

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE CASE STUDY:



Somervale School – Midsomer Norton

Size: 85 staff (teaching and support)

Sector: Education

Location: Midsomer Norton

Status: Initially recognised December 2001. Successful re-assessment December 2007



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Overall Impact

“Each IIP assessment offers excellent qualitative evidence of staff perceptions in how we invest in their futures. Each time we are reminded that it is the workforce that provides the impetus for what we are trying to achieve for our learners. This time re-assessment offered us a chance to validate how far we had come in developing quality performance frameworks for our support staff and how far the staff saw the contraction of the school as a threat to its future success. The feedback, as always, offered quality nuggets of information which helps to validate what we are doing and re-assure us that we are taking the staff with us on our strategic journey of school improvement”.

*Mark Kenny, Deputy Head Teacher
Responsible for Continuous Professional Learning*

The Organisation

Somervale School is an 11/18 specialist English and Media College with 700 students on roll with 120 in the Sixth Form. The school is situated in Midsomer Norton close to Bath. In its last Ofsted the school was judged as good and is in the top 40 schools in the country for improvement based on the 5A*/C measure including English and Maths.

The Challenge

The key priority areas are; Challenge, Learn, Growth and Leadership. The challenge for the school is to challenge every individual to reach their full potential in a supporting community and a modern environment. The school for example wants students to:

- enjoy and succeed in their studies
- grow as happy, confident individuals with high esteem
- be able to work confidently on their own and with other people
- show responsibility for themselves, each other and the wider local and global community
- to grow through a wide range of opportunities outside the formal curriculum

Underpinning these aims are clear measurable objectives for both the current school year and extending to identified goals until 2010.

The Strategy

The profile standard ties in with our benchmarking processes across the school. Schools are increasingly mirroring industry best practice in benchmarking performance against declared criteria. Why shouldn't we measure our staff investment effectiveness in the same way as we measure our achievement targets, behaviour effectiveness and our IT strategy effectiveness? The standard is, after all, what we would expect of ourselves as an organisation. The day and a half process of talking to staff about their jobs in relation to the standard offers insights from objective skilled interviewers on how staff feel valued and included by the organisation.

The Results

The feedback always reminds me how far we have come as an organisation as each time the feedback shows us we are addressing the issues without losing the ethos we so carefully hold close. It offers us encouragement that the innovations we introduce in teaching and learning are communicated well and understood. For instance staff understand how much we cherish the vision of students being equipped as local and global citizens for a digital future. In the constant quest for school improvement it is always worthwhile to stop and smell the roses. Quality South West assessor,

Veronica Parsons, said "There is a very positive culture of learning for all staff within the school resulting in both teaching and support staff feeling valued and understanding they have an integral part to play in the future of the school".