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Raising Performance
Standards

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
REVIEW ASSESSMENT REPORT

For

Lytchett Minster School

ASSESSOR: John Dewar Chartered F.C.I.P.D.

DATE: 27 June 2007



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Review Assessment Plan

1. OUTCOME

Lytchett Minster School continues to comply with the requirements of the Investors in People Standard. I am pleased to confirm that recognition is therefore maintained as from 27 June 2007.

John Dewar Chartered F.C.I.P.D.
Assessor
Quality South West Limited
28 June 2007

2. STRENGTHS AND AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

- The School was originally assessed on 21/22 June 2004 and formally recognised as an Investor in People on 13 July 2004. They have continued to develop their management practices and embrace the principles of the Standard. The Core Management Teams and Senior Management Team have developed a culture of continuous improvement with a commitment to providing pupils with the best possible start to their careers. They have also continued to maintain a single status culture and developed the ethos of 'one team'. The Assessor has discussed the good practices with the Core Management Team and has suggested that they could be good role models for other Schools and that they could be a useful case study for Investors in People.
- The School has become 'Training School' since the original Assessment and as such has introduced some very good practices relating to Learning and Development, Evaluation, Sharing Knowledge and Leadership and Management.
- As part of their continuous development strategy the School has developed their Intranet which now has a section relating to whole staff training. "Teams of colleagues (teaching and non-teaching) work together to provide the very best experience for our students. The National Agenda of Workforce Reform seeks to promote closer working relationships between colleagues with clearly focused roles. We continue to develop our practice as we respond to our School Improvement Plan". All staff can identify their specific training needs in response to their developing role as individuals or teams. They can also identify best practice to be modelled across the School. They can identify training by having staff responding to whole staff needs from the School Improvement Plan (SIP), Foundations for Learning, Language for Learning and Performing Arts. They can also develop Induction Materials for colleagues in new roles or those new to the School through the Intranet. Finally there is also a facility for Individual Professional Development.
- As part of the development of the Intranet there is now a section for CPD. This enables staff to join the Action Research Group by sharing best practice. There is also a facility for staff to write up their own research and gain accreditation towards a MA (Ed) via the South West Initiative for Training (SWIFT). There is also the facility to access research to expand knowledge and thinking and thereby develop new perspectives on practice.

3. FEEDBACK AGAINST AGREED OBJECTIVES

- There has been no adverse reaction since the School achieved Training School Status. Most staff have taken it in their stride and made good use of the learning and development that has become available including the Leadership and Management Training opportunities. Staff have also seen this as an opportunity to share best practice.
- The Workforce Remodelling has been seen by some staff as an opportunity to enhance their involvement and spend more time with teaching. They genuinely believe that they

have the teaching support they need to provide the high quality service and educational support to pupils. Teaching Assistants believe that they a very strong working relationship with the teachers.

4. POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

- The Core Management Team may wish to give consideration to School Continuity by giving thought to creating some form of Succession Planning to ensure that they develop the key staff for the future. There could be a programme to off-load some of their daily activities to the Management Team to allow them the time to develop the longer-term strategy for the School. There is a danger that the Core Management Team will continue to be too involved in the day-to-day activities and miss the opportunity to bring on their potential replacements.
- There are regular Department/Team Meetings. To encourage greater involvement the 'chair' could be rotated amongst the team members. This would give everyone the experience of chairing and organising meetings. The Department Meetings are also a useful forum for sharing training knowledge and experiences with colleagues.
- The School may wish to include a review of Job Descriptions and Job Specifications when the Performance Management Reviews are is being carried out. This will ensure that Job Descriptions and Specifications are current and up-to-date. The School would then be in a position to move forward quickly when recruitment is necessary knowing that they know exactly what the vacant requires. It would also help 'line managers' to understand exactly what their staff are doing as opposed to assuming they know.
- When Performance Management Reviews are being carried out the School may wish to consider encouraging 'line managers' to ask the apraisee for feedback. They could ask, "What do you think I do well, What could I do better, What should I start or stop doing to help you perform your role better"?
- The School may wish to consider reviewing the Induction Training Programme. This could be done by bringing a couple of new starters together after three or six months service and asking them what they would have changed or added to the Induction Process. This also applies to the Induction Programme for new Governors.
- You might want to look at Quality South West's own website to maintain a view of the developments around the Investors in People Standard in the region: <http://www.qualitysouthwest.co.uk/>. The Leadership and Management/Recruitment and Selection/Work Life Balance Model(s) may be of particular interest to you.) You may also wish to consider the benefits of having a 'Profile' Review next time. You will find that <http://www.investorsinpeople.co.uk> provides guidance on working with Profile including case studies and a Profile Self Check online tool.
- Check if any of the Health & Safety information available on the HSE website could be useful in maintaining both your compliance and staff awareness. Your Health & Safety Representative might consider if there are any issues that should be addressed: <http://www.hse.gov.uk>.
- Consider interactive training packages to continue to develop the IT skills and knowledge of your staff. Try <http://learndirect.co.uk> for ideas, a good number of these courses are either free of charge or reasonably priced.
- For some useful information on the whole area of employee consultation, try looking at either <http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/consultation/proposal.htm> or <http://www.acas.org.uk>

