

**COMMERCIAL-IN-CONFIDENCE**



**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE**

*Review carried out on behalf of  
Yorkshire & Humberside Assessment Ltd*

*For*

*Greenhill School*

*Staff: - 53*

*Assessor*

*Peter Griffiths*

*On Behalf of Yorkshire & Humberside Assessment Ltd*

*January 2007*

### ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Assessor	Peter Griffiths
Learning & Skills Council	South Yorkshire
Organisation:	<b>GREENHILL SCHOOL</b>
Address	Greenhill Main Road Sheffield S8 7RA
Tel No:	0114 237 7080
Number of Sites	One
Number of Employees	53 plus indirects and governors
Nature of Organisation	Primary School
Head Teacher	Mr J. Marriott
Assessment Co-ordinator	Amy Read
Assessment Type	Review
Site visit date	24 January 2007

# GREENHILL SCHOOL

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The School was first assessed and recognised in 1998 and this is the fourth review, although the first review against the current Standard.

### 1.1 The Review

The assessor selected fifteen people to interview including the Headteacher, teachers, support and administrative staff. The sample also included staff governors, union members and recent recruits. The site visit took place over one day which also enabled the assessor to look at some of the available documentary evidence.

There was a considerable amount of good quality documentary evidence that included the School Development Plan, training plan, personal reviews, job descriptions, surveys and training records, evaluation and policy documents.

**The assessor spent some time analysing all the information and was happy to be able to confirm that the organisation continued to meet the Standard. It was evident that, despite changes in the interval, the School had moved forward on most fronts since the last review and had continued to apply the principles of Investors in People to good effect. One or two development points were identified which appear below. These largely related to strengthening processes currently being implemented such as the restructuring of teaching and learning responsibilities.**

A feedback meeting was held immediately which was attended by the Headteacher and Deputy.

### 1.2 Background

Greenhill School is a large primary school serving a catchment to the South West of Sheffield. It has some 500 pupils in the age range 4 to 11. The School employs 53 staff, with an increasing proportion of support staff. Management is conducted by the Head Teacher through a small senior management team and then key stage co-ordinators, overseen by the governing body. The Head and a number of staff have been in post for many years, although there has been an influx of new staff recently. A slightly unusual aspect is the high incidence of job sharing.

The School has been the subject of very favourable Ofsted inspections, achieving outstanding ratings in four out of six categories in the most recent one, and is rated as successful by all those involved. In academic terms Greenhill continues to produce high SAT results but the School is intent on offering breadth of education, placing emphasis on dramatic arts and sporting activities. It is unusual in providing lessons in foreign languages at primary level. A number of successful initiatives have been introduced, parental interest is high and the School is currently oversubscribed.

Since the last review, Greenhill School has introduced a number of changes to its procedures, notably in the form of reviewing and modifying the School planning process and the personal review procedure for support staff. Applications for training and recording are now undertaken on-line, using the LEA system. Evaluation procedures have been reviewed at the individual and whole school levels. Communications have been reviewed and modified, involving changing the structure and frequency of meetings and the implementation of an effective internal e-mail system. A programme of NVQ training has been established for support assistants and efforts have been made to use the expertise in the School to undertake internal training specifically tailored to its requirements, notably in the form of mentoring and management development.

There have been some new appointments and the management structure has been changed following the departure of the previous Deputy Head. In fact three senior members of staff have moved for promotion, reflecting the effectiveness of the School as a training establishment for its staff. This is also demonstrated by approaches from Hallam University and the Teacher Training Agency to become involved in partnerships for teacher training. The previous Assistant Head is now acting Deputy and a Bursar has been appointed to look after most non-teaching aspects of the School. The increased number of support staff has warranted greater attention and efforts have been made to encourage support assistants to undertake more responsibility and gain qualifications. The School has gained Healthy School status, in addition to the Activemark Standard. Several staff, including the Head work on projects outside the School, reflecting their expertise and good practice. The main practical concern remains the cost and effort required to maintain an ageing and crumbling school building.

Another dimension is the recently announced retirement of the Head who, after fourteen years service, has decided to leave in December 2007. This timing allows for an orderly recruitment process and replacement of the key role in the organisation, as well as a lengthy transitional period but also means that changes such as the new teaching and learning responsibilities structure are in abeyance, pending the input of the new incumbent.

## **2. STRENGTHS**

- Commitment to training and development is unquestioned and demonstrated by the range of support provided and the opportunities for advancement. All staff believe that training will be made available if warranted and most have experienced some form of development, despite the budget constraints. Recent promotions demonstrate the effectiveness of staff development.
- The range of training and development provided is extensive and includes formal internal and external training, mentoring, shadowing and self-development. The School is innovative in its approach and has a range of evaluation which demonstrates the effectiveness of the bulk of the activity.
- There is clear direction and enthusiastic leadership which receives a good response from staff. Advice and support from the Head, Deputy and experienced staff was confirmed by other teachers and support staff. The commitment of senior staff is a key factor in enabling the School to continue to function and maintaining the loyalty and interest of other staff.

- There is a comprehensive, thorough development plan in place in which most people have been involved. The plan is costed, contains criteria for success and shows how activity will be evaluated. It is tightly focused on achieving objectives, mainly in the form of pupil performance and the performance management procedure reinforces this focus at the individual level.
- Procedures are well thought out and are generally well applied. The performance management procedure is well received by staff and a similar procedure has been introduced successfully for non-teaching staff.
- Communications are generally regarded as effective despite the difficulties associated with a diffuse site and a number of part-time workers, with email being used to supplement a range of meetings. The School publicises its School Development Plan and ongoing performance against the plan. Good practice is shared through staff and team meetings.
- Despite limited resources and time, the School has continued to make progress on a wide front. Workforce remodelling has taken place creating PPA time. Roles have been reviewed and restructured under this process, as have teaching and learning responsibilities, although full implementation of the latter is still pending. A variety of initiatives have created interest and brought benefits.
- Morale is good, reflecting the success of the organisation and the supportive environment. People feel that staff pull together well in demanding circumstances. They believe the School is making good progress on both the academic and extra-curricular fronts, and are happy to be associated with it. All the employees interviewed regarded the School as a good place to work.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

These recommendations seek to build on the levels of good practice already existing within the organisation and do not reflect in any way on its ability to meet the Standard. In most instances, it is a case of the School pursuing activities or strengthening procedures already in hand.

1. A form of performance management review has been successfully extended to most non-teaching staff. There may be merit in a further review of the process itself to see if any lessons need be learnt and whether the procedure works as effectively as possible. In particular, greater emphasis can be placed on setting SMART objectives linked to the School plan. Reviews currently handled by the Head and Deputy can be delegated to other appropriate senior staff such as the Bursar and SENCO.
2. The process of involving people in the preparation of plans and projects should be continued on both a team and staff basis with particular emphasis on gaining the input of support staff.

3. Teaching and learning responsibilities have been reviewed and plans prepared for the implementation of a new structure but, understandably, this has not taken place yet, pending the appointment of the next Head. When the structure and roles are finalised, it will be beneficial to give more thought to the competencies required for management roles, particularly at the middle management level.
4. The process of providing management development training for middle managers and supervisors which is in train needs to be continued and reinforced to enable those individuals to maximise their potential.
5. Job descriptions for changed roles need to be worked up, as is in hand, and publicised so that all staff are fully aware of their manager's responsibility for them.
6. The various forms of evaluation can usefully be reviewed to ensure that they work together in an integrated systematic fashion, which will facilitate individual evaluation and feed into higher level evaluation. Possibly on-line entry of individual evaluation is an approach which will help, as this would facilitate recording and analysis.
7. Some staff felt that communication regarding individual children, could be improved. This is an area that a multi-disciplinary project team could usefully consider.

No significant concerns were expressed by staff, other than the problems caused by the nature of the premises, e.g. parking, toilets.

#### **4. REVIEW AGAINST THE INVESTORS IN PEOPLE STANDARD**

##### **4.1 BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW PROCESS**

Since the last review in January 2004, the following factors needed to be explored in the context of the Standard:-

Some restructuring has taken place.

Some new appointments have been made and changes have occurred in terms of personnel. The Deputy Headteacher and other senior staff have moved on and been replaced and the new role of Bursar has been created.

The School has introduced personal reviews for support staff.

A number of initiatives have been implemented which have had an impact on the roles and development of individuals, notably workforce remodelling.

## **4.2 REVIEW VISIT OBJECTIVES**

Determine impact of changes in personnel and role, especially the exercise of the management role.

Assess the impact of revisions to procedures, especially the application of the personal review policy to support staff and the induction of new staff.

Assess the impact of recent initiatives, particularly in relation to non-teaching staff.

Comment on the effectiveness of communications, team spirit and the state of morale.

Determine the impact of any changes made as a result of Assessor recommendations following the last assessment.

Verify whether the School continues to meet the Standard.

Provide recommendations for further development.

## **4.3 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY**

A programme of interviews was conducted and the School's paperwork was reviewed, with particular emphasis on the objectives in 4.2 above.

### **Documents reviewed**

School Development Plan  
Training plan  
Training records  
Evaluation procedures  
Job descriptions  
Performance management reviews  
Reports  
Self-evaluation  
Parent surveys

### **The Interview Sample**

13 interviews took place with 15 interviewees in total, covering employees at as many levels as possible in the time allowed. The sample included the Headteacher, staff governors, teachers, and a variety of non-teaching staff.

More recent recruits were involved, as well as a mixture of experienced staff from a variety of departments and union members.

## **5. FINDINGS FROM THE REVIEW**

### **DEVELOPING STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE ORGANISATION**

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

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

The School has in place a mission and clear aims. These form the basis of the School Development Plan which generates specific objectives. There is a well-established planning process and cycle. The School Development Plan is an amalgam of the plans prepared for Key Stages and subjects, following review and evaluation and discussion with key staff. Final agreement follows consideration by the governing body. Issues, objectives and plans are discussed at staff and team meetings and the plan is publicised. The main priorities are derived from the last Ofsted inspection, the response to a parents' survey, points from Key Stage groups and core subject performance targets. Specific targets have emerged such as improving pupil performance, especially in writing and maths, the provision of outdoor play activity, usage of ICT and addressing premises issues.

Senior and other staff described the aims of the organisation and how their roles contributed to their achievement. Objectives in the overall plan are cascaded to staff through Key Stage/subject plans, meetings and the annual review process. The process gives staff a very clear idea both of the aims of the School and how their work contributes towards their achievement. Teachers have specific targets for improving the performance of pupils in their classes. Support staff are generally charged with looking after individual pupils or groups of children and there is a conscious effort to encourage problem sharing and the generation of ideas for occupying and developing them.

The School has a budget for training but much of the development activity takes the form of time off the job requiring cover, on the job training and mentoring and supervision. Latterly, there has been a conscious effort to increase the level of internal training as being more economical and tailored to the specific needs of the School.

There are regular team and management meetings when progress is reviewed and issues discussed. Interviews confirmed that people felt that the staff and team meetings made for good communication, encouraging the exchange of ideas.

**Quotes – “Key areas are to raise attainment in English and develop outdoor play activity. We try to disseminate good practice and ensure parents are informed about targets. My targets include improving pupil performance, as well increasing parental involvement.”**

## **2. Learning and development is planned to achieve the organisation's objectives**

Planned learning and development was explained by the senior staff. All staff have been involved in 1:1 dialogue regarding training and development needs, mainly through the personal review procedures. Activity and needs are collated and recorded in an overall training plan co-ordinated by the Deputy. Impact is measured through observation, assessment and the performance reviews. Plans and resources are in place starting from recruitment/induction, through on-going mentoring and shadowing and a range of professional training generally related to school priorities.

Subject training has equipped teachers to deliver lessons to the required standard and training in assessment has been disseminated to familiarise staff and enable them to undertake the necessary work. Thinking Skills and ICT have been other significant areas related to the key objectives. Recent training for support staff has included autism and behaviour training to equip staff to deal with more difficult children to reflect the changing nature of the population. First Aid and cleaning training has been provided to improve awareness and maintain the organisation's safety and hygiene standards. Inset training is focused closely on the key priorities and is provided for all staff concerned

People explained how they were involved in discussing their training needs through discussions within teams and the performance management procedure which sets performance targets and identifies the help needed to meet them. They described the benefits of training activities in contributing to their knowledge and confidence, increasing their ability to work with children. Such activity helped to improve capability and flexibility as well providing cover and contributing to the safety record. Quotes – **“Training is designed primarily to enable us to meet our targets in the core subjects. The plan includes training activity to meet key priorities such writing and ICT. I undertook a five-day maths co-ordinator course to equip me for my role. The main aim is to provide training to meet the needs of the children.”**

Closer linkage between individual and corporate objectives can be gained by greater emphasis in the personal review procedure for support staff, and the coverage should be extended to all support staff.

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

The School has in place policies and strategies to ensure equality of opportunity. Training and development are readily made available to non-teaching and part-time staff.

Senior managers described the strategies in place to create a team culture and open working environment which include a performance management system, access to support and records. All the interviewees were able to give examples of how their training needs had been reviewed and they had been given encouragement to develop, either on the job or through courses. Many support workers work part-time but all are included in the provision, with most attending Inset days. Some support staff have been given the opportunity to move into supervisory roles through training and mentoring. Employees are encouraged to come forward with ideas through the team and staff meetings.

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

In the light of the departure of the last Deputy and the need to implement the Government policy on teaching and learning responsibilities, there has been a definite policy to restructure and strengthen the management and encourage delegation, as well as problem solving and decision-making within teams. Workforce remodelling has led to the definition of new roles within the support structure which now includes the role of Bursar. Job descriptions have been prepared for each new appointment and this process is ongoing so that experience, skills, qualifications and knowledge are defined.

The co-ordinators, for instance, are required to have a thorough knowledge of the curriculum, be capable of planning, monitoring and evaluation and be able to lead Inset. Where appropriate, the incumbents have been reviewed under the personal review procedures which assesses their competence for the role. A recent innovation has been the videoing of model lessons so that less experienced staff can draw from the examples.

The personal review procedures also provide employees with information regarding the roles the managers/co-ordinators play and the capabilities required. People knew that managers were there to mentor and advise, provide training, solve problems and provide encouragement and leadership and that they had been chosen for the role because of experience and capability. Communication was another important aspect, reporting team concerns and keeping members informed, an area that staff felt worked well. An interesting development recently is the self-assessment of competences by teaching assistants, including those in supervisory roles, under a survey related to National Occupational Standards for Teaching Assistants which is under consideration.

These initiatives have given staff greater awareness of the capabilities managers should demonstrate, although this aspect can usefully be taken further. Further work to develop and publicise management competences, particularly in relation to the new appointments under the revised teaching and learning structure, when approved by the new Head, will increase understanding and help to identify training needs.

### **TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE ORGANISATION**

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

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

The management structure involves the Head, Deputy, Bursar and Key Stage co-ordinators. Those interviewed were all able to give illustrations of their role, for example in planning the workload, delegation and time management, prioritising tasks, giving and seeking support and generally acting as role models. People explained how they were encouraged to suggest ideas, take on more responsibility and contribute to the efficient and flexible operation of the School. Quotes- **“I trained colleagues how to use the whiteboard and try to share good practice. I organise the workload and cover and undertake staff training. I undertake NPQH tutoring work covering our own staff and another school.”**

Interviewees referred to the support they received from managers, supervisors and experienced staff and the supportive nature of their colleagues. Mentoring and good teamwork were often mentioned in interviews. Senior staff mentor less experienced ones and appropriate training such as Leading from the Middle has been provided for people taking more responsibility. Quotes – **“I was given the opportunity to develop my career and received excellent support. I am observed regularly and had some useful tips. The reviews show appreciation of our work and are motivational. We agree three targets, review progress and it is monitored closely. XXX encouraged me to take more responsibility and move to my present role.”**

The open management style of the senior staff, their interest in encouraging participation and ideas and willingness to keep people fully informed was recognised by staff and appeared to be a factor in ensuring that morale has been maintained. The personal review procedures enable senior staff to provide feedback and support in a systematic fashion but there is also regular day-to-day contact and team working. The reviews for support staff can usefully be delegated further, as planned.

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

The managers interviewed gave specific examples of how they recognised performance and contribution. This is done systematically through personal review and team meetings and, more informally, by individual praise and compliments.

Employees confirmed that they believed their contribution was recognised through the performance management procedure and the achievement of individual and team targets.

All staff interviewed had a good understanding as to how they contributed to the organisation’s success. People knew that the organisation depended on them to care for the children, keep them occupied and safe and contribute to their development. The senior staff are keen to encourage and reward ideas and suggestions and people have responded positively, notably in the form of taking more responsibility. Praise is given at meetings and individually, when appropriate.

**Quotes – “ I was given recognition for my hard work. My manager made me feel appreciated when I had my review.”**

Currently the Head and Deputy undertake all the personal reviews and it would be desirable for some of this activity to be delegated to the relevant departmental managers, as is planned. This would allow more time for the purpose and strengthen the roles of the managers concerned.

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

The Head and Deputy explained how they encouraged teams and individuals to take responsibility. They looked to people to identify and solve problems with reference to them as the last resort, while at the same time promoting greater communication and transparency. Throughout the assessment visit, people confirmed their involvement in problem-solving and decision-making with the aim of improving contribution, for example in terms of dealing with individual children.

**Quote – “We were all involved as a year group in our response to Ofsted. We consider the school development plan as a team. We discussed the admissions policy and time table collectively.”**

The process of increasing staff involvement in target setting and planning at team and organisation level should be continued, particularly for support staff.

## **8. People learn and develop effectively**

Managers described how development needs and related activity are followed up through the performance management procedure, supervision and observation. Activity is logged centrally through a computerised system.

All staff could explain how their needs were met, by a mixture of on the job training and courses. The senior staff and subject co-ordinators undertake training during the Inset days and the supervisors also have a training role. The School makes good use of these resources to ensure staff are training to the required standards, particularly in relation to its key priorities. External training is generally accessed through the LEA but the School has shifted the emphasis from external to internal training, where possible, as this is both more cost effective and closely related to the School needs. An interesting recent example has been the videoing of exemplar lessons for other staff to follow.

Training activity is evaluated under the organisation’s evaluation procedure and recorded. It is also reviewed under the performance management procedure, although this aspect could be strengthened. There is also systematic observation of classes.

Many people were able to describe how their contribution had improved as a result of training, frequent examples being maths and writing as well as assessment and IT. Newly Qualified Teachers were complimentary about their programme and the mentoring they received. Support assistants had been given training to equip them to deal with individual children over aspects such as Autism and Epilepsy, as well as more general provision such as behaviour and First Aid. Admin staff had received appropriate systems training. Quotes - **“I have progressed from supply teacher to a co-ordinator role while I have been here. My role has expanded and I have taken on more responsibility. I have gained an HLTA qualification and now have a career opportunity working on pupil behaviour. I worked alongside an experienced teacher shadowing her. I learned speech therapy to work with particular children.”**

The performance management and induction procedures were generally regarded as effective by the participants and appropriate training had been provided for supervisors, with more planned.

