

COMMERCIAL-IN-CONFIDENCE



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

ST MARY'S MENSTON

**Recognition Review
for
Yorkshire & Humberside Assessment
17-18 November 2008**

ASSESSOR
Mary Weir

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Organisation Name	St Mary's Menston
Organisation Address	Bradford Road Menston Ilkley LS29 6AE
Head of the Organisation	Michael Pyle, Head teacher
Number of Staff	157
Staff Interviewed	30
Sample %	19%
Type of Assessment	Recognition Review
Site Visit Date	17-18 November 2008
Objectives for the review <ul style="list-style-type: none">- To confirm that the school meets the Investors in People Standard- To review the impact of the performance management process- To review the effectiveness of induction for teachers and support staff- To review the impact of bringing the catering service in-house	
Recommendation <p>I confirm that St Mary's Menston has undertaken a process of continuous improvement and I recommend that they should continue to be recognised as an Investor in People.</p> <p>Assessor: Mary Weir</p> <p>Date: 25 November 2008</p>	

INTRODUCTION

- 1 St Mary's Menston has a clear Mission to provide leadership through service and "the work of the School is the spiritual, moral, intellectual, aesthetic and physical development of each pupil. It seeks to put Christ at the centre of every activity, worship, learning and service to others." To achieve this they provide 'Challenge, Compassion, Community and Cooperation' to students and staff alike.
- 2 Since the last Review in 2005, a number of significant changes have taken place including:-
 - a. The name of the School has changed to St Mary's Menston symbolising a change of image, with an attractive new frontage and reception area, which is cheerful and welcoming.
 - b. With the introduction of Teaching & Learning Responsibilities, the management structure is now based on six Faculties combining Subject Areas in to larger, more effective management units.
 - c. The Workforce Reform Agenda has been implemented creating new roles and career opportunities for Support Staff.
 - d. The continuing specialist status of the Sports College has given the School resources and opportunities, which have been very beneficial.
 - e. The Catering Service has been brought in house with the recruitment of a highly experienced Chef Manager who has transformed the quality and style of food provided.
 - f. The School was rated good with outstanding features in its Ofsted inspection in September 2008 and exam results have placed St Mary's in the top 50 comprehensive schools in England

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am pleased to recommend that St Mary's Menston should continue to be recognised as an Investor in People. I would like to thank everyone I met for their warm welcome and willingness to share their views and experience with me.

FINDINGS AGAINST THE INVESTORS IN PEOPLE STANDARD

PLAN

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

Indicator 1

A Strategy for improving the performance of the organisation is clearly defined and understood.

- 1 St Mary's Menston has developed a detailed 3 year School Improvement Plan within the overall strategy and direction set by the Governors and Headteacher. The School Improvement Plan (SIP) sets out the Mission Statement and shows the School Targets, Key Priorities and the Self-Evaluation Plan. There are Whole School Targets, supported by Plans for each Faculty and Subject Area.
- 2 The planning process seems to have improved and be more structured with the introduction of the Performance Management Training Day in October which gives Subjects the opportunity to work together on their own Plan and then take time to have their Performance Management discussions, so that the targets of individuals link directly to the Subject Area Plan, Faculty targets and Whole School targets and priorities.
- 3 As a result the planning process is more coherent, with everyone involved in developing the SIP, so they understand the targets and priorities for the School and it is clear that they are fully engaged and committed to the central aim of ensuring that every individual student achieves their full potential.

Indicator 2

Learning and development is planned to achieve the organisation's objectives

- 4 The Training Plan, which is included in the SIP, is based on the training and development needs identified as part of the planning process. It shows why the training is being done, the expected outcomes and date and how the training will be implemented.
- 5 People interviewed said they find the Performance Management Training Day very useful to identify their training needs linked to their personal targets. Performance Management is used very positively to support people's development and identify opportunities to grow their skills and use their talents.

Indicator 3

Strategies for managing people are designed to promote equality of opportunity in the development of the organisation's people.

- 6 The School has a strong commitment to equality of opportunity and there has been a significant development in the role of support staff since the introduction of Workforce Reform, which is reflected in the inclusion of the Business and Finance Manager in to the Senior Management Team representing the Administrative Support staff.
- 7 Events such as the Catholic Ethos day, which was attended by everyone in the School, demonstrate how people come together equally in a shared community to work for the support and encouragement of every member of staff to reach their maximum potential and develop a bond of teamwork.

- 8 People said that communications in the School are good and they value the weekly Staff Bulletin, which is colour coded red or blue to link with the two week timetable. The Bulletin is very comprehensive and gives details of activities in the School and general information. The weekly Monday meetings are also seen as very helpful, including Staff Briefing, Faculty Meetings and Subject Meetings through which people are encouraged to put forward their ideas to improve performance.
- 9 The School Intranet and the Learning Platform are a useful resource for information, documents and learning materials, which is particularly helpful for teachers new to the School who are developing their lessons

Indicator 4

The capabilities managers need to lead, manage and develop people effectively are clearly defined and understood.

- 10 The management structure of the School has changed significantly since the last review with the implementation of the Teaching & Learning Responsibilities. Subjects have been combined to create six Faculties, which means that they are better integrated and can take a wider view of their activities. Teachers said they feel the new structure has enabled them to share good practice across a range of Subjects and this has been valuable to support and encourage the improvement of teaching standards and ensure a greater consistency of approach across Subjects and between Faculties.
- 11 The School places considerable emphasis on the development of management skills among staff and job descriptions set out very clearly the requirements for professional leadership and managing and developing staff. Experienced Line Managers are encouraged to support people to develop leadership and management skills through mentoring, coaching, observation and feedback, as well as constantly encouraging people to learn and try new approaches.

DO

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

Indicator 5

Managers are effective in leading, managing and developing people

- 1 The Senior Management Team is highly experienced and forward looking with a commitment to the key driving force of raising student aspirations and attainment. Staff interviewed described how the Head had developed the culture of the School to be highly focussed yet informal, with a strong emphasis on colleagues supporting each other and helping everyone to achieve their full potential.
- 2 The Performance Management process operates very effectively and staff value the advice and guidance they get from their line manager. Constructive feedback in performance discussions, coaching and through lesson observations demonstrate that managers are extremely supportive and actively involved in the personal development and achievement of their staff. They identify opportunities for projects and new initiatives, which give staff ways of widening their experience.

- 3 People said the targets they agree in their Performance Management keep them focussed on their priorities and they get a sense of achievement when they have succeeded in meeting their targets, particularly where this is recognised in their pay and grading.
- 4 Internal training for Performance Management Team Leaders and the careful recording of the process by the Personnel Manager ensure that it is robust and consistent across all Faculties and Subject areas.

Indicator 6

People's contribution to the organisation is recognised and valued

- 5 In general, people said that they feel their contribution to the success of the School is recognised and they are valued personally for their work. There were many examples where people had received positive comments, feedback and thanks for a job well done. The Teaching Assistants appreciated being thanked personally by the Head for their contribution to achieving a Grade 1 in the Ofsted report for the care, guidance and support of students. There is a culture of giving praise and sharing in the success of people's achievements which people find very satisfying.

Indicator 7

People are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility by being involved in decision-making

- 6 People throughout the School feel they are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility for improving performance and attainment. They also feel they are empowered to make decisions about things collaboratively in their Faculty and Subject meetings, as well as contributing to the SIP. People feel that their views are listened to and acted on where appropriate. Both Teachers and Support Staff gave many examples of how they contribute ideas to develop the School and look for ways of improving their skills and expertise to improve performance.
- 7 For example, the recently appointed Chef Manager has been working closely with her team to transform the catering service at the School. The menus and quality of food have been significantly improved to support the Healthy Schools Award and to show students that healthy food is part of their total learning experience. The Service is now also much more cost effective with all food prepared from fresh, rather than relying on bought in pasta sauces and ready prepared foods.

Indicator 8

People learn and develop effectively

- 8 There were many examples of people who have developed their careers at the School, from quite junior posts and have now taken on roles with considerable responsibility. Because the School has such a good reputation, it is able to recruit high quality staff who can be supported through the School to give them satisfying career development and variety, as well as continuity for the School. The School's policy of internal promotion means people are actively encouraged to apply for more senior positions when they are ready.

- 9 In seeking to make the most effective use of resources, there has been a shift towards more internal training within the School, making use of the vast experience and skills among staff, which can be shared in a way that is related to their needs and the priorities of the School. A number of CPD Working Groups have been set up on a range of topics to share ideas and good practice and staff said they are finding the Groups very helpful and stimulating.
- 10 People who had recently joined the School were very positive about their induction, which they found comprehensive and supportive. The Induction Day for new staff held in July was particularly mentioned as an extremely useful event, giving staff all the information they needed about the School, their role and the schemes of work they would be using. People said it gave them confidence to start their first day in the School, knowing they were well prepared and ready to begin.

REVIEW

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

Indicator 9

Investment in people improves the performance of the organisation

- 1 One of the significant strengths of the School is its strong commitment to the monitoring, review and evaluation of its activities. The SIP is regularly monitored and reviewed through different layers of management by the Senior Management Team, Faculty Leaders and Subject Leaders with their Teams. Self-evaluation is used to inform the development of the SIP for the following year, building on strengths and addressing areas where improvements have been identified.
- 2 The Senior Management Team also undertake an in depth Review Week of two Faculties each term, to look at the quality of Teaching and Learning and identify areas for improvement.
- 3 The impact of the training and development of staff on performance is clearly demonstrated in the improvement in student exam grades over the last few years, which has been impressive and staff are justifiably proud of the way students are progressing and achieving. There is a ‘can do’ ethos, which means that people are constantly reviewing what they are doing and seeking ways to do things more effectively.

Indicator 10

Improvements are continually made to the way people are managed and developed

- 4 The re-structure in to six Faculties has created a more effective management process, with experienced leaders having wider responsibilities, including the CPD and career progression of people in their team. The result is a more integrated approach with opportunities to share resources and good practice, but there may be some reporting anomalies which still need to be resolved.

- 5 The Catholic Ethos Training Day was a very successful event according to those interviewed and brought together staff from right across the school in an opportunity to reflect on the spiritual life of the School and their shared community.
- 6 The CPD Working Groups have also been a successful initiative to enable people to work across Faculty boundaries and think creatively about relevant issues and share ideas and good practice.

AREAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

- 1 The Performance Management process for Support Staff seems to have drifted when there was a gap waiting for the appointment of the Business and Finance Manager. Now that she is in post, it would be helpful to revive the process using more streamlined forms which have been designed. It would also be helpful to consider a team building event for Support Staff, to build their identity in playing a key role in the effective administration in the School and supporting teaching staff.
- 2 There are a number of opportunities for development which could enable the School to become even more effective including:-
 - a. Wider use of the Learning Platform across the School
 - b. Developing the Coaching Programme and Learning Walks
 - c. Using the Excellent Teacher grading for outstanding teachers
- 3 Planning, Preparation & Assessment time (PPA) could be used more productively to enable staff to have blocks of protected free 'thinking' time to develop new approaches and initiatives, rather than feeling they may be called on to cover other classes. It may also be more cost effective to have more Study Supervisors, rather than using teachers to arrange and provide cover for classes.
- 4 With the recommendation in the Ofsted report to provide further opportunities for vocational pathways and work-related learning, it might be helpful to encourage staff to look at the different style of teaching needed with the introduction of BTEC courses. The Sports College is already familiar with the change of mind-set required and it would be helpful to share the good practice they have developed.

CONCLUSION

St Mary's Menston has demonstrated a strong and genuine commitment to train and develop people and support them in moving forward in their careers. The proactive approach to internal promotion and identifying development opportunities and projects is enabling people to achieve their potential and feel valued in doing a satisfying job. Staff find the School a motivating and supportive place to work and the results they achieve with students are a tribute to their hard work and dedication.