

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE ASSESSMENT REPORT

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

St Damian's RC Science College, Ashton under Lyne

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE SPECIALIST: Carol Davidson

DATE: 5th December 2012

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Introduction

St Damian's has experienced significant changes since their previous Review held in December 2009.

- The building project had been completed and the staff and students were now located in the new premises.
- A new Head Teacher has been appointed after the College had been placed in Special Measures for a period of time.
- The membership of the leadership team had changed and there had been a reduction in the number of staff being directly employed by the College.

A total of seventy four people were employed of whom eighteen were interviewed as part of the Assessment process. (24%). A range of documents were provided to the Assessor to assist in the evidence gathering process.

Objectives for the Assessment

The key objective of the Review was to measure to what extent the organisation continued to meet the requirements of the Investors in People Standard. The Standard was met.

In addition the following objective was identified for the Assessor to explore and establish how the Framework would support the organisation in achieving its future priorities:

To ensure all staff subscribe to the vision of the school and understand the expectations and core values of the school through:-

- Effective leadership.
- Empowering people to strive to be outstanding.
- Providing professional development opportunities and ensuring that all new staff receive a comprehensive induction into the culture of St Damian's.
- Internal communication at and between all levels results in increased efficiency

Areas of good practice, improvement opportunities and observations above the Standard were also identified.

Executive Summary

Areas of Good Practice

- The planning process was robust resulting in a comprehensive College Improvement Plan (CIP) focussing on the Ofsted Inspection Schedule. The objectives set in the Faculty Improvement Plans (FIP) demonstrated clear links to the CIP which were cascaded to individuals through the appraisal process. Rigorous monitoring strategies were in place to ensure that objectives and targets were achieved and any shortfalls in performance addressed.
- Learning and development was focussed on achieving the schools objectives and were well planned, making good use made of internal expertise to deliver Twilight Sessions and INSET day. The interventions in place to improve performance were viewed as positive and developmental.
- Everyone clearly understood their job roles and how they contributed to the success of the school, demonstrating high levels of loyalty and a desire to raise and deliver expectations.

- Strong team work had been encouraged with pastoral, support and teaching staff all working collaboratively to improve performance and achieve positive outcomes for the students.
- The leadership team worked effectively together and were considered to be very supportive and accessible. The Standards of Leadership document provided a good basis for discussing development areas and highlighting good practice. It was evident that the leadership team had gained the respect from staff by being open and decisive in the way they managed the school. Consideration had also been given to future leaders within the school and opportunities provided to develop people's leadership skills.
- The strategies in place for involving people in the decision making processes had engendered a sense of ownership and empowerment.

Continuous Improvement Opportunities

Learning and Development – Whilst the learning and development activities of the school were well organised an Organisational Training Plan, bringing together the learning needs of teams and individuals, will provide an overall picture of what has to be carried out to achieve objectives which will enhance the evaluation and validation processes. Consideration should also be given to using an evaluation model e.g. Kirkpatrick, to measure outcomes and the return on investment from learning and development activities.

Coaching - There was evidence to demonstrate that informal coaching took place in the school and consideration should be given to adopting a more formal approach to maximise the benefits that could be achieved.

Continuous Improvement – Benefits could be gained from conducting an annual staff survey to gain feedback from people on how they are managed and developed. This will inform the development of future policies and procedures and provide a benchmark to measure improvements as a result of initiatives introduced.

Observations – areas observed during the Review process but not assessed.

- The values were integral to how the school operated and highly visible.
- People helped to make decisions about their own learning.
- Mentoring was used effectively.
- Managers were role models of leadership, teamwork and knowledge sharing.
- People were helped to develop their careers.
- Culture of openness and trust.
- Colleagues' achievements are recognised.
- Learning and development resources were used effectively.

Review Assessment – Outcome

Having carried out the assessment process in accordance with the guidelines provided for assessors by UK Commission for Employment and Skills, the Assessor was satisfied beyond any doubt that St Damian's RC Science College continues to meet the requirements of the Investors in People Standard. On behalf of Investors in People North of England the Assessor would like to congratulate St Damian's RC Science College on this achievement.

Next Review

St Damian's RC Science College next Review should take place in December 2015. An eighteen month interaction will be planned with the College during the feedback meeting.

Carol Davidson - Investors in People Specialist

5th December 2012

Findings against the objective

To ensure all staff subscribe to the vision of the school and understand the expectations and core values of the school through:-

- Effective leadership.
- Empowering people to strive to be outstanding.
- Providing professional development opportunities and ensuring that all new staff receive a comprehensive induction into the culture of St Damian's.
- Internal communication at and between all levels results in increased efficiency

Planning Strategy

A substantial amount of work had been undertaken to remove the school from Special Measures and the future expectations to achieve the vision and values had been clearly identified and shared with all staff.

