

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE ASSESSMENT REPORT



Equate Education Trust

Key Information

Assessment Type	Review
Investors in People Practitioner	Robert Haywood
Visit Date	9 th -11 th November 2016
Assessment Enquiry Number	100613-VGNV4F

Conclusion

This was a successful Review as the client met the Core Standard plus 132 additional Evidence Requirements thus qualifying for Gold accreditation.

Milestone Dates

Review of Continuous Improvement	11 th May 2018
Date of Next Full Assessment	14 th October 2019

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Investors in People Practitioner

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Executive Summary

Headline Statement

The Equate Education Trust is comprised of two primary schools: Witham St Hughs and Manor Farm. Manor Farm Primary opened in September 2016, with just one year group, under the leadership of Witham St Hughs, and both schools are included in this Gold Review.

The Witham St Hughs primary school has maintained the highly successful practice, processes and outcomes achieved at the time of the Gold accreditation, and the Manor Farm primary school has been established with the same level of performance against the Investors in People Framework evident.

Assessment methodology

The assessment methodology comprised:

1. Interviews with school leaders and Chair of Governors.
2. Interviews with a wide cross-section of the staff team (at both schools) covering all roles and responsibilities
3. Scrutiny of some key internal documentation.
4. Interview with two Teaching Alliance staff to discuss relationships and collaboration.

Assessment Objectives

1. To ascertain if the two schools within the Trust continue to meet the Core Standard.
2. To ascertain if additional evidence exists for re-accreditation at Gold level.
3. To provide feedback on the emotionally intelligent leadership of the schools.
4. To make recommendations on potential improvements and future accreditation using the Generation 6 [2015], version of the Standard.

Note: this assessment did not include the Teaching School Alliance.

This Report

The first section of the report summarises the evidence in support of the emotionally intelligent leadership of the school.

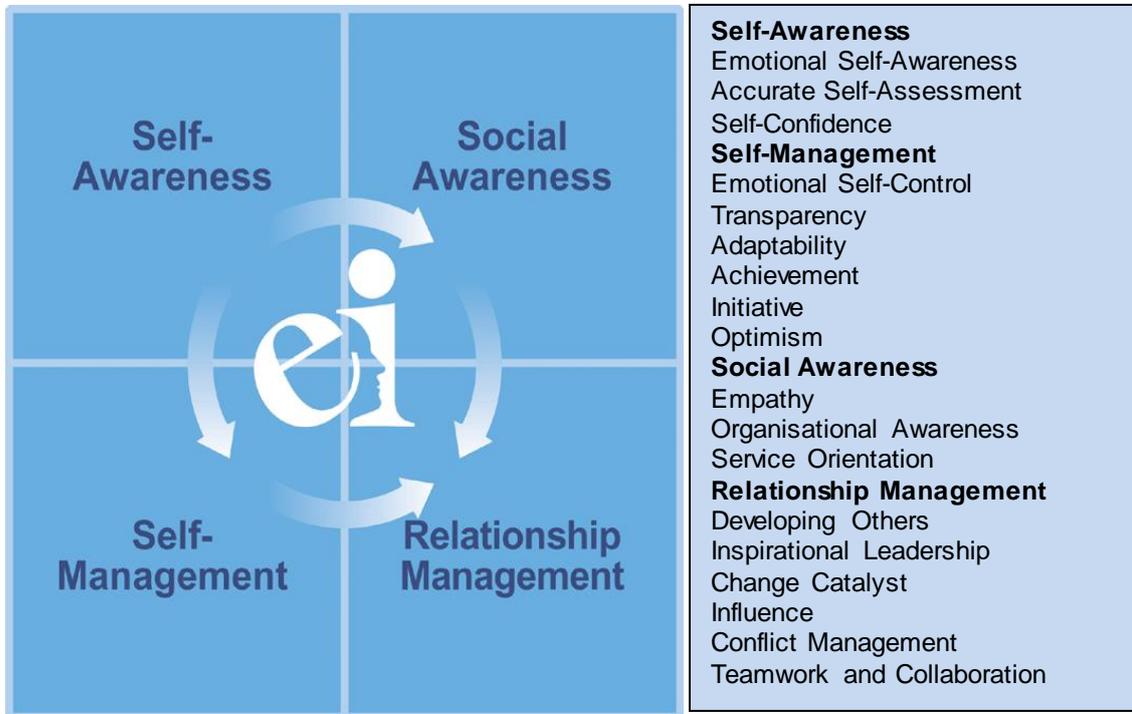
This report is structured against the Principles and Indicators, with summary evaluative comment for each. Quotations from staff and documents are provided in italics.

Section 1: Emotionally Intelligent Leadership of the Schools in the Equate Trust

The Head teacher requested feedback on the extent to which assessment evidence supports the notion that the schools are led in an emotionally intelligent way. The commentary provided in response to the request is not based upon 360 diagnostic activities, rather the assessor cross-

matching evidence from interviews to Goleman’s model, and how the weight of evidence resonates with the 18 competencies.

Daniel Goleman’s Emotionally Intelligent Leadership Model



Self-awareness

With one year of headship experience Amanda has, and continues to reflect upon her emotional self-awareness and how her behaviours, actions and language affect the staff team and her relationship with leadership colleagues, wider stakeholders in the Trust and Teaching School Alliance, and Governing Body. Interview evidence reveals that she responds to challenging situations in calm, measured ways and has the confidence to make her views and opinions clearly known drawing upon a secure set of beliefs and values about what is best for children and their learning. Taking over the school from a highly successful and confident school leader posed the challenge of how to maintain the status, reputation and performance of the school and lead the staff team well, demonstrating equally strong leadership. The evidence is that Amanda is building upon prior success through her own styles of leadership and the staff experiences this in very positive ways – they said there is greater empathy and transparency in her style for example. Amanda also disclosed that she feels that her confidence is growing in being able to meet the challenges and lead the schools in her own way.

Self-management

One of Amanda’s self-declared leadership behaviours, supported by interview evidence, is that information sharing, the viewpoints of stakeholders and her personal views are discussed in open and transparent ways. Staff reported that they respond well to this and they feel that they can be equally transparent and open in meetings and conversations, and said that there are no hidden agendas in meetings. The also said that this builds trust and confidence across the school, and in its leadership in

particular. Amanda has a very high achievement drive and ambition for the schools, and staff reported that she instills confidence in them so that they can achieve great results, and Amanda makes a wide range of learning and development opportunities available to help ensure they can – it is not just rhetoric. The attention to detail with performance data, and involving staff so that they can use it intelligently to support their work in classrooms, is strong but not obsessive, over-riding or overbearing as is typical of 'pace-setting' leadership styles. Senior leaders ensure that CPD and performance management systems, for example, are aligned to support nationally expected rates of pupil progress in all areas across all key stages. There is a tone of optimism across the school that mirrors Amanda's beliefs, values, behaviours and confidence that the school's practice is worthy of dissemination through the Teaching Alliance.

In developing the Trust by opening another primary school, Amanda has had to demonstrate initiative and collaborative behaviours to make things work on time, and to budget.

Social Awareness

Amanda has ably demonstrated, being fully supported by evidence from staff, that she is highly empathetic to the needs and emotions of her staff team and responds to them in sensitive and highly professional ways. Amanda intuitively understands that the emotional and psychological wellbeing of her staff team is intimately linked to their morale, motivation, discretionary effort and performance. Examples provided during the assessment related to individuals and teams, coupled with her acute awareness of shuttle leadership between the two schools to keep her finger on the pulse in both settings.

