



## Report on IQM Inclusive School Award



**School Name:** South Bank Primary School

**School Address:** Poplar Grove  
South Bank  
Middlesbrough TS6 6SY

**Head/Principal:** Tammy Cooper

**IQM Lead:** Charmaine Burgess

**Assessment Date (s):** 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021

**Assessor:** Sylvia Cramp

### Sources of Evidence:

- Self-evaluation report.
- Website.
- Tour of the school.

### Meetings Held with:

- Headteacher.
- IQM Lead/SENDCo.
- Phase Leads.
- Class teachers, Support Base teachers and teaching assistants.
- Senior Leader for SEMH.
- Mental Health Nurse.
- Parents of children currently in the school.
- Children representing year groups Y4 to Y6.
- Parent Governor.



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### Overall Evaluation

'Moving potential to new horizons' is the mission statement for South Bank Primary School, representing the high level of commitment to inclusion and achievement for each child in this warm and vibrant school. From the enthusiastic welcome and pride of staff to the ever-present focus on celebrating each child as an individual, South Bank Primary is a school clearly fulfilling its own mission statement.

South Bank Primary School has 286 pupils on its roll including nursery and is host to a Support Base offering 25 places for children with significant additional needs, funded and allocated by Redcar and Cleveland local authority. The school is situated in an area of high deprivation where 40.2% are eligible to receive Free School Meals (FSM).

The school is mostly White British but has 27.3% of children from ethnic groups, including children arriving from Syria. The percentage of children with English as an additional language is 16.8%. The school currently has 27.3% of children on the SEND register and 9.4% has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The Headteacher is firmly committed to meeting each child's needs within an inclusive environment. Supporting social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs is a clear priority and Pupil Premium funding supports the high level of staffing directed at supporting wellbeing. As a parent told me, "There is real understanding for each child". The use of additional funding to provide a team for SEMH development, including the appointment of a Mental Health Nurse, demonstrates the extent to which the Head and governors have gone in maintaining a highly nurturing, caring and supportive school.

Children make good progress in the school, as recognised by the short Ofsted inspection in June 2019. In 2018, for example, progress through Key Stage 2 was above the national average in reading, writing and maths and there is 'a positive climate for learning'. In Key Stage 1 children have been closing the gap with the national average for phonics in Y1 and reading, writing and maths combined at the end of Y2. Children enter the school in nursery and Reception with below average scores in all areas using baseline assessment. There is a three-year upward trend of children achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of Reception.

A wide range of opportunities is offered within the school curriculum for all children, including those who attend the Support Base. Activities to develop basic skills are planned to harness children's interests and provide motivational contexts. In addition, there is an expectation that all children will develop life skills and enjoy experiences including overnight residential visits, learning a musical instrument or singing in a choir and visiting different places of work.

The Headteacher and governors are equally firmly committed to supporting all staff and providing opportunities for development, including supporting a Teaching Assistant to qualify as a teacher in the school. There is a high level of professional trust and staff are encouraged to develop their own ideas and opinions to contribute to the growth of the school.



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The Headteacher and SENDCo explained that the aim for achieving the IQM award is to celebrate the good and outstanding practice for inclusion and SEND within the school and to embrace future areas for development. The school is particularly keen to develop excellent practice across the local area. The Headteacher and SENDCo are rightly proud of their achievements so far and ensured that I was able to visit all classes and meet a wide range of staff and children in order to fully appreciate the rich inclusive ethos and environment.

It is highly evident that South Bank Primary School meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark's Inclusive School Award. Inclusive practice is not an 'additional element', it is at the very centre of the school's ethos and values. The school has a vast amount of experience and inclusive practice to share, whilst also recognising the continued need to move forward.

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 IQM's 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.

**Assessor: Sylvia Cramp**

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

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



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

South Bank Primary School is on an inclusion journey, reaching out to children, staff, families, governors and the whole community. This ethos is driven forward passionately by the Headteacher who told me, "If there's an idea that meets the needs of the children, we run with it".

The needs of the children have continued to become more complex, resulting in an increasing number experiencing challenges with social communication and SEMH. This is evident in mainstream as well as the Support Base. The school has prioritised the work of the SEMH Team, together with extending the links between the Support Base and mainstream school. As the Headteacher explained, ensuring that both specialist teams work across the school and engage with families has brought everything together, allowing for effective support to be offered holistically.

