



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

Standard Assessment Report

Stockport School

Accreditation number: 17/1897
Accreditation valid from: 27/11/2017
Assessment conducted by: Liam Linacre



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Acknowledgements

This assessment was undertaken through consultation and co-operation with the senior management team and staff of Stockport School. Special thanks are given to Rob Clifford in organising and supporting all elements of the assessment.

Introduction and Context

Stockport School first opened in 1888. Almost eighty years ago, in 1938, the school moved to its present site on Mile End Lane, providing the current school with a beautiful traditional building. Stockport School has since become very much part of the 21st century. It is a thriving and very successful LA mixed comprehensive school for over 1100 students.\

In 2005, the school became a Specialist Arts College. This means that, in addition to offering the full National Curriculum entitlement to students, the school is recognised as being a provider of excellence in the Visual and Performing Arts. The Arts College Status also means that the school benefited from enhanced funding, which allowed us to create outstanding Art Studios and a Gallery area. All subjects benefit, as, through the Arts College they are able to teach more creatively and to offer students extra opportunities. The school has been awarded the ArtsMark Gold award four times

Significant investment has allowed the school to develop enhanced teaching areas:

- Art Studios, refurbished Technology area and Library, a huge investment in ICT facilities, including digital projection in all classrooms, interactive whiteboards and several new ICT suites.
- In 2010, a new building, dedicated to the Creative and Media and R.E.
- In 2012, additional new building works, comprising three new history classrooms and a Dance/ Drama Studio.
- Modern sports complex including Sports Hall and Fitness Suite
- An excellent Drama studio, with 4D projection facilities and Music Block with recording studio and Music Technology Suite.
- Greenhouses and gardening area, refurbished Dining Room.
- Security fencing, electric gates and CCTV for the safety of the students.

Stockport School is recognised by others as a centre of excellence:

- Leading Edge School from 2005 to 2012: innovating and sharing good practice.
- Two national nominations for excellence in the 'Innovation and Impact' Leading Edge Award
- Artsmark Gold (four times awarded)
- Basic Skills Quality Mark (five times awarded) -first in Stockport
- Inclusion Quality Mark -first in Stockport
- Investors in People
- Leading Parent Partnership Award (LPPA)
- Centre of Excellence in Financial Education
- Young Carers Gold Award
- International Schools Award
- E-Twinning Award
- Inspiring IAG Award - Stage 2
- Duke of Edinburgh Awarding Centre

The school was first accredited with Investors in People in October 2014 against version 5 of the standard and following the Introduction of version 6 of the framework, the school decided to be assessed against this version of the standard. Since the 1st Assessment in 2014, the school has endeavoured to embrace high performance working principles across key themes and strategies which has contributed to significant success. The school employs 125 staff.

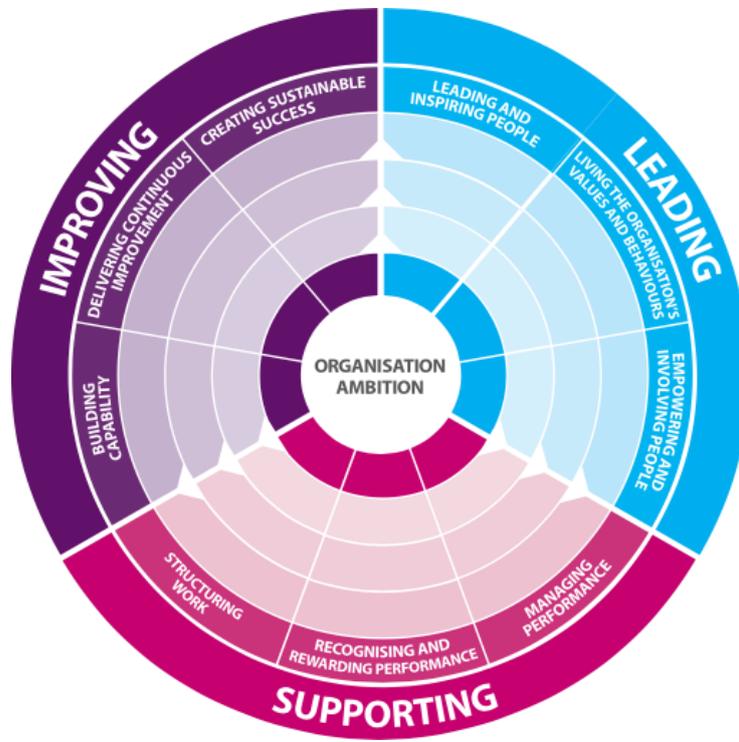
Organisations that meet the world-recognised Investors in People Standard reflect the very best in people management excellence. Underpinning the Standard is the Investors in People Framework. Based on 25 years of leading practice, the latest research and workplace trends, the Investors in People Framework 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. Assessment is carried out using desk-top review, interviews, meetings and observations. The assessment outcome of Stockport School is summarised below. The accreditation awarded represents the current level achieved and the Investors in People Standard can be used to facilitate ongoing development of people management practices.