- For general business advice and employment legislation, incorporating DTI 'best practice', the following website might be useful: <http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/>.
- With regard to Leadership and Management, visit the Institute of Leadership and Management at <http://i-l-m.com>. <http://www.ashridge.org.uk/> includes access to some interesting reports as well as E-Learning resources, whilst <http://www.leadershipsouthwest.com/> will provide you with lots of information from a more local source.
- You may find it beneficial to contact your local Train to Gain team for a review of your skills training requirements in the context of your School needs. It is a free and impartial assessment that will give you access to a wide range of training provision, some of which may be funded. Please ring 08456 047047 or visit www.traintogain.gov.uk.

The basis of an Action Plan has been prepared below to help you move forward and address the development areas identified during this visit.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The first column of this Plan has been completed for you as a basis for moving forward on the feedback suggestions discussed.

Suggestions for further development	Action Agreed	Responsibility	Date
Develop a School Continuity strategy to give greater day-to-day responsibility to the Management Team to enable the Core Management Teams time for Strategic Planning. This will also include reviewing areas where absence of key staff has a considerable impact on the day to day activities of the School and find ways to minimise the impact by cross training if possible.			
Rotate the chairman at various staff/department meetings to develop the skills of all staff.			
Review all job descriptions and person specifications when the annual appraisal is being carried out, with the incumbent.			
Encourage 'line managers' to seek feedback from the staff they are carrying out appraisals on. What do they do well, what could they do better, what should they be doing to help their staff?			
Involve a few new starters and Governors to review the Induction Programme and make suggestions for improvement.			
Consider talking to Train to Gain to see if any advice or guidance can be useful.			

Target date for the next visit/contact by the assessor:

Date for next Investors in People Review:

5. FINDINGS AGAINST EACH PRINCIPLE OF THE STANDARD

An Investor in People develops effective strategies to improve the performance of the organisation through its people.

