



# Diagnostic assessment report

Stockport School

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## Acknowledgements

This assessment was undertaken through consultation and co-operation with the senior leadership team and staff of the Stockport School by Liam Linacre thanks is given to Rob Clifford and in organising and supporting all elements of the assessment.

## Executive Summary

Stockport School was assessed for accreditation against the Investors in People Standard in September 2017. The assessment involved an initial context analysis and production of an assessment plan. Following this, individual interviews were carried out with 38 members from across the school together with a thorough review of support documentation and site tour.

Stockport School is an example of an organisation which has endeavoured to embrace proven principles in high performance management. There is a clear route map for the future, which in turn, is supported by formal planning processes across all areas linking the school's themes and strategies together. The leadership team clearly articulated a desire to build on the continuous improvement activities already established since the last assessment. In realising the ambition moving forward, the leadership team described their overarching themes and strategies designed to deliver success. These strategies covered an ongoing process of planning and evaluation aimed at ensuring the school fully realises the potential by providing opportunities which will lead the school to an outstanding review by Ofsted.

It was clear that all activity was driven by the open leadership style of the leadership team, demonstrable through real role model behaviours on a day to day basis. It was apparent from the assessment that the employees feel the school is a great place to work as demonstrated through the interviews and the 2017 employee survey.

The assessment also clearly revealed a volume of strengths in Stockport School's approach to high performance working. The heat map shows that the school is focused on delivering its vision, driven by a set of defined values, has embraced the concept of ensuring a fit for purpose structure, using team working to fuel creativity and recognised the need for sustainable success and rewards.

In addition, there were robust and embedded approaches to supporting strong leadership, a values' based culture, learning and development, effective communication, collaboration and team working. As a result, the school:

- demonstrated elements of high performance working through both internal & external measurement & benchmarking
- ensured learning and development resulted in a workforce which was competent, capable and understood their role
- demonstrated effective leadership from a committed and trusted leadership team, who demonstrate role model behaviour for the workforce
- demonstrated that continuous improvement is a whole school approach
- demonstrated a commitment to community engagement

The assessment also provided clear recognition that improvements could be made to further move to towards excellence. These opportunities for improvement included:

- maintaining the focus on upskilling the workforce, delivering leadership development and establishing thought leadership as a base level requirement for all levels across the organisation.
- maintaining the current adoption of a values based culture in all activity.
- ensuring any measurement processes you adopt moving forward are consistently applied over time and demonstrate outcomes from your strategies from a people

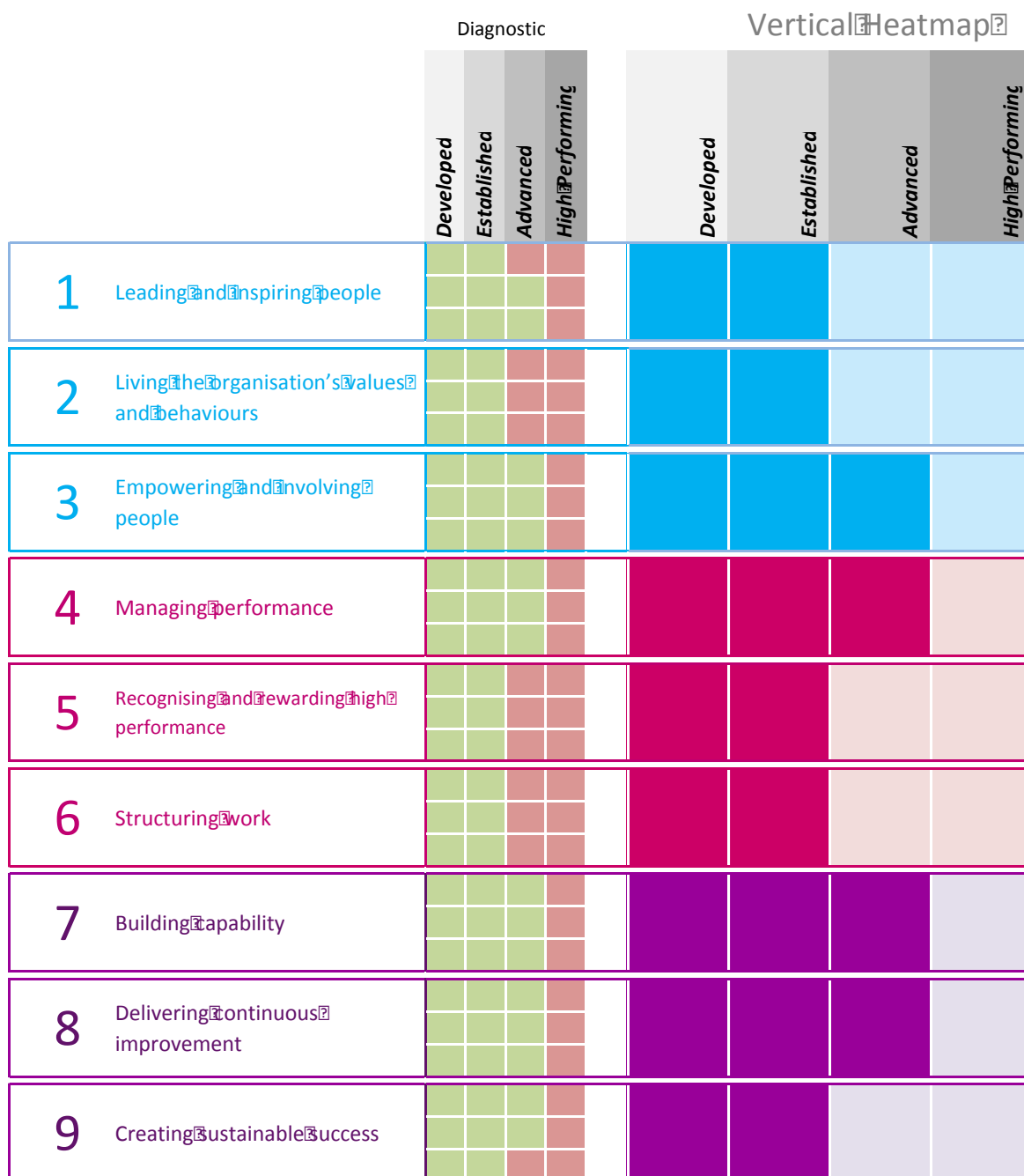
perspective and give consideration to progress achievements. It's important to widen the measures used across the school to better reflect the breadth of activity against each individual indicator.