Assessment Summary

Assessment Outcome

Stockport School



Investors in People Standard Met



Assessment Findings

Since the last assessment, Stockport School has endeavoured to embrace the principles of high performance, despite the tremendous pressures experienced within the field of education over the last few years. Since the last review, there have been significant improvements across the school which have been driven by the commitment and dedication of both the leadership team and the staff. Across all 9 indicators of the framework, there were significant examples of good practice which would indicate the opportunity for the school to be recognised at a much higher level within the Investors in People Framework. In summary, the positive components in place to support the schools approach covered:

- A commitment to planning. The head teacher and senior leadership team described their drive to maximise staff and pupil opportunities and achieve the aspiration as being recognised as an outstanding school. The planning processes seen were a mixture of consultation activities, formal and informal discussions and consistently driven by the stakeholders. This approach to planning within the school had led to consistent understanding and 'buy in' from the staff. Many staff described how their views around teaching, learning and support were encouraged and embraced. In all cases, the level of involvement and understanding was high and staff provided numerous examples of where they suggested ideas, reported on progress and felt ownership of the successes of the school.
- Recognition externally of good practice across numerous areas including a commitment to external assessment, benchmarking and review.
- A commitment to developing knowledge and skills within the school. Considerable resources had been allocated for learning and development for staff to ensure they could conduct their roles consistently. This included a thorough learning and development structure with elements in place such as internal and external training, cascading of information, INSET, Carousel and informal support. Focus has been driven from the requirements of the school plan, complemented by the views of staff. Activities focused on key training needs, health & wellbeing and thought leadership.
- The senior leadership team within the school, supported by the staff, also focused on developing the performance of all activities within the school. This drive on performance management within the school was focused to ensure the sustainability and improvement of results from the pupils. These activities included:
 - Developing improved management information to support decision making.
 - Encouraging staff to display leadership characteristics in all their approaches. There had been a concerted drive to enhance leadership capabilities through the Aspiring Leadership programmes across the school.
 - Improving communication through emphasis on accountability and empowerment and good structure.
 - Improving results from pupils through effective management of teaching and learning focused of school priorities. Internal audit processes had been a key focus, with many positive examples provided supporting this activity.
 - Effective performance management activities including peer support and observations. Peer support and recognition was a key feature, with examples including the Shout out board and pupil recognition being highlighted during interviews.
 - The sharing of best practice across teams, departments and individuals was also considered a strength by the people interviewed.
- A commitment to engage with key stakeholders. Stakeholder involvement was a central pillar to how the school operated. It was noted that engagement with stakeholders had contributed to success through links with the local community, other schools and wider educational organisations such as the MMU.
- Information on the current performance was shared through activities including regular management meetings, staff meetings, INSET, Carousel, performance management and informally. When challenged, people felt that the level and consistency of communication provided to them was strong, and, overall, communication was effective.

- An open-door policy towards management support. Overall, people feel confident in the senior leadership teams approach and direction for the future. People provided examples of where they have been involved in decision making. Interviewees feel that the school was genuinely committed to their empowerment.
- Throughout the review, people described the commitment and dedication of the management team as being excellent and as a result, people feel loyalty towards these individuals. It was clear that people were committed to ensuring the future success of the school.

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

- Continue to develop current approaches to measuring impact in relation to key people themes Developing objectives, measures and reports for cross cutting themes which complement the planning activities will add value to reporting on outputs and outcomes. Key themes which could be enhanced include:
 - Trust and Transparency
 - Impact of the Values Culture
 - Human resource measurement including Diversity, Staff Turnover, Sickness / Absence, Health & Wellbeing and Stress
 - Reward, Recognition & Celebration
 - External Awards
 - Thought Leadership
 - Social Media
 - Advanced Learning & Development measures related to Talent Management

As a result of the assessment finding the improvement suggestions are summarised below:

Recommendations / Agreed Action Plan

Investors in People Indicator / Key Theme	Required Actions	Timescale
All Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop systems which can easily and appropriately measure the return on investment across all your strategies. At the higher levels of accreditation for Investors in People, it is important to demonstrate both ‘Outputs and Outcomes as well as Inputs and Activities’. 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 you and your 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. Key themes include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trust and Transparency ○ Impact of the Values Culture ○ Human resource measurement including Diversity, Staff Turnover, Sickness / Absence, Health & 	

