

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

**POST RECOGNITION REVIEW
REPORT**

For
HIGHSTED GRAMMAR SCHOOL
Site visit dates – 6th and 7th July 2010

Prepared by

John Baker
Investors in People Assessor

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1. Introduction

Highsted Grammar School is a selective community school for girls and is situated in the town of Sittingbourne, Kent. The school is judged to be outstanding by OFSTED in every area and has specialist school status in science and mathematics, Highsted has a partnership arrangement with 2 other local schools in order to provide a wide range of courses for sixth form students.

As a grammar school Highsted is proud to build on traditional values and standards to prepare its students for their future in a highly technological society.

The school expects from its students the highest standards of personal conduct, the best possible academic performance and a real commitment to the wider life of the school. In return, it helps each individual to develop their talents to the full by working in partnership with parents, by providing a stimulating yet demanding approach to teaching and learning, and by presenting challenging opportunities through a wealth of enrichment activities beyond the classroom. The school aims to provide young women and, in the Sixth Form, young men with the skills and qualities they need to serve society and the international community. Students are expected to leave school fully equipped for the next stage in their education; to be confident, positive and creative in their outlook on life; and to be at ease with themselves and others.

2. Overall findings

I was extremely impressed with the strength of evidence which exists to support the Evidence Requirements of the Standard. Highsted Grammar School is a remarkable community of people who experience inspirational leadership, the culture underpinning the Investors in People Standard remains very firmly embedded, and it was good to see the way in which the areas for further development identified at the last review have been addressed.

The school has a clear vision and strategy for improving its performance and a robust performance management framework which has a clear focus on achieving excellence in everything the school does. People are able to articulate the school's overall aims and objectives clearly and have an excellent understanding of how they are expected to contribute to its overall success at individual, team and organisational level. People also demonstrate a extremely high level of personal commitment to the school and feel they are encouraged to accept responsibility for what they do and have appropriate levels of authority and autonomy for making decisions.

People referred to the excellent working atmosphere which exists and are clearly very enthusiastic about their jobs; everyone referred to the strong personal support they received for their learning and development. They described the existence of an open and inclusive style of management throughout the school which is focused on achievement and they feel encouraged to contribute their ideas and suggestions for improvement. People felt there was a very clear commitment to their learning and development and identified that one of the great strengths of the school was the quality of the coaching and mentoring support which exists at all levels. People appear to be very happy working at the school and feel very much part of the whole school team.

The school manages diversity well and I found many good examples of learning and development opportunities taking place for people in a complete spectrum of roles; it was particularly good to see the recognition of the importance managers at all levels in the school play in improving performance and the focus on their continuing development them as leaders; the members of the Senior Leadership Group are very effective in their respective roles and have high expectations of their people; everyone is very proud of what has been achieved over the last three years. The culture underpinning the Investors in People Standard is very firmly embedded and the school demonstrates best practice in the way it manages and develops its people.

A summary of findings against each indicator is given below with more detailed narrative and analysis of the evidence supporting the Standard in Section 6 of this report

Indicator 1	Met	Indicator 6	Met
Indicator 2	Met	Indicator 7	Met
Indicator 3	Met	Indicator 8	Met
Indicator 4	Met	Indicator 9	Met
Indicator 5	Met	Indicator 10	Met

3. Strengths and areas of good practice

The review highlighted a number of significant strengths within the school, including:

- Clearly Highsted Grammar School is an exceptional place to work and it is very rare to find people who are so proud of their organisation and committed to its success; people feel truly empowered and exhibit incredible loyalty. The Headteacher demonstrates inspirational leadership and truly cares about everyone who works for the school, and this is recognised by everyone. This style of leadership is replicated by the other members of the Senior Leadership Group and permeates through to the performance of all those in managerial roles.
- The culture underpinning the Investors in People Standard is deeply embedded and the school is an example of best demonstrated practice in the way it supports and manages its people. People are closely focused on achieving excellence in everything they do and have a very clear understanding of how they are expected to contribute in achieving the school's strategies and objectives and their own department plans, and are able to articulate them clearly.
- The way that people accept ownership for their own learning and development is excellent and the use of shared practice sessions is proving to be very effective. Coaching and mentoring is strong at all levels in the school, particularly in developing leadership skills, even for pupils
- It was particularly good to see the way in which people are encouraged to develop their roles within a flexible organisation structure
- The school has high aspirations and continually challenges itself to improve its performance; there is great energy throughout the school and people at all levels are innovative and anxious to perform well. People are very proud of