The Support Base provides places for 25 children with EHCPs for communication and interaction and SEMH needs. Decisions about how to organise staff and children are made by the SENDCo in consultation with the Headteacher and Phase Leads, based on the range of needs, age of children and discussions with parents. This academic year the youngest children have joined their mainstream peers in Reception, supported by staff from the Base.

The integration of children attending the Support Base with mainstream classes is managed seamlessly by the SENDCo. The school endeavours to meet the needs of every child and make best use of the expertise available in the school. Specialisms include dyslexia, Makaton and drawing and talking therapy. Flexible arrangements are made to enable children from the Base to join in with mainstream activities, both with and without support, and phase back into mainstream education where appropriate. During my visits to classrooms, a child in transition from the Support Base was quietly encouraged to return to his seat as he worked in his new class. Conversely, children in mainstream also benefit from specialist support.

Parents are warmly welcomed into the school and develop good relationships with all staff, from the office to class teachers, from teaching assistants to specialist staff in the Support Base. In addition to creating an open and caring ethos, this also enables parents who find support from health and social care intimidating or intrusive, to access information and advice from school. The Headteacher pointed out that such genuine relationships allow issues such as poor attendance to be addressed whilst maintaining the trust between school and family. As deprivation levels have increased over lockdown, an increasing number of families have turned to the school for support. The school has collected and delivered food parcels and maintained contact with vulnerable families.

Thoughtful adjustments are readily made to ensure that children feel safe and secure in school and transitions are carefully planned. Issues from previous schools are dealt with immediately, often before the child has started at the school, including visits at home by the Headteacher and SENDCo. When young children start school, parents can record messages on Sound Buttons to play to the children which is especially helpful for those



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with English as an additional language. A calm sensory area is available for children of all ages in need of additional sensory experiences and time to regulate their emotions.

Communication with parents ensures they understand how to help their child learn and the progress they are making. Videos on the school's website demonstrate teaching techniques whilst photographs and examples of work are shared via apps and Facebook.

A parent told me that the staff are "absolutely fantastic!" She added that they went out of their way to make sure that every child would reach their potential. "It's more like a family" she concluded.

One element which clearly stands out is the commitment to staff wellbeing. Each half term all staff receive support and supervision with the SEMHW team. The Headteacher ensures that all staff know they are trusted and valued which was demonstrated by their enthusiasm and lively debate during my visit. This was underlined by the Mental Health Nurse at the end of our meeting, who told me, "We are all one".

### Next Steps:

- To further develop inclusive practice across school, including the 2-year-old provision (opened in September 2019), extending current expertise and knowledge.
- To provide additional support and advice to other schools with regards to children with additional needs through the Local Authority SENDCo mentor programme.
- To provide mainstream staff with opportunities to spend quality time observing in the SEND Support Bases.
- Continuous professional development in relation to supporting children with Special Education Needs, including online courses for all staff and in-house training.



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### Element 2 - Leadership and Management and Accountability

South Bank Primary is a school where every decision is based on the needs of the children. The Headteacher has recently transformed the management structure to encourage shared decision-making and a pro-active approach from all staff. Previously a Head and Deputy structure, there is now greater distributed leadership with the creation of Phase Leads. Staff, including teachers and the Business Manager, now come to the Head with possible solutions to challenges and know that their ideas will be valued. Staff told me that there is always someone to go to and Phase Leads have a bigger team to support each other. Action plans are developed in phase teams, allowing all staff to contribute.

All the staff I met bubbled over with enthusiasm about the support they receive in school and how they work together. If a staff member can explain why such an approach, classroom layout or resource is needed, their ideas are regularly put into practice. During my tour of the school, for example, two classes in Upper Key Stage 2 were organised in rows facing the front. In the other class, however, groups of tables encouraged children to work together. The Head explained that the decision had been made based on the class teacher's judgement of the needs of the class. She emphasised that all suggestions and practice are personalised to the situation, telling me "If it is good for staff and children, we 'South Bank' it".

Performance management and monitoring are used as tools for development. Staff agreed that learning walks are not one-off events and are not used to increase stress. Support is provided using a coaching model and enabling professional conversations. To develop consistency with Read Write Inc., for example, team teaching and team meetings were used. Performance management is offered to all staff including teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors.

The school makes good use of the expertise in SEND from the Support Bases and staff receive termly professional development sessions where problems can be shared as well as achievements. Training is provided to lunchtime staff by the SEMH team including strategies for developing activities in the playground. The SEMH team also provides external training for other schools. In addition, the school has procured a designated teacher from the local authority to support children learning English as an additional language within class.

