

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™

We invest in people



12 months on...

Horton Grange Primary School

Project number: NOR-21-00192

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It's been a while!

It's been over a year since we finished our assessment and awarded you Gold level accreditation.

We checked in with you recently to see how you've got on in the last 12 months and find out what you're planning for the year ahead.

Sheila Warren (Investors in People Practitioner) held eight meetings through Teams calls, engaging with your people in a range of roles across the school. Thanks are due to everyone for their help, especially to Lynda Salthouse who was the main point of contact.

Last year, we found out...

- **Your people spoke very positively about their leaders**

Your people enjoyed strong support and there were high levels of trust in senior leaders.

- **Your values influence the way people work**

Your people explained their close personal alignment with the values.

- **Your people feel empowered and trusted**

Your people are involved in making changes and have the information they need.

- **Your people feel valued**

Informal recognition was strong, and people felt valued and appreciated.

- **There is a strong culture of supporting learning and development**

You support people at all stages of their career, which builds capacity.

- **Your people are committed to making improvements**

Your people collaborate and draw on internal and external expertise.

- **Your people have a great understanding of the needs of stakeholders**

Your people are committed to the children and their families, working well with partner agencies.

And you were planning to focus on...

- **Continuing to enhance to your people management and development practices**

You'd experienced significant changes in the school's senior leadership, and you were determined to build on the school's success whilst further developing the team.

Main findings of the 12-month review

- **The school responded quickly to the challenges of the pandemic**

Horton Grange Primary School moved quickly to ensure that children and their families were supported during the pandemic. The school is currently open with much reduced numbers, supporting the children of key workers. Action has been taken to organise resources so that the children in school and at home were educated and supported. The existing strong relationships with parents and carers have been further strengthened with welfare calls, communication via “Marvellous Me” and the provision of guidance and practical help, at times in very difficult circumstances involving (for example) bereavement and domestic abuse. *“I feel that the school has adapted very well.”*

- **Your people feel safe, secure and confident that their health and wellbeing is paramount**

Feedback from the interviews confirmed that your people have confidence in the school’s response: they feel safe and secure while they are working on the premises, through the establishment of health and safety protocols and risk assessments. Your people enjoy strong support from leaders at all levels, and from team members and colleagues looking out for each other. There is a strong awareness of mental health issues, and a member of staff is a trained Mental Health First Aider and Mental Health Champion. Your people have access to an Employee Assistance Programme. You have taken feedback from people and listened to their thoughts and ideas. *“The support couldn’t have been better. The SLT have been amazing. I really appreciate the support I have had.” “Our safety has been at the forefront of the SLT’s minds.”*

Feedback suggests that, unsurprisingly, your people have found the last 11 months to be tough and challenging, and several people commented that they are finding the current lockdown the hardest. You have made changes to working arrangements to ensure that people don’t become overloaded: the welfare calls with families can take a lot of time, as parents have such a high level of trust in the school as a source of information and support. In addition, your people have been called upon to offer IT advice as laptops have been secured via Government and purchased by the school, to be loaned out to families in need. *“Teaching is a challenge. There is a lot of technical support to parents.” “This term has been very tough, with new procedures and guidelines changing. The last two weeks have been better.” “It’s been hard this term, It’s easier with the children in front of you. It can take its toll.”*

- **Your people have had further opportunities to collaborate and be creative**

Your people are collaborating mainly through Teams or Zoom meetings. There has been no shortage of opportunities to be creative, as your people have worked on new approaches to learning. *“There is a lot of collaboration, We zoomed this morning, helping a team who came to us for help.”* Your people have also had the opportunity to work with children of different ages and to further develop PHSE teaching and approaches to the wellbeing of the children. *“This has given people the opportunity to work with different stages: it’s been really powerful for staff to do this.”*

- **Your people have experienced strong and supportive leadership**

There are high levels of trust in senior leaders, which translates into your people trusting what they say and put in place. When the 2020 Investors in People took place, your people welcomed recent changes in senior leaders, noting improved approachability and a commitment to building the team. These improvements have continued, and your people spoke very highly of the current leadership. *“They have done everything they can for me: they go above and beyond. I’ll give a shout out for the Head Teacher.” “The change in leadership has been dramatic, a fresh, renewed energy. They help you solve the problems. It feels like a much closer team.” “The culture has very much changed...staff feel listened to.”*

- **Relationships with stakeholders continue to be very strong**

Positive relationships with children, families, carers remain a well-established feature of the school's culture. Your people understand the challenges facing the local community. Relationships with partner agencies are strong: your people have an in-depth understanding of the roles of various partners and are able to signpost families who need further support.

- **Approaches to learning and development have evolved**

Your people are accessing e-learning modules and webinars. There is evidence that other approaches to formal learning and development have been adapted so they can be carried out safely: as an example, some training is delivered through virtual platforms: a recent example was Anti-Racist training delivered through Zoom. Your people are supporting their colleagues with learning and development, for example through training staff on Zoom, You-Tube and various aspects of IT.

The school continues to offer great learning opportunities for students who come through the Exceed Trust's SCITT programme and from Bradford College. There is strong on-going support for NQTs: there are currently three in post, with a further member of staff completing their NQT year at Christmas. The school is currently involved in the pilot of the Early Careers Framework, providing feedback from the NQTs and a member of SLT as their mentor. Leadership development programmes (NPQH, NPQSL and NPQML) continue to be delivered through the Exceed Trust and Northern Lights. The Senior Leadership Team have undertaken additional training in the areas of Safer Recruitment, Fire Marshall and DSB certification. There are also external development opportunities, such as a "New to Early Years" programme.

The meetings included a very recent starter who joined the school in January, joining the team at a very busy time as the current lockdown began. Induction has been carried out through a combination of familiarisation with the school and access to e-learning modules covering topics such as health and safety and safeguarding.

- **Communication is working well**

Your people confirmed that they had been kept well informed of changes to Government and sector guidance and understand what is happening in school. This is achieved through Zoom briefings and weekly email updates. There are good relationships between the Exceed Trust and recognised trade unions.

- **There are high levels of mutual support**

Your people are drawing on established relationships and a team ethos which has been strengthened since the 2020 Assessment. They support and help each other, recognising colleagues' contribution and strengths. *"I feel welcomed and appreciated. Everyone is very helpful."*

You've had a challenging few months!

It's great that you have continued to engage, support and develop your people during these challenging times, and I am pleased to confirm that the Investors in People Standard continues to be met with Gold level accreditation. Our next interaction will be at the 24-month stage, in February 2022. We can discuss the focus of that review nearer the time. In the meantime, best wishes to everyone at Horton Grange Primary School and congratulations on your achievements to date.