- what has been achieved over the last few years and keen to see the school continue to perform well.
- There is a continuing investment in learning and development which is well planned and supported, and which is clearly linked to people's individual needs and the school's strategic performance objectives
 - People have a strong sense of ownership and feel truly empowered
 - The Headteacher is extremely well respected and an inspirational leader, managers are inspired by the headteacher and are given the autonomy to manage and lead their teams
 - People are positively encouraged to contribute ideas to help the school continuously improve
 - There is a no blame culture, everyone is encouraged to accept responsibility for what they do and learn from their mistakes
 - All those who were interviewed were passionate about what they do
 - People believe that there is transparency in everything the school does
 - People feel fully empowered and trusted
 - People are encouraged to continuously learn and develop
 - Innovative sources of learning and development are created
 - Everyone is openly consulted on all issues affecting the school
 - Department Plans and individual objectives are aligned to the School Improvement Plan
 - Objectives are set and discussed at performance management reviews
 - Excellent communication with the members of the Senior Leadership Group keeping people informed and involved
 - The school has high aspirations and challenges itself in everything that it does
 - There is clear evidence there is equal access to learning and development for everyone
 - The school has many talented and passionate people who make a significant contribution to the its success

4. Opportunities to Improve

Introduction

The school has very robust systems in place to ensure that people's learning and development needs are dealt with effectively and the main development issue is therefore to continue building on what is clearly a winning formula. One of the most telling things was that people found it extremely difficult to identify any specific areas where they felt things could be done better and it is against this background that the following areas for further development should therefore be considered.

- It will be important to continue the focus on creating innovative learning and development opportunities to meet people's needs. Shared practice sessions are being well received and proving to be a cost effective method of providing good quality learning, it will be useful to consider using other action learning techniques to meet some of the more specific needs of specialist groups. This will also strengthen the process of evaluating the outcomes of learning and development activities at individual and team level

- The school demonstrates excellent practice in the way it supports the evidence requirements of the Investors in People Standard and I was impressed with the way that it has continued to move forward since the last review. It will be useful to consider the future strategy for liP recognition and some of the more flexible options for maintaining recognition together with the potential to achieve gold recognition, one example is to use the option of a rolling review linked to the schools priorities and the ofsted framework, liP UK is also introducing additional tools such as Headway which is an interactive package designed to capture the views and opinions of the school's key stakeholders in line with ofsted requirements.
- The school is extremely strong on the quality of coaching and mentoring support which people receive and recognises its importance in achieving high levels of individual and team performance and it is important to continue to maximise the opportunities for people at all levels in the organisation to share their specialist knowledge and experience in improving the performance of others.
- The way that the school has moved forward over the last few years and the way in which it constantly challenges itself is impressive. It was clear from interviews that it is also able to create a wide range of learning and development opportunities as well as being very proactive in the way in which it encourages people to take advantage of them. The main development action which is required is to maintain the strong focus on the process of continuous improvement which exists, particularly in terms of continuing to benchmark its performance against other high performing organisations and learn from their experiences.
- It could be helpful to use **liP Interactive**. This is a free, online business support tool that is designed to help identify strengths and development areas against the Investors in People Standard, and has links to free information and resources including a library with many guides, examples and templates that can be downloaded and customised. This includes advice on areas such as Strategic Planning, Effective Management, Developing People, Culture and Communication, and Managing Performance, which link directly to the Investors in People Standard. Visit www.investorsinpeople.co.uk to register and use this service. Visiting IBP's website on a regular basis also provides the opportunity to maintain a view of the developments around the Investors in People Standard and for details of **workshops and events** across the region. Visit www.isb.org.uk for more information Useful sources for defining **Leadership and Management** capabilities include the Institute of Leadership and Management. Visit www.management-standards.org and www.businesslink.gov.uk for general business information and links to the DTI Inspirational Leadership Index. Interactive training packages are available to develop **IT skills and knowledge**. Try www.learnirect.co.uk for ideas: a good number of these courses are either free of charge or reasonably priced.

5. Conclusions

Following this visit, I am pleased to confirm that Highsted Grammar school continues to meet the requirements of The Standard part of the Investors in People framework. I would like to express my personal thanks to all those people who provided me with support

during the Review as well as those who took part in interviews. Everyone was very welcoming and their friendliness, openness and ability to articulate their views clearly helped the evidence gathering process considerably.

The maximum period between Post-Recognition Reviews is three years. However, it is the policy of Inspiring Business Performance Limited to maintain contact with you between reviews. This is done via regular e-bulletins, and contact from Inspiring Business Performance Limited and by me as your Assessor. The first contact will normally be in about six months' time, principally to find out how you are progressing with the suggested opportunities to improve and to see if you need any further support.

