

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE REVIEW REPORT

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

LITTLETOWN JUNIOR, INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

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BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Littletown Junior, Infant and Nursery School was first recognised as an Investors in People school in 2000. The last review was carried out in 2009, confirming the school had maintained the standard.

Since the last review, a new Head Teacher has been appointed following the retirement of a long-standing Head.

Discussions took place with the Head Teacher to plan the review and agree the focus/objectives. In total, 15 people were interviewed and written documentation was presented as evidence.

This report is to summarise the findings of the review, highlighting areas of good practice and suggestions for further development around the Investors in People framework.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Having carried out the assessment process rigorously and in accordance with the guidance provided by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, I am satisfied beyond doubt that Littletown Junior, Infant and Nursery School continues to meet the requirements of the Investors in People standard.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank Fiona for arranging the review and all the staff involved for their time and contributions. I really enjoyed meeting everyone and listening to the enthusiasm displayed by everyone for Littletown Junior, Infant and Nursery School.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AGAINST OBJECTIVES

The vision of working towards excellence for Littletown Junior, Infant and Nursery School is clear and at the forefront of everyone's minds. *'Be the best we can be in everything we do'* is the message that was repeated throughout the Investors in People review. From reviewing the new website to arriving at school, the whole bright, stimulating environment outside and inside gives an impression of commitment to excellence. Learning and development is supported, recognising the importance of a having skilled staff team to deliver excellence. The new Head Teacher supported by the Deputy Head have created an environment in which staff are actively encouraged to contribute ideas to improve their own and other people's performances. Staff believe more than ever before that there is genuine commitment to treating people equally and fairly. Staff do believe that the leadership team are outstanding and inspire staff and children to aim high and be the best they can, leading by example in all that they do. All staff receive constructive feedback on their performance through a variety of methods, primarily performance management. Teaching staff are aware of what to do to be 'outstanding', which everyone strives for every day. Staff do feel valued, and regular thank yous, praise and acknowledgments of the hard work and effort happen more than ever before under the new leadership team. Staff are involved in decision-making where possible, and the Head Teacher's style of leadership is very much about consulting and involving staff, and empowering them to make their own decisions. Staff spoke of feeling more confident to take ownership and make their own decisions, knowing they have the backing of the leadership. Staff feel encouraged to be creative and try new strategies to support children's progress/experiences and to learn from mistakes and successes. Induction is thorough, in particular for NQTs, with an experienced mentor supporting them. Without exception, everyone believes that many improvements have been made to the way people are led, managed and developed since the last Investors in People review in 2009, in particular the appointment of the new Head Teacher. Staff spoke of the school being 'modernised' and being a brighter and more dynamic environment for the children and staff of Littletown Junior, Infant and Nursery School.

STRENGTHS AND AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

- Clear vision, which is shared with everyone.
- High expectations of the children and staff.
- Leadership – inspirational, motivating, fair, leading by example and supportive.
- Recognising individuals' contributions.
- Involving people in decision-making and empowering staff to make their own decisions.
- Commitment to continuing professional development.
- Staff team – enthusiastic and motivated.

POTENTIAL AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT AROUND THE FRAMEWORK

Review all roles in school to make more explicit what makes them good/outstanding, e.g. what makes an good/outstanding teaching assistant, administrator, SMSA, etc.

Governors to continue to review their roles, responsibilities and expectations against the new Ofsted criteria.

Review the performance management process/documentation for non-teaching staff to identify a clearer link to the School Improvement Plan and the school's priorities. Ensure all non-teaching staff go through performance management to gain feedback on their performance.

Consideration could be given to introducing an annual staff survey/questionnaire asking staff what to stop, start and continue to continue to strive for excellence.

Consideration could be given to using the Health and Wellbeing Good Practice guide.

FEEDBACK AGAINST YOUR AGREED OBJECTIVES

The new leadership team at Littletown Junior, Infant and Nursery School have a very clear and ambitious vision for this school: 'To continue to move towards excellence.' This message is shared with all staff and other stakeholders via the website, in meetings, and by the actions and standards set by the leadership team.

The School Improvement Plan invites contributions from staff and governors, and takes into account local and national requirements and targets that are measurable.

Staff gave consistent messages throughout discussions regarding the high expectations of all staff and children and the move towards excellence. **'Vision of excellence.'** **'We are all very clear of what is expected, more than ever before.'** **'More focused than ever. X wants the school to be the best.'** **'Aspires to be the best.'**

Through performance management, staff agree performance measures that link to the School Improvement Plan and the move towards excellence. Monitoring has tightened up, and the introduction of regular progress reviews with the Head Teacher has worked extremely well. By reviewing individual pupil progress, interventions can be introduced earlier and targets can be stretched for children, and staff feel that support is available to continue to raise standards. Interventions are more closely monitored in terms of pupil progress, which the support staff value, as they can see the impact on the children's performance and make changes earlier if little progress is being made.

Staff spoke of the message of always doing your best in everything you do being constantly shared with the children. A real 'can do' environment has been created.

Governors have a more active role in school and understand their contribution. The governing body want to be outstanding in their role at Littletown Junior, Infant and Nursery School and are using the Ofsted framework to assess where they are now and what they need to do to be recognised as 'outstanding'.

Parents are welcomed into school and training is provided to help parents continue to support their child/children outside of school. Regular communication through learning logs, parents evenings and chats with staff encourage parents to understand their role.

Continued professional development is actively encouraged by the leadership team. Courses are suggested to staff, in-house training is provided and experienced staff are eager to pass on their knowledge and skills to benefit others. Everyone has the opportunity to review their learning and development needs through performance management, observations and general discussions. Learning and development does build capacity in school, and staff are more flexible and able to take on more areas of responsibility.

The leadership team are role models for continuous learning and continuing professional development. Littletown Junior, Infant and Nursery School is a learning community where

children, staff and parents all have access to learning. Staff also believe that being part of the trust will increase learning opportunities.

The new leadership team at Littletown Junior, Infant and Nursery School have created a culture where everyone is encouraged to contribute ideas to improve their own and other people's performances in the pursuit of excellence. Staff spoke of being listened to and encouraged to suggest new ideas.

Policies are in place relating to equality of opportunity. Staff spoke of the Head Teacher being very fair and consistent with all staff, which some said did not always happen under the previous leadership. The different needs of people are considered and supported. Staff are not forced into further development; however, the strengths and potential of staff are recognised and, through talking to staff and giving individuals more confidence, some have accessed further development when perhaps they would not have done so previously.

The capabilities of leaders and managers are clearly defined. The new Ofsted criteria are used to assess and grade individuals. The leadership team at Littletown Junior, Infant and Nursery School are inspirational and have an open, honest and trusting management style. Staff gave extremely positive feedback throughout the review: **'An inspiration.'** **'High standards for all – an inclusive, nurturing school.'** **'All clear what the Head wants for the school.'** **'X has a reputation in the authority of someone good to work for.'** **'Very professional and organised.'** **'Inspires you to want to work hard.'** **'The leadership work so hard – too hard!'** **'Forward-thinking, ahead of the game.'** **'So inspirational – I strive to be like them.'** **'Very approachable.'** **'Model good practice all the time.'**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers at leading, managing and developing people is assessed through rigorous performance management. The school has continued to buy in support from the school improvement partner.

The change in leadership has had a very positive impact on most staff in school. For some, the constant drive for high standards and expectations of everyone has resulted in a couple of staff not able to keep up and therefore having left the school. Staff see the arrival of new staff into the school as very positive, bringing new energy and ambition. There is no doubt about expectations, but support is provided. **'We are so much more up to date.'** **'The Head gets out and promotes Littletown.'** **'The vision is clearer than ever before.'** **'The school is brighter.'** **'More businesslike. The Head is really good at getting grants for the school.'** **'More pressure for everyone.'** **'Very fair.'** **'Much more positive environment.'** **'Everyone is more accountable.'** **'We can't stand still – it is a changing world.'** **'Every morning in the playground X is greeting parents and children.'** Staff do firmly believe the changes will help the school continue to strive for excellence.

Staff trust and have total respect for the leadership team. Staff admire their drive and share in the vision of the school.

Performance management is very effective for teaching staff. Feedback is always presented positively, including areas to improve. Performance management for support staff and

observations have been welcomed, ensuring that everyone contributing to the school receives constructive feedback on their performance and contribution. Targets set through performance management for teaching staff are ambitious.

Staff do feel valued and believe their efforts and hard work are acknowledged through regular praise, thank yous, chocolates, cards, trust, encouragement, listening, getting credit for what they do and comments from children, parents and governors.

The new leadership style in school is one of consulting and involving staff in decision-making and empowering staff to make their own decisions and take ownership for decisions, knowing that the Head and leadership will support them.

Everyone interviewed, without exception, displayed a genuine commitment to the success of the school. Staff are proud of the school's achievements and, when attending training events and meetings, feel that Littletown School is ahead of many other schools.

The induction process, in particular for NQTs, is thorough and effective. Mentors are supportive and provide regular feedback, advice and guidance. The friendly staff team make the school a welcoming place to join, which helps individuals feel part of the team and settle in easily.

Investment in staff development does impact on individual, team and school performances. Individuals gave examples: **'We have been trained in restraint so we feel confident if we have to use this with any of the children, doing it properly.'** **'We have revised the curriculum with the increased number of boys to make it more creative and active.'** **'Writing has been a focus. We have introduced new interventions, different books, visited other schools and it is amazing how well they have come on.'**

Throughout the day, staff were enthusiastic, passionate and eager to talk about working at Littletown Junior, Infant and Nursery School and what a great place it is. Staff feel that improvements have been made in all areas in school, including in the way people are lead, managed and developed. The school environment is brighter, with new outdoor equipment and playground games, while inside school, security and safeguarding have significantly improved, the vision is clear, the pace is faster and more ambitious to ensure standards continue to be excellent, staff feel much more involved and valued, and there is a fair and consistent approach to managing people. The profile of the school has been raised through networking and being part of the Trust. Monitoring is tighter, more rigorous and supportive. Staff are more accountable and clear about their expectations. Governors are more involved and their roles and responsibilities are clear. Staff also commented on morale being more positive and there being a real 'buzz'. From discussions with staff, it is evident that Littletown Junior, Infant and Nursery School was a really good school that is now even better.

'Much more for the children at break time.' **'Performance management was so positive it really lifted me.'** **'Happier staff team.'** **'X listens and takes on board. Wants the best out of the staff.'** **'Action is always taken'** **'Constantly moving forward.'** **'Gains momentum through the term.'** **'Much more involved.'** **'Much more accountable, nothing wishy washy.'** **'Cycle of everything.'** **'Happy staff – happy children.'** **'X wants the best for the staff and the children.'** **'It's a lovely place to work.'** **'Brilliant school – I love my job.'**

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE FRAMEWORK TOPIC MAP – The areas that are included in your Investors in People review are shaded in yellow.

PLAN				DO				REVIEW	
01: BUSINESS STRATEGY	02: LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY	03: PEOPLE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	04: LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	05: MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS	06: RECOGNITION & REWARD	07: INVOLVEMENT & EMPOWERMENT	08: LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT	09: PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT	10: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
THE STANDARD TOP MANAGERS SHOULD MAKE SURE (AND THEIR PEOPLE SHOULD CONFIRM) THAT:									
<p>The organisation has a vision/purpose, strategy and plan</p> <p>People are involved in planning</p> <p>Representative groups (where appropriate) are consulted when developing the plan</p>	<p>Learning priorities are clear and are linked to the plan</p> <p>Resources for learning and development are made available</p> <p>The impact will be evaluated</p>	<p>People are encouraged to contribute ideas</p> <p>There is equality of opportunity for development and support</p>	<p>Managers are clear about the capabilities they need to lead, manage and develop people</p> <p>People know what effective managers should be doing</p>	<p>Managers are effective and can describe how they lead, manage and develop people</p>	<p>People believe they make a difference</p> <p>People believe their contribution is valued</p>	<p>Ownership and responsibility is encouraged</p> <p>People are involved in decision-making</p>	<p>People's learning and development needs are met</p>	<p>Investment in learning can be quantified</p> <p>Impact can be demonstrated</p>	<p>Evaluation results in improvements to people strategies and management</p>

PLAN			DO			REVIEW			
YOUR CHOICE TOP MANAGERS SHOULD MAKE SURE (AND THEIR PEOPLE SHOULD CONFIRM) THAT:									
Clear core values relate to vision and strategy	The learning and development strategy builds capability	The recruitment process is fair, efficient and effective	Leadership and management capabilities for now and the future are defined	Managers are role models of leadership, teamwork and knowledge-sharing	Reward and recognition strategies link to business strategy and are externally benchmarked	Effective consultation and involvement is part of the culture	Learning and development resources are used effectively	The contribution of people strategies is measured and evaluated	Self review and information from external reviews are used
Key performance indicators are used to improve performance	Plans take account of learning styles	A diverse, talented workforce is created	Managers are helped to acquire these capabilities	Coaching is part of the culture	Representative groups are consulted (where appropriate)	People are supported and trusted to make decisions	Learning is an everyday activity	Impact on key performance indicators can be described	Effective feedback methods are used to understand people's views on how they are managed
Social responsibility is taken into account in the strategy	People help make decisions about their own learning	A work/life balance strategy meets the needs of its people	Leadership and management strategies link to the business strategy, taking account of external good practice	People are helped to develop their careers	What motivates people is understood	Knowledge and information are shared	Innovative and flexible approaches to learning and development are used	Performance improves as a result	Internal and external benchmarking are used
People and stakeholders are involved in strategy development	Learning and development is innovative and flexible	Constructive feedback is valued	Everyone is encouraged to develop leadership capabilities	There is a culture of openness and trust	Success is celebrated	People are committed to success	People are given the opportunity to achieve their full potential	Career prospects improve	People's views on how they are managed improves
	There is a culture of continuous learning	The structure makes the most of people's talents			The benefits strategy goes beyond legal requirements	There is a culture of continuous improvement	All learning is valued and celebrated and is an everyday activity	Flexible and effective approaches to measuring return on investment are used	People believe it is a great place to work
					Colleagues' achievements are recognised	People can challenge the way things work	Mentoring is used	Return on investment in people is reported to stakeholders	
						There is a sense of ownership and pride in working for the organisation	Personal development is supported		

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Continuous Improvement Plan (to be discussed)

Aim What	Suggested Action(s) How	Potential Benefits/Impact of Taking No Action Why	Suggested When	Potential Solutions/Support Available Who
<p><i>'To continue to move towards excellence.'</i></p>	<p>Review other roles in school to make more explicit what makes them good/outstanding, e.g. what makes an good/outstanding teaching assistant, administrator, SMSA, etc.</p> <p>Governors to continue to review their roles, responsibilities and expectations against the new Ofsted criteria.</p> <p>Review the performance management process/documentation for non-teaching staff to identify a clearer link to the School Improvement Plan and the school's priorities. Ensure all non-teaching staff go through performance management to gain feedback on their performance.</p> <p>Consideration could be given to introducing an annual staff</p>	<p>This will help everyone in whatever role to be clear about what they have to achieve to be good/outstanding and could identify areas for development for individuals.</p> <p>To ensure governors are clear about what makes them outstanding.</p> <p>This will ensure that every member of staff is clear about how they are expected to contribute to developing and achieving the school's priorities.</p> <p>To gather staff's feedback and involve everyone in school</p>		<p>To be led by the leadership team with input from support staff.</p> <p>Led by the Chair of Governors.</p> <p>Leadership team.</p> <p>Leadership team.</p>

	<p>survey/questionnaire asking staff what to stop, start and continue to continue to strive for excellence.</p> <p>Consideration could be given to using the Health and Wellbeing Good Practice guide.</p>	<p>improvement planning.</p> <p>To ensure staff's wellbeing is considered and to continue to improve the way people are lead, managed and developed.</p>		<p>I-DG to send information on free workshops and details of the Health and Wellbeing Good Practice Award.</p>
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