Many of the areas of the framework relating to Advanced and High Performance had evidence presented, however, measures were not clear or robust. For example, it was evident that the leadership team had positioned the school at the front of good practice with evidence presented such as the involvement in the Parliamentary Review, Quality mark assessment, British Council International Schools Award and The Princess Teaching Institutes Mark. The examples would all contribute to evidence for Advanced and High Performance but linkages to people metrics were less clear and as such prevent the school from achieving these levels in some cases.

The staff survey of 2017 contained some opportunity to gather people related metrics, which could be used to demonstrate outputs and outcomes for the school which would contribute to metric evidence at higher levels.

Stockport School has noted its commitment to use the IIP framework as a key part of its people management processes and by addressing development areas aspires to achieve the Gold level of the standard within the 3 years.

## Stockport School diagnostic assessment outcome



## Introduction

Stockport School sought assessment against the Investors in People standard at the Developed Level in November 2017. Having been made aware of the version 6 framework, the leadership team were keen to take advantage of this framework.

Organisations that meet the world-recognised Investors in People Standard reflect the very best in people management excellence. Underpinning the Standard is the Investors in People Framework. Based on 25 years of leading practice, the latest research and workplace trends, the Investors in People Framework is organised around nine key indicators of high performance each with three underpinning themes.

To achieve accreditation, organisations are assessed against these themes and indicators. For the Standard, organisations will achieve an award level of standard, silver, gold or platinum, that represents the level of performance achieved, or the level of 'maturity', from a fundamental 'developed' level to 'high performing'. Assessment is carried out using interviews, meetings and observation, while there is an additional online assessment component for the Standard.

This unofficial added value diagnostic report summarises the wider elements of the Investors in People Standard for Stockport School. Implications of the diagnostic assessment for Stockport School are discussed, outlining development recommendations where appropriate and complement the official assessment completed in November 2017. Evidence summarised within this additional report does not contribute evidence of assessment against the Investors in People Standard and is based on good practice observed during the official assessment.



# Indicator 1: Leading and Inspiring People

1

## Leading and Inspiring People

Leaders make the organisation's objectives clear. They inspire and motivate people to deliver against these objectives and are trusted by people in the

Themes	<i>Developed</i> In place and understood	<i>Established</i> Engaging and activating	<i>Advanced</i> Creating positive outcomes	<i>High Performing</i> Embedded and always improving
<b>Creating transparency and trust</b>	Leaders provide clarity around the organisation's purpose, vision and objectives	m There is clear and regular two-way communication between leaders and people at all levels	m Leaders ensure that there is consistent levels of trust at all levels of the organisation	n Leaders are active role models, leading by example and trusted by people in the organisation
<b>Motivating people to deliver the organisation's objectives</b>	People understand the organisation's objectives	m Line managers support people to deliver the organisation's objectives	m Leaders are passionate about delivering the organisation's objectives and motivating people to deliver against them	n Leaders motivate and inspire people to achieve results above and beyond what is expected of them
<b>Developing leadership capability</b>	Line managers know what is expected of them to lead, manage and develop their people effectively	m People know what to expect from their line manager and provide feedback on how they are managed and developed	m People have confidence in the leadership and management capabilities within the organisation	n Future leadership capabilities are defined in line with the organisation's values and leaders meet these challenges

The results above demonstrate how people across Stockport School believe that the leadership team continually motivate them to achieve exceptional results and deliver the school strategy.

It was apparent from the interviews and the documentary evidence, that the leadership team have invested considerable effort, time and resources in ensuring **ALL** stakeholders of the school, internally and externally, had clarity around the purpose, vision, ethos and objectives. Without exception, all individuals interviewed described, in detail, the school development plan, key objectives, associated actions and desired outcomes.

To support the strategy, there were written faculty plans which followed a structured format with key measurable objectives and metrics. The leadership team ensured current and historic performance information was considered during planning activity and consistently presented through various reports. It was also recognised that creating and maintaining "motivation and buy in" from the staff around planning activity remained a constant priority.

The leadership team had further ensured communication processes were in place including regular leadership & staff meetings, internal development meetings, and extensive performance management. These communication activities supported the regular update of progress towards the achievement of the strategies and included clear performance reporting of results. It was evident that communication was effective across the school. Communication processes had been measured through the 2017 staff survey.

During Interviews, people were vocal in describing high levels of trust and responsibility. People described the functions and outcomes of the numerous employee engagement activities and numerous individual decisions which were made in day to day working. This element was fundamental to success in delivering the vision and was a strength of the school. However, there was limited measurement in relation to transparency and trust.

In addition, the leadership team were consistently described as role models by the people interviewed. People at all levels of the school had confidence in the leadership and management capabilities to drive success. There were numerous performance achievements demonstrated linked to KPI's across the school, however, there was limited measurement in relation to confidence in leadership.

Developing leadership skills across the school was defined as a key focus by the leadership team. Investment had taken place through formal external development, external coaching, through internal training and internal mentoring and support. There were processes in place to ensure the future leadership capabilities were defined in line with the strategy and linked to developing a fit for purpose management structure. Full records existed to support this activity including metrics around resource and talent planning.

Across all interviews, there was a belief that line managers were passionate in the delivery of their responsibilities. In all areas, interviewees described their line managers as being passionate, effective role models, fair & consistent, experienced, strong communicators and a driving force within their area of the school. During discussion, it was clear that the staff were confident in the leadership team's ability and felt motivated by them to achieve exceptional results. In driving high performance, there were numerous examples related to the achievements of the school and around the progression of staff.