Amada's service orientation to the wellbeing and achievements of the pupils and what it means to the future life chances is unquestionably very high, underpinning her commitment, effort and contribution.

Relationship Management

The interview evidence from both schools and stakeholders overwhelmingly supports the notion that Amanda is highly effective in this quadrant, particularly in 'Developing others', 'Inspirational Leadership', 'Change Catalyst' and fostering 'Teamwork and Collaboration'. Little evidence was forthcoming on 'Conflict Management' in order to say anything productive, and inferences have to be made on 'Influence' (the establishment and operations of the Teaching Alliance), but for 'Change Catalyst' (the development of a new assessment system for example), was evidence rich by comparison.

Goleman's conclusion that leaders have to display competence in each quadrant to be effective, and not in all 18 emotional competencies is a salient point to make, as strength in some can compensate for relative weakness in others. This initial analysis indicates that Amanda leads the schools in a 'rounded' emotionally intelligent manner, and indicates that experience will lead to the refinement and deepening of many competencies.

A useful follow-up to this initial analysis is to engage with the 360-degree tool that draws upon evidence from a wide range of people from which a diagnostic (and reflection-inducing) report is produced, which can also be used formatively to create and Personal Leadership Development Plan.

Feedback against the Framework



**Principle 1:
Develop strategies to improve the performance of the school**

Indicators 1 to 4

1 Business Improvement Strategy

Meeting the Standard

Both schools have a School Improvement Plan [SIP] that includes:

- A statement of the Vision, Values and Aims
- A Three Year Strategic overview 2016 – 2019 with priorities identified for each year
- A detailed Annual Improvement Plan 2016-17, with each priority area expanded into detailed planning frameworks that include objectives, actions and success criteria that include measurable KPIs.
- A Monitoring Framework and Evaluation Record

School improvement planning is of a very high quality and is devised in full consultation with the staff team and Governing Body. Roles and responsibilities are assigned to each section of the Improvement Plans so that team leaders and individuals are clear about the actions they need to take achieve to improve practice and provision, and the KPIs they need to achieve. Staff and governor interview evidence confirmed the full engagement with improvement planning.

Additional Evidence

The school's core values

The Core Values are clearly stated in the SIP and include:

- Perseverance and lifelong learning;
- Honesty and mutual respect;
- Personal success – high standards and achievement for all
- Happiness and enjoyment;
- Effective partnerships.

These values are not a decoration, but heart-felt and integral to the schools' vision and daily work. For example, several teachers and TAs made reference to the grounding of learning in practical examples in the enterprise-led curriculum in order that the pupils develop practical life-skills and see how their learning relates to life. The values inform everyday interactions between children and between children and the staff team – staff believe that good role-modelling of the values is important and spoke of fostering mutual respect in the code of conduct for example.

The use of KPIs to improve performance

School leaders, classroom staff, and governors are fully aware of how the school performs against national benchmark data supplied via Raise-Online and other tools such as the Ofsted Dashboard. The KPIs specified in the SIP relate to national expectations and school improvement priorities are predicated upon ensuring that the school meets criteria for outstanding pupil progress and achievement. FS staff, for example, spoke of working with the children to support their learning against the EYFS Goals so that in 2017, at least 70% achieve a 'good level of development'. KS1 and KS2 staff are similarly aware of the nationally expected standards in core subjects at the end of each key stage.

Stakeholder engagement

The schools have an established process for engaging the staff team and governors in the construction and approval of the SIP. School leaders explained the process of how the end of year evaluation feeds into key stage and whole-school planning. The head teacher consolidates the initial thinking into a draft school-wide plan that is discussed by key stage teams and governors. The final version is then published. Staff and the Chair of Governors confirmed the process and teachers and TAs spoke of fully owning the plans and having a firm understanding of them.

Social Responsibility

The national school improvement agenda has enabled the formation of Teaching School Alliance that is charged with offering high-quality support and CPD to Alliance member schools to help them to raise their standards. The school also has a wider social responsibility attitude in:

- Supporting work experience placements;
- Offering school experience to volunteers that can translate to TA training and development;
- Supporting a TA apprenticeship
- Fostering 'Eco Awareness' through 'Eco-weeks' and achieving the Eco Flag award;
- Fundraising for national charity events and local charities of choice such as the Air Ambulance and Young Carers.

Interviews revealed that:

- there is a collective drive for the school to remain outstanding;
- the whole staff team is committed to improving outcomes for pupils and they speak about them with passion and commitment;
- leaders ensure that a set of core values are at the heart of the school and govern the way it operates;
- staff believe in the vision and values and that they are at the heart of how the school operates;
- staff teams feel fully engaged with school improvement planning and the overall strategy, and have good understanding of their own Key Stage team's improvement priorities;
- there is clarity about the KPIs across the school and their importance, and staff know what is expected of them in terms of contributing to their achievement;
- progress against the KPIs is rigorously monitored and evaluated by leaders and governors.

Your people said:

"Our values define who we are and shape the culture of the school.

"We have a fully inclusive process for the creation of the SIP."

"We have a shared set of values such as skills for life"

"TAs are involved in improvement planning."

“One of the main aims here is to provide an education for life...we emphasize life-long learning quite a lot and plan learning activities and lessons to it.”

Interview and documentary evidence confirms that:

- The Core Standard is met.
- All Evidence Requirements of the Framework for Indicator 1 are culturally embedded in Witham St Hughs, and are establishing in Manor Farm

Summary

Indicator 1: Maximum number of additional Evidence Requirements	No. Achieved	Running Total
19	19	19

2

Learning and Development Strategy

Meeting the Standard

Senior leaders remain fully aware of the schools' learning and development needs and the CPD priorities required to build the capability and capacity of the staff teams to achieve SIP objectives and their associated KPIs. The same is also true for the levels of resourcing required to meet them, both financially and in terms of time allocations. The CPD needs are woven into the SIP and includes, for example, assertive mentoring for all staff, inducting new staff into core teaching and learning policies, TA CPD to support the drive for 75% outstanding learning as measures through direct observation. (see below).

The school has maintained a strong CPD culture whereby staff in all areas of the schools continue believe that continuous learning and development is a major strategic tool for school, team and individual performance improvement. The CPD strategy is closely aligned to the strategic and annual operational plans and is heavily focused towards improving the quality of provision and outcomes for the pupils, such as improving the rates of progress and attainment across all ability groups, initiating (EYFS) or embedding assessment systems across key stages, implementing plans to ensure that quality of learning is outstanding for at least 75% of pupils, and the wider implementation of the life-skills framework

Key Stage leaders are also attentive to their team's learning and development needs and can explain what needs to be done to support their people to improve their performance, and, simultaneously build their capacity to improve further. Staff learning and development needs are identified through a range of processes such as lesson observation, work scrutiny, quality assurance process, performance management reviews and individual conversations. The implementation of IRIS technology is also adding a rich dimension to staff self-reflection and peer coaching approaches to further improve teaching and learning practice.

Teachers and TAs spoke about how performance management includes a strong element of discussion of future CPD needs to meet individual objectives, and past impact analysis, so team leaders and members are aware of the how the investment in CPD improves performance outcomes.

