

# Essentials Assessment Report

## **BURNHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

Accreditation number:      SOU-17-00042  
Accreditation valid from:    15 NOVEMBER 2017  
Assessment conducted by:   CATH PARISH





Investors in People

157-159 Buckingham Palace Road,

London, SW1W 9SP

+44 (0) 300 303 3033

The Investors in People brand, trademarks, methodology and assets are owned by Investors in People Community Interest Company (registered in England and Wales with company registration number 10420361). The Investors in People Standard and associated products is delivered by Investors in People Community Interest Company.

©2017 The contents of this proposal, the Investors in People name, designs, mark and logo are protected by copyright and international trademark law. This report should be considered commercial in confidence. Investors in People Community Interest Company is recognised as the Data Controller in the context of all data relating to Investors in People.

## Contents

Contents .....	3
Acknowledgements .....	4
Executive Summary .....	5
Assessment Outcome .....	7
Burnham Grammar School Assessment Outcome Final Heatmap.....	7
Context .....	8
Organisation Overview .....	9
Assessment Approach.....	11
How Burnham Grammar School was assessed.....	12
Detailed Assessment Outcome .....	13
Alignment against the IIP Framework .....	13
Table of Results for the Online Assessment .....	14
Principle 1: Leading .....	15
Principle 2: Supporting .....	19
Principle 3: Improving .....	23
Recommendations and Next Steps .....	27
Key dates for next stages .....	28
Annex 1 – Table of outcomes against the IIP Themes .....	29

## Acknowledgements

The Investors in People (IIP) Practitioner, Cath Parish, would like to thank all staff for their time and enthusiasm throughout this assessment. Their co-operation, openness and honesty were much appreciated.

In particular many thanks to Nina Adamson for facilitating the assessment.

It was a genuine pleasure to meet everyone and I look forward to working with you all going forward.

## Executive Summary

Burnham Grammar School has always been committed to using the Investors in People Standard as a route map for continuous improvement. This was the first time the school has been assessed against the revised Sixth Generation Investors in People (IIP) Framework. This Framework is far more stretching than the previous Fifth Generation Framework and the Practitioner is delighted to confirm that Burnham Grammar School has maintained its Gold Accreditation.

The assessment included an on-line assessment that was carried out with all staff prior to face-to-face interviews with 23 staff from across all levels of the school. Staff were extremely positive and enthusiastic and it was clear they all enjoyed working in the school.

The ethos of the school is quite different from most grammar schools as the focus is on supporting students to meet their individual potential rather than ranking them against one another. There is just the same focus of enabling individual staff to reach their full potential - underpinned by the strong Values/Aims that are embedded within the culture of the school.

All staff understood the main priorities in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) as they had been involved in its development. The Aims/Values were absolutely clear and are permeated throughout the school although there could be more clarity around the 'Vision' of 'Embracing Challenge'.

The consultative leadership style has built real trust and confidence in the management capabilities of the Leadership Team – reflected in the successes in the school's performance as well as low staff turnover. There are many opportunities for staff to develop their leadership skills through the culture of continuous development. This is supported by the well thought out structure within the school. This has both motivated staff to perform at their best and kept staff engaged as taking on new roles and responsibilities has added variety and interest to their jobs.

The school readily recognises the internal expertise it has and uses this to champion change as well as developing others. The school's Governors have many different skills and these are used to their full extent. The 'Excellence' and 'Beyond Outstanding sessions' together with triad teaching observations have made a marked difference to the teaching within the classrooms, resulting in an increase from 96.3% in 2014 to 99% Good to Outstanding teaching during the current year. This has also been reflected in the excellent examination results with a significant proportion of students moving on to attend their preferred destinations including two going to Cambridge University and one going Oxford University.

Reward and recognition has always been a strength within Burnham Grammar School. However, it has been difficult to reward teaching staff over the past few years owing to external funding issues. The Head has tried hard to compensate for this with other flexible benefits although financial rewards are a priority for most of the younger staff with the price of living in the school's locality. The extra leadership responsibilities can in some cases facilitate pay increases for teachers although this does not appear to be in place for support staff. This is an area to be reviewed.

Work life balance is taken seriously and staff appreciate the way they are allowed time to deal with any family or personal issues without feeling pressured to return to their work. It is not always easy to do this, but fits with the 'Caring' Values within the school.

Burnham Grammar School plays an important role within the community both in supporting other schools as well as the neighbourhood. Taking the lead role within the Burnham Teaching Partnership has created opportunities for Burnham staff to visit a variety of different schools to share good practice as well as providing opportunities for the school when recruiting new staff. The connection with several Universities such as Roehampton and Reading has also provided additional ways of bringing fresh ideas into the school.

The passion for innovation and '*thinking outside of the box*' has encouraged the school to continuously evaluate and review its ways of working. It is hoped that this report will also help to celebrate all the good practice within the school as well as provide some suggestions for development.

As a result of this assessment, the Practitioner is delighted to congratulate the whole team on maintaining the Gold accreditation. This is a real accolade in view of the stretching Sixth Generation of the Investors in People Framework.

Well done!

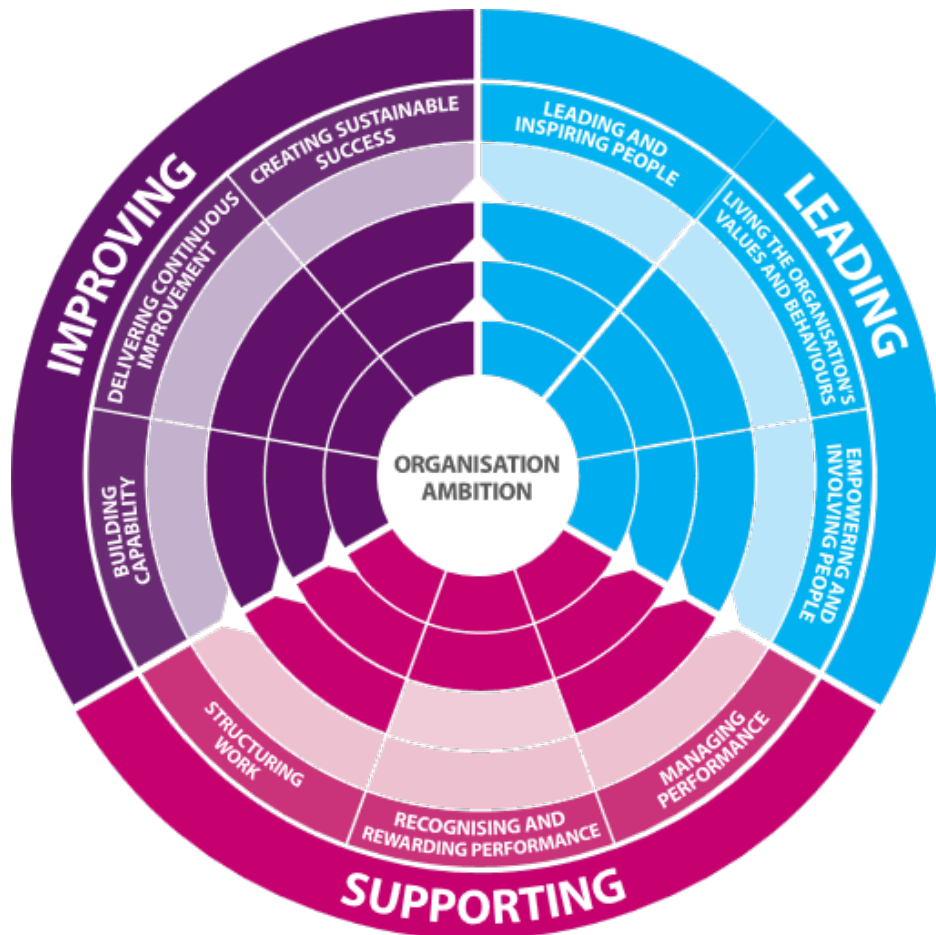
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cath Parish". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cath Parish  
IIP Practitioner  
November 2017

## Assessment Outcome

The levels of performance gained are highlighted on the heat map below.

### Burnham Grammar School Assessment Outcome Final Heatmap



### Burnham Grammar School Final Award Outcome



## Context

Burnham Grammar School sought to be re-assessed against Sixth Generation Investors in People Framework in May 2017. The previous assessment was against the Fifth Generation IIP Framework in September 2014 when they gained the Gold Accreditation. The organisation has always been very committed to Investors in People and has used the assessments as a way of celebrating all the good practice in place as well as using any areas for development as part of its continuous improvement plan.

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, leading to an award level of Standard, Silver, Gold that represents the level of performance achieved, or the level of 'Performance', from a fundamental 'developed' level to 'advanced' performance. Assessment is carried out using surveys, interviews, meetings and observation. The approach taken in the assessment of Burnham Grammar School is summarised in a later section of the report. The accreditation awarded represents the current level achieved and the Standard can be used to facilitate ongoing development of people management practices.

This report summarises the assessment of Burnham Grammar School and the level achieved.



## Organisation Overview

Burnham Grammar School is a co-educational grammar school in Burnham, Buckinghamshire. In October 2011 the school became an academy. It takes students aged 11–18, with approximately 900 on roll.

The school is always striving for 'Excellence' and has been committed to using the Investors in People (IIP) Framework to support its drive for continuous improvement. The last Investors in People Assessment took place in 2014 when the school gained the Gold Accreditation and also became a Champion. In 2015 it went on to be chosen as one of 7 finalists in the IIP Awards Ceremony for its Leadership.

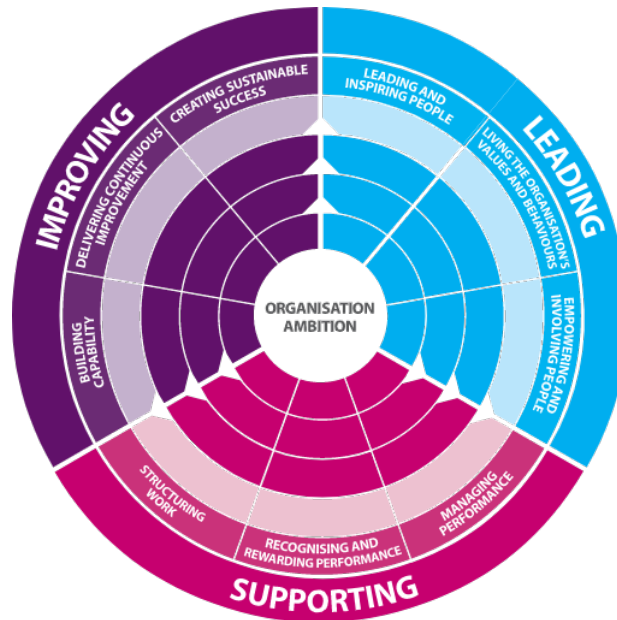
There is a culture of 'community' within the school where staff and students all support one another. Students and staff come from very diverse backgrounds and it is good to see how they all work and play well together – underpinned by the strong aims/values. The focus is on providing development opportunities and extra-curricular experiences that will enable individual students and staff to reach their full potential. The whole focus is on supporting and measuring the holistic individual progress of students rather than the more usual focus on just examination results.

The school is accredited as a Beacon Leader Teaching and Training provider in partnership with Roehampton University. It shares its expertise with 14 schools across the local community.

Having carefully considered the IIP Framework, Burnham Grammar School carried out a self-assessment and decided the organisation was at the Advanced level of performance in all areas of the IIP Framework. This was substantiated by the excellent increase in the 'outstanding' classroom teaching from 96% to 99% over the past three years; improvement in examination results with 97% A