

Commercial in Confidence

Project Number
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Investors in People Post Recognition Review Report for

Robert Clack School

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Investor in People Assessor

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▶ Introduction

The school has been classed as 'outstanding' by Ofsted. In terms of its leadership, planning and people management the school is a role model in every aspect. Interviewees acknowledge and respect the excellent leadership found at the school and cite leadership as the ultimate factor for the school's success. The schools plans are comprehensive and there are clear links between plans. Interviewees reported that they are very well managed and supported.

Since the last Investors in People (IiP) Review, the school has continued to improve, has successfully completed an Ofsted inspection and staff turnover remains very low, particularly for a London school.

The IiP Review involved interviewing 32 people. There were four changes to the original list as these people were out of school on the days the interviews took place. The interviewees included new starters, people who had recently been promoted, full and part time staff and union representatives. At the end of the on-site interviews, feedback was given to the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher.

The Assessor would like to thank everyone who took part in the interviews and thank Michelle for helping to organise the review and for ensuring interviews ran to time.

▶ Executive Summary

The Executive Summary extracts the key positive findings of the assessment and highlights some development areas the school may want to consider as they plan for the new academic year.

▶ Areas of particular strength or effective practice

The school is very good at planning. There are several plans including Departmental Plans and a School Development Plan. These are produced by involving staff at various meetings and when completing the Self Evaluation.

People believe they are well managed and appreciate how accessible managers make themselves. Interviewees like to receive feedback as it helps them develop and makes them feel valued members of the school.

Interviewees enjoy the opportunity to discuss their performance and training needs at the appraisals and believe the changes have improved the process.

The most striking feature of the school are the people. They are enthusiastic, passionate, motivated and want to do a good job.

Senior managers are held in high esteem by staff and there is warm praise for their approach and accessibility. People believe it is the quality of the senior team that is a major factor for the school being so successful and such a great place to work.

▶ **Areas where development could be considered**

The aims of the school are found in a number of handbooks. The school may want to consider putting a list of the overall aims as an introduction to the School Development Plan and Departmental Plans to help improve the links between the school's aims and annual targets even further.

All the aims are focused on the children. Organisations usually have at least one aim dedicated to staff, for example how the school aims to develop and retain high quality staff.

The school may want to consider applying for Train to Gain funding for employees to achieve relevant Level 2 and in some cases Level 3 NVQs.

Corporate and Social Responsibility (CSR) is extremely topical in the UK. The school may want to consider this further in its planning because the school is at the heart of the local community and has a great impact on everyone in the area.

It could be beneficial for the school and future managers if managers agree and document the behaviours, knowledge and skills required by a Robert Clack manager. This could then be used to help judge the effectiveness of managers and identify their development needs.

There are several other models of best practice and awards the school could consider achieving, for example the Green Mark, EQFM or entry into the Sunday Times Best Companies to Work For.

▶ **Assessment Findings**

Developing strategies to improve the performance of the organisation

An Investor in People develops effective strategies to improve the performance of the organisation

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

Indicator met

- *Top managers make sure the organisation has a clear purpose and vision supported by a strategy for improving its performance.*
- *Top managers make sure the organisation has a business plan with measurable performance objectives.*
- *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.*
- *Managers can describe how they involve people when developing the organisation's business plan and when agreeing team and individual objectives.*
- *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.*
- *People can explain the objectives of their team and the organisation at a level that is appropriate to their role, and can describe how they are expected to contribute to developing and achieving them.*

The school is good at planning as witnessed by the School Development Plan. The school has clearly defined its overall aims (1.1), which include

- To promote a culture of achievement.
- To prepare students for adult life.
- To provide a well-ordered and stimulating environment.
- To develop the individual on the basis of mutual respect and equal opportunity.
- To encourage participation and excellence in every aspect of school life.

These aims are found in a number of the school's handbook. The school may want to consider putting a list of the overall aims as an introduction to the School Development Plan and Departmental Plans to help improve the links between the school's aims and annual targets even further. Also all the aims are focused on the children. Organisations usually have at least one aim dedicated to staff which could state how the school aims to develop and retain high quality staff for example.