Staff feel well-supported by leadership in the school. Over the last academic year Phase Leads have checked in regularly with staff online to share information, resolve issues and monitor wellbeing. Staff have been encouraged to share lockdown experiences such as supporting their own children at home whilst continuing to teach. The Head Teacher also ensures that staff can attend their own children's performances and events at other schools as she recognises the importance of home life to staff wellbeing and achieving a work-life balance. They are also allowed to spend planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time at home in alternate weeks with being school based. Staff therefore feel both trusted and valued by the school leadership.



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Safeguarding is given the highest priority within the school. Whilst the Headteacher and Senior Leader for SEMH are the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL), all Phase Leads and the Mental Health Nurse are trained as Deputy DSLs. Every September half a day is allocated to providing training and updates on safeguarding with additional training provided in the spring term. Online training is available for all staff including lunchtime supervisors. All incidents and involvements are recorded on the Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS) and monitored daily.

The Headteacher appreciates the level of support and challenge from the governing body together with the knowledge and experience they bring to the school. The governing body is totally committed to their local area of South Bank and to ensuring the best quality education the school can offer. Governors are encouraged to develop their skills and to engage regularly with the school. During lockdown this has been limited to virtual meetings. Governors receive in depth reports from the Headteacher, and they also check in with her to ensure her wellbeing. Every governor is linked to a Phase Lead and are very enthusiastic about their roles.

The Parent Governor I met explained how he was known to parents as a proactive member of the local community but was also keen to find out what staff and children think. As a relatively new governor, he has been well supported in accessing modules from the National Governance Association and extending his knowledge about data, safeguarding and wellbeing. As a new governor for safeguarding, he meets regularly with the Head and the Senior Leader for SEMH. He also stated that inclusion was a strength of the school at all levels including regular communication with parents and support for children. He was very supportive of the new leadership structure which ensured that everything continues to run smoothly even without the constant presence of the Headteacher.

### Next Steps:

- Phase leaders to meet termly with named governors – focus for meetings.
- Increased visibility of governors to parents including website contributions, coffee morning drop ins, Governor board in the entrance.
- Partner school for cross school moderations.



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

South Bank Primary School endeavours to motivate all children to achieve their best by providing meaningful contexts for learning. Curriculum plans ensure coverage of the National Curriculum. Topics are planned using the Cornerstones model based on problem solving and completing projects. Pupils in the Support Base follow the same topic plans on a rota basis due to the mixed age groups.

The school has adopted published schemes to ensure coverage and progression of skills and knowledge. The Read Write Inc literacy programme is delivered across the school every morning and children in Early Years and Key Stage 1 work in streams. This includes children in the Support Bases, allowing for children from different classes to mix. Staff share feedback and children are moved into different groups as appropriate. Focused activities are provided when more practice is needed, for example, with letter formation. The Headteacher described how she came back buzzing after a recent learning walk during phonics. She was extremely impressed by the engagement of all the children, and the mainstream and base children working closely together.

Teaching staff are encouraged to use their professional judgement to adapt the content in order to inspire their children. The Y4 class teacher came alive describing how she has developed the main skills and elements of Read Write Inc, including vocabulary, into the theme of Harry Potter. Chosen to build on the children's interests and their need for interactive activities, she introduced an exciting mystery by encouraging the children to use inference skills to explore characters using clues from a range of shoes. The next day a newspaper article describing a crime provided the context and drew the children in with more clues provided every day. This theme enabled all the children to take part and develop their reading skills. All the staff I spoke to agreed that the school priority was to do what was right for the children, enabling staff to focus on the needs and interests of their class. As the Y4 teacher concluded, "Nothing is better as a teacher [than] when you know your children love what they are doing."

'In the Moment' plans are used in early years to drive learning forward by building on each child's interests. Staff in nursery and reception respond skilfully during play and look for opportunities to develop a wide range of skills and knowledge as specified in the early years' curriculum. The nursery teacher described a child that morning who was using a stick as a wand. She joined in with his play, offering him a cauldron to make a spell. Glitter spiders were added, and other children soon joined in. A child who could not communicate verbally showed they wanted a spider too! This provided an excellent opportunity to support communication and turn taking.

The Parent Governor spoke enthusiastically of the creative curricular opportunities offered to the children including setting up a Bug Hotel. He referred to the increased motivation for learning and how his own child, for example, loved the work he was doing. In addition, he also spoke highly of the brilliant support given for children with speech difficulties.