	<p>Wellbeing and Stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reward, Recognition & Celebration ○ External Awards ○ Thought Leadership ○ Social Media ○ Advanced Learning & Development measures related to Talent Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deliver a staff engagement survey which can support the people management themes across the school. Investors in People covers 27 key themes and any engagement survey tool should gather evidence to demonstrate the impact of strategies against these key themes 	
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Next Steps

The above findings and recommendations will be discussed at the feedback session following the assessment. At this meeting, the following areas will be covered:

- Outcome of this Assessment
- Areas of strength and development and options for improvement
- Scheduled date and format for the 12-Month Review

The key dates for the next stages of Stockport School Investors in People journey are set out below:

Accreditation date	Amnesty Review	24-Month Review	Accreditation Expiry
27/11/2017	27/11/2018	27/11/2019	27/11/2020

Annex 1 - Assessment Approach



Onsite assessment

We interviewed 38 employees from across the school.



Observations

Tour of the school.



Desk top analysis

Showcase Presentation Files across all 9 indicators.

Annex 2 – Evidence Summary

Indicator	Theme	Evidence Summary	Developed
1. Leading and inspiring people	Creating transparency and trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear purpose, vision and strategy in place across the school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focus for the school was driven by the aspiration to be recognised as an outstanding school by Ofsted ○ Strategy clearly linked measures and targets with objectives contained within both an annual development plan and longer term development plan. The whole school development plans were complemented by individual departmental plans. • People interviewed confirmed the purpose, vision and strategy throughout interviews including elements linked to the school development plan, measures and targets 	■
	Motivating people to deliver the organisation's objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A school development plan with measurable performance objectives was in place. Objectives within the plan covered themed areas. Objectives included but were not limited to key priority areas such as Leadership Development, Communications, Closing the Gap and Curriculum Development • The school development plan was communicated at all levels through established communication process including INSET, leadership & staff meetings, governor meetings and the performance management process. The whole school development plan objectives were used to set departmental and individual objectives for staff • Across all interviews, at appropriate levels, people articulated objectives and were able to explain both departmental and whole school plans and the processes supporting their development. Example data related to the achievement of KPI's such as Progress 8 scores and attainment 	■
	Developing leadership capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line managers described key skills relating to communication, planning, time management, performance management, learning and development and the behaviours they need to lead, manage and develop people effectively 	■

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Line managers were able to provide examples of how they were effective in leading, managing and developing staff including the delivery of support for staff through formal performance management /1-1's, through identifying training needs and effective delivery of the plans The school had a progressive and forward thinking approach to leadership development including activities the Aspiring Middle Leaders programme and the extended Senior Leadership Team 	
2. Living the organisation's values and behaviours	Operating in line with the values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Values across the school were explicit, with staff describing their impact on staff and pupils as well as being able to recite them Values were integrated into daily activities, performance management activities and behaviour management across the school 	■
	Adopting the values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Values across the school were explicit, with staff describing their impact on staff and pupils as well as being able to recite them Interviewees were able to consistently describe the values and provide examples around how they integrated into working methodology. Examples included but were not limited to the development of the House system and whole school behaviour and rewards system 	■
	Living the values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviewees were able to consistently describe the values and provide examples around how they integrated into working methodology. Examples related to the Inclusion team support for key students and whole school development of Pupil Premium. Specific measures provided in this area related to Positive Progress 8 scores for disadvantaged students, exclusion data and the Sky Sports Project Interviewees also provided examples of the values in action relating to staff needs such as adoption of mindfulness sessions within Carousel, Dodgeball and sports activities to promote teamwork and the staff band 	■
3. Empowering and involving people	Empowering people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders described how they provided access to school information through regular updates such as INSET, regular staff meetings, 1-1 support, and performance management People interviewed described an organisation where knowledge and information 	■