The School Development Plan identifies the key challenges and sets action plans for improvement (1.2). These include

- Curriculum
- Every Child Matters
- Teaching and Learning
- Staff and Management

Managers can describe how they involve people further when developing these objectives, for example through discussions at team and individual meetings (1.4). People are involved in discussing how they and their team will help achieve the various school targets and they can also be involved in the Self Evaluation.

People can describe the aims of the school and how they can contribute (1.6). For example

- ***“We want to add value to the education of the students.....and I work to do that in my subject”***
- ***“I help the teacher in the lessons with students who are statemented so they can achieve as well”***
- ***“This school is great at getting the most out of its students”***

Management has an on-going dialogue with Trade Unions and involves them in decisions that could affect their members (1.3 & 1.5)

2. Learning and development is planned to achieve the organisation’s objectives

Indicator met

- *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.*
- *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.*
- *People can describe how they are involved in identifying their learning and development needs and the activities planned to meet them.*
- *People can explain what their learning and development activities should achieve for them, their team and the organisation.*

The government has set a very ambitious target that everyone who is employed should be qualified up to NVQ Level 2. This would be a great financial undertaking by employers so the government has launched its Train to Gain campaign which provides funding for employees to achieve relevant Level 2 and in some cases Level 3 NVQs. This funding could be particularly useful for support staff as they could enrol for qualifications

such as teaching assistant, business administration, IT or team leading. Further information is available on the Train to Gain website www.traintogain.gov.uk

Top managers explained the organisational learning and development needs as

- Updating subject skills
- New examinations
- Improving the quality of teaching and learning
- Management Development

Top managers can describe the resources that are allocated to achieving the learning needs, the activities planned and how the impact will be evaluated (2.1).

Examples given of resources include

- Twilight sessions
- Internal expertise
- External courses and conferences
- The Borough's training courses

Examples of activities planned include

- Follow up to the literacy twilight session
- One to one coaching and mentoring
- Visits to other schools

Examples given of how the impact will be evaluated include

- Discussions at appraisals
- As part of the Self Evaluation
- Results of the Ofsted inspection

Managers can explain team learning and development needs and the activities planned to meet them (2.2), for example

- ***“The examinations are changing in September and we have to get up to speed on that so people are attending courses and then feeding back to the rest of the department”***
- ***“Things like literacy and SEN are across the curriculum so we are having twilight sessions on subjects like that”***

People can describe how they are involved in the identifying their learning and development needs (2.3). This includes discussions with managers at team and individual meetings and being aware of the training opportunities available through the Borough's Education Department, the Institute of Education and private providers, for example

- ***“I discuss my training needs at the appraisal and my Head of Department will suggest things as well”***
- ***“If I want some training I simply say this is what I want to do and we sit down and discuss it”***

The appraisal has changed recently and managers and staff believe the changes have improved the discussion and the process. People now think the appraisals are more focused resulting in more relevant targets which are easier to measure. People believe that the performance management system makes people accountable and enjoy the opportunity it gives to reflect and discuss what they want to do.

People are clear about what their learning and development activities should achieve for them (2.4). Examples given include

- ***“I use Integris and Oracle in my job and I go to an update run by the Borough every six months”***
- ***“We try to share knowledge and practice so I'm going to watch one of my colleagues teach a lesson”***

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

Indicator met

- *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.*
- *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.*
- *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.*
- *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.*
- *People can give examples of how they have been encouraged to contribute ideas to improve their own and other people's performance.*

Corporate and Social Responsibility (CSR) is extremely topical in the UK and has evolved for most organisations from simply donating money to charity. Robert Clack School is at the heart of the local community and has a great impact on everyone in the area. Every organisation is responsible for their social and environmental impacts – managing those impacts in a proactive manner is part of behaving in a socially responsible manner. Think of social responsibility as a commitment to consider all the different stakeholders who are affected by an organisation's actions. This ranges from employees, to the local community, to local and global environments and to supply chains.