- There is an Annual School Improvement Plan (SIP) prepared by the Core Management Team with input from the broader Senior Management Team. The SIP starts with broad guidance from the Core Management Team being cascaded to Department Managers. They then prepare their Department Plan on how they anticipate achieving their objectives and the objectives set by the Core Management Team. The final draft of the SIP is then presented to the Board of Governors who will make comments and suggestions if necessary to develop any issues they may have before they finally approve it. The final SIP is then made available to all staff and presented to them at various whole staff meeting during the year.
- The Core Management Team will outline their plans for the future and the performance measures expected from each team. They will also give feedback on how the School has performed over the previous period. Throughout the year staff are continually encouraged to have an input into the performance of the School and are encouraged to submit ideas and suggestions for developing the School.
- Staff confirmed that they were aware of the Aims and Objectives of the School as they either had a copy of the SIP or knew where to access it and the Core Management Team had briefed them at the various Whole Staff Meetings. They are also kept up-to-date with developments throughout the year through Department updates by their 'line manager' at Team Meetings.
- Most staff confirmed that they had been given a Performance Management Review over the past twelve months. New starters are given their first formal review at the end of their Probationary Period. Staff confirmed that their Performance Management Review was positive, constructive and generally a pleasant experience. They confirmed that they had a two-way, free-flowing conversation with their 'line manager' and that during the discussions they had the opportunity to discuss their training and career development aspirations.
- Examples given by staff of how their learning and development had benefited them and the School were, "I am more confident and believe in what I teach and my ability to reflect and think about what pupils get out of my input on their learning". "I am much better at talking to parent at parents evenings". "I am much better at speaking to pupils and using open questions". "My presentation skills have improved with IT Training".
- The School has developed its Intranet and there is a section for CPD. This enables staff to join the Action Research Group by sharing best practice. There is also a facility for staff to write up their own research and gain accreditation towards a MA(Ed) via the South West Initiative for Training (SWIFT). There is also the facility to access research to expand knowledge and thinking and thereby develop new perspectives on practice.
- The Intranet also has a section relating to whole staff training. "Teams of colleagues (teaching and non-teaching) work together to provide the very best experience for our students. The National Agenda of Workforce Reform seeks to promote closer working relationships between colleagues with clearly focused roles. We continue to develop our practice as we respond to our School Improvement Plan". All staff can identify their specific training needs in response to their developing role as individuals or teams. They can also identify best practice to be modelled across the School. Take part in training responding to whole staff needs from SIP, Foundations for Learning, Language for Learning and Performing Arts. They can also develop Induction Materials for colleagues in new roles or new to the School through the Intranet. Finally there is also a facility for Individual Professional Development.

- Some training agreed with staff came from the SIP needs identified in the Aims and Objectives for the School. The School also provides funding for, Professional studies such as NPQH, Leadership Pathways, Mentoring Level 3, Certificate in Educational Administration, Microsoft Officer User Systems Training (MOUS), Leading from the Middle, Higher Level Teaching Assistant, Health & Safety Food Hygiene, B'Tec and Masters Courses. There is a School Development Plan prepared from the information in the School Improvement Plan and Performance Management Reviews. Training is budgeted and costed and expenditure is recorded in the management accounts. "If training is required and a benefit to the School then funding is provided". Training is also published in the new in-house Newsletter and the Governors are given a Report.
- All staff confirmed that training information was circulated to them throughout the year and that they were encouraged to develop their skills to help the School provide a better quality opportunity for pupils. The Core Management Team reviews all training and gives budget approval if necessary. "My computer skills have improved since my training and I can now teach and help other staff".
- Staff have regular team meetings and or one-to-ones with their 'line manager' and they are encouraged to submit ideas and solutions for the continuous improvement of the School. Staff genuinely believe that the Core Management Team and wider Senior Management Team are committed to their continued training and development. Staff and their 'line manager' will discuss their training needs and determine the best learning method to be used to ensure maximum benefit is gained from the training. Training may be through formal courses or through coaching, mentoring or guiding from more experienced staff.
- 'Line managers' have Job Descriptions that identify they are responsible for leading, managing, developing and training their staff. They also develop some of their own leadership and management skills and knowledge through the various programmes that are available to them. Leadership and Management skills could be met through the Aspiring Middle Managers Training, Leading from the Middle, Leadership Pathway or the NPQH. They also have a process to share best practice and knowledge on how to maximise the skills and knowledge of their staff.

An Investor in People takes effective action to improve the performance of the organisation through its people.

- Most staff confirmed that they have an annual Performance Management Review and that their 'line manager' carries it out effectively. They stated that their Performance Management Reviews were positive and constructive and that training was always discussed openly and freely. They stated that they are always encouraged to undertake training to develop their knowledge and career potential. Staff who were new also stated that they had regular feedback on their performance during their Probationary Period.
- Staff were asked to rate the performance and skills of their 'line manager' on a scale from 1 to 10 with 1 being poor and 10 being the image of perfection they were asked to described. The result of the discussion was that all staff rated their 'line manager' between 6 and 9. This was evidence that staff felt that their 'line manager' was competent at leading, managing and developing them.
- Staff also confirmed that they were given regular feedback on their performance and that their 'line manager', Core Management Team and Board of Governors gave them praise and thanks for putting in extra effort. Staff also had feedback from parents and pupils. All staff interviewed genuinely believe that their contribution to their team and to the success of the School was valued and appreciated by their 'line manager'.
- All staff confirmed that they are encouraged to develop their job role and take responsibility for their own work and could explain how they were contributing towards the aims and objectives of their team and the School. "Suggestions and ideas for doing things differently are always discussed".