Planned date for next contact by your Assessor: December 2010

Signed: *John Baker*

Investors in People Assessor

Date: 20th July 2010

6. Findings against each Indicator of the Standard

Developing strategies to improve the performance of the organisation.

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

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

The Headteacher and other members of the Senior Leadership Group have a clear strategy for improving the performance of the school, which is to maximise the potential contribution of every member of staff in achieving the overall aims and objectives defined in the school's improvement plan, the contents of which are subject to regular review and incorporate the contents of the school's SEF. As part of the process of continuous improvement the structure of the plan has been refined and the contribution of stakeholders has been enhanced in defining its content. The school is focused on achieving excellence in everything it does and performance improvement has a particularly focus on sustaining the school's high standards of academic success, as well as caring for every student and helping them achieve their maximum personal potential. The Headteacher and members of the Senior Leadership Group were very clear about what the school is trying to achieve and how it impacted on the contribution people were expected to make at all levels of the organisation.

The school has a policy of open communication with everyone but formal representation is recognised with respect to any specific industrial relations issues should they arise. People in managerial roles described a number of ways in which

people are involved when developing the school's improvement plan as well as individual and team objectives, one example is the way that everyone is invited to a strategy day at the start of each academic year which is held at a local hotel, during which people are able to contribute to the content of the plan, they also described how they carry out regular performance management reviews to agree individual objectives which are linked to the school's overall aims and objectives. In addition they described how people also take part in a variety of meetings during which they are encouraged to contribute their ideas and suggestions for improvements. People were very clear that they were consulted on specific issues concerning change within the school and how their views were taken on board.

People were able to explain the overall aims and objectives of the school and their respective teams in an appropriate way. One example at team level was the way in which people in support roles were able to explain the importance of their respective roles in helping to raise levels of attainment. Other examples included the way in which someone described the school's overall targets for academic achievement and what this meant both in terms of where they needed to focus their personal effort and how they interacted with the other members of their department, and another who described how they were contributing in adding value to students during their time at the school.

Quotes included:

- *"We all go to.....each year which enables people to have their say in what's being planned so they can contribute their ideas and suggestions".*
- *There are performance management reviews as well, they look at personal objectives".*
- *"We all have to work closely together and that has a direct impact on what students achieve, the support we provide makes a big difference".*
- *"Everything's very open here I definitely feel I can have my say, we do get listened to"..... is excellent in that way,*
- *"We get plenty of opportunity to be involved in commenting on the contents of the plan and there are some good inputs".*

Summary of findings against evidence requirements for Indicator 1	
<i>1.1 Top managers make sure the organisation has a clear purpose and vision supported by a strategy for improving its performance.</i>	Met
<i>1.2 Top managers make sure the organisation has a business plan with measurable performance objectives.</i>	Met
<i>1.3 Top managers make sure there are constructive relationships with representative groups (where they exist) and the groups are consulted when developing the organisation's business plan.</i>	Not reviewed
<i>1.4 Managers can describe how they involve people when developing the organisation's business plan and when agreeing team and individual objectives.</i>	Met
<i>1.5 People who are members of representative groups can confirm that top managers make sure there are constructive relationships with the groups and they are consulted when developing the organisation's business plan.</i>	Met
<i>1.6 People can explain the objectives of their team and the organisation at a</i>	Met

<i>level that is appropriate to their role, and can describe how they are expected to contribute to developing and achieving them.</i>	
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2. Learning and development is planned to achieve the organisation's objectives.

The main focus for learning and development within the school is to ensure that people are able to maximise their personal contribution in achieving the overall aims and objectives defined in the school's improvement plan and this is achieved by the use of a combination of in house and external learning and development activities. The Headteacher and other members of the Senior Leadership Group were clear about the school's strategic learning and development needs and were particularly focussed on making sure that the opportunities for learning and development were appropriate and flexible, they are also actively involved in providing people with coaching and mentoring support and were very clear about how the learning and development which was taking place impacted on the achievement of the school's overall aims and objectives. Resources are allocated to accommodate the direct costs associated with people's development, and the overall learning and development needs of the school are collated centrally by a designated member of the Senior Leadership Group. The outcomes of learning and development are evaluated in a variety of ways such as through the performance management process and the regular reviews which the Senior Leadership Group carry out to assess the progress being made in achieving the performance targets defined in the school's improvement plan.