Many examples were given of the support offered by the school to support continued learning and progress during lockdown. One parent described the communication



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through emails and phone calls and parcels being sent home with resources. Each day there would be information on the school website about learning for each class including videos by teachers to model use of resources for home learning. Virtual platforms were used to offer group activities including stories and games such as a scavenger hunt. Staff were very pleased with the level of engagement from parents with these tasks as their enjoyment encouraged the children too.

Parents I spoke to felt that their children had continued to make progress and the staff could not do enough to help with home learning. Teachers sent marked work home and would phone or email if there were any issues. Children who were not engaging had paper tasks delivered. Laptops were also provided with dongles for Wi-Fi when needed. Activities could also be accessed via Facebook. Each week during lockdown a member of staff demonstrated how to bake items that were low cost and used only a small number of ingredients, for example, cheese straws, for children to follow at home. Photographs were uploaded by the children to show off their own creations. I thoroughly enjoyed seeing these creations on the school website and Facebook page.

Staff routinely adapt teaching and learning to meet individual needs. This includes offering regular breaks, the use of fidget toys and allowing a child to use a different game to practise timetables as the school method of Times Tables Rockstars was over-stimulating. It is normal practice for some children to have a slightly modified set of resources where needed and all children are accepting of this as a result and support their peers appropriately.

Working alongside the Treetops Occupational Therapists, a sensory programme has been developed which allows staff to work 1:1 with children on personalised sensory diets. A sensory room allows for children to experience sound and light therapy within a safe space. There are also two areas designated as Safe Havens where groups and individuals can work on developing SEMH skills including friendships and emotional resilience.

### Next Steps:

- Develop Subject Leader action plans so that subject leaders are accountable for their subject, including monitoring and analysis.
- Increase in SENDCo time to allow SENDCo to provide support, training and assessment more consistently throughout school.



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

The school presents an inviting learning environment, and every space is used to ensure a wide range of needs are catered for. Classrooms are well resourced and organised and every classroom has its own reading area. The school has invested in providing all children in KS2, including the Support Base, with their own iPad, which were loaned out during lockdown. Photos of all the activities are displayed, together with examples of work representing the range of abilities. The early years classrooms are particularly inviting with their wide range of open-ended resources.

During lockdown, the staff redeveloped the entrance area into a welcoming library with lights, a tent, soft furnishings and books displayed invitingly. The Headteacher explained how reading is a priority and how excited the children were when they returned to school and saw it for the first time.

Outside there is a large amount of playground equipment to promote physical development including a climbing frame and tyre park area. Recent additions include the Bug Hotel and raised beds for the children to grow flowers and vegetables. In every class I visited children were engaged with their tasks, often working with adult support at the tables with some groups working independently. The SENDCo explained how learning is presented firstly in a concrete form, moving to pictorial before abstract. In a whole class lesson on fractions in Upper Key Stage 2, for example, targeted children worked alongside an adult with access to practical resources to support their understanding. Time was also given for children to work through the maths problems.

In early years staff always start where each child is at when they join the school. The nursery teacher emphasised how this was particularly important as children arrive in the school as the year progresses. One moving account described how the early years team had welcomed a little boy with complex needs using a wheelchair, moving furniture and resources to allow him to access all activities and for the other children to be able to interact with him. Photographs showed him taking part in all the fun of a nursery day including blowing bubbles, peeking through tubes and playing with paintbrushes. Physiotherapy sessions took place in nursery, becoming a normal part of the nursery day. His 1:1 support enabled him to extend his independence and friendships and his speech developed well from interacting with his peers.

The SENDCo explained that staff reflect on every situation to find a solution. Breakfast is provided for every child in the Support Base as some children have long journeys across the authority area to attend school. When a child was unwilling to use school transport, it was arranged for the driver to meet the child in school beforehand. The SENDCo also travelled on the bus with him until he was settled. If a child finds the beginning or end of the school day challenging, times are re-arranged to suit the child's needs.



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### Next Steps:

- Ongoing development of iPad project throughout KS2 and for some children in the KS1 Support Base.
- To develop an outdoor sensory area to promote good mental health and wellbeing as well as addressing sensory issues.



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### Element 5 - Assessment

Assessment and monitoring progress is a key responsibility for the Phase Leads. The progress of each child is tracked using Target Tracker enabling gaps to be addressed. An Intervention and Planning Panel has been recently created to ensure that needs are identified, and appropriate support provided. This Panel ensures that targeted children are discussed by staff from across the age groups and information can be shared, for example, past achievements, family links. There is also a wider range of expertise available to suggest the most effective strategies and the progress of targeted children will be closely monitored. Staff involved so far told me they have enjoyed discussing children across the age range.

All staff use Assessment for Learning strategies throughout lessons to provide effective differentiation as lessons progress, in addition to planned differentiation. Success criteria is shared in lessons and children are encouraged to develop a range of skills to improve their work, including peer assessment and working walls, before asking their teacher. Immediate feedback in lessons encourages children to understand their errors and apply new understanding. A child in Key Stage 2 described how he would try to work out answers in maths by finding different ways, maybe using a number line. Another told me about using a polishing pen to check if anything had been missed out. Children are also encouraged to generate their own targets for writing after completing an independent writing task at the end of each unit.

The school uses the philosophy of MAGICAL learners to support children's understanding of good learning behaviours. The SENDCo described how this daily exercise encourages children to think about their own personal attributes, providing a visual reminder of the areas they are already good at and the ones they need to work on. A child in Upper Key Stage 2 explained how everyone aims to be a magnificent learner, displaying skills such as ambition and independence and having a lot of grit.

Success is celebrated in many ways. Children are awarded 'Wow' tokens and notes are sent home as part of their daily routines. When a piece of work is impressive, a child told me they receive stickers on their chart. When the chart is full a letter is sent home and a prize can be chosen. Good work is regularly shared with other staff and classes and then taken to show the Headteacher. Celebration assembly is usually held every week and celebrates achievement in all areas including attendance. Parents and governors are encouraged to attend but assemblies have not been taking place this year due to lockdown.

In the early years learning and progress are continually monitored during child and adult interactions. Learning journeys are created using photographs and comments to provide detailed descriptions of individuals which are shared with the children and their parents. These descriptions celebrated a wide range of strengths for each child. Target Tracker is used to ensure children are making progress across the early years' curriculum.

Additional support is given across the school as soon as a need arises. A child with speech difficulties, for example, received support from Speech and Language Therapy



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(SALT) which greatly reduced their frustration and enabled them to make friends. Training is always available for staff to ensure children's needs are addressed in class in addition to focused interventions.

### Next Steps:

- Continue to develop Phase Lead files and accountability.
- Continue to develop links with other provisions to ensure consistency of moderation levels.



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

Pupil wellbeing is at the heart of the school ethos and is woven through the curriculum and the environment. Activities are planned to engage and motivate whilst focus is placed on developing SEMH, creative and physical skills in addition to the academic curriculum. Children were focused and enthusiastic in all the classrooms I visited and relationships between children and staff were warm and supportive.

Children explained that they can offer ideas about their school, and that they will be considered rather than being ignored. There is usually a school council, but this has been adversely affected by lockdown. The overall sentiment was summed up by one child who told me “The teachers are really nice, the dinner staff – everything is just perfect!”

The appointment of a Mental Health Nurse has been a unique step to addressing SEMH issues throughout the school and has been embraced by the entire school community. Transition to secondary school, for example, is planned to provide each child with the best chance of succeeding. Small groups of Y6 pupils meet with the SEMH team and every child is encouraged to have a say about their feelings related to moving to the next phase of their education. Children are also offered immediate access to counselling when needed. One child described how she had enjoyed the opportunity to talk about her emotions privately and to be given strategies to help such as practising her breathing.

The MHN is proactive in engaging parents by developing trusting relationships by being out on the playground every day. Regular events include coffee mornings where parents can access information from a range of experts including the School Nurse, and the Housing Officer. For parents this provides additional support to other agencies in a bid to promote learning and happiness. The aim is to provide preventative information and to present the school as a place of support and security. After years of experience in community work and visiting schools, the MHN told me he regards it as a privilege to be based in a school as part of the staff team where emotional support can be delivered with far greater impact.

In addition to the SEMH team, all children have regular opportunities to work with Kidz Konnekt, a local charity promoting team building and self-confidence. Photos in the Support Base showed children engaging in fun outdoor activities supporting the building of resilience and positive relationships.

Children are supported in developing awareness of safeguarding issues as part of the school curriculum. Discussions are held in class and via computer programs about safety online and children know they can speak to any member of staff if they have a problem, which many children have done.

It is evident that the staff all go out of their way to support children who may be experiencing challenges in accessing school. One parent described the support she had received when bringing her child to the school following a year of home schooling as he was unable to cope with the environment and expectations of his previous school. Both



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the Headteacher and SENDCo visited home to establish a trusting relationship, before planning school attendance in very small steps. Photo books were sent home of the children in his class and the staff to allay his fears. Starting with visits lasting ten minutes, his mother was gradually able to withdraw. She told me that nothing had been too much trouble. On my tour of the school, I met her son as he worked in class and only knew who he was when told afterwards.