- All training agreed and discussed is booked as quickly as possible once it has the Core Management Teams' approval. Training courses are circulated to all staff and discussed regularly outside the formal Performance Management Review process. New starters confirmed that they were given a formal Induction immediately they started. They were also briefed on the Aims and Objectives of the School.

An Investor in People can demonstrate the impact of its investment in people on the performance of the organisation.

- There is a formal Training Budget and most training required to meet individual needs tends to be met. The School budgets for training and costs incurred are recorded in the management accounts. The Core Management Team believe that the investment of time, effort and money in training and developing staff contributed to the success of the School. They also believe that their practices contributed towards their achievement of the Training School Status.
- Staff confirmed that their training and mentoring had improved their performance and they gave examples of things they could do now that they could not do before they had their training. This had improved their performance and that of their team and ultimately the School. Development enabled staff to prepare for promotion to their next job role.
- A benefit identified by staff was the creation of an Intranet system with automated links to other websites, web pages. Other benefits have been, "My moderator Training enables me to invigilate at Examinations". "I now provide on-the-job training for my colleagues". "I believe I can now carry out effective Performance Management Reviews". "We have developed the role of Tutor Training and we work better as teams now". "I am more competent at using computers to provide a better service to pupils". "I have learnt how to manage people better and organise things". "I can make better use of ICT equipment". "I can actually use excel now to create spreadsheets".
- The School has continued to improve since the last Assessment. There is a natural culture of continuous improvement to provide a quality environment for staff and pupils. The Induction Programme has been refined and improved and the whole staff meeting has continued with the involvement of all staff in creating ideas for improving the School.
- The range of Management Skills Training available for staff had improved since the original Assessment and staff were encouraged to develop their career potential by following the Aspiring Middle Managers Training

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INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
REVIEW ASSESSMENT PLAN

For

Lytchett Minster School

ASSESSOR: John Dewar Chartered F.C.I.P.D.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The School is an 11 – 18 mixed comprehensive School of 1200 pupils approximately 210 of whom are sixth form. The School is housed in the South Lytchett Manor House, together with a number of modern extensions and a collection of temporary classrooms. The School has developed a solid academic reputation over the years and at all levels students achieve well above National Averages and Add Value. The School has recently been successful in achieving redesignation of Performing Arts College Status and following an invitation from the DfES they have also achieved Training School Status.

The School employs 125 staff (111 full time and 14 part time).

This is a Post Recognition Review for Lytchett Minster School. They were originally assessed on 22 June 2004 and formally recognised on 13 July 2004.

AGREED OBJECTIVES

- To confirm that Lytchett Minster School continues to meet the requirements of the Standard for recognition as an Investor in People.
- To provide feedback on opportunities for further improvement and continuous development.
- To review the actions taken on the suggestions for improvement offered during the previous visit.
- The School has achieved Training School Status and would like some feedback on the impact this has had on staff.
- Do subject areas feel they have the support they need following the Workforce Remodelling exercise regarding teaching support?

ADDITIONAL NOTES

1. The sample size is 16.0%. The recommended sample is 15% to 27%.

ON SITE DATE(S):	26/27 June 2007	REPORT SENT TO CLIENT BY:	4 July 2007
TOTAL NUMBER OF DAYS:	2.5 days	TOTAL COST:	£1375.00 + VAT

The national rate for Investors in People assessments and reviews is £750 per day (plus VAT). Quality South West is able to provide a subsidy of £200 per day. Any travel expenses over 100 miles per day (charged at 40p per mile) and any other agreed expenses incurred will be invoiced directly to you by your assessor.

We agree to the costs as detailed above and have read and understood the terms and conditions contained within your 'Client's Guide to the Assessment/Review Process'.

Signed:

Date: