How Irlam Primary School got a clearer evidence base and gave its SLT time back

How Irlam Primary School's SLT spotted gaps and saved time on self-evaluation, and how The LINK Education Trust is building consistency across its schools.

About the school

Irlam Primary School is a primary school located in Irlam, Greater Manchester. The headteacher, Elaine Darwin, leads a supportive and caring school, which achieved a Good rating from Ofsted in December 2022. As they became an academy in 2024, they are due for an inspection with the 2025 framework soon.

The challenge

Before adopting Intelligent Evidence, Irlam Primary School had difficulty gathering evidence, with Elaine and the SLT having to read through lengthy reports and search through pages to find the information they needed and map them to Ofsted's grade descriptors.

It was hard for them to spot where the gaps were, which made self-evaluation difficult.

The solution

After being brought up at The LINK Education Trust's Heads meeting, they made the decision to trial Intelligent Evidence in the majority of their schools to support the self-evaluation process across the MAT. With The LINK Education Trust due for inspection in 2026, Ofsted readiness was also a key factor in the decision to implement Intelligent Evidence across the trust.

> "It's user-friendly - you don't need to be a tech expert. We were up and running the very same morning!"
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> **Elaine Darwin**
> Headteacher, Irlam Primary School

The results

Built a solid evidence base quickly

> "Collecting evidence used to be painstaking. I was that person who filed everything in labelled folders just to tick it off, but it used to take me hours per week. By using Intelligent Evidence, I had a solid evidence base within 10 minutes of uploading a few key documents."
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> **Elaine Darwin**
> Headteacher, Irlam Primary School

Self-evaluation made easy

Searching for information from different sources and re-reading reports in order to get the information they needed, the school's "traditional" self-evaluation process took a considerable amount of time for Elaine and the SLT. Since using Intelligent Evidence, information is now organised and accessible across the team, allowing them to see exactly where the gaps are.

"Intelligent Evidence clearly highlights our strengths and gaps under each Ofsted heading, so we can focus our efforts where they're most needed - improving our school."



Elaine Darwin
Headteacher, Irlam Primary School

Consistency across the MAT

As schools within The LINK Education Trust develop their use of Intelligent Evidence, they are building a standardised way of presenting their evidence despite each school continuing to use individual methods for self evaluation. Intelligent Evidence creates a single point of truth for the trust, making it easier for the whole trust to see where their schools are doing well, and where they may need support.

Saved valuable time across the SLT

"It saves valuable time - something every headteacher needs more of!"



Elaine Darwin
Headteacher, Irlam Primary School

Elaine and the team can now simply upload their documents to Intelligent Evidence and instantly map them across the new framework.

They have reduced their workload significantly and given themselves time back to focus on what's really needed - working with children and families. The team now regularly reviews their evidence base on Intelligent Evidence to see what's missing and add more documentation to fill any gaps.

"Intelligent Evidence is an invaluable tool for busy school leaders. With Ofsted inspections on the horizon, it's a fast and effective way to organise your existing evidence under Ofsted headings. You can instantly see your strengths and identify any gaps. It's straightforward, efficient, and genuinely brilliant."

"I'll certainly feel more confident and prepared going into inspection. Inspectors will find it difficult to argue when the evidence is clearly identified and accessible in various documents."



Elaine Darwin
Headteacher, Irlam Primary School

Find out where your evidence stands

Book a demo

Book a demo and see how Intelligent Evidence maps your existing documentation against the framework - so you can see exactly where you're strong and where the gaps are.