Overall, there was evidence supporting the outputs achieved within Stockport School. However, there were limited examples of people measured outcomes within the school in relation to Leading & Inspiring People outside of the basic 2016 staff survey. It was noted that Outputs in relation to overall pupil performance and school performance were high.

**Outputs** are the result of the investments in activity level processes. They provide the means for evaluating the impact of the human capital development and people management processes at the activities level, and describe how the return on those investments can be improved, optimised and adapted to meet your ongoing needs.

In addition, **Outcomes** should inform Stockport School and stakeholders whether outputs are translating into long term value. Value to Stockport School in this area should focus on measuring value relating to role model behaviours, trust and future leadership capacities. Outcomes measures describe how the organisation is sustaining itself to deliver value not just for today but for the future.

**Performance Level Achieved:** Established

**Summary Action Points to meet the next level of performance:**

1. At an advanced level, consider adopting consistent people performance measures which demonstrate how your approaches translate into outputs for the school. In 2017, you implemented a basic internal staff survey which is yet to be revisited. Ensure any measurement processes you adopt moving forward are consistently applied over time and demonstrate people measures, for example:
  - a. Leaders ensure consistent levels of trust
  - b. Leaders are passionate about delivering objectives and motivate people to deliver them
  - c. People have confidence in the leadership and management capabilities within the school
2. At a high performing level, consider how you can measure the impact of leadership and inspiration across the school. Consider how you can measure the impact of role model behaviours, trust and future leadership capacities within the workforce. Metrics in this area could be further developed across other areas to show how the breadth of activity is translating into value. Consider:
  - a. How you evidence that leaders are active role models, leading by example and trusted by people in the organisation
  - b. How leaders motivate and inspire people to achieve results above and beyond what is expected of them
  - c. How future leadership capabilities are defined in line with the organisation's values and leaders meet these challenges

## Indicator 2: Living the organisation's values and behaviours

# 2

### Living the organisation's values and behaviours

People and leaders act in line with the organisation's values at all times. They have the courage and support to challenge inconsistent behaviours.

Themes	Developed <i>In place and understood</i>	Established <i>Engaging and activating</i>	Advanced <i>Creating positive outcomes</i>	High Performing <i>Embedded and always improving</i>
Operating in line with values	Leaders clearly communicate the organisation's core values and how they should be applied	People are led, managed and developed in line with the organisation's values	Leaders consciously consider and act in line with the organisation's values when making decisions	The organisation's values are at the heart of everything it does. They shape the way it operates at every level
Adopting the values	People know and understand what the organisation's values are	People are personally motivated to behave in line with the organisation's values	People do the right thing in accordance with the values, not necessarily the easiest or most convenient thing	People make decisions based on values rather than self-interest
Living the values	People understand how to behave in line with the organisation's values	People are encouraged to demonstrate the organisation's values in the way they behave	Leaders create a culture of openness and trust where people consistently behave in line with the organisation's values	People feel comfortable challenging behaviours that are not in line with the organisation's values and people are held to account

As can be gleaned from the results above, one of the key strengths within Stockport School was the adoption and delivery of defined values & behaviours. These were golden threads throughout all activity across the school.

The values appeared to be embedded into all practices across the school. Examples were clear within key strategic documents, within the Health & Wellbeing strategy, recruitment & selection processes, induction, learning & development, reward & recognition and performance management. It was noted that in all areas of the school, everyone fully believed in and supported the adoption of a values driven culture and people frequently referred to the values as underpinning all activities. This was reinforced through questions from within the staff survey.

People articulated the linkages between living the values and achieving their personal objectives, the objectives of their individual teams and the school. It was clear that the values were at the heart of everything the school did. It was clear that people demonstrated the behaviours entwined within the values in a framework which allowed staff to challenge others including the senior leadership team.

It was noted that transparency was a key feature of the school. This was evident during the assessment and from the documentation provided. People were encouraged to perform and behave in line with the values on a day to day basis in all activities and team meetings were focused on values and objectives.

There were many examples provided around how people were comfortable in providing feedback and challenging behaviours at all levels through activities which included the open door employed by the senior leadership team and through 1-2-1's.

Overall, people described the school as being a great place to work. Indeed, it was confirmed that the school was focused on measuring and benchmarking these statistics, although no evidence was presented

Further measurement to demonstrate positive and sustained impact is required. There were limited examples of people outcomes within the school in relation to Living the Organisations Values outside of demonstrating the delivery of school processes. People **Outputs** are the result of the investments in activity level processes. **Outputs** provide the means for evaluating the impact of the human capital development and people management processes at the activities level, and describe how the return on those investments can be improved, optimised and adapted to meet your ongoing needs. In addition, **Outcomes** should inform Stockport School and stakeholders whether outputs are translating into value over time.

Value to Stockport School in this area should focus on demonstrating how the schools' values impact on performance at all levels and shapes decision making.

**Performance Level Achieved:** Advanced

**Summary Action Points to achieve the next level of performance:**

1. Maintain the current adoption of a values based culture in all activity.
2. At an advanced level, consider adopting consistent measures which demonstrate how your values translate into people outputs for the school. In 2017, you implemented an internal staff survey. Ensure measurement processes you adopt moving forward are consistent over time and demonstrate areas such as:
  - a. Leaders consciously consider and act in line with the organisations values when making decisions
  - b. People do the right thing in accordance with the values
  - c. There is a culture of openness and trust where people consistently behave in line with the values
3. At a high performing level, consider how you can measure the impact of values across the school and how you demonstrate that values are the catalyst for decision making. Metrics in this area could be further developed across other areas of the school to show how the breadth of activity is translating into value. Within any measurement process, consider how you demonstrate that:
  - a. The organisation's values are at the heart of everything it does. They shape the way it operates at every level
  - b. People make decisions based on values rather than self interest
  - c. People feel comfortable challenging behaviours that are not in line with the organisation's values and people are held to account

## Indicator 3: Empowering and involving people

### 3

#### Empowering and involving people

There is a culture of trust and ownership in the organisation where people feel empowered to make decisions and act on them.