The planning strategies in place were robust and the College Improvement Plan (CIP) had been developed to reflect the five areas of the Ofsted Inspection Schedule which included:

- Overall Effectiveness
- Achievement of Pupils
- Quality of Teaching
- Behaviour and Safety of Pupils
- Leadership and Management

The CIP was a very concise and accessible document with detailed action plans produced identifying the lead person responsible, timescales, the resources required, outcomes, monitoring and evidence criteria and impact measures. The results of the last Ofsted Inspection had highlighted areas where improvements were required and had informed the planning process.

Examples of key priorities included:

- Improving and maintaining levels of attainment at Key Stages 3 and 4.
- Raising the standards in teaching and learning to ensure an improvement in the grades achieved by teachers.

Faculty Improvement Plans (FIPs) had been developed collaboratively involving team members and replicated the format and issues contained in the CIP.

Both the CIP and FIPs were active working documents and rigorously monitoring of plans was undertaken using a traffic light system to ensure that progress against targets was being achieved. One to one meetings were held every two weeks between middle managers and members of the senior leadership team to discuss progress and identify what actions would be required to meet any shortfalls in performance.

The new appraisal processes, developed for both teaching and support staff, provided the vehicle for setting and agreeing individual objectives linked to the overarching priorities of the school. The new Teachers Standards were used to review performance and provided a benchmark with which to measure improvements.

Everyone confirmed their involvement in the planning process and had a clear understanding of the expectations and future priorities of the school.

The values were visibly throughout the school and people described how they were integral to the way they conducted themselves and worked on a daily basis.

Learning and Development Strategy/Learning and Development/Performance Measurement

Learning and development needs were identified during the planning process and incorporated into the CIP and FIPs. The resources required to deliver learning needs in relation to time, materials and financial investment had also been identified in the CIP.

The focus for the school was *“to build capacity in the classroom resulting in increased pupil outcomes”*.

To achieve this expectation a range of initiatives had been put in place and INSET Twilight Sessions were planned throughout the academic year covering aspects of teaching and learning. Examples provided included:

- Developing questioning techniques to engage and gain a greater degree of interaction with students.
- Sessions on lesson starters and plenaries.

Good use had been made of internal expertise to deliver the Twilight Sessions with teaching staff and members of the leadership team taking the lead on certain topics to demonstrate good practice.

Other strategies adopted to deliver learning and development needs included:

- Web based learning and research on the internet.
- Attending external courses provided by the Local Authority.
- Mentoring activities.
- Visiting other schools.

Individual learning needs were predominantly identified during the appraisal process. The new Teaching Standards were used to benchmark performance and identify areas where improvements could be achieved. Standards for Support Staff had also been developed in house and were being introduced for use during the appraisal process. People stated that if a training opportunity arose that would support them in their role and the achievement of objectives they had been encouraged to raise this with their line manager.

In addition to the appraisal process other strategies in place to identify further development required to support teaching and learning included:

- Learning Walks
- Lesson observations
- Work Scrutiny

As well as the training specifically related to teaching practice, interventions were also in place develop other categories of staff including teaching support, pastoral roles and administrators. Examples included:

- A Child Protection Course had increased knowledge on how to identify changes in behaviour and had been used when working in the Inclusion Suite.
- A course on Accelerated Reading was planned to help student improve their literacy.
- One to one sessions had been held with a consultant to learn how to fully maximise the use of the SIMS software.

Those staff who had joined St Damian's in the past twelve months confirmed that a full and effective induction had been provided to help them settle into their roles quickly and covered the policies and procedures and the ethos of the school. The Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) programme was extremely thorough and well planned over the year. Subject Mentors and Induction Tutors had been appointed who met with NQTs to provide support and guidance and review progress.

Monitoring and reporting mechanisms were in place to ensure that progress against the objectives and targets were being achieved. Data tracking of student progress was rigorous and regular meetings were held with middle managers and the leadership team. Each middle manager was responsible for updating their faculty plan using a traffic light system which was then fed back to the leadership team.

The Self Evaluation Form enabled the school to reflect on their priorities and what had been achieved. Evident of improvements as a result of learning interventions included:

- 70% of students had achieved five Grade A – C including, Maths and English, which was the best results recorded in the history of the school.
- The latest monitoring of teaching and learning had shown an increase in the number of teachers achieving a good or better grading.

People Management Strategy

It was evident that effective team work had been encouraged both within departments and across the school as a whole to improve performance. Examples included:

- Faculty meetings had been used to share good practice and resources e.g. in the Humanities Faculty support had been provided to a NQT on updating materials in history and uploading it onto PowerPoint.
- Learning Walks provided the opportunity to observe the practice of colleagues and provide constructive feedback following the exercise.
- Collaborative working on projects e.g. putting on performances in the school.

Good working relationships between the pastoral team and teaching staff had been formed and were considered essential in order to ensure that student issues relating to behaviour and progress were dealt with quickly and efficiently.

The school operated an inclusive policy in relation to learning and development to ensure that everyone's skills and knowledge were kept up to date.

People confirmed that strategies were in place to ensure that all staff had equal access to development activities. Examples included:

- A new appraisal process had been developed by the Business Manager for support staff which mirrored the system used for teachers.
- All staff had been involved in the Twilight Sessions to develop the new Mission Statement.
- The briefing notices were circulated to staff in the form of an e-mail for those who were unable to attend.

People commented that they felt a more "*integrated approach*" was being taken by the school which had improved relationships between different groups of staff and ultimately the overall performance.

Leadership and Management Strategy/Management Effectiveness

Strong leadership was considered essential to drive and deliver the objectives of the CIP.

The new leadership team had been allocated specific responsibilities according to their individual strengths and took the lead for certain aspects of the CIP.

One of the key issues to be addressed by the school was to gain a consistent approach by middle managers in the way they worked and managed their teams. The new Standards for Leadership competency framework had been developed in house and was used to self assess and benchmark performance and highlight both good practice and development needs. Bespoke Leadership Plans were produced for individuals to support their development in order to improve performance.

A Quality Assurance process was in place to enable members of the leadership team to monitor the Work Scrutiny undertaken by middle managers and compare the results against their own assessments.

It was evident that the leadership team had identified people with the potential to take on more demanding roles in the future and had provided them with opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge to progress their careers.

The Head Teacher was highly visible throughout the school, making regular visits to classrooms during lessons which was appreciated by the staff and influenced the behaviour of students.

People confirmed that they felt the leadership team and middle managers were effective in their roles with the following comments made:

“The leadership team are extremely supportive, demonstrating mutual respect and understanding”.

“The head is very decisive about the future and has really led us out of the problems experienced over the past couple of years”.

“As people, the leadership team have a very open and approachable style making this a supportive environment”.

“There is a lot more consistency in what is expected and this is reinforced throughout the school”.

Reward and Recognition

Interviewees clearly understood their roles and responsibilities and the contribution they made to the achievement of the school’s objectives and targets. Examples presented included:

- Inputting data on the system received from primary schools, Raise Online, teachers’ progress checks and providing reports to the Head Teacher and Faculty Heads.
- Assessing pupils in Year 7 in English to set levels for children with a statement or SEN.

It was evident that people felt appreciated for their input and described the following actions that had been taken to demonstrate how they were valued:

- Being invited to do Learning Walks and delivering Twilight Sessions demonstrated confidence in people’s abilities.
- Acknowledgements in the Newsletter to thank people for taking on additional tasks e.g. running a retreat.
- Regular praise and thanks during the Monday morning briefings.
- Holding a party to celebrate coming out of Special Measures.

“I feel I’m really making a difference”.

“We like to celebrate success”.

“The positive comments received from parents are shared and make me feel personally rewarded”.

Involvement and Empowerment

Involving staff in the decision making processes was critical to engender a sense of ownership and empowerment.

A number of working groups had been established to drive forward the school’s initiatives and priorities involving a cross section of staff. One example was the Teaching and Learning Forum involving a cross section of staff to develop policies and strategies and sharing good practice.

It was evident that people were consulted on a range of issues with the following examples provided:

- New protocols had been developed and made available for staff on the shared drive. People had been encouraged to view the protocols and highlight any issues of concern.
- Consultation on the proposed restructuring of the support staff team had been carried out effectively with the Head Teacher.

The communication processes in the school were robust and a variety of meetings were held for different categories of staff to put forward their views and opinions.

“We can all pitch in our ideas and suggestions are allowed to trial and try out new ideas”.

Continuous Improvement

The appointment of the new leadership team presented the opportunity to review and amend the policies and procedures for managing and developing the staff.

Examples of improvements that had been introduced included:

- The Standards for Leadership competency framework had been developed and implemented supporting the desire to gain a more consistent approach from middle managers.
- New appraisal processes for teaching and support staff had been designed and implemented.
- Pastoral responsibilities had been reviewed and amended creating more structured roles.

People stated that morale in the school had improved as a result of the changes that had been introduced and the move to the new premises. It was evident that people were proud of the work that had been carried out and were positive and optimistic about the school's future.

Investors in People Topic Map

Business Strategy	Learning & Development Strategy	People Management Strategy	Leadership & Management Strategy	Management Effectiveness	Recognition & Reward	Involvement & Empower	Learning & Development	Performance Measurement	Continuous Improvement
The Standard - Top Managers should make sure (and their people should confirm) that:									
Organisation has vision/purpose strategy and plan	Learning priorities are clear and linked to the plan	People are encouraged to contribute ideas	Managers are clear about the capabilities they need to lead, manage and develop people	Managers are effective and can describe how they lead, manage and develop their people	People believe they make a difference	Ownership and responsibility are encouraged	People's learning and development needs are met	Investment in learning can be quantified	Evaluation results in improvements to people strategies and management
People involved in the planning	Resources for learning and development are made available	There is equality of opportunity for development and support	People know what effective managers should be doing		People believe their contribution is valued	People are involved in decision-making		Impact can be demonstrated	
Rep.groups (where app.) are consulted when developing plans	The impact will be evaluated								

Your Choice - Top Managers should make sure (and their people should confirm) that:

<p>Clear core values relate to vision and strategy</p> <p>Key performance indicators are used to improve performance</p> <p>Social responsibility is taken into account in the strategy</p> <p>People and stakeholders are involved in strategy development</p>	<p>The learning and development strategy builds capability</p> <p>Plans take account of learning styles</p> <p>People help make decisions about their own learning</p> <p>Learning and development is innovative and flexible</p> <p>There is a culture of continuous learning</p>	<p>The recruitment process is fair, efficient and effective</p> <p>A diverse, talented workforce is created</p> <p>A work-life balance strategy meets the needs of its people</p> <p>Constructive feedback is valued</p> <p>The structure makes the most of people's talents</p>	<p>Leadership and management capabilities for now and the future are defined</p> <p>Managers are helped to acquire these capabilities</p> <p>Leadership and management strategy link to business strategy, taking account of external good practice</p> <p>Everyone is encouraged to develop leadership capabilities</p>	<p>Managers are role models of leadership, teamwork and knowledge sharing</p> <p>Coaching is part of the culture</p> <p>People are helped to develop their careers</p> <p>There is a culture of openness and trust</p>	<p>Reward and recognition strategies link to business strategy and are externally benchmarked</p> <p>Representative groups are consulted (where appropriate)</p> <p>What motivates people is understood</p> <p>Success is Celebrated</p> <p>Benefits strategy goes beyond legal requirements</p> <p>Colleagues' achievements are recognised</p>	<p>Effective consultation and involvement is part of culture</p> <p>People are supported and trusted to make decisions</p> <p>Knowledge and information are shared</p> <p>People committed to success</p> <p>There is culture of continuous improvement</p> <p>People can challenge the way things work</p> <p>There is a sense of ownership and pride in working for the organisation</p>	<p>Learning and development resources are used effectively</p> <p>Learning is an everyday activity</p> <p>Innovative and flexible approaches to learning and development are used</p> <p>People are given the opportunity to achieve their full potential</p> <p>All learning is valued/celebrated and is an everyday activity</p> <p>Mentoring is used</p> <p>Personal development is supported</p>	<p>The contribution of people strategies is measured and evaluated</p> <p>Impact on key performance indicators can be described</p> <p>Performance improves as a result</p> <p>Career prospects improve</p> <p>Flexible and effective approaches to measuring return on investment are used</p> <p>ROI in people is reported to stakeholders</p>	<p>Self review and information from external review are used</p> <p>Effective feedback methods are used to understand people's views on how they are managed</p> <p>Internal and external benchmarking are used</p> <p>People's views on how they are managed improves</p> <p>People believe it's a great place to work</p>
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Green – Areas met **Amber – Areas met with development opportunities** **Red – Areas not met** **Blue – Areas observed**

Suggested Continuous Improvement Areas – St Damian’s RC Science College

Business Issue What	Suggested Action(s) How	Potential Benefits / Impact of Taking No Action Why	Suggested Timescale When	Potential Solutions / Support Available Who
Learning and Development Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an organisational training plan • Investigate the use and benefits of learning and development evaluation models. 	Will enhance the evaluation and validation process. Will assist in measuring outcomes and the return on investment from learning and development activities.	Medium Priority	Resources on evaluation models can be found on the following websites: www.cipd.co.uk www.businessballs.com The Assessor can also provide examples of evaluation models.
Coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a more formal approach to coaching as a development strategy 	Will maximise the benefits to be achieved from this type of intervention.	Medium Priority	Information on formal coaching training can be provided by the Assessor specifically relating to the education sector.
Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an annual staff survey. 	Will provide feedback from staff on how they are managed which could inform future policies and procedures. An annual survey will also provide a benchmark and highlight where improvements have been achieved.	Medium Priority	The Assessor can provide examples of staff surveys