Senior leaders and staff [teachers and TAs], re-affirmed the diverse range of learning and development practice across the two schools making use of the following processes:

- training – internal and external events (including access to the Teaching School Alliance [TSA]);
- performance management;
- ‘Friday release time’ for co-development;
- meetings where staff discuss practice and issues;
- formal observation of practice and feedback;
- subject/team leaders advising colleagues on how to develop their practice;
- self-review processes which provide feedback on pupil performance and progress, the quality of leadership and management and other performance measures;
- experimentation and testing out ideas in classrooms;
- co-coaching through ‘Lesson Study’ activity;
- academic and personal study and research;
- formal qualifications;
- informal sharing of practice;
- the use of Iris video technology.

This diverse range of experiences ensures that learning and development meet all types of learning styles, and during their interviews staff expressed their preferred ways of learning with a strong preference for ‘learning by doing and reflecting’. New staff have a tailored CPD package so that they can align with school practice and performance expectations as quickly as possible with mentors assigned, and experience staff are deployed to support them on key issues such as the teaching and learning policy. NQTs, RQTs, and apprentices have very specific support packages in place and they confirmed the ‘*amazing levels of investment in them*’. At the time of the assessment, a Working Group was busy developing a framework on ‘effective teaching and learning’ in the context of the primary national curriculum and assessment arrangements.

Additional Evidence

Learning and Development Strategy – Capability and Capacity Building

Senior leaders explained the aims underpinning their L&D strategy centered upon continually developing the schools to sustain outstanding practice and outcomes. A major focus has been, and remains, refining and embedding assessment practice and using the data to ensure that higher proportions of pupils achieve at above nationally expected levels. Capacity building continues to include developing leadership and management competence to enable confident distributed leadership. This is achieved through, for example:

- leadership CPD such as subject leadership and LLE training;
- coaching ‘developing leaders’ to learn the skills of monitoring and evaluation for example;
- enabling staff to lead on projects;
- linking performance management to leadership roles and responsibility;
- providing access to SLT meetings.

Key Stage leaders not only described their own experience of development to lead and manage in their roles, but also confirmed that developing members of their teams to build capacity was part of their remit. Staff also confirmed this approach, and gave examples of their development. Senior and Key Stage leaders also spoke of how they share their learning and development with the wider staff team, partly to demonstrate how they act as role models for continuous learning, and partly to disseminate information and practice guidance and examples.

Team Learning and Development needs identification

Key Stage teams, such as Foundation Stage, discuss their CPD needs associated with their action plans, and the same is true for subject leadership teams and Working Groups. Staff are also clear about what team CPD should achieve providing good example such as:

- assessment across the key stages, including the parallel development of TAs;
- improving writing across the key stages;
- initiating and implementing Tapestry in EYFS

Interviews revealed that:

- senior and Key Stage leaders are wholly committed to capability and capacity building through staff learning and development processes;
- generous financial and time resources are allocated to learning and development activity;
- CPD for the school, teams and individuals are strategically aligned;
- staff in all functions and at all levels within the organisation believe that CPD is key to quality and performance improvement;
- staff believe that CPD is well planned and organised and that needs are met;
- staff like the flexibility of the Friday release time and spoke with enthusiasm about it noting that people have a measure of responsibility for their own development;
- staff believe that there is a strong culture of CPD within the school.

Your people said:

“Yes, I would agree that we have a culture of continuous learning here.”

“We are learning all of the time as we aim to improve what we do.”

“We link CPD to our main priorities though we are flexible to support individuals and the Friday development time is offered for staff to learn things that they want to...they have to take responsibility for it themselves.”

“We have a strong culture of staff learning and development work...we try to work together wherever possible.”

“CPD here is very good here, and the Friday sessions are a great idea.”

“There has always been lots of CPD on offer here.”

“When we developed the new assessment system we all worked together and shared and discussed our experiences in team and staff meetings.”

“There are common CPD needs in our key stage teams...in FS we have some development issues that are unique to us.”

Interview and documentary evidence confirms that:

- The Core Standard is met.
- The school has an embedded culture of continuous professional learning and development that is planned to meet school, team and individual objectives.

Summary

Indicator 2 : Maximum number of additional Evidence Requirements	No. Achieved	Running Total
13	13	32

3 People Management Strategy

Meeting the Standard

When you enter the schools your intuition picks up something rather special – a calm and purposeful ethos where children are highly engaged with their learning and the whole staff team collaborate seamlessly, with mutual respect and enthusiasm for their work. The more time that you spend in school the more this collegiality impresses upon you. Deeper investigation reveals that a number of cultural strands are fully embedded within the school with regard to collegiality and ‘equality of opportunity’ – for example:

- all people have the opportunity to learn and develop;
- all people are encouraged to contribute ideas to improve their performance and that of their team;
- leadership and management is highly distributed and fully inclusive, and TAs can take lead roles;
- there is a strong, open environment of giving and receiving feedback on all aspects of practice;
- teachers and TAs have exactly the same entitlements and work collaboratively

This outstanding school also has a ‘buzz’ about it, and one characteristic is the constant discussion and sharing of ideas to make improvements. All groups of staff said that ideas to make improvements are generated and discussed in forums such as team meetings, in working parties, improvement planning discussions at school and team levels, plus practice sharing conversations, performance management dialogues and in response to moderation, monitoring and evaluation activity for example. Both teachers and TAs explained, and gave examples, of how the exploration of ideas has improved aspects of their practice such as assessing pupils work or developing their independence, and the wider support staff body spoke of having a good measure of trust and autonomy to implement ideas to try and improve the effectiveness of what they do.

Another strong aspect of the leadership and management of the school is the equality of opportunity for all staff to learn and develop. This commitment is evident throughout the school due to senior and Key Stage leader actions, and people feel that they have the support they need to improve their performance based upon a secure identification of their needs. Feedback is integral to learning and development and is embedded within the operational fabric of the school. Feedback is provided through the usual channels of performance management, lesson observations, work scrutiny and progress data analysis for example, but co-development activity, where people work in pairs, enables risk taking because judgement-free peer feedback lowers the emotional barriers to classroom feedback. The use of Iris technology is offering a new reflective lens (no pun intended), to examine practice ever more critically.

Another strand of the school's leadership and management culture is the alertness to individual talent and potential, and to provide opportunities for people to take on responsibility with encouragement and coaching support as necessary. Through these actions leaders and managers have created a climate of opportunity that enables people to develop professionally and this clearly contributes to the overall high levels of morale across the workforce. Similarly, the recruitment and selection of staff is underpinned by identifying people with talent and the potential to succeed within the school, and who are also aligned with the values and the school's ambition. The selection of people at interview continues to be informed by consultation with staff whilst ensuring that fair practice is observed.

Additional Evidence Requirements

Work-Life Balance

Senior leaders described how the policy shapes their attitude, rationale and practical actions to try to ensure the work-life balance [WLB] of all employees is part of the wider wellbeing agenda. The policy also links WLB to the main aims of the school and the need to attract and maintain an effectively functioning workforce. Key Stage leaders are equally aware of the need for a positive attitude to WLB so that the school has a co-ordinated approach to the issue. Staff reinforced the school's positive attitude and mentioned practical matters such as the formation of subject leadership teams to 'spread the load' and how this approach led to better prioritising and collaborative working which reduces potential stress levels and pressure points in the school improvement cycle. Other example of practical actions that staff mentioned includes:

- not programming staff meetings in the weeks that include parents evenings;
- ensuring that staff have the equipment they need to do their jobs;
- discussing work issues and concerns in open forum;
- teachers not having to submit their planning in advance for scrutiny by leaders;
- revising the marking policy to streamline it to reduce the workload;
- people being treated empathetically when family or personal health issues require attention.