Organisations can move towards social responsibility by considering the following

- **Policy** – What is the theory and how can it be put into practice in your organisation?
- **Practice** – What practical measures can make a difference in your organisation? This could range from managing waste to implementing better payment procedures.
- **Stakeholders** – How could effective communication impact your stakeholders? Look at opening a dialogue that engages employees, parents, regulatory bodies and suppliers.

For more information and detailed planning tools, visit www.smallbusinessjourney.com

Top managers have created an environment where everyone is encouraged to contribute ideas (3.1). This is helped by having

- An open door policy
- An encouraging ethos where people are happy to try out new ideas
- Managers that are approachable and accessible
- Appraisals and observations
- Regular meetings

Top managers and managers recognise that different groups of people have different needs (3.2 & 3.3). For example

- Management - coaching and mentoring in the management role
- Teaching staff - the new examinations and subject updates
- Teaching assistants - NVQs and subject knowledge
- Support staff - IT and systems

People believe managers are genuinely committed to making sure everyone has appropriate and fair access to the support and training they need (3.4). They described how managers are accessible and able to direct them to appropriate training and resources. For example

- ***“If you need any help you can go to any Manager and they will make time for you and be willing to help you”***
- ***“My manager is always telling me about training opportunities.....we don’t just wait for the appraisal”***

People are encouraged to put forward ideas (3.5). This occurs at individual, team and staff meetings and at in-house training sessions. Examples include how to improve

- Teaching and learning
- Exam results
- Analysis of student data

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

Indicator met

- *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.*
- *Managers can describe the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to lead, manage and develop people effectively.*
- *People can describe what their manager should be doing to lead, manage and develop them effectively.*

Top managers and managers are able to describe the knowledge, skills and behaviours managers need to lead, manage and develop people effectively, (4.1 & 4.2). These include

- Being open and honest
- Being available and interested in their team members
- Listening to staff and helping them solve problems
- Respecting the views of others
- Coaching and supporting
- Managing performance

People can describe what their manager should be doing to lead, manage and develop them effectively (4.3). Examples include

- ***“Give me support and back up when I need it”***
- ***“Help me develop by giving me feedback on my performance”***
- ***“Conduct my appraisal, let me know how I’m doing and suggest how I can improve”***

The management style at the school has evolved since the Headteacher has been in post. Interviewees believe the style has developed because the Headteacher is a role model of the behaviour required by a good manager and others have followed his lead. It could be beneficial for the school and future managers if managers agree and document the behaviours, knowledge and skills required by a Robert Clack manager. This could then be used to help judge the effectiveness of managers and identify their development needs.

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

Indicator met

- *Managers can explain how they are effective in leading, managing and developing people.*
- *Managers can give examples of how they give people constructive feedback on their performance regularly and when appropriate.*
- *People can explain how their managers are effective in leading, managing and developing them.*
- *People can give examples of how they receive constructive feedback on their performance regularly and when appropriate.*

People think that Robert Clack is a 'good school to work for'. The assessor has worked with hundreds of organisations and has found in good companies there are two common themes. The first is the attitude, actions and behaviour of the senior team. This filters down the organisation and determines whether staff feel the working atmosphere is good, bad or OK. The second theme is the relationship between the line manager and a member of staff. In good organisations this is an adult relationship which means managers do not get angry, shout or blame people but discuss problems and agree a course of action. The interviewees experience these two common themes at Robert Clack.

Managers can explain how they are effective in leading, managing and developing people (5.1), for example

- ***"I know I'm effective when people are happy to ask for my support and they act on my advise"***
- ***"By making sure people have the development they need"***
- ***".....being available to help them and by conducting observations and appraisals"***

Managers give people constructive feedback on performance and people confirmed it takes place (5.2 & 5.4). This includes

- During the appraisal
- Following an observation
- At team and individual meetings

Interviewees reported that the leadership demonstrated at the school is outstanding. The reasons why people think the leadership is good include

- the style is open and honest
- there is mutual respect
- leaders are accessible and approachable
- it is consistent

The school uses coaching effectively with more senior managers developing junior and potential managers in their role. In the assessor's experience this is one of the best ways to develop managers as discussions usually targets live issues that managers are experiencing.