Staff wellbeing is also a priority and opportunities for team building and wellbeing are provided. Staff events have included bowling and white-water rafting. Each half term, members of staff receive a special lunchbox. They are also allocated one Wellbeing Day each year, which can be used as staff wish. As one member of staff commented during a warm and lively staff discussion, there is “massive recognition that one size doesn’t meet all”.

### Next Steps:

- To further develop the role of the SEMH team within school to provide additional support throughout school to individuals and small groups of children.
- To further upskill staff in managing children with challenging behaviour.
- To extend links within the local area e.g., places of worship, industry, education, other schools to establish collaborative working for our children.



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### Element 7 - Parents, Carers, Guardians

The parents I spoke to could not speak highly enough of the school and the support offered for both their children and the whole family.

The school focuses firmly on success. Staff share news about what has gone well when children are picked up at home time. They understand the importance of maintaining supportive relationships with parents and feel that it is a strength of the school. Parents are very open with staff about issues where they need help including debt. Regular phone calls were an important way of maintaining links over lockdown.

Parents are sent newsletters and information by email with paper copies sent home if needed. Many parents access the school on Facebook where there are picture collages every week to celebrate the learning that has taken place. Children can add their own photos. The school also has an app called Marvellous Me which records achievements both as a class and as individuals. Photographs, certificates and awards can be added by home and school. The parents I spoke to enjoy sending back a 'High 5' to acknowledge success.

Outside of lockdown and restrictions on visitors, parents are regularly welcomed into the school including termly parents' evenings and events including plays and the summer fair.

Special effort is made to welcome families with English as an additional language. Some families are very keen to learn English and are signposted to classes. Translation is offered when needed, often by other parents and children. I learned about one family who have maintained links with the school and introduced all their children's teachers online to the family in Lebanon. The Resettlement Team in Redcar and Cleveland regularly recommends South Bank Primary to new families needing support.

In the Support Base staff work closely with parents and develop effective home/school links including class emails. The SENDCo ensures that parents fully understand the needs of their child and helps them understand the Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process and what their child needs to achieve next. Base staff also ensure parents feel confident in meetings with external agencies, such as educational psychology and occupational therapy. One parent described to me how the SENDCo had supported the family during an appeal for assessment of their child for an EHCP after being turned down by the local authority.

Families are well supported by the school which is seen as a safe place for many parents. During lockdown, the Headteacher and Senior Lead for SEMH identified the families who were struggling and dropped off food hampers. There was also regular contact with parents of children with EHCPs who were particularly anxious about their child catching Covid when at school during lockdown.

#### Next Steps:

- Continue to provide training and support for parents in key areas.



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- Look for other opportunities to include parents in children's learning – parental engagement sessions.
- Encourage parents from different job areas to talk about their experiences to foster aspirations for the future in children.
- Use of parental skills to support groups of children e.g., music, gardening, sport.



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

All the staff at South Bank Primary work tirelessly to engage with the children and their families and to extend their knowledge of and impact within the local community. The SENDCo emphasised the school's positive and supportive reputation within the local community. Links have been made with pre-school/private nurseries, primary and secondary schools in the local area. There are regular meetings for staff with other primary schools in the local cluster, but these have not taken place recently due to Covid 19.

The school enjoys inviting people from the local community into school, including the police to support community relationships. Many religious festivals are celebrated, and key visitors invited to assemblies to talk to the children. Children use the school minibus to visit local churches and shops and have taken part in community projects such as litter picking and charity work. The children have also enjoyed singing carols at local care homes.

Links have been made with a local charity which promotes the development of resilience and self-worth for girls in Upper Key Stage 2 (UKS2). This group continues to work with the same cohorts during their time at secondary school. All children in UKS2, are encouraged to think about their future careers and links are continually evolving with employers and further education providers within the local area.

Coffee mornings for parents are used as opportunities to introduce families to external agencies and help develop their confidence in approaching them. Parents have also been encouraged to take part in keep fit sessions and Bollywood dancing.

The school is now seeking to extend links beyond the wider community to develop a partnership with schools in Australia and New Zealand.

#### Next Steps:

- Seek out opportunities to be involved in community projects.
- Continue to offer as much support as possible through a range of events, drop-in sessions, informal meetings and open-door policy.
- Consider how to encourage other faiths and cultures to share their experiences and skills within the school community.