As a result of the policy and practice, staff believe that the school values WLB issues and is part of the culture.

Equality and Diversity

The school operates a fully inclusive approach to issues such as:

- all staff are entitled to an induction, CPD, performance management and career development;
- all staff have access to leadership team meetings through open invitation;
- recruitment and selection is non-discriminatory and follows best practice procedures;
- all staff are encouraged to develop professionally and are provided with the necessary support;
- all staff feel that they are given the opportunity to develop their talents and CPD plus coaching support is in place to develop such;
- Individual differences are seen as a strength and not deficit.

The school has an inclusive culture as recognised and validated by the Inclusion Quality Mark award in 2014. The school has plans in place for re-assessment in 2017.

Recruitment and Selection

Senior leaders reconfirmed their approach to recruitment and selection and additional evidence was provided on how it links to the school's aims and need for a talented workforce in order to remain outstanding. The facility for Key Stage leaders to be involved in recruitment and selection was confirmed and examples given with regard to recent recruits

Talent management

This aspect of school practice is particularly strong and embraces:

- attracting high calibre staff to the school;
- proving early career stage leadership experience for teachers;
- proving the opportunity for a wide range of staff to lead on projects;
- delegating roles to people's strengths and talents;
- allocating staff to teams so they can share experience, responsibility and be fully engaged in school improvement;
- the receiving and giving of constructive feedback;
- enabling staff to get involved in working groups based upon their ideas for improvement;
- offering CPD, coaching and mentoring support for staff to develop their careers as rapidly as they wish;
- deploying staff to support other schools based upon their strengths and thus widening their school improvement experience.

Interview evidence confirmed that staff believe that the school recognises and develops their talents and that opportunities to develop professionally are provided. Some great examples of making use of talents came for the deployment of TAs (the majority of whom are graduates), for example, who lead on:

- a) sport and gymnastics
- b) RE
- c) Life skills teaching.

Interviews revealed that:

- people believe that senior and Key Stage leaders are receptive to ideas to improve practice and performance and that this general orientation is motivating;
- people believe that there are equal opportunities to learn and develop to improve their effectiveness and performance;
- people in all job functions believe that they and their colleagues are well trained and developed and that the school places CPD at the heart of what it does to make things better for pupils;
- the school has good recruitment and selection processes in place and staff, other than leaders, have the opportunity to get involved;
- there is an open culture for the giving and receiving of feedback and people value it as a tool for improving practice;
- everyone has the opportunity to lead and manage an area or aspect of school practice.

Your people said:

"You cannot slide a sheet of paper between teachers and TAs here."

"I am a teaching assistant not a teacher's assistant"

"The whole school works like one large team...we might have different jobs to do but we are all valued, and are treated the same."

“It’s a great place to work but you have to work so hard all of the time...I think we are at the edge at times.”

Interview and documentary evidence confirms that:

- The Core Standard is met.
- The strategies for leading, managing and developing people embody the equality of opportunity for all, and people confirmed that ‘inclusivity’ is embedded

Summary

Indicator 3 : Maximum number of additional Evidence Requirements	No. Achieved	Running Total
24	19	51

4 Leadership and Management Strategy

Meeting the Standard

Leadership and management capability and competence are benchmarked against Ofsted criteria for outstanding school leadership and management, and reference was also made to National College accredited programmes. The School Improvement Plans also contains a section on the ‘Leadership and management efficiency of the school’. Senior leaders are aware of their own leadership styles and skills and have continued to apply models of highly distributed leadership and management practice evident at the last Gold assessment.

Senior and Key Stage leaders have a shared view about the qualities, skills, and attributes of effective leadership, namely:

- having a clear view of outstanding education and learning and communicating it;
- having a shared set of values and aims that define what is valuable in the schools and reinforce them in *‘what you say and what you do’*;
- using performance and progress data to drive improvements;
- distributing leadership by providing opportunities for everyone to develop leadership and management skills and experience;
- be able to give honest, constructive feedback on how team and individuals are performing;
- being an effective communicator;
- having good organisation and time management skills;
- having strong interpersonal skills;
- being approachable, a good listener, empathetic and compassionate.

They also mentioned that they have to be knowledgeable in the use and interpretation of performance data, curriculum design, effective teaching and learning, administrative functions, the effective use of ICT and the behaviours of modeling fairness, honesty, trust, and transparency. Senior leaders described how they set challenging targets to improve rates of progress and attainment, and performance pay progression for teachers is in line with national requirements.

Subject leaders [team approach] are also clear on their roles and responsibilities and are committed to doing the best they can to support the development of their subjects, and CPD is part of the process by which they can keep up-to-date, be aware of good practice, and how to support their colleagues with planning, teaching, and assessment. An influx of new staff into the schools has meant that the assignment of subject leadership has required investment in their learning and development to be effective in their roles. TAs who have a leadership role, including subjects, are delighted to hold such responsibility and are similarly motivated to do a great job. The lead TA spoke of the need to develop her team and let them flourish and take a lead on aspects of provision, and this requires her to be able to provide constructive feedback and foster an ethos of collaboration for example.

Both teaching and support staff were, once more, very complimentary about the leadership and management of the school and their role, and interviewees stated that the school continues to take very positive steps to develop them. The leadership of the school was praised by a good cross-section of the staff team, who claimed this to be a strength of the school, pointing out that the leadership style of the 'new' head teacher is quite different, but preferential. In establishing Manor Farm School, senior leaders are working hard to replicate the excellent tone, climate, and ambition of Witham St Hughs.

The Additional Evidence Requirements

The distribution of leadership and management

As mentioned above, senior leaders continue to invest in the leadership and management of all staff to ensure that the schools have a team approach to leadership and all feel that they can lead on some aspect of provision. For example, apart from NQTs, all teachers and TAs have a leadership role and TAs confirmed that they have led on gaining awards such as Science and Eco.

Support for leadership and management development

High distributed models of school leadership and management requires a high investment in:

- CPD including learning from diverse resources
- Role modeling by senior leaders;
- Coaching support;
- Constructive feedback both informally and through performance management;
- Opportunities to visit and shadow staff working in the TSA;
- Opportunities to experiment and share experiences – what went well and what didn't!

All staff claimed that they receive support and guidance for their leadership and management roles and that appraisals and monitoring provide rich sources of feedback.

Interviews revealed that:

- The Core Standard continues to be met.
- Senior leaders have the knowledge, skills and behaviors to lead, manage and develop staff effectively;
- Senior leaders continue to actively developing a wide range of staff to gain experience of leading and managing to develop their knowledge and skills;
- Senior leaders are clear about how their leadership actions and behaviours are firmly aligned with the school improvement strategy;

- Leadership and management is highly distributed and fully inclusive;
- Team members have high expectations of middle and senior leaders and are clear what they should be doing to lead, manage and develop them effectively.

Your people said:

“Apart from NQTs, all teachers and TAs have a leadership role.”

“My role is to help foster an ethos of collaboration.”

“Subject leaders, for core subjects, work in teams...this is a great way to do it as we can support each other.”

Interview and documentary evidence confirms that:

- The Core Standard is met.
- Leadership and management is widely distributed and all classroom staff lead and manage some aspect of school provision, and support staff team leaders are also experienced and competent in their roles.

Summary

Indicator 4 : Maximum number of additional Evidence Requirements	No. Achieved	Running Total
10	9	60

Principle 2: Take action to improve the performance of the school

Indicators 5 to 8

5 Management Effectiveness

Meeting the Standard

A strong remaining feature of leadership and management practice at the school relates to the frequency and quality of feedback provided to teams and individuals. Senior, Key Stage and subject leaders are clear that a core function of their role is to provide direction, set expectations and standards and provide feedback to their team, and individuals, on their practice and performance.

Staff continued to speak with a united voice about the individual feedback provided through performance management reviews, informal verbal feedback, coaching and mentoring conversations, lesson observations [teachers and TAs], pupil work scrutiny and moderation of assessment activity [teachers], monitoring and evaluation processes. Staff are ‘feedback-rich’ and are clear on their individual and team strengths and development needs. The quality of constructive feedback has had a significant impact upon peoples’ professional development and increasing levels of competence: this was clearly stated by the newer members of staff. The quality of feedback has also encouraged people to take on responsibility for development projects and areas of responsibility. An interesting

example discussed during this review related to the competence of the TA team – a feedback questionnaire and local TA development initiative led school leaders and lead TA to conclude that their practice is already meeting national expectations of excellence. Benchmarking against a national model has provided compelling feedback to the TA team.

Staff team members are able to describe what their leaders/managers should be doing to lead, manage and develop them effectively and gave examples based upon their experience. Staff said that their team leader/manager* should be/have:

- approachable and a good listener;
- supportive, helpful and encouraging;
- invest in us to ensure we are well trained;
- good interpersonal skills and project confidence;
- an effective communicator;
- a good role model for the schools' values and aims;
- give good feedback and recognise effort and contribution;
- be knowledgeable and experienced;
- passionate about their work and be committed to quality of provision for pupils;
- be good leaders and get people involved in decision-making;
- delegate and trust people to do what they have been asked to do;
- feel able to experiment in classrooms and learn from feedback from the pupils;
- create opportunities for staff to experience practice in other schools, and learn from others.

*This is a composite list of attributes

The above composite list can be regarded as 'cultural signifiers' of the schools as examples were readily given, and staff feel highly engaged in every aspect of school provision and life, so much so that they freely give their time for enrichment activities, and for some staff, the school is the centre of their lives.

The Additional Evidence Requirements

Role Modelling and coaching

Senior leaders made reference to their leadership styles, and when mapped against the Hay Model, they believe that visionary, democratic, affiliative [emotionally intelligent]; pacesetter [progress and attainment focused] and coaching styles are their dominant styles, noting that directive styles are rarely used. They claimed that these styles are more in line with the schools' core values and their role was to confidently guide and influence and only occasionally instruct. Senior leaders believe that 'emotionally intelligent leadership' is the most effective way to lead the school, as this closely aligns with the core values, but is also equally rigorous and effective in the drive to improve standards and achievement.

Leaders described how they have worked hard to try and make coaching part of the school's culture – to become a natural way to support improvements and focusing on the key issues of classroom practice. Staff confirmed that they believe that coaching is part of the organisation's culture, and is a core method used to support and develop each other and for them to reach their potential.

Trust and confidence in school leadership

The promotion of the deputy head to head teacher has provided the staff with 'cultural continuity', and staff rapidly adjusted to the 'new' head teacher's style noting the same drive, commitment and

ambition, but a more affiliative style has been applauded. Senior leader continuity has provided a second layer of 'cultural continuity' and their united behaviours and actions have ensured that the whole staff team [in both schools] has confidence in their ability to lead the development of both schools.

"I have absolute trust in the head and the leadership team."

"Most definitely...without any shadow of doubt."

"Absolutely.... without question."

"They are brilliant...of course, I trust them."

Staff also believe that the school has a culture of openness and trust:

"Transparency and honesty in all of your conversations with staff is fundamental to an open and trusting culture...talk to people, don't whisper about them."

"If you lead by example and model open behaviours then you are likely to get it back in return."

"Yes, the school has a culture of openness and trust."

"There is most definitely an open culture in this school."

"The school runs in an open and trusting way."

"We have always been able to talk about things openly"

"The head is open in what she thinks and believes...she was as deputy, so nothing new."

Inspirational leadership

Leaders at the school like to think they are 'inspirational at times', and believe that their passion for what they do is inspiring: they believe that the commitment to maintaining 'outstanding' is in itself inspirational. Leaders said:

"Using the machine analogy, every process is connected to every other for it to work efficiently, so pulling together for the same ends is, I hope, is inspiring. Being fully inclusive also conveys the importance of everyone."

Staff said:

"SLT are fully committed and passionate about what they do and this is inspiring."

"We are all passionate about what we do...I hope you have gathered this....and our shared passion for childrens' learning is what inspires and motivates us all I think."

Career Guidance and advice

Many staff, including NQTs and RQTs, confirmed that they are given good advice and mentoring support by senior leaders, not only to qualify and make professional progression, but on their own potential career development. This has included guidance during the performance management process but has also included being given opportunities to take on responsibility or lead the development of an idea through to implementation. TAs have the same opportunities for supported career development and are encouraged to 'go for QTS' if they so wish. The Teaching Alliance has also opened up avenues for teachers and key stage leaders, for example, to broaden their roles as LLEs and lead training programmes for Alliance schools.

"Coming here has been brilliant for my career as I've learned so much and been given the chance to lead on a subject."

Interviews revealed that:

- Senior/Key Stage/subject leaders can explain and give examples of how they are effective in leading, managing and developing their team members, and are able to identify their development points to become more effective;
- Key Stage and TA leaders are able to give a range of examples of how they provide constructive feedback to their teams/individuals;
- All staff can furnish a range of examples of how their managers are effective in leading, managing and developing them;
- Staff can give a range of examples of how they receive constructive feedback and the support they can draw upon to improve;
- Staff in both schools believe the organisation has a culture of openness and trust and that they respect and trust the senior team.

Interview and documentary evidence confirms that:

- The Core Standard is met.
- There is an embedded culture of honesty, openness, and trust.
- Staff are passionate about their work and like the ethos of the school.
- There is trust in school leadership across the staff team and governors.

Summary

Indicator 5: Maximum number of additional Evidence Requirements	No. Achieved	Running Total
21	20	80

6 Recognition and Reward

Meeting the Standard

Everyone interviewed was able to provide multiple examples of how they contribute to the work of their team and the schools, and how it contributes to the desired outcomes in the SIPs. Staff are clear about their roles, responsibilities and accountabilities and the expectations of the senior team and their team leader. Staff are generally confident that they are competent in their roles due to the feedback that they receive and the recognition of their contribution and efforts. One of the cultural characteristics of the school is the extent to which people feel valued for what they do. An assessment exercise was repeated from three years ago whereby staff were asked to rate their sense of feeling valued and their morale, excepting that fluctuations can occur with peak work demands. When asked to score how valued they feel, staff consistently replied in the 80-90% range once more, and in a similar exercise to score their morale, the same scoring range emerged. Staff confirmed during their interviews that there are high levels of emotional intelligence in the school and that relationships are very friendly, empathetic and caring and this has a positive impact on morale.

In terms of being recognised for their effort, staff universally said that they appreciate a simple “*thank you*” either verbally, or via an email, in addition to public praise in meetings, and more formal positive feedback gained during performance management meetings.

The Additional Evidence Requirements

Reward and recognition strategy

The Academy Pay Policy, approved by the Governing Body, reflects the SCPCS national arrangements and performance-related pay processes are well established.

The arrangements are:

1. Teachers

M Scale progress – performance management and overall impact is used for teachers pay progression and people can double jump for exceptional performance.

Performance threshold – applications must be supported by 2 years performance against the national criteria.

Upper Pay spine – wider and sustained contribution informed by performance management and staff must be professional coaches.

TLRs - are used to reward Key Stage leadership and management responsibility.

Leadership Spine – progression is awarded on the basis of performance management and wider contribution. An External Adviser is deployed to guide and support governors for the head teacher's performance review.

2. Support staff

GLEA pay scales are used along which staff can progress based upon performance outcomes and contribution, up to a ceiling. In all conversations about performance and pay progression, no major issues arose, and some work is underway with some support staff as Manor Farm develops and work-patterns and job roles become modified.

Other reward evidence provided was:

- Social functions with competitions, quizzes, comedy events and games;
- Free meals for staff on INSET days;
- Half-term thank you buffet;
- Meals out together;
- Staff certificates for recognition of contributions;
- Celebration events at the end of term;
- End of year letters.

These rewards were confirmed by staff in their interviews who could readily describe the various strands of the strategy and how they are recognised and rewarded by it. Staff also mentioned how they are involved in celebrating the achievement of people's efforts and contributions through simple gifts and public 'thank-you' gestures.

"From my own experiences and from what staff tell me, we do feel recognised and valued here."

"Discretionary effort here is brilliant...you see a job needs doing and you 'step-up' and this happens because staff feel valued and recognised for what they do."

Interview evidence confirms that:

- The Core Standard is met.
- The schools' reward and recognitions strategy is benchmarked against national/local instruments.
- Staff feel valued and morale is generally very good.
- Staff are motivated intrinsically to do their best for the children and provide excellent learning opportunities and experiences, but also believe that rewards are fairly applied in line with the Pay Policy.

Summary

Indicator 6: Maximum number of additional Evidence Requirements	No. Achieved	Running Total
16	7	87



Involvement and Empowerment

Meeting the Standard

The distribution of leadership and management at the schools remains exemplary, the TAs being a prime example and a model for other primary schools. Partnering the distributed leadership there is a strong culture of involving and empowering teams and individuals to take responsibility for performance as typified by, for example:

- developing Key Stage leaders to lead and manage their teams;
- allocating time for teams to meet and discuss improvements and developments to practice;
- engaging staff in discussions about school and team development planning;
- establishing working parties to discuss development issues;
- engaging people in decision-making on objectives/targets and their CPD during their performance management dialogues;
- engaging people in monitoring and evaluation activity to ensure accountabilities are tied to responsibilities;
- encouraging people to undertake developmental/research work – sometimes in pairs – to develop specific aspects of school improvement work.

The interview with the Chair of Governors confirmed leadership claims that they continue to be involved in strategic decision-making, monitoring and evaluation activity, and that sub-committee teams work on delegated activity on behalf of the full Governing Body.

Feedback from all interviews revealed that the delegation of responsibilities and the facility to make decisions at team and individual level remains culturally embedded. Staff spoke of enjoying the freedom and trust that comes with this facility, whilst acknowledging that they are also accountable for decisions and the subsequent actions. A wide range of staff stated that being engaged in decision-making makes them feel as though their experience, ideas, opinions, and suggestions are valued and this continues to have a positive impact upon performance and morale.

Manor school staff have to operate with high levels of delegated responsibility and trust and they reported enjoying the opportunity that this provides for them.

The Additional Evidence Requirements

Internal Communication and knowledge sharing

Senior leaders described the internal communication channels in place within the schools to share knowledge and information:

- staff meetings;
- team meetings;
- emails;
- working parties;
- CPD sessions such as INSET Days;
- daily noticeboard;
- informal communications;
- calendared events;
- work scrutiny and moderation;
- informal conversation.

Staff confirmed that these channels continue to be effective and everyone said that they were sufficient for them to 'know what is going on' and that knowledge and information is freely shared across the schools. A very real challenge with the opening of Manor Farm is that 'shuttle leadership' is a necessity, and very effort is being made to ensure that the small number of staff at Manor feel that they are fully 'in the communications loop', and holding meetings there is one action that helps to support this, and, make the Manor staff feel part of the whole staff team.

Consultation and involvement

As indicated above, the SLT ensure that a range of mechanisms are in place to enable staff to participate in discussion and decision making - consultation and involvement are part of distributed leadership and are culturally embedded. Staff stated that meetings are 'democratic' and that people can speak freely and openly, and they feel fully involved in decision-making. Rarely do they feel they are told what must be done by the head teacher, but understand why this has to be done at times. The climate of the school, the styles of leadership enacted by the SLT, and delegation processes interlock to create a strong feeling amongst the whole staff team, in both schools, that they feel trusted to do their jobs:

"Yes, I feel trusted to do my job...my professional judgments and commitment are not questioned."

"I feel absolutely trusted to do my job to the best of ability and I get all the support and encouragement I need to improve."

"We work collaboratively and in a trusting way here...we always have done."

"I feel one hundred percent trusted to do my job."

"Yes, I feel that the SLT 100% trust me to do my job and they frequently ask me how things are going."

"We are encouraged to experiment and try new ways of working...we have Friday CPD sessions to provide the time for this...this is a brilliant idea."

Commitment, ownership, and pride

It is abundantly clear, once more, that the staffs in both schools are very committed to the success of the school and many spoke with enthusiasm and pride about their work and how they work very hard so that the pupils get the best deal and opportunities to learn and develop.

“Commitment? We work very hard here...we have to maintain the standards and we do this because we want to.”

“Everyone here is totally committed to the pupils...we work very hard...it's exhausting but worthwhile.”

“We are proud of what the children achieve.”

“This is a brilliant school and so, yes, I'm proud of what the children achieve.”

“The children do so well here and I'm proud of them.”

“It's the high work ethic of the staff that makes us outstanding.”

“We work above and beyond without thinking...its hard work but the benefits are massive.”

“I would not want my children to go to any other school than this...my children love it and I cannot fault anything.”

Commitment to continuous improvement

The previous Gold Report stated:

‘The commitment to continuous improvement and outstanding practice is ‘a given’ at the school and staff feel that it is an expectation as well. The open culture of the school means that people do not feel defensive about their practice as senior leaders have developed a climate/ethos that enables the free and open exchange of ideas, experimentation without blame...all grounded in one shared purpose....doing what is best for the children and each other.’

This remains the case in 2016, and during the visit, more than one teacher said that ‘Continuous improvement is cultural here...’

Interview and documentary evidence confirms that:

- The Core Standard is met.
- Consultation and knowledge and information sharing is culturally embedded.
- There is unquestionable commitment to continuous improvement and success of the school.
- Staff are proud to work for the Trust schools due to the progress and achievements made by the pupils.

Summary

Indicator 7: Maximum number of additional Evidence Requirements	No. Achieved	Running Total
16	13	100



Learning and Development

Meeting the Standard

The senior team take steps to ensure that school, team and individual learning and development needs are met through carefully integrated planning and systematic monitoring. A Training Matrix is in place for ensuring that all statutory requirements are met such as Health and Safety, First Aid for the MDSAs for example, and Safeguarding. At the individual level, the learning and development needs

derived from performance management reviews are collected and collated and feed into the school's wider CPD Plan. Key Stage leaders and the business manager also discuss learning and development needs of their team during improvement planning meetings and these are factored into their plans which are monitored on a sufficiently frequent basis to ensure that needs are not overlooked. Common needs across the school are dealt with through school INSET Days and staff development sessions. When staff return from external training they are provided with opportunities to disseminate the knowledge and skills gains (as appropriate). For example, the lead TA described how she 'shared the learning' with her TA team, after attending a programme on effective interventions. With regard to CPD meeting staff needs, people said:

"The school has a good attitude to training and all my needs have been met for health and safety, First Aid and COSHH."

"INSET days are carefully crafted and are closely related to common needs in the SIPs such as writing moderation."

When people join the school or change their role, they received an effective induction and the induction programme for NQTs meets requirements and is highly rated and valued by them. NQT mentors follows the school's policy on NQT Induction to ensure that all requirements and entitlements are met.

"My support programme and mentor have been great...I would say at least 9/10 for my support programme."

"I good induction programme when I joined and you are trained and supported to learn 'The Witham Way'."

"My induction was fabulous and I had policies to read before I started and I joined the staff training days."

A wide range of examples were provided on the application of learning covering examples such as:

- a) How using IRIS technology is good at stimulating reflection and videos of teaching are being made to create a video bank for internal CPD;
- b) Observation of colleagues' practice has led to improvements in a wide range of scenarios such as phonics, assessment development, writing and 'learning for life'
- c) The application of Read Write Inc. to improve literacy teaching;
- d) Sharing practice on the use of Tapestry in FS.

The Additional Evidence Requirements

Learning and development resources

Senior leaders explained how good use is made of internal and external resources and expertise to support learning and development at all levels in the school. External resources used to support learning over the past 2-3 years include, for example:

- national and local training providers;
- National College programmes;
- local School Partnerships and Clusters;
- Teaching School Alliance programmes
- university courses;
- visiting other schools.

Internal resources correspond to the skills sets of a wide range of staff who willingly share their knowledge and welcome staff into their classrooms to observe. The weight of evidence gathered over the three days in the school confirmed a very strong culture of learning and development and that the school is flexible in meeting the needs of individuals and groups.

Motivation for professional learning

Many staff spoke with great enthusiasm about their learning and development activity and mentioned how much has been invested in them. The interviews confirmed staff's willingness to learn and that people like learning new skills. Classroom staff in particular spoke of being encouraged to try new ideas and approaches to teaching and learning, sharing their successes, reflecting upon, and adapting things that did not work as well as expected:

"Staff speak as though they enjoy learning new things and trying out ideas...it is encouraged by senior leaders."

"If you experiment in the classroom and it works well, we are able to present it to staff in meetings."

"If I'm not motivated to learn, how can I expect to model it for the children?"

Many people mentioned that they seemed to be learning and developing all of the time:

"I literally learn something every day....you never stop learning in this job."

"As a relatively young teacher, I am learning all of the time...this is a great place to develop."

"You encouraged to learn by senior leaders and you can use Friday slots to undertake a research project or learn from colleagues."

Senior leaders believe that the school's coaching programme running alongside the wide range of provision for staff learning and development ensures that daily opportunities exist, and this was confirmed by a wide selection of the staff team. Examples of how people have been, and continue to be supported in their personal development activities readily emerged from interview conversations and included, for example:

- teachers encouraged to become SLEs to deliver training to other schools through the Teaching School Alliance;
- TAs working on Foundation degrees and BAs so they can become teachers.

Mentoring

Senior leaders have ensured statutory NQT mentoring process have been in place and updated to meet shifts in requirements: NQT mentors have been trained to facilitate the mentorship process. NQTs and RQTs spoke positively of their programmes and the high level of support and guidance provided. Informal mentoring is also in place to support career progression and for staff to "*bounce ideas off*" leaders and managers, and people gave some examples of how this has been helpful to them, particularly personal development through the TSA.

Knowledge sharing

Senior leaders ensure that learning and development is tied to the achievement of objectives and where appropriate this is disseminated to key staff. Learning from courses is shared through presentation of various kinds in staff meetings.

"We are asked to feedback from courses in staff meetings or during INSET Days."

"I have provided feedback from lead TA programme."

Once more, staff also spoke of the near constant sharing of ideas they have tested in classrooms, approaches to teaching and learning, resources and the results of evaluation activity such as book scrutiny: such activity is routine and cultural.

Interviews revealed that:

- team leaders are active in ensuring that people's learning and development needs are met;
- individuals can describe how their learning and development needs have been met, what they have learned and how they have applied the learning in their role;
- good induction processes are in place.

Interview and documentary evidence confirms that:

- The Core Standard is met.
- All of the additional evidence requirements are culturally embedded in this professional learning-centred Trust

Summary

Indicator 8: Maximum number of additional Evidence Requirements	No. Achieved	Running Total
17	15	115

Principle 3: Evaluate to improve the performance of the school

Indicators 9 & 10

9 Performance Measurement

Meeting the Standard

Senior leaders gave examples of some of the resource investment in CPD such as:

- Training budget of £10,000
- 5 INSET Days = 40 hours per target colleague
- Time for performance management process for each member of staff amounts to a substantial time investment
- £11,000 for IRIS technology accessed through the Teaching School.

This runs alongside research and development projects, NQT and RQT coaching and mentoring, inducting new staff, team meetings where practice is discussed, development group activity and visits

to other schools. Lead practitioners within the school also contribute to training and support programmes in Alliance partner schools.

Senior leaders and the wider staff body are able to give examples of improvements to the school's performance as a result of learning and development activity. For example:

- the implementation of the revised national primary curriculum infusing it with the school's own learning strategies such as life skills;
- improvements in the overall quality of teaching to the new required standards;
- improvements in leadership knowledge and skills across the school through lead practitioner training;
- investing in phonics training led to 100% success in phonics screening in Y1;
- improvements in phonics progress using Read Write Inc approaches;
- the development and implementation of new assessment arrangements from early years entry through to the end of KS2;
- ensuring compliance with manual handling, health and safety and ensuring that regulations and advice on pupil safeguarding processes and procedures are securely in place.

The head teacher also spoke of how senior leaders measure and evaluate how its investment in staff development processes are impacting through performance management, general monitoring processes [to which governors contribute], and annual self-evaluation [which fully involves all classroom staff], as part of the 'plan-do-review' cycle of school improvement.

"As a new head, I have intensive monitoring in place and we use data to inform what we need to achieve...performance management and CPD are directed to school performance data improvement."

Individuals also provided examples of how investment in them has improved their performance and that of the wider team through dissemination and follow-up internal training. For example, a maths lead undertook a 10-week programme and returned to train TAs to have greater impact on progress in key maths concepts. Teachers and TAs also spoke of improvements to reading and the 100% phonics screening scores achieved in Y1

The Additional Evidence Requirements

Impact upon KPIs

The SLT described how they measure the impact of its learning and development investment against school improvement objectives and how their leadership and management strategy is ensuring that the school is outstanding in all four areas of the 2012 Inspection Framework.

Benchmark performance data is reviewed annually by senior leaders with staff and governors to identify strengths and areas for development that transcribe into SIP objectives. For example, current Raise-Online data points to some progress and attainment issues for Pupil Premium children.

The school is also aware that its 100% phonics screening results in Y1 placed it within the top 3% of schools nationally leading to it support local schools to improve their practice and scores.

"In FS and KS1 we used the Ruth Miskin programme, with teachers and TAS working together, and we achieved 100% placing us in the top 3% nationally and we have become a lead school as a consequence."

The school's thorough self-evaluation shows, directly and indirectly, the impact of its investment in staff learning and development and cross-references it to the Ofsted KPI judgments. FS and KS leaders are aware of the school's performance against the KPIs [such as national expectations for achievement and progress], and members of classroom-based staff teams are aware of the trends in the school's performance data and can link it to the priorities for staff development.

The transparency and availability of evaluation and impact data across the school (and for use by governors), ensures that classroom staff are clear on what the school has achieved, what their team has achieved, and how they contribute to the overall success.

Career prospects

A number of people gave examples of how their career prospects had improved whilst at the school due to investment in their learning and development and opportunities made available to them. People said:

"My career prospects and confidence have improved quite a lot whilst I have been here."

"Absolutely...the school has supported me to gain qualifications to help my career."

"I've had great career development here."

"I've made a lot of progress whilst I've been here."

Some people were able to describe their career progression routes whilst at the school including examples such as teaching assistants working on their qualifications to achieve QTS status and teachers progressing through the 'Threshold'.

Interview evidence confirms that:

- The Core Standard is met.
- Senior leaders are able to track the achievement of KPIs to staff learning and development activity.
- Staff feel that the investment made in them helps them widen and deepen their knowledge and skills to improve their performance, and helps develop their careers.

Summary

Indicator 9: Maximum number of additional Evidence Requirements	No. Achieved	Running Total
9	7	122

10

Continuous Improvement

Meeting the Standard

The focus on, and commitment to continuous improvement, in the quality of provision and outcomes for pupils is culturally embedded. The highly competent way in which staff are led, managed and developed energises and motivates the staff team's constant drive for performance improvement.

In 2014, the Report stated:

One powerful illustration of the commitment to continuous improvement is the school's application to become a "Teaching School" so that it can help local schools to improve their practice and performance. The school does not have to do this, but its social responsibility and moral purpose underpins the application coupled with the opportunities that it will provide for the staff team.

This has been achieved with the development of the Teaching School Alliance of which the Trust schools are key partners: the commitment of every member of staff to achieve this has been vindicated, and experienced classroom staff within the school have been developed and contribute to Alliance CPD programmes.

The Additional Evidence Requirements

Self- review and benchmarking

Two examples were cited as evidence of benchmarking practice and outcomes:

- a) Using the Lincolnshire TA effectiveness tool

Internal audit scores and attendance at a Lincolnshire event held to commence work to improve TA effectiveness in the County, revealed that the school's practice already meets the highest levels of TA performance.

"When we attended the LA meeting we found that our TA practice is already at the high level so we have pulled out of the project."

- b) Lincolnshire Peer Review system – the school was 'inspected' by heads from two outstanding schools and no 'major gaps' were found and some constructive feedback was given on 'life skills' and 'purposes for learning' in FS.

"The Lincs peer review is equivalent to and Ofsted in many ways and no major issues for improvement were identified...they did not find any gaps."

Engagement with the TSA management group ensures that Trust leaders remain fully connected with school improvement agendas and Ofsted KPIs

Continuous Improvement

Senior leaders can give examples of how they monitor staff's views about how they lead, manage and develop them through performance management, staff meetings, surveys and individual conversations. Staff believe that senior leaders are committed to improve the way that they lead, manage and develop them such as Work-Life Balance being better promoted, and treating staff with greater empathy than was previously the case. The TA survey, for example, yielded very high scores and the main development point was to ensure that new staff are clearer on the expectation of the role and performance.

The opening of the second school has also involved senior leaders in self-reflection and the detailed planning required to open a new school and 'ensure that *the Witham way is replicated*'. This issue will continue to exercise the minds of staff and governors.

Great Place to work

This clear commitment by the SLT and governors to improve the school and drive for outstanding, and beyond, has contributed to the high morale and full commitment of the staff team to the school, the children, their parents/carers and the wider community. The overwhelming view of all sections of staff is that Witham St Hugh's is a great place to work. People repeated the sentiments of the first assessment visit:

"I love coming to work...very rare that I don't feel like it...but that goes as soon as you walk through the doors."

"Massive improvement on my previous school."

"I love it here because I've had more praise in 8 weeks than 3 years in my previous role."

"I love coming to work...can it be any better than that?"

"It's so rewarding working here."

It was clear from the interviews just how the school's core values and leadership styles and behaviours have created a climate where people feel valued, work incredibly hard for the children, enjoy their work and feel that it is important, remaining eager to learn and develop and are proud of the children's achievements.

Interviews revealed that:

- senior leaders are aware of the resourcing needs for CPD across the school;
- senior leaders can explain how CPD has impacted upon KPIs;
- senior leaders can provide examples of how their evaluation of their people development processes has led to modifications;
- Key Stage and FS leaders can give examples of how CPD has impacted upon team performance measures;
- members of teams can give examples of how CPD has impacted upon their performance and that of their team, and how this contributes to wider school KPIs.

Interview and documentary evidence confirms that:

- The Core Standard is met.
- The whole team and governors respond well to external challenges and make improvements to address any weaknesses in provision and pupil achievement outcomes.
- Continuous improvement is culturally embedded.
- Staff think the school is a great place to work.

Summary

Indicator : Maximum number of additional Evidence Requirements	No. Achieved	Running Total
12	10	132
Gold entry threshold		126

Development Point

Staff acknowledged that working at the school involves very hard work, high levels of emotional commitment and discretionary effort. To your credit, you do explore work-life balance strategies and demonstrate care and empathy for your staff team, but evidence was forthcoming that many staff struggle to maintain the volume and pace what they do, even though they want to. Your schools are not alone in this regard.

It is suggested that you invest in high-quality resilience/mindfulness training for staff to help them better manage the pressures of working in an outstanding school and wanting it to remain so.

Investors in People is currently finalising a new Health and Wellbeing Standard that could provide you with a framework to lead and manage the issue of staff wellbeing to a high standard. You also have the option to have your achievements assessed alongside your next IIP assessment – this will give you three years to reach the Standard. I can support you with this.

Appendix 1 – Continuous Improvement Plan (headlines)

Business Issue - What	Suggested Actions - How	Potential Benefit - Why	Priority - When	Solutions/Support Available - Who
Transition to the new Standard as a school improvement framework	Undertake an audit during a senior team meeting with the support of your assessor.	Explore how the new Standard can improve your leadership and management of the school	Next 12 months	Your assessor can support this.
At the next assessment try to meet the new IIP Health and Wellbeing Indicator in addition to the Standard	Once it has been finalised your assessor can support you audit and help create an Action Plan.	Use the Health and Wellbeing Indicator to address you main development point and build upon your current practice.	Next 12 months	Your assessor can support this.
18-month intervention	Note that this is a requirement of accreditation	Your assessor will visit after 18 months to review progress	April 2018	Your assessor will lead this.

Appendix 2 – Assessment results summary

The Investors in People Framework

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
The Indicators	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓														
	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
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	5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The number of evidence requirements met is **39 [Core] plus 132** additional Evidence Requirements from the Framework

Key:



The Core Investors in People Standard



Your Choice from the Investors in People Framework



Not part of the Investors in People Framework