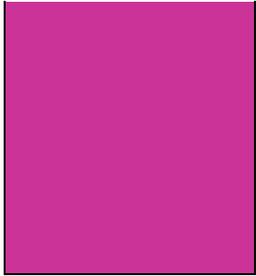
		was freely available. Examples relating to working with partner organisations to support ITT and NQT's and sharing successes were all freely given	
	Participating and collaborating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders described how consultation was an embedded theme across the school, with team working to support the delivery of the school development plan. They also described how INSET, Carousel, performance management, 1-1's, coaching and departmental planning activity also supported involvement in decision making • People provided examples supporting consultation and decision making including the development of the curriculum. Specific outcomes related to the development and expansion of the school careers offer and the Post 16 programme • Support was given to ensure people were able to participate in both internal and external collaboration strategies such as form tutor meetings, pastoral team meetings, network meetings and the Science Network 	■
	Making decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders were clear about trust and support for employees, they had provided safe systems of working to support people deliver their roles. Individuals developed their skills through an enlightened approach to development. Many staff had completed additional activities based on teaching competencies as well as wider thought leadership. The INSET and Carousel training processes were well received and people valued this approach • People were vocal in confirming that they were trusted to deliver their roles and responsibilities and that their decision making was respected. Specific examples related to the development and delivery of the Sky Sports Project and Mosaic Mentor Programme 	■

Met
 Not Met

Indicator	Theme	Evidence Summary	Developed
4. Managing performance	Setting objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews confirmed staff were aware of performance requirements. Interviews also confirmed job descriptions were in place for all staff. • Examples objectives provided during interviews included but were not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focus on better matching student progress and achievement in the basics ○ Focus on improving the literacy and numeracy levels of all students ○ Continuation of the school intervention support programme to maximise progress and outcomes ○ Support for Anxious Girls and Apathetic Boys • Interviews articulated linkages between individual, team and whole school objectives 	■
	Encouraging high performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line managers confirmed delivery of performance management activities in line with national expectations • Interviews confirmed Individual performance was reviewed through performance management including observations in workplace. Individuals valued the current performance management processes • Interviews confirmed line managers were effective in delivering performance feedback on a regular basis in line with school approaches 	■
	Measuring and assessing performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance management covered key skills and abilities required and linked to each role. The performance management process was clear and applied at various points during employment including additional support for NQT's and RQT's. • Performance reporting included but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ weekly EBAC meetings to support communication and collaboration through regular reviews of data ○ Pupil Progress Meetings to evaluate progression 	□

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use of AR to support literacy ● Performance management at a leadership level linked to measures and targets within the school development plan. Performance management at a senior level was linked to management by objectives and included key tasks and achievements ● Performance was reviewed at governor level through regular reporting 	
5. Recognising and rewarding high performance	Designing an approach to recognition and reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strategies described by the leaders included performance reviews, social activities & events, learning and development, shout outs, email and verbal feedback, long service awards and above statutory minimum terms and conditions 	■
	Adopting a culture of recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leaders described how the recognition and reward strategies were utilised across the school and how this affected performance including bonus payments and social events. Recognition was given to the journey the school had experienced over the last three years, and the contribution staff made to success ● Reward and recognition also applied to strategies involving the pupils such as the development of the In-house rewards system ● Celebration was also a key feature with elements relating to the Stockport School Achievement evening and the Community Awards Evening ● Interviews confirmed application of the strategies described by line managers and the impact on performance. Interviews confirmed these approaches were deemed as fair and consistently applied by line managers 	■
	Recognising and rewarding people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Examples provided by leaders chimed with the strategies described including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development of a specific Science Award commemorating the long service of a member of staff ○ The creation of the 'Shout Out Board' within the staff room ○ The adoption of 'pupil shout outs' for staff ○ 23 awards at the community awards evening ○ Personal performance rewarded 	■

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviewees confirmed consistent application of the strategies described and the processes employed across the school 	
6. Structuring work	Designing roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders described how job descriptions clearly identified accountabilities for each role. Clearly defined organisational structure was observed covering all areas of the school Leaders described an ongoing process of review for the structure of the school with a specific example provided around the continued development of the in-house catering facilities and wise pay systems Interviewees confirmed that job descriptions described accountability & decision making responsibility and were clear. Interviewees confirmed there was no confusion between themselves and their peers 	■
	Creating autonomy in roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders described how they ensured clear decision making responsibilities were understood through clarity within job descriptions, regular staff meetings, INSET and leadership team management meetings. The school had developed an extended senior leadership team to enhance people's contribution Policies and Procedures were place in line with Local Authority practices Employees were empowered to work, perform duties in line with capabilities that echoed core competencies. Examples included involvement with the catering transition, work with key stakeholders through activities including ITT and NQT's Interviewees confirmed levels of accountability and decision making within their roles Interviewees were clear about support from line managers through the various strategies employed across the school including performance management and delivery of the whole school and departmental objectives 	■
	Enabling collaborative working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders described how the structure of the school had been designed to reflect the delivery of the school development plan. The design of extended senior leadership team roles had been implemented to ensure sufficient line management support for staff and involvement in decision making. The structure has been developed to reflect the current stresses and strains experienced 	■