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

Indicator met

- *Managers can give examples of how they recognise and value people's individual contribution to the organisation.*
- *People can describe how they contribute to the organisation and believe they make a positive difference to its performance.*
- *People can describe how their contribution to the organisation is recognised and valued.*

One of the most striking features of the school is the quality of the people. Interviewees spoke about

- Their enthusiasm for their work
- Their passion for education
- Wanting to do a good all the time
- How they are developed and challenged
- How they enjoyed working at the school
- How they believe that Robert Clack is a great school to work for
- How they feel valued members of staff

Examples given by managers of how they recognise and value people's individual contribution (6.1) include

- ***"There are certain times such as team meetings or individually at the appraisal that you can officially give them the recognition"***
- ***"The school is very good at rewarding good performance by giving people extra responsibility and money"***
- ***"I always try to comment on good work....even if it's just saying thank you"***

People can describe how they contribute to the success of the organisation (6.2), for example

- ***"I support the teacher in lessons by helping students with special needs"***
- ***"We go the extra mile here to really add value to each individual"***
- ***"Everyone wants to do their best for the students"***

People can describe how their contribution to the organisation is recognised (6.3), for example

- ***"Other staff will always say thank you for the work I do"***
- ***"I've been given a promotion"***
- ***"The Headteacher is often telling us how well we are doing"***

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

Indicator met

- *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.*
- *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.*
- *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*

The planning process forces people to be involved in making early decisions of how targets will be achieved (7.1). This happens at individual, team and whole school meetings. The open style of management promotes a sense of ownership amongst team members and helps to encourage people to make decisions about their planning and delivery. Examples of how managers involve people in decision making include

- Producing plans for the school, department and lessons
- Discussions about work as a team and individually
- Providing ideas for improvements

People believe that they are involved in decision making (7.2). Examples given of when they are involved include

- At the individual appraisals
- When planning lessons
- When dealing with student in the classroom or with parents

Encouragement comes from a number of directions including from subject leaders, department heads, teachers and senior managers (7.3). When senior managers take an interest in people's work and give further encouragement it makes people feel valued. It helps generate the great working atmosphere found at the school and is one of the key aspects why people enjoy working at Robert Clack School.

8. People learn and develop effectively

Indicator met

- *Managers can describe how they make sure people's learning and development needs are met.*
- *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.*
- *People who are new to the organisation, and those new to a role, can describe how their induction has helped them to perform effectively.*

Managers described the appraisals, observations, one to one and team meetings as ways they make sure people's learning and development needs are met (8.1), for example

- ***“Appraisals are used to identify training needs and discuss any training people have completed”.***
- ***“I always get people to feedback to the rest of the team the key learning points from any training courses they have attended”***
- ***“I use the observations to check improvements in performance which may be due to training”***

People can describe how their learning and development needs have been met (8.2), for example through

- Twilight sessions
- Visits to other schools
- Attending external conferences and courses
- Following longer term programmes
- Coaching from more experienced members of staff

Interviewees could also explain how they have applied the learning in their role, for example

- ***“Without the training on Oracle and Integris I couldn't do my job”***
- ***“We're now going to plan as a department how we will manage the new examinations”***
- ***“I've already used some of the ideas I picked up in the literacy session in my lessons”***

The working atmosphere at the school makes new starters feel comfortable. They are given a thorough induction which allows them to settle into their jobs and the school quickly (8.3), for example

- ***“The NQT course is fantastic and we cover different areas of a teacher's job”***
- ***“When I first started I was shown what to do by one of my colleagues”***
- ***“We had a weekend conference which was a great way to meet people and find out about the school”***

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

Indicator met

- *Top managers can describe the organisation's overall investment of time, money and resources in learning and development.*
- *Top managers can explain, and quantify where appropriate, how learning and development has improved the performance of the organisation.*
- *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.*
- *Managers can give examples of how learning and development has improved the performance of their team and the organisation.*
- *People can give examples of how learning and development has improved their performance, the performance of their team and that of the organisation.*

Top managers can describe the money, resources and time allocated to learning and development (9.1). For example

- ***“We have a budget for training which is made up of funds from different areas”***
- ***“There is a lot of expertise in the school which is used to conduct the twilight sessions”***
- ***“The Borough and the Institute provide a whole range of courses that we find useful”***

Top managers and managers can explain, and quantify where appropriate, how learning and development has improved the performance of the organisation and their team (9.2 & 9.4). For example

- Good exam results
- Performing very well at the Ofsted inspection
- Having low staff turnover
- Good added value results

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 (9.3). There are several reviews of the school's activity which includes the Self Evaluation of a subject area, external audits from Ofsted and regular reports to governors. These reviews and reports give governors and senior management feedback on activity, including training and development. The Self Evaluation is a comprehensive exercise that reviews every aspect of the curriculum to determine how well plans are produced and the curriculum delivered. The outcome of this exercise informs the next Departmental Plans, School Development Plan and Training Plan.

People can give examples of how learning and development has improved their performance, the performance of their team and that of the organisation (9.5). Examples given demonstrated how

- Training on computer systems has helped with the analysis of student data
- Training on the new examinations is helping in preparation for September
- Training on specific areas such as literacy and subject based topics is giving people the knowledge to help improve Key Stage 3 and 4 results

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

Indicator met

- *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.*
- *Managers can give examples of improvements they have made to the way they manage and develop people.*
- People can give examples of improvements that have been made to the way the organisation manages and develops its people

There have been a number of improvements that have resulted from evaluation (10.1), for example

- The changes to the performance management process have resulted in more focused discussions and the production of more relevant targets.
- The introduction of Self Evaluation has given greater structure to how the school's activity is judged

Managers and people can give examples of improvements that have been made to the way people are managed and developed (10.2 & 10.3), such as

- ***"I like the new appraisal.....it is more focused and the targets set are easier to measure"***
- ***"Getting involved with the Self Evaluation really allows you to influence the way the department does things"***

Continuous improvement is part of the school's quality culture. It is regularly audited by various external awarding bodies for Ofsted and awards such as liP. There are several other models of best practice and awards the school could consider. These include

- Green Mark - enables organisations to demonstrate their on-going environmental improvement
Please see www.green-mark.co.uk
- EQFM – this is arguably the most comprehensive business quality and improvement model available and considers every aspect of a business.
Please see www.efqm.org

Managers and staff work hard at making the school a good place to work. To celebrate this, the school could consider working towards achieving entry into the Sunday Times Best Companies to Work For. This is arguably *the list* that organisations want to gain entry into as it gives them a great national profile and is fantastic for PR purposes. Please see www.bestcompanies.co.uk

► **Recommendation and Next Steps**

Having carried out the assessment process in accordance with the guidelines provided for Assessors by Investors in People UK, The Assessor is totally satisfied that Robert Clack School meets the requirements of the Investors in People National Standard.

► **OPTIONS AT YOUR NEXT REVIEW**

Investors in People Profile

Investors in People Profile is an optional service for organisations where, instead of a conventional post recognition review or assessment, organisations can choose to be measured against the Standard and compare their performance with other Investor in People organisations. So, in addition to all of the usual benefits of Investor in People Recognition, a Profile Review will give clear guidelines for continuous development, provide an in depth look at your strengths and weaknesses and highlight areas of good practice. Profile is a premium product and the assessment requires a higher financial investment.

Promoting continuous improvement

CQL offers an integrated advice and assessment support service, as well as workshops, surgeries and networking events to promote continuous improvement and maximize the benefits of working with the Standard. Details of the support available to you can be found on: -

Internet:  www.cqlgroup.co.uk

Telephone:  **0207 016 1925**

Email:  info@cqlgroup.co.uk