People in managerial roles were clear about the needs of their respective teams and able to describe a range of learning and development activities which had taken place to meet them. Examples included the way that a number of people had taken part in management training packages such as Leading from the Middle and Leadership Pathways, in each instance the ultimate impact had been evaluated by observing the improved performance of the individuals concerned. People in managerial roles are also actively involved in carrying out performance management reviews and other informal one to ones, as well as providing direct coaching support for their people. These processes also facilitate the planning and evaluation of training and development activities against specific team objectives.

People were able to confirm that they had a clear understanding of what their learning and development was intended to achieve for themselves, their respective team and the school as a whole. People described how they took part in performance management reviews with their respective managers to identify their personal learning and development needs, and they also described how provision subsequently took place. Quotes included:

- *"We talk about that sort of thing in my performance review, but we get lots of other chances to talk about the training, Is responsible for co-ordinating CPD".*
- *"We're able to influence what we do and a lot of the learning I do takes place all the time really, shadowing others, being coached etc".*
- *"Everything's very well structured and there's a lot of support".*

- *Our development's well supported we do lots of different things, a lot of training takes place in the school but there's more formal that takes place as well, we go away on seminars and things".*

Summary of findings against evidence requirements for Indicator 2	
<i>2.1 Top managers can explain the organisation's learning and development needs, the plans and resources in place to meet them, how these link to achieving specific objectives and how the impact will be evaluated.</i>	Met
<i>2.2 Managers can explain team learning and development needs, the activities planned to meet them, how these link to achieving specific team objectives and how the impact will be evaluated.</i>	Met
<i>2.3 People can describe how they are involved in identifying their learning and development needs and the activities planned to meet them.</i>	Met
<i>2.4 People can explain what their learning and development activities should achieve for them, their team and the organisation.</i>	Met

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

The Headteacher and other members of the Senior Leadership Group encourage people to contribute their ideas and suggestions for improvement and to express their opinions on a range of issues in a variety of ways. Various meetings are held at team and organisational level and during these people are encouraged to contribute their ideas for improving the performance of the school and their respective teams. Performance reviews and regular contact between managers and their people enable them to get feedback about the impact of their contribution at individual and team level, and how they can improve their personal performance. People in senior managerial roles are also actively involved in training others as well as providing direct coaching and mentoring support.

The school has a clearly defined equal opportunities policy and demonstrates a commitment to provide everyone with appropriate support for their learning and development which is widely understood. I was impressed with the importance given to learning and development within the school and what is clearly embedded learning culture.

People in managerial roles were able to describe how they were effective in making sure that people had fair access to the necessary support for their learning and development. The people that I interviewed were able to give examples of learning and development activities their people had taken part in and described a range of ways in which their needs had been met which included external provision, in house training, a range of seminars, individual CPD activities, coaching etc., they also described how people had been encouraged to take on specific pieces of work to aid their personal

development. People were very clear that there is a genuine commitment to them as individuals and that their needs were dealt with fairly.

People provided a number of examples of how they have been encouraged to improve their own and other people’s performance. One was the way in which people described how they go to a local hotel at the start of each academic year and involved in the construction of the school improvement plan; another was the way in which people described how they had been consulted on a number of specific issues within the school either formally or informally.

Quotes included:

- *“Everyone gets the opportunity, some people have a greater need than others but everything’s done very fairly”*
- *“Everyone’s fully involved, it’s as simple as that”.*
- *“We do a lot of training, it goes on all the time one way or another, the shared practice sessions are very good”*
- *“Everyone’s very supportive; you see it all the time.....’s always talking to us and we all get treated well like that”.*
- *“.....is really good as far as that’s concerned, I’m always being asked what I think”.*
- *“I’ve been able to have a say in what I will be doing and I’m able to make a better contribution as a result”.*
- *“I’ve been able to take on more responsibility as a result of the encouragement and support I’ve received, but it’s that sort of school anyway”.*

Summary of findings against evidence requirements for Indicator 3	
<i>3.1 Top managers can describe strategies they have in place to create an environment where everyone is encouraged to contribute ideas to improve their own and other people’s performance.</i>	Met
<i>3.2 Top managers recognise the different needs of people and can describe strategies they have in place to make sure everyone has appropriate and fair access to the support they need and there is equality of opportunity for people to learn and develop which will improve their performance</i>	Met
<i>3.3 Managers recognise the different needs of people and can describe how they make sure everyone has appropriate and fair access to the support they need and there is equality of opportunity for people to learn and develop which will improve their performance.</i>	Met
<i>3.4 People believe managers are genuinely committed to making sure everyone has appropriate and fair access to the support they need and there is equality of opportunity for them to learn and develop which will improve their performance.</i>	Met
<i>3.5 People can give examples of how they have been encouraged to contribute ideas to improve their own and other people’s performance.</i>	Met

4. The capabilities managers need to lead, manage and develop people

effectively are clearly defined and understood.

The Headteacher and other members of the Senior Leadership Group were very clear about the way in which people in managerial roles are expected to perform in the way they support their people and the associated skills, knowledge and behaviours are clearly understood. People in managerial roles have specific responsibility for carrying out performance management reviews and they are also directly involved in carrying out the induction of new starts and supporting people's in-house learning and development. The careful consideration which is given to the appointment of people in managerial roles is also a good indication of the understanding which exists of the need to ensure that managers have the necessary skills, knowledge and attributes to lead manage and develop their people effectively. The Headteacher and other members of the Senior Leadership Group were also able to describe how people were encouraged to attend formal management training programmes such as the Leading from the Middle programme and Leadership Pathways; I was very impressed with the capabilities managers' demonstrate and the strong leadership they provide.

People in managerial roles were able to describe how they were expected to support their people. They identified that they achieved this by having a clear understanding of what they were expected to achieve within their respective areas of responsibility and adopting a style of management which is focused on encouraging people to accept ownership and responsibility for what they do. They were able to give examples of their specific involvement in managing and developing people by describing how they were involved in setting up and running team meetings, carrying out performance management reviews and informal one to ones, dealing with issues of poor performance in a positive and supportive way and being actively involved in the training of their people etc. They identified how they had become equipped to do this by using the skill and knowledge they had acquired earlier in their careers or by more recent formal learning and development initiatives such as Leadership Pathways and the Leading from the Middle programme

People were very clear about the way that managers should perform in providing them with effective support. They described how they expected them to have strong leadership and communication skills and the ability to provide them with clear direction for their efforts, feedback about their performance and support for their learning and development. People described how this was achieved using processes such as performance management reviews, various meetings and one to one contact on a day to day basis; they also identified they expected managers to be able to motivate individuals and teams, and provide coaching and mentoring support for their learning and development. People were extremely complimentary about the abilities of managers and felt that there was a very open and supportive environment which encouraged them to work together in support of the school's overall strategies and key objectives.

Quotes included:

- *"I think inspirational is an appropriate word, the standard of leadership is very strong".*
- *"It's a very strong team, they support each other and they support us".*
- *"They provide leadership and support, they lead from the front and they've got incredible energy".*

- *“It’s a good balance of skills here, leadership, communication, coaching etc”.*

Summary of findings against evidence requirements for Indicator 4	
<i>4.1 Top managers can describe the knowledge, skills and behaviours managers need to lead, manage and develop people effectively, and the plans they have in place to make sure managers have these capabilities.</i>	Met
<i>4.2 Managers can describe the knowledge; skills and behaviours they need to lead, manage and develop people effectively.</i>	Met
<i>4.3 People can describe what their manager should be doing to lead, manage and develop them effectively.</i>	Met
<i>4.4 Top managers can define the current and future capabilities managers need in line with the organisation’s purpose, vision and values</i>	Met
<i>4.10 Managers can confirm that they are regularly reviewed against the capabilities and receive constructive feedback on their performance</i>	
<i>4.11 Managers can confirm they are provided with the help they need to develop the capabilities</i>	

Taking action to improve the performance of the organisation.

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

5. Managers are effective in leading, managing and developing people.

People with management responsibility were able to describe how they were effective in supporting their people and how they motivated them by adopting a supportive and participative style of management, by providing specific direction for people’s efforts and feedback about the way they were performing. They also described how they were actively involved in running regular meetings, carrying out performance management reviews and dealing with any personal performance issues as and when they arose. A further example is the way that managers are involved in supporting the learning and development needs of NQTs.

People in managerial roles identified that the core process for providing people with feedback about their performance was performance management. They identified that people were encouraged to evaluate their own performance prior to reviews taking place and how this formed the basis of further discussion during the review itself. However people in managerial roles also identified that providing feedback was something that was taking place all the time on a day to day basis.

People were able to provide examples of how their managers were effective in supporting them. One concerned the way in which someone described the personal coaching they were receiving from their manager to help them with their professional development. Another was the way that one manager was actively involved in

providing direct support in helping someone achieve a professional qualification.

People described how people in managerial roles were responsible for implementing performance reviews consistently and how these was supplemented by frequent informal one to ones and regular communication about what was happening in the school and their respective areas. People described how these processes enabled them to receive regular and constructive feedback about how they were performing.

Quotes included:

- *“Giving feedback is something I do all the time, I see people every day and we have regular meetings so we discuss how they’re performing all the time.”*
- *“We have regular observations and performance reviews and they give me the chance get formal feedback, but it goes on all the time.”*
- *“I feel I get the support that I need, ...gives me lots of help like that and is available whenever I want to discuss anything”.*
- *“..... is very experienced and things are OK like that, there’s a lot of pressure in teaching these days and I think managers have done very well under the circumstances”.*
- *“.... And I spoke about this when we last met and I’ve been able to do more work in that area which has been really beneficial to me, I get a lot of feedback from all sorts of other sources as well, things are very open here.”*

Summary of findings against evidence requirements for Indicator 5	
<i>5.1 Managers can explain how they are effective in leading, managing and developing people.</i>	Met
<i>5.2 Managers can give examples of how they give people constructive feedback on their performance regularly and when appropriate.</i>	Met
<i>5.3 People can explain how their managers are effective in leading, managing and developing them</i>	Met
<i>5.4 People can give examples of how they receive constructive feedback on their performance regularly and when appropriate.</i>	Met
<i>5.9 Mangers can describe how they lead, manage and develop people in line with the organisation’s values</i>	
<i>5.10 Managers can describe how they encourage people to work together and share knowledge within and across teams</i>	
<i>5.11 Managers can describe how they make sure that people receive information, advice and guidance to help them plan and develop their career</i>	Met
<i>5.13 Managers can describe how they act on feedback from all levels in the organisation to improve the way they lead, manage and develop people</i>	Met

6. People’s contribution to the organisation is recognised and valued.

People in managerial roles were able to give a number of examples of how they recognise and value people’s contribution. One person described how they openly shared people’s personal successes within their team. Another described how they

used performance reviews and individual one to ones with their people to provide them with personal feedback about their contribution and the value which is placed upon it.

People were able to describe how they contributed to the overall success of the school and their respective teams, they were very positive about the way their contribution was recognised and valued and described how they received public recognition for their achievements during team meetings, on an individual basis during performance management reviews, and on an ad hoc basis at the time the contribution was recognised. One example was the way that someone had received specific feedback from a member of the Senior Leadership Group after achieving particularly good results in their subject area.

Quotes included:

- *“I have to exercise a balance, it’s important to recognise what people do as individuals, but it’s also important to recognise the team’s achievements as well”.*
- *“I get direct feedback from and that’s very important to me and the rest of the team”.*
- *“I’ve been allowed to use my previous experience and that’s meant I’ve been able to make a bigger contribution”.*
- *“I have contact with lots of people in different ways and they form an opinion of the school through me, if I get it wrong it reflects badly on us all”.*
- *“We talk about that sort of thing at my performance review, but I know the effect I have all the time, I’m always getting that sort of feedback”.*
- *“.....spoke to me about how well I’d done afterwards and that meant a lot”.*
- *“We get a lot of pats on the back,knows exactly what’s going on in the school, we always get a personal word of congratulation when we do something well”.*

Summary of findings against evidence requirements for Indicator 6	
<i>6.1 Managers can give examples of how they recognise and value people’s individual contribution to the organisation.</i>	Met
<i>6.2 People can describe how they contribute to the organisation and believe they make a positive difference to its performance.</i>	Met
<i>6.3 People can describe how their contribution to the organisation is recognised and valued.</i>	Met
<i>6.13 Managers can describe how they encourage people to recognise the contribution their colleagues make to the organisation</i>	

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

People in managerial roles were able to describe how they promoted a sense of ownership amongst their people and involved them in the decision making process and how responsibility was being pushed further down the organisation. The way that a number of people have been encouraged to develop their personal roles on the basis

of their successful performance is one good example of how managers involve their people and encourage ownership and responsibility. People in managerial roles were also able to describe how the nature of people's jobs meant that they needed to have autonomy and clear accountability for what they do and how this naturally meant that in many instances people are required to assume high levels of responsibility for decision making

People were very clear that they were involved in making decisions and were able to describe how they took part in working parties and participated in the strategy day held at the start of the autumn term each year. A number of people also described how the nature of their respective jobs meant that they have a great deal of personal responsibility for what they do which involved them in making appropriate decisions. People were very positive about the encouragement they received. One example was the way that people had been encouraged to take ownership of for a new initiative. Another was the way in which someone else was able to describe how they had been encouraged to be actively involved in looking at ways to improve levels of academic achievement with one group of students. The shared practice sessions are also an example of how people can decide what subjects they wish to focus on for their learning and development

Quotes included:

- *"We all went into individual groups to discuss it, we all had a chance to have our say, and that meant that everyone signed up to the plan, we all have a common understanding of what we're trying to achieve".*
- *"We were involved in the decision, we were able to make our views known and they took account of what we said".*
- *".....has always encouraged me to take on new things and I get challenged to do more, everything's very good like that".*
- *"I think we get plenty of opportunity to take ownership for what we do, it's that sort of place".*

Summary of findings against evidence requirements for Indicator 7	
<i>7.1 Managers can describe how they promote a sense of ownership and responsibility by encouraging people to be involved in decision-making, both individually and through representative groups, where they exist.</i>	Met
<i>7.2 People can describe how they are encouraged to be involved in decision-making that affects the performance of individuals, teams and the organisation, at a level that is appropriate to their role.</i>	Met
<i>7.3 People can describe how they are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility for decisions that affect the performance of individuals, teams and the organisation, at a level that is appropriate to their role.</i>	Met
<i>7.12 People can give examples of how they accept ownership for decisions that affect the performance of individuals, teams and the organisation at a level that is appropriate to their role</i>	

8. People learn and develop effectively.

People in managerial roles were able to provide me with a range of examples of how they made sure that people’s learning development needs were met, which included a variety of external courses, development days, coaching and mentoring, and individual tuition in the workplace. People in managerial roles also described how they were involved in agreeing clear objectives for formal training activities as well as evaluating the impact of the outcomes. They also described how they were actively involved in ensuring that the induction of new starts was carried out effectively and that people’s initial job training needs were met. I was particularly impressed with the way in which people’s CPD is supported and the needs of those new to the teaching profession such as NQTs are met.

Everyone was able to confirm that they had taken part in a range of learning and development activities and how this had impacted on their role. One example concerned the need for someone to attend a course in their specialist area and the way in which appropriate provision was arranged with an external provider. The person concerned was able to describe how they had been able to extend their knowledge base and how this had subsequently enabled them to improve the quality of their work.

Those people who had joined the school in the recent past were able to confirm how they had gone through a well structured period of induction and initial job training, they described how this had given them the opportunity to gain an excellent understanding of what the school was trying to achieve and understand the way in which it was structured and how they were expected to contribute to its success.

Quotes included:

- *“The shared practice sessions are relay good, the fact that we’re all able to have a say in what we do and that means it’s all relevant to what we do and it means we can apply what we’ve learnt more effectively”.*
- *“The work I did was really helpful, it gave me much more of an understanding of what I could with the system and I can do things much more quickly now, It’s made life easier for me and I now have time to do more things”.*
- *“I was pleased with the amount of time that they spent with me and making sure I knew what was going on in the school, they introduced me to people and after I started I had regular meetings with..... and everything was very good”.*
- *“I’ve have been able to make a lot of progress as a result of the support they’ve given me, it’s given me a lot of confidence and it all helps you to perform better”.*
- *“We get a lot of coaching here and that’s really effective”.*

Summary of findings against evidence requirements for Indicator 8	
<i>8.1 Managers can describe how they make sure people’s learning and development needs are met.</i>	Met
<i>8.2 People can describe how their learning and development needs have been met, what they have learnt and how they have applied this in their role.</i>	Met
<i>8.3 People who are new to the organisation, and those new to a role, can describe how their induction has helped them to perform effectively.</i>	Met

Evaluating the impact on the performance of the organisation.

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

9. Investment in people improves the performance of the organisation.

The Headteacher and other members of the Senior Leadership Group were able to describe the resources allocated to meet people's learning and development needs and between them were able to explain how the school budgeted to meet the direct costs of learning and development provision associated with meeting the needs that had been identified, they also described how the indirect resources associated with in house training, lost time, travel, accommodation etc, are included within general overheads. I was impressed with the level of direct and indirect resources which continue to be invested to support people's learning and development. Records of the training and development activity which takes place are kept centrally.

The Headteacher and other members of the Senior Leadership Group were also clear about how learning and development has improved the performance of the school and their respective areas of responsibility. A good example is way in which the school has achieved a continuing improvement in its performance as a result of the sound skill and knowledge base which has been developed as a result of the investment that has been made in people's learning and development. Another is the way in which people are encouraged to take advantage of learning and development opportunities to enable them to maximise their personal potential. They were also able to describe how managers had regular contact with all their people and how this enabled them to discuss the outcomes of development activities and how they impact on people's performance, they also described how this information was captured and analysed, and in turn used to inform the school's future strategy for improving its performance.

People in managerial roles were able to give a number of examples of how learning and development had improved people's personal performance and the school as a whole. One was the way in which someone had achieved a nationally recognised qualification and how this had led to an improvement in their personal contribution and the achievement of individual students. Another was the way that someone described how they had attended a shared practice session and how this had enabled them to learn with their colleagues and expand their knowledge base. People were clear about the impact of their development on the school's performance.

Quotes included:

- *"Since we've used this approach there's been an improvement in performance, which has had a beneficial impact on the school".*
- *"..... has become much more proficient and it's shown in their personal achievement."*
- *"The feedback in this area has been very positive and that reflects the investment we've made in their training, just look at our last Ofsted result."*
- *"The learning and development I've done means I'm already getting better*

results in that area, I understand what the problems are and that's good for everyone, not just me".

- *"I've really benefitted from the development I've had and the school's benefitted as well".*
- *"We do a lot more training now which is linked to what we're doing on a day to day basis and that means it's very clear what the impact is."*

Summary of findings against evidence requirements for Indicator 9	
<i>9.1 Top managers can describe the organisation's overall investment of time, money and resources in learning and development.</i>	Met
<i>9.2 Top managers can explain, and quantify where appropriate, how learning and development has improved the performance of the organisation.</i>	Met
<i>9.3 Top managers can describe how the evaluation of their investment in people is used to develop their strategy for improving the performance of the organisation.</i>	Met
<i>9.4 Managers can give examples of how learning and development has improved the performance of their team and the organisation.</i>	Met
<i>9.5 People can give examples of how learning and development has improved their performance, the performance of their team and that of the organisation.</i>	Met

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

The Headteacher and other members of the Senior Leadership Group were able to give examples of how they had made improvements to the way they manage and develop their people as a result of evaluation. One example is the way that responsibility has been pushed further down the organisation and leadership capacity has been developed from within the school. The creation of self directed learning opportunities to ensure that people's needs are met in the most effective way is a further example. The way in which everyone is involved in a planning and strategy day at the start of the autumn term is another example of how things get better. An additional example is the way that people at all levels have been encouraged to develop their personal roles as a result of the evaluation of the outcomes of earlier development activities. Someone described how they had created the opportunity for one of their people to take on increased management responsibility and how they had become more involved in coaching and mentoring the individual concerned. The way in which managers have continued to refine the performance management review process and ensure that the outcomes are dealt with effectively is also an example

People were very clear that the way in which the school manages and develops its people has continued to improve.

Quotes included:

- *"It's difficult to improve on brilliant, they're on top of everything, and as soon as something changes they're ready for it".*

- *The day we have at the hotel is a good example of something that's better*
- *“The way we're managed has always been excellent, I think there's been a greater focus on encouraging leadership though and that's at all levels, even the students”.*

Summary of findings against evidence requirements for Indicator 10	
<i>10.1 Top managers can give examples of how the evaluation of their investment in people has resulted in improvements in the organisation's strategy for managing and developing people.</i>	Met
<i>10.2 Managers can give examples of improvements they have made to the way they manage and develop people.</i>	Met
<i>10.3 People can give examples of improvements that have been made to the way the organisation manages and develops its people.</i>	Met

A. Key Information

Organisation	Highsted Grammar School	Date of last assessment/review	2007
Date of plan	21 st July 2010	Review date for this plan	21 st July 2011
Proposed next review date	7 th July 2013		

B. Key Contacts

Client Key Contact	John Deakin	E	j.deakin@highsted.kent.sch.uk	T	01795 424223
Assessor	John Baker	E	stacks@btopenworld.com	T	01795 532826
Client Coordinator	Sherrie McDonald	E	sherrie.mcdonald@qse.org.uk	T	01329 822073

C. Recommended Future Activity

Development Area	Objective of Development, i.e. expected outcome	Organisation Activity	Person Responsible	Timescale / Due Date for Completion	Suggested Support from Centre/Specialist/others
Continuing to create innovative learning and development opportunities	Cost effective solutions to meet the people's learning and development needs which are closely aligned to performance improvement objectives and also strengthen the process of evaluating the outcomes of learning and development activities				

	at individual, team and organisational level				
Leadership	There has been a focus on pushing responsibility further down the organisation and developing leadership capacity from within. Continuing to pursue this approach will help fuel the process of continuous improvement and further enable people to maximise their contribution at individual, team and organisational level				
Gold recognition and the future use of the choices framework and new liP tools such as “Headway” and the option of rolling review	The achievement of gold recognition and public recognition that the school demonstrates best practice in the way that it manages and develops its people. An liP review strategy linked to the key issues affecting the school’s future performance.				

Assessment Summary Chart

- Evidence requirement in scope: met
- Evidence requirement in scope: not me
- Evidence requirement not in scope

INDICATORS

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COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE