the school attendance team work hard to ensure that these students are carefully monitored, families are supported through a personalised pathway and occasionally are collected from home by members of staff to ensure their continued regular attendance.

Parents interviewed during the day spoke warmly of the supportive ethos created by the school. Parents are provided with many opportunities to be involved in their child's learning. They felt well informed of their child's progress and felt that communication between home and school in all areas is very good. Parents are able to communicate with staff face to face, or through email or telephone contact and report that school personnel are very responsive.

Parents interviewed spoke of their involvement in the induction process for their child at key transition times. They affirmed that the school has a fully inclusive approach, both socially and academically. They spoke well of the range of opportunities the school provides for parents to engage in discussion about their child's learning, exemplified through reports, IEP reviews, and regular access to the key worker or mentor and teaching staff.

Parents spoke of the school's success in promoting strategies to raise self-esteem and personal confidence and the school's ability to create an atmosphere in which difference is accepted and celebrated. Parents praised the excellent relationships with all staff and the caring ethos of the school.

Parents felt they could share concerns with school and that they would be listened to and any issues or concerns would be acted upon straight away. *'My son loves coming here; I have no worries about his wellbeing'*. Parents are consulted through the school communications' systems and regular meetings and have opportunities to discuss and comment on decisions to ensure they are agreed ones.

#### Strengths:-

- Communication.
- Relationships.
- Transition arrangements.

#### Areas for development:-

- Parent Advocacy/ Parent Forum.

### Element 9 - Governors, External Partners & Local Authority

*'Governors know the school well and are both supportive and challenging. They are kept well informed by the headteacher and are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching, how staff are rewarded and how underperformance is tackled. Governors understand published data on the school's performance. They know how pupil premium funding is spent because they receive detailed information at governing body meetings. Governors are committed to supporting the school by attending appropriate training and complete two online courses annually to ensure they are up to date with safeguarding and equalities issues.'* OFSTED 2013

Governors are clearly actively involved with the life of the school and knowledgeable of the systems in place. The governing body has a clear understanding of the aims of the Inclusion Policy as well as of issues related to Every Child Matters. They receive regular updates and a very detailed Head Teacher's report. The executive Leadership team and SENCo regularly feed back the developments around Inclusion and keep the governors updated with new initiatives. The Chair of Governors has taken part in Learning Walks with the Head teacher and Governors often attend staff CPD training.

The governing body effectively utilises the strengths of individual members to the benefit of the whole school community. They have been involved in teambuilding, are regular visitors in school and are rightly proud of the importance of the school at the heart of the local community.

Governors interviewed spoke of their commitment to ensure that all aspects of pupils' development were valued at the school and were clearly aware of the issues that needed to be addressed. They praised the work of the school in raising pupils' awareness of the world beyond Worcester through the strong links with schools in contrasting environments. The school has worked hard to establish and maintain international links thereby enhancing experiences for staff and pupils.

It is clear from interviews on the day that members of the governing body have an extensive depth of knowledge on a range of issues relating to inclusive practice. Inclusion is endorsed as a key value at Christopher Whitehead Language College and it was clear to the assessor that governors are very supportive of the school's priorities for improvement. The governors interviewed demonstrated a commitment to promoting inclusive values across the school. Through curriculum committee meetings they have an overview of the assessment and tracking system. Through their work and dedication they ensure that the committee structure is used effectively to support school development.

It is clear from portfolio evidence, parent and staff interviews that in addition to providing strategic direction, the governing body is very actively and effectively involved in school life.

It is also apparent from portfolio evidence and interviews on the assessment day that the school has developed a clear and co-ordinated communication process with a range of external partners and as such takes full advantage of the opportunities they provide for staff training and support. External professionals such as Occupational Health Therapists, CAHMS team, Sensory Impairment Specialist Teachers are regularly liaised with. The school works in active partnership with a range of outside agencies including the Educational



Psychology Service, Local Authority, SEN Service, CAMHS, Education Welfare Service, Primary Schools, Alternative Providers and various agencies engaged as part of the CAF Process.

*Care and support for students are outstanding because the school works well with a number of outside agencies to promote students' physical and mental health. In-school programmes, such as anger-management courses, support students whose circumstances make them more vulnerable.'* OFSTED 2013

### Strengths:-

- This is an area of significant strength in the school.

### Areas for development:-

- Sharing good practice with partner primary schools.

### **Element 10 - The Community**

There is a wealth of evidence that the school is involved at a number of levels in the local community and that the links reinforce opportunities for the students to develop personal and social skills alongside enterprise and learning. The school's doors are open to members of the community and parents are encouraged to attend regular engagement evenings. For example in response to parent demand the school has arranged a "meet the teacher" evening for parents of Y7 pupils to begin to develop joined up working relationships with parents, another example of how the staff at Christopher Whitehead 'go the extra mile'.

The sports hall/gym is shared by school and the community. The school have exclusive use during school hours and it is in great demand by the local community outside of school hours.

Recognition must also be given to the school's support for local, national and international charities. Pupils raise funds for local and national charities and donate to food collections for local distribution. All pupils are involved in fundraising and in this way they have a developed awareness and greater understanding of the needs of others.

#### Strengths:-

- This is an area of strength in the school.

#### Areas for development:-

- To continue to address the challenges of serving a community with a broad geographical reach.

### Summary

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It was a great pleasure to spend time at Christopher Whitehead Language College. The staff believe in the students' ability to achieve and enable them to do so to the best of their ability. It is an innovative, aspirational, inspiring school where the students' learning, emotional wellbeing and safety are of paramount concern to every member of staff. The staff body offer a great deal of expertise both in curriculum and pastoral care. This care extends to the entire school family, pupils, staff and parents interviewed reported that they too feel nurtured and supported and that aspirations are high with regard to the well being and development of all.

Staff are committed to their responsibilities to the students in their care and are consummately professional in their work. The school is a friendly, calm, purposeful, welcoming, supportive environment and is very much at the heart of the community that it serves. The ethos and achievements of the school are highly praised by pupils, parents, staff and external partners such as Health and Local Authority officers. Inclusive practice is backed up by policy and curriculum documents, observation, interview, progress data and anecdotal evidence from all.

The school is a designated as a specialist Language College and as such broadens pupils' experiences beyond the locality. The wonderful Learning Support Centre and staff work with the whole of the staff and also with external services to provide exemplary care for pupils who are experiencing short or long term vulnerability. The school has a superbly resourced Learning Resource Centre which is open to pupils before and after school to enable access to study support.

The Local Authority had designated them an EAL lead school and it continues to provide expertise and a wealth of resources and expertise to schools in the community on request. The school is growing and a newly designated building will further facilitate on site support for vulnerable pupils. An animal and gardening facility, alongside a hair and beauty room has recently been established on site to broaden opportunities for a cohort of pupils identified as requiring an alternative learning pathway.

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In addition to the standard demands of the curriculum the pupils are encouraged and supported through whole school initiatives, extracurricular activities and exciting developments initiated by expert staff to develop self-efficacy, reflection and independence in their thinking and learning. Co operation and teamwork skills are highly valued. Through practical experience and active participation in a creative curriculum pupils are supported to develop a range of lively, enquiring and imaginative skills and form positive attitudes and relationships.

The school works hard to ensure that all stakeholders, pupils, parents and staff views are sought, evaluated and effect change as is appropriate. The school is helping students and their families to develop good mental health, resilience and healthy bodies through promoting healthy choices.

The pupils at Christopher Whitehead Language College perceive their school to be a happy, safe and secure learning environment which is supportive and stimulating and where adults and peers are mutually respected. The school has a clearly defined inclusive philosophy; rather than the pupil having to fit into one template of a rigidly structured learning experience. It is the school's responsibility to adapt and modify teaching and learning experiences to make them accessible to individual pupils. The sense of responsibility towards the students, their wellbeing and the drive to enable pupils to achieve or exceed perceived potential is exceptional. Observation of practice, scrutiny of documentation and interviews with pupils, staff, Governors, external agencies and parents evidence that Christopher Whitehead Language College is a highly inclusive school.

The school's local education authority's Educational Psychologist stated that she really enjoys working with the school and the school SENCo, stating.....

*'She really knows her students; she understands the whole picture and context. She is passionate, enthusiastic and wants the best for them. The pupils are nurtured and they flourish. In my experience the staff work above and beyond expectation and the school is held in high regard by Local Authority officers.'*

Interviews with staff evidenced that all members interviewed hold a shared understanding of the school's philosophy of outstanding inclusive practice and lesson observation further confirmed a policy of inclusion for all in practice.

Assessor: Sarah Rawsthorn

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> September 2013