## **EVALUATING THE IMPACT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE ORGANISATION**

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

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

The Head and Deputy outlined the investment in time, money and resources expended in developing the organisation. They described the return on investment across the organisation in a variety of ways. In a service organisation, this is generally expressed in the achievement of standards, meeting targets and the improved capability of staff, as well as increased confidence. Meeting Ofsted requirements is crucial.

A review of provision had led to a shift in emphasis from external courses to in-house training, which meant training could be better tailored to the needs of the School and made more accessible to all staff. Inset training was revised accordingly, which included the videoing of exemplar lessons.

Interviewees believed that their contribution and the performance of their teams and the organisation had all benefited from the training provided and were able to give examples in terms of greater knowledge, confidence and ability to deliver care and supervision to the children. Quotes- **“Use of whiteboards has improved substantially. Assessment and pupil tracking is far better now, enabling us to target support and resources and monitor results. The team teach approach has helped with children with behavioural problems. The NVQ training for cleaners has had positive results.”**

Individual evaluation takes place through questionnaires, performance reviews, supervision feedback to meetings and observation. This aspect can usefully be investigated with a view to establishing a more integrated systematic approach. If this can be done on-line, then it will have benefits in terms of ease of use and analysis.

There are regular staff and governors' meetings at which major initiatives are reviewed and the annual school report reviews performance, referring to the training that has taken place. Teachers, other than the Head, report to the governing body on specific activities or initiatives where they have particular responsibility, which helps with their own development and increase the governors' knowledge. An interesting development has been the preparation of quarterly training reports covering the cost and impact of any significant activity, an approach which should be continued.

Quotes – **“CPD is closely monitored by XXX to ensure people are getting the required training and making progress. We have seen people moving into management demonstrating presentation and leadership skills. The fact that three staff have moved on to take promotion shows how effective we are at developing people. The good Ofsted report and our results show the support we provide is working.**

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

Recent changes have been the introduction of personal reviews for support staff, the use of parent surveys, costed evaluation reports and the videoing of lessons. The management structure, roles and competences have been reviewed under the Government teaching and learning responsibility initiative and are in the process of being modified to meet the current priorities. Workforce remodelling has resulted in the establishment of supervisory roles following appropriate training and this has included the establishment of the bursar role to handle most non teaching activities. Apart from strengthening the management chain and improving communication, this restructuring has rewarded performance and offered people the possibility of advancement. A review of provision in relation to the budget and current needs led to the change in emphasis from external to internal training and the revision of Inset training which was generally regarded as being beneficial. The School is constantly reviewing the ways training is delivered in order to come up with more effective approaches. Consideration of the NAPTA programme is an example.

Communications had been strengthened through management and team meetings and email. Staff spoke about good flow of information and transparency, although one or two staff felt that more prompt information about individual children was necessary. Overall, they confirmed the benefits of the approach and endorsed the supervisor and co-ordinator roles. They were impressed by the range of training made available and, in particular, how support was provided on an ongoing basis.

**Quotes – “We have moved to providing more training in the staff meetings and this is co-ordinated in line with our SDP targets. We have changed from group performance management reviews to individual ones for the support staff. We demonstrate good practice to staff through videoing our own members of staff. We reviewed the provision of support for an autistic child and reorganised the training and approach to achieve consistency. I worked with the external adviser to learn about assessment which I then took over so that he could use his skills elsewhere. The decision to introduce the bursar role has worked well. It has helped the running of the School immensely.”**

### ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Assessor	Peter Griffiths
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Organisation:	<b>GREENHILL SCHOOL</b>
Address	Greenhill Main Road Sheffield S8 7RA
Tel No:	0114 237 7080
Number of Sites	One
Number of Employees	53 plus indirects and governors
Nature of Organisation	Primary School
Head Teacher	Mr J. Marriott
Assessment Co-ordinator	Amy Read
Assessment Type	Review
Site visit date	24 January 2007