Themes	<i>Developed</i> In place and understood	<i>Established</i> Engaging and activating	<i>Advanced</i> Creating positive outcomes	<i>High Performing</i> Embedded and always improving
<b>Empowering people</b>	People have access to the knowledge and information they need to do their job well. <b>m</b>	People feel empowered to identify ways to improve how they do their job. <b>m</b>	People are encouraged to take the lead and have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills. <b>m</b>	People use their initiative to lead and take ownership over delivering the organisation's objectives. <b>n</b>
<b>Participating and collaborating</b>	People or their representatives are consulted about decisions which have an impact on them. <b>m</b>	People are involved in decisions that have an impact on them and feel their contribution makes a difference. <b>m</b>	People consistently participate in decisions and feel their contribution makes a difference. <b>m</b>	Participation, collaboration and teamwork are at the heart of the organisation's approach to decision-making. <b>n</b>
<b>Making decisions</b>	Leaders trust and support people to make decisions in line with their level of responsibility. <b>m</b>	Leaders involve people when establishing their level of decision-making, in line with their role. <b>m</b>	Leaders are open and transparent about sharing information which enables people to make and act on decisions themselves. <b>m</b>	People are empowered to challenge the status quo to improve the organisation's performance. <b>n</b>

Across the whole school, from the senior leadership team through line managers to the staff, there was a culture of empowerment and involvement. The senior leadership team ensured that staff, were aware of, and contributed to the practical activities needed to ensure the schools strategy was achieved. This was done through the extensive engagement activities from development planning to 1-2-1's and the open-door approach to management.

Interviewees provided examples about how their views and comments had been adopted in improvement activities such as the development of the Business In the Community activity, Auditing and the health & wellbeing offer.

A consistent theme highlighted during the interviews, was the focus on team working. People highlighted this process as being part of the values of the school and fundamental to creating high performance. It was clear from discussion with members of the leadership team that actions to support this were integral to the ongoing development of the structure. The approach to team working and collective decision making was providing positive outcomes.

The process of sharing information in a timely manner created a clear sense of ownership, which was reinforced through staff meetings, general feedback and performance management. The adoption and delivery of underpinning knowledge and skills and sharing of information was strong. Staff were rewarded for their performance and during the interviews, staff linked their own performance improvements to the development of key skills as well as more subtle elements such as chocolates, informal feedback and awards. The training processes were designed to enhance workforce agility and linked to the values adopted within the school. Outcomes of activities such as improvement suggested by staff were gathered, evaluated and reported on.

The direct involvement from the senior leadership team confirmed a firm foundation for decision making and many people valued these approaches. During the interviews, people confirmed they felt empowered to challenge the status quo and drive performance success. In addition, evidence to support a decision-making ethos had been measured through the 2017 staff survey

Overall, there were examples of evidence supporting the outputs achieved within Stockport School through the staff survey. However, further measurement to demonstrate positive and sustained impact could be adopted. People **Outputs** are the result of the investments in activity level processes. **Outputs** provide the means for evaluating the impact of the human capital development and people management processes at the activities level, and describe how the return on those investments can be improved, optimised and adapted to meet your ongoing needs. In addition, **Outcomes** should inform Stockport School and stakeholders

whether outputs are translating into value over time. Value to Stockport School in this area should focus on demonstrating how the approach to empowerment and involvement impacts on performance at all levels and shapes decision making.

**Performance Level Achieved:** Advanced

**Summary Action Points to achieve the next level of performance:**

1. At an advanced level, consider adopting wider measures which demonstrate how your approaches translate into outputs for the school. In 2017, you implemented a staff survey which is yet to be repeated. Ensure measurement processes you adopt moving forward are consistent over time and demonstrate:
  - a. People are encouraged to take the lead and have the opportunity to develop skills
  - b. People consistently participate in decisions and feel their contribution makes a difference
  - c. Leaders are open and transparent about sharing information which enable people to make and act on decisions themselves
2. At a high performing level, consider how you can measure your approaches to measuring empowerment and Involvement across the school and how you demonstrate that empowerment and involvement themes are the catalyst for decision making and success. Metrics in this area could be further developed across all areas of the school to demonstrate measures showing how the breadth of activity is translating into value from a people perspective. Measures relating to the Impact of empowerment and involvement were less clear.

## Indicator 4: Managing performance

# 4

### Managing performance

Objectives within the organisation are fully aligned, performance is measured, and feedback is used.

Themes	<b>Developed</b> <i>In place and understood</i>	<b>Established</b> <i>Engaging and activating</i>	<b>Advanced</b> <i>Creating positive outcomes</i>	<b>High Performing</b> <i>Embedded and always improving</i>
<b>Setting objectives</b>	People know what is expected of them and understand how their individual objectives fit the organisation's objectives	Leaders involve people in setting clear and achievable objectives. People are regularly reviewed against these objectives	Stretching individual and team objectives are aligned to the organisation's objectives and performance measures. People take responsibility for monitoring their own performance	People take the lead in setting stretching objectives that support and respond to the organisation's goals and plans for change
<b>Encouraging high performance</b>	Line managers invest time in managing performance and ensure people understand the performance process	Line managers have open and honest conversations with people about their performance	Line managers are highly effective and consistent in supporting high performance and addressing underperformance through effective, constructive and open dialogue	People are expected and actively supported to strive for high performance at all times
<b>Measuring and assessing performance</b>	People's performance is regularly measured and assessed against objectives. People receive feedback on their performance	People's behaviours are assessed against the organisation's values	Performance data and evidence on behaviours are captured and used effectively to improve the performance of people and the organisation	Giving and seeking timely feedback on an informal basis, engaging in performance discussions, and coaching are a core part of the day-to-day running of the organisation

The results above demonstrate that the staff of Stockport School believe they understand that success is reliant on their performance. Within Stockport School, the senior leadership team had ensured the development of robust process for managing performance at all levels. The school had created a 'High Performing mentality' setting objectives ensuring performance management was cascaded to all staff members regardless of role, through teams to individuals. These processes followed national guidelines and were used to ensure linkages between school, faculty and individual objectives. The schools' core values also featured formally within these processes. Performance management also linked to the process for learning and development.

The delivery of the performance management process for staff across the school was strong and consistently applied. Individuals described the processes, their own objectives and their relevance to overall performance. People were also able to confirm that their line manager was highly effective in supporting positive and negative performance. People described the range of activities such as INSET, Carousel, external training and coaching to support high performance and mentoring at all levels.

As a result, individuals were able to describe the school, team & individual objectives required, the linkages to the values, the performance outcomes achieved and the associated reward and recognition activity. People confirmed ownership of objectives and the monitoring of performance.

In supporting and encouraging the drive for high performance, the organisation had developed processes to ensure transparency. Data on performance and behaviours were shared openly. Staff members described how these performance processes were used to highlight performance improvement activity and achievements as well as to drive future performance objectives. The transparency of performance information was strong.

Through the learning and development processes, the organisation also measured and assessed performance using structured systems for evaluation. There were also many examples of people developing their careers within Stockport School.

Across the organisation, there was evidence to support performance areas. These included, not just pupil performance but it was clear that areas such as sickness, absence and new starters performance (although no data was presented).

Overall, there were many examples of evidence supporting the outputs achieved within Stockport School in relation to pupil performance. Further measurement to demonstrate positive and sustained impact is required in relation to people measures. **Outputs** are the result of the investments in activity level processes. **Outputs** in this area, provide the means for evaluating the impact of the human capital development and people management processes at the activities level, and describe how the return on those investments can be improved, optimised and adapted to meet your ongoing needs. In addition, **Outcomes** should inform Stockport School and stakeholders whether outputs are translating into value over time. Value to Stockport School in this area should focus on demonstrating how the approach to managing performance impacts at all levels and shapes decision making.

**Performance Level Achieved:** Advanced

**Summary Action Points to achieve the next level of performance:**

1. At an advanced level, consider adopting consistent measures which demonstrate how your approaches translate into outputs for the school. In 2016, you implemented an internal staff survey which is yet to be repeated. Ensure measurement processes you adopt moving forward are consistent over time and demonstrate:
  - a. Stretching individual and team objectives are aligned to organisational objectives and performance measures.
  - b. Line managers are highly consistent at supporting high performance
  - c. Performance data and evidence of behaviours are captured and used to improve the performance of people and the organisation
2. At a high performing level, consider how you can measure your approaches across the school and how you demonstrate that performance management themes are the catalyst for decision making and success. Metrics in this area could be further developed to include:
  - a. Coaching and coaching impact
  - b. How people take the lead in setting stretching objectives.



## Indicator 5: Recognising and rewarding high performance

5

### Recognising and rewarding high performance

Recognition and reward is clear and appropriate, creating a culture of appreciation where people are motivated to perform at their best.

Themes	Developed <i>In place and understood</i>	Established <i>Engaging and activating</i>	Advanced <i>Creating positive outcomes</i>	High Performing <i>Embedded and always improving</i>
Designing an approach to recognition and reward	The way the organisation recognises and rewards people supports its objectives	Leaders continually review how the organisation recognises and rewards its people	The approach taken to recognising and rewarding people is flexible and tailored to meet individual motivations	People are involved in designing the organisation's approach to recognising and rewarding people
Adopting a culture of recognition	The organisation has an appropriate and clear approach to recognition and reward	Individual and team achievements are rewarded and celebrated with financial or non-financial benefits	People feel confident that individual and team achievements are consistently recognised and encouraged across the organisation	There is a culture of appreciation where people feel valued and are recognised for their efforts and performance
Recognising and rewarding people	People know how they are recognised and rewarded and the criteria have been clearly communicated	People are recognised for their behaviours as well as their performance on formal and informal basis	People are motivated to perform at their best as a result of the approach to recognition and reward	High performing people and teams receive greater financial or non-financial recognition and rewards

The results above demonstrate how people across the school believe, Stockport School recognise and reward high performance. It had been recognised by the senior leadership team that Stockport School had a positive, enlightened and forward thinking approach for reward and recognition. Well-being and work life policies had been introduced to support key employees.

Organisational rewards included elements such as welfare rewards, staff awards and linkages to team building events, learning and development, wellbeing and charity support for staff. Terms and conditions exceeded statutory minimums.

During interviews, people confirmed that all these processes were part of an established system for reward and recognition. People also confirmed that they were recognised for performance & behaviours and that the systems were effective and consistently deployed. People also confirmed that they were motivated to perform based on the established systems and that rewards reflected their performance levels.

The approaches to reward and recognition also linked to celebration and celebration had been an activity which was embedded. People described how the approaches gave them confidence that individual and team achievements were encouraged and celebrated. A specific example related to the Shout out board within the staff room.

People described how high performance was rewarded consistently across the school and that rewards reflected levels of performance whilst reflecting sector constraints.

Overall, there were examples of evidence supporting the outputs achieved within Stockport School from a people perspective. However, further measurement to demonstrate positive and sustained impact is required. **Outputs** are the result of the investments in activity level processes. **Outputs** provide the means for evaluating the impact of the human capital development and people management processes at the activities level, and describe how the return on those investments can be improved, optimised and adapted to meet your ongoing needs. In addition, **Outcomes** should inform Stockport School and stakeholders whether outputs are translating into value over time. Value to Stockport School in this area should focus on demonstrating how the approach to Recognising Performance impacts on performance at all levels and shapes decision making.

**Performance Level Achieved:** Established

**Summary Action Points to achieve the next level of performance:**

1. At an advanced level, consider adopting consistent measures which demonstrate how your approaches translate into outputs. In 2016, you implemented a survey which is yet to be repeated and included limited questions around recognition and reward. Ensure measurement processes you adopt moving forward are consistent over time and demonstrate:
  - a. The approaches taken to recognising and rewarding people is flexible and tailored to meet individual motivations.
  - b. People feel confident that individual and team achievements are consistently recognised and encouraged across the school
  - c. People are motivated to perform at their best as a result of the approaches employed
2. At a high performing level, consider how you can measure your approaches across the school and how you demonstrate that reward and recognition themes are the catalyst for decision making and success. Metrics in this area could be further developed to include wider cross cutting themes such as intellectual, social and environmental strategies. Consider how you can demonstrate whether your recognition and reward activities are directly influencing high performance.

## Indicator 6: Structuring work

# 6

### Structuring work

The organisation is structured to deliver the organisation's ambition. Roles are designed to deliver organisational objectives and create interesting work collaboratively working.

Themes	Developed <i>In place and understood</i>	Established <i>Engaging and activating</i>	Advanced <i>Creating positive outcomes</i>	High Performing <i>Embedded and always improving</i>
Designing roles	Roles are designed to deliver organisational goals by creating clear accountability and avoiding duplication of effort across teams	m Roles are designed to create interesting work for people, with skills and capabilities for each role clearly identified	m Roles are designed to help people develop the skills and capabilities needed for progression	n Roles are designed in order to meet the changing needs of communities, markets, organisational strategy and employees
Creating autonomy in	Each role is designed with clear decision-making authority	m Policies and practices across the organisation support people to make the decisions required in their specific roles	m Policies and practices are aligned to help people take individual ownership and act quickly and effectively	n Policies and practices are regularly reviewed and improved to speed up decision making and increase individual ownership
Enabling collaborative working	It is clear how roles enable people to work together to achieve the organisation's objectives	m People are encouraged to work across the organisation to share information and expertise	m Open communication and flexible work practices make collaboration across the organisation easy and effective	n The organisation's structure encourages people to create formal and informal networks to maximise collaboration

It was clear that a fit for purpose structure, clear reporting, clear roles and responsibilities for staff was in place. This was reinforced during interviews, with people confirming roles were interesting and utilised the skills and capabilities of the workforce. The examples provided during the interviews and would imply Stockport School was an organisation which was structured to deliver its ambition.

People from across the School were aware of current decision making authority, with examples being provided in relation to their roles. Job descriptions were designed to link to school and team objectives and were regularly updated following review. Policies and procedures were also regularly updated and available to all staff to ensure effective and appropriate decision making. Policies and procedure took account of current UK requirements and it was reported that they were reviewed on a regular basis.

The structures across the school allowed people to share experiences and develop additional job related skills and competences. Specific examples were freely given relating to daily & weekly updates, meetings, team progress reviews, INSET and Carousel. People provided many examples of team working as well as career promotions and skill development. The school objectives and training records were used to structure organisation. Upskilling of teams and individuals was focused to future proof positions. New roles and structures had been introduced such as the development of in house catering.

In relation to enabling collaborative working, it was clear that there were embedded approaches to ensuring the sharing of good practice. Team building, INSET and Carousel were all used to support collaborative working. Processes including the coaching of individuals during employment and during induction were used to share excellent practices.

Overall people had developed both formal and informal networks across the school and there were organisational links with external stakeholders including local charities and other schools.

Overall, there was strong evidence supporting the activities of the school. However, there were limited examples of outputs and outcomes within the school in relation to Structuring Work outside of demonstrating the delivery of processes. Further measurement to demonstrate positive and sustained impact is required. **Outputs** are the result of the investments in activity level processes. They provide the means for evaluating the impact of the human capital development and people management processes at the activities level, and describe how the return on those investments can be improved, optimised and adapted to meet your ongoing needs and these were strong. In addition, **Outcomes** should inform Stockport School and stakeholders whether outputs are translating into value. Value to The Stockport School in this area should focus on demonstrating the impact of designing roles

for the future, measuring the impact of policies and procedures on decision making & performance and the development of external collaboration. Outcomes measures describe how the organisation is sustaining itself to deliver value not just for today but for the future.

**Performance Level Achieved:** Established

**Summary Action Points to achieve the next level of performance:**

1. Continue to deliver the strategies around maintaining a fit for purpose structure, underpinned by skilled and knowledgeable staff.
2. Metrics in this area could be further developed across other areas of the school to show how the breadth of activity is translating into value. The value to the organisation was transparent when viewed in relation to individual and organisational financial performance and HR performance such as sickness and absence.

Outcomes of structuring work was less clear in relation to:

- a. How roles are designed in order to meet the changing needs of communities, markets, organisational strategy and employees.
- b. How policies and practices are improved to speed up decision making and increase individual ownership
- c. How the organisation's structure encourages people to create formal and informal networks to maximise collaboration.

## Indicator 7: Building capability

7

### Building capability

People's capabilities are actively managed and developed. This allows people to realise their full potential and ensures the organisation has the right people in the right roles.

Themes	Developed <i>In place and understood</i>	Established <i>Engaging and activating</i>	Advanced <i>Creating positive outcomes</i>	High Performing <i>Embedded and always improving</i>	
Understanding people's potential	Line managers have development conversations with people to identify their potential and ensure learning and development needs are met	m Learning and development opportunities are provided in line with the organisation's objectives and enable people to achieve their full potential	m The organisation is flexible in the way it develops people, using innovative solutions that meet learning and development needs	m People take ownership of their own learning and development to effectively support the organisation's objectives	n
Supporting learning and development	Development advice and guidance is well communicated throughout the organisation	m People have the opportunity and support to put new skills and knowledge into practice	m Investment in learning and development is evaluated to understand the impact on people's progression opportunities	m Continuous learning is part of the culture of the organisation	n
Deploying the right people at the right time	Recruitment and selection is fair, efficient and effective and fits with the organisation's objectives	m Resource planning is actively managed to support the organisation's objectives	m The organisation uses succession planning to ensure critical roles are filled and people are in progress	m Leaders continually look to the future to identify and plan the capabilities people will need to deliver success	n

The results above demonstrate how people across the school believe that the leadership team are committed to building the capacity of the workforce. The approach to building capacity within Stockport School was actively managed and developed and had resulted in the development of a full learning and development strategy.

The training and development focus included formal performance management & 121 systems being used to develop individual training plans. Career progression discussions occurred with clear development /experience plans. There were a range of techniques used as part of the learning and development framework.

It was clear that flexible approaches to learning and development were in place and that development embraced new technology and approaches where appropriate. It was clear that continuous learning was at the heart of the culture of the school, underpinned by the values. Specific objectives for learning and development were directly linked to objectives and monitored.

Recruitment & selection activities were well structured and linked to the provision of training at the start of an employees work within the school. All mandatory needs were met in relation to recruitment including reference checks. Induction was structured and probation periods with evaluation were adhered to and contracts / supporting documentation were all reported to be in place.

Resources were proactively managed across the school and there was a succession plan in place for key roles within the management structure. The objectives and talent plans were used to support the creation of a fit for purpose structure within the school.

The leadership of the school had a clear strategy focused around developing skills necessary to enable the school achieve its aspirations. As a result, Interviewees were able to provide practical examples of the strategies in action.

There were positive examples of measures in this area of the framework linked to human resource data

Overall, there was strong evidence supporting the activities within Stockport School and there were also examples of outputs in relation to Building Capacity. Further measurement to demonstrate positive and sustained impact could be developed. **Outputs** are the result of the investments in activity level processes. They provide the means for evaluating the impact of the human capital development and people management processes at the activities level, and describe how the return on those investments can be improved, optimised and adapted to meet your ongoing needs and these were strong. In addition, **Outcomes** should inform Stockport School and stakeholders whether outputs are translating into value. Outcomes

measures describe how the organisation is sustaining itself to deliver value not just for today but for the future.

**Performance Level Achieved:** Advanced

**Summary Action Points to achieve the next level of performance:**

1. At an advanced level, consider adopting consistent measures which demonstrate how your approaches translate into outputs for the school. Ensure measurement processes you adopt moving forward are consistent over time and demonstrate. Metrics in this area could be further developed to show how the breadth of activity is translating into value over time. The value to the organisation could be expanded to demonstrate measures over time such as:
  - a. Evidence of staff / stakeholder engagement
  - b. time to fill an open position
  - c. % satisfaction with hired employees
  - d. Improvement in knowledge % of employees demonstrating an improved understanding of the topic being trained
  - e. Hours training received
  - f. Capability development change in capabilities/person
  - g. Successors in place i.e. bench strength
  - h. Average time to promotion,
  - i. % talent mobility - vertical and horizontal

## Indicator 8: Delivering continuous improvement

8

### Delivering continuous improvement

There is a focus on continuous improvement. People use internal and external sources to come up with new ideas and approaches, supported by a culture

Themes	Developed <i>In place and understood</i>	Established <i>Engaging and activating</i>	Advanced <i>Creating positive outcomes</i>	High Performing <i>Embedded and always improving</i>				
Improving through internal and external sources	The investment in people is evaluated and the results are used to improve performance	m	The organisation uses information from internal and external sources to improve how it manages and develops its people	m	Leaders look beyond the current business environment to learn from the outside world and bring in knowledge to improve the organisation's performance	m	People take responsibility for continuous improvement. They look to the world around them for new ideas and innovation then deliver change in line with this	n
Creating a culture of continuous improvement	People are aware of how they can contribute to improving their performance and ways of working within the organisation	m	People are encouraged to try new approaches and learn from their efforts, mistakes and successes	m	People are supported by their leaders to take reasonable risks when trying new and innovative approaches	m	The organisation nurtures innovation and acts quickly in response to new ideas and opportunities	n
Encouraging innovation	People are encouraged to come up with new ideas	m	People work together to generate new ideas	m	People are passionate about innovation and volunteer new ideas	m	New ideas deliver positive outcomes for the organisation	n

Across the whole school, from the senior leadership team through the managers to the staff, there was a culture of continuous improvement being driven. There was a clear focus on improvement embedded with the strategies. The School produced performance management information including:

- People data via the HR dashboard (although no evidence presented)
- Performance data

Across the school, there was formal benchmarking taking place. There was focus on learning from best practice internally and externally.

There were many examples provided during the interviews to support a culture of continuous improvement. Indeed, people were not only able to provide examples of where improvements had been made, but felt they were supported and encouraged to develop and try new approaches and learn from their mistakes.

There were positive examples of measures in this area of the framework linked to improvements in quality assurance activity and pupil performance.

Overall, there was positive evidence supporting the activities within Stockport School and some examples at the outputs level. However, there were limited examples of outcomes within the school in relation to Continuous Improvement outside of demonstrating the delivery of processes. **Outputs** are the result of the investments in activity level processes. They provide the means for evaluating the impact of the human capital development and people management processes at the activities level, and describe how the return on those investments can be improved, optimised and adapted to meet your ongoing needs and these were strong. In addition, **Outcomes** should inform Stockport School and stakeholders whether outputs are translating into value. Value to Stockport School in this area should focus on demonstrating the impact of Continuous Improvement over time and in relation to all cross-cutting themes. Outcomes measures describe how the organisation is sustaining itself to deliver value not just for today but for the future.

**Performance Level Achieved:** Advanced

**Summary Action Points to progress to the next level of performance:**

1. Metrics in this area could be further developed across other areas of the School to show how the breadth of activity is translating into value. Evaluation of activity was less clear in wider cross cutting themes such as intellectual, social, environmental and customer value strategies. Consider how you can demonstrate whether your activities are directly influenced through:
  - a. Internal and external sources of information

- b. personal responsibility
- c. speed of decision making
- d. ongoing performance



## Indicator 9: Creating sustainable success

# 9

### Creating Sustainable Success

The organisation has a focus on the future and is responsive to change. Leaders have a clear understanding of the external environment and the impact

Themes	Developed <i>In place and understood</i>	Established <i>Engaging and activating</i>	Advanced <i>Creating positive outcomes</i>	High Performing <i>Embedded and always improving</i>	
Focusing on the future	Leaders communicate future priorities	m People are actively engaged in both short-term and long-term planning	m People believe the organisation is a great place to work and are committed to its future success	m Leaders are aware of future challenges for the organisation and consciously develop their own capabilities, and partner with stakeholders to respond to these	n
Embracing change	Where change happens is communicated in a timely and transparent way across the organisation	m Benefits of change are measured and captured. Successes and failures are openly communicated	m People that demonstrate optimism and drive are selected to champion change and support others to understand and engage with it	m Change is viewed as 'business as usual', where mistakes are accepted and valued, as an opportunity for learning and improvement	n
Understanding the external context	Leaders have a clear understanding of who the stakeholders are in the communities and markets the organisation serves	m The workforce is diverse and reflects the communities and markets the organisation serves	m People understand the relationship between the organisation and the wider community	n The organisation has a positive impact on the communities and markets it serves	n

As can be seen from the results above, Stockport School is committed to creating sustainable success for the organisation.

It was clear during the assessment that Stockport School has invested considerable time and effort in ensuring a focus on future priorities. Indeed, throughout the assessment, individuals articulated the short term strategy and specific objectives and this was complemented by an understanding of their own individual role and how they delivered success.

In addition, individuals were also able to articulate future organisational priorities related to the strategy. The level of clarity demonstrated throughout the assessment by the workforce was strong and had been achieved through providing a framework to provide a good understanding of the 3-year plan.

This clarity had been further supported through regular updates and involvement from the leadership team. Communication processes were effective.

People across the organisation were vocal in confirming the school was an excellent place to work. This was further reinforced through the employee survey results

The diversity of the School was a theme and there was a clear policy which followed the principles of equal opportunity & dignity at work as well as health and wellbeing. The leaders were vocal in describing how they have created a great blend of people who represent different interest groups.

There was also evidence to suggest change as an activity is well received with examples relating to teaching and learning.

Evidence of change initiatives were communicated through the embedded approaches. It was clear that people viewed change as an ongoing part of assisting the school to achieve its aspiration.

There was also a positive approach to understanding the external context in which the school operated. It was clear that Information on the impact of the strategies was clearly communicated across the organisation via its communication processes, although impact was less clear.

Overall, there was some evidence supporting the outputs achieved within Stockport School. However, there were limited examples of outcomes within the school in relation to Creating Sustainable Success outside of demonstrating the delivery of processes. **Outputs** are the result of the investments in activity level processes. They provide the means for evaluating

the impact of the human capital development and people management processes at the activities level, and describe how the return on those investments can be improved, optimised and adapted to meet your ongoing needs and these were strong. In addition, **Outcomes** should inform Stockport School and stakeholders whether outputs are translating into value. Outcomes measures describe how the organisation is sustaining itself to deliver value not just for today but for the future.

**Performance Level Achieved:** Established

**Summary Action Points to maintain the current level of performance:**

1. Continue to deliver the current strategies across the school.
2. Metrics in this area could be further developed across other areas of the School to show how the breadth of activity is translating into value. Evaluation of activity was less clear in wider cross cutting themes such as intellectual, social and environmental strategies. Consider how you can measure and demonstrate:
  - a. That leaders are aware of future challenges for the organisation and consciously develop their own capabilities, and partner with stakeholders to respond to these personal responsibility
  - b. Change programmes are delivering success
  - c. The organisation has a positive impact on the communities and markets it serves These outcomes measure should be used to ensure the organisation is sustaining itself to deliver value not just for today but for the future. Consider impact measures to support your CSR strategies. Consider measuring the impact your investment in CSR has on the people who receive your attention. Consider developing a formal reporting structure for impact around CSR

## Implications and Recommendations

The following recommendations for the leadership team are based on the professional judgement and assessment of Stockport School undertaken by Liam Linacre.

A number of development points have been highlighted for consideration to support the continued development of the organisation in support of the defined ambition. These are not intended to highlight weaknesses but rather to indicate opportunities to further move towards excellence in these areas. These improvement suggestions are summarised below.

Continue to deliver the embedded strategies around:

1. focusing on upskilling the workforce, delivering leadership development and establishing thought leadership as a base level requirement for all levels across the organisation.
2. maintaining the current adoption of a values based culture in all activity.
3. how balance can be achieved around between collective decision making and individual trust, empowerment and ownership.
4. focusing on creating the team led ethos with all staff members, especially new recruits, reinforcing the delivery of the values.
5. maintaining a fit for purpose structure, underpinned by skilled and knowledgeable staff.
6. further supporting the drive for ownership of continuous improvement at all levels in all areas, especially around individuals focusing on identifying continuous improvement opportunities from external best practice.

In addition, to ensure sufficient evidence for the next levels of the framework, consideration should be given:

1. Consider how you can combine strategies within the school to provide tangible opportunities for improvement. For example, integrating your approaches to Health & Wellbeing into the reward, recognition and celebration strategy may provide a clear benefit for staff.
2. At an advanced level, consider adopting consistent measures which demonstrate how your approaches translate into outputs for the School. In 2017, you implemented an internal staff survey which is yet to be revisited. Ensure any measurement processes you adopt moving forward are consistently applied over time and demonstrate outcomes from your strategies. This applies to all 9 indicators. In addition, you may wish to widen the measures used across the school to better reflect the breadth of activity against each individual indicator.
3. At a high performing level, consider how you can measure the outcomes across the school. Outcomes should inform Stockport School and stakeholders whether outputs at the advanced level are translating into value. Value to Stockport School in this area should focus on demonstrating the impact of strategies over time (3 years minimum) in relation to all cross-cutting themes. Outcomes measures describe how the organisation is sustaining itself to deliver value not just for today but for the future.

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