<p>through the changes within education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leaders described how the planning processes, consultation, staff meetings and performance management approaches were designed to ensure school objectives were cascaded to all staff• Interviewees confirmed the described strategies provided clarity around school objectives	
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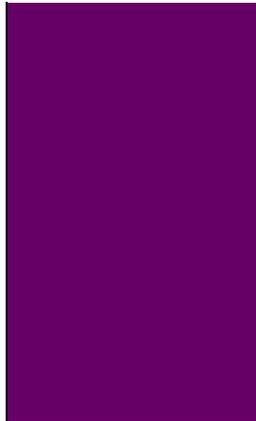


Not Met

Indicator	Theme	Evidence Summary	Developed
7. Building capability	Understanding people's potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a clear commitment to training. There were records of learning and development, including examples of the materials used • Training assessment, review and support was covered during induction days and linked to core competencies, with additional support for NQT's • External and internal training was sought where a requirement had been identified to enhance an employee's learning, knowledge and capabilities thus enabling the school to continuously improve. The INSET and Carousel processes were embedded and valued by staff • Performance management processes were in place and were utilised to identify the potential of people and as a vehicle to deliver feedback. • Interviewees confirmed that performance management and induction processes were a two-way process, utilised to identify learning and development needs and the resulting activities 	■
	Supporting learning and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career development information was provided following review of performance management activities • Interviewees confirmed advice and guidance was provided. Examples of career development for individuals were numerous including NQT's developing into members of the SLT, adopting leadership roles and delivering specific projects. • The aspiring middle leaders programme was highlighted as best practice across the school, with specific metrics provided to support the success of this approach • Fortnightly line management meetings were used to explore key issues across the school • Coaching and mentoring was an embedded approach within the school • There was an enhanced offer for NQT's within the school beyond that offered by the local authority and focused on Stockport School needs 	■
	Deploying the right people at the right time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders described a formal recruitment and selection process in place including formal interviews and selection criteria for each role. Examples of recruitment 	■

		<p>which reflected the objectives of the school related to NQT roles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A full Induction programme including probation review was confirmed, with additional support for NQT's • Approaches to diversity reflected key skills and competencies as well as traditional activities including gender, health, medical and age. Succession planning for key roles reflected school needs and growth aspirations. Examples included the Aspiring Middle Leader programme and the creation of the Extended Senior Leadership Team 	
8. Delivering continuous improvement	Improving through internal and external sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of improvements to the approach to managing and developing people included application of the school quality assurance programme via subject audits • External best practice was sought from numerous sources including other schools, from TED talks and from personal development activities • Examples of improvements in performance included but were not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Year on year pupil progression ○ Development of the In-house catering function ○ Adoption of the wise pay system ○ Improvement to whole school marking • Return on Investment was measured through a range of measures. Key performance indicators were comprehensive but mainly reflected pupil objectives and not people management processes 	■
	Creating a culture of continuous improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders described team working to identify SMART ways of working supported by employee consultation processes • Standardise management meetings were held to support development with key school issues • Full staff Involvement through INSET to identify improvement opportunities • Optional attendance at Carousel to support thought leadership activities • Interviewees confirmed effectiveness and consistent delivery of the strategies 	■

9. Creating sustainable success		described.	
	Encouraging innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders described team working to identify SMART ways of working and opportunities for staff to think differently and come up with new ideas and innovate • Interviewees confirmed effective and consistent delivery of the strategies described and were complementary about their opportunities to innovate and improve approaches 	■
	Focusing on the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders described an ongoing school planning process for both short and long term time periods. • Interviewees described development of new approaches to support the plan including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improvements in the quality of teaching and learning ○ Improvements in the approach to developing leadership skills within the school ○ Development of the in-house catering functions • Interviewees described the planning processes supporting the drive for being recognised as an Outstanding School. Strategy development was driven by the senior leadership team but success had been achieved through commitment of the whole school 	■
Embracing change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders described the change processes employed within the school such relating to the strategies within the school development plan • Communication of changes took place through established communication and consultation processes • Interviewees confirmed effective and consistent delivery of the strategies described. 	■	

	<p>Understanding the external context</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School strategies including social responsibility were developed through stakeholder engagement. Examples included but were not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development of tailored support for NQT's from within the school and from the local authority ○ Strategies to support for local charities, identified, and chosen from staff and pupils within the House Systems of the school ○ Support for DofE activities for pupils ○ Adoption of best practice from the Teacher Development Trust ○ Thought leadership using approaches including the Carousel 	
	 Met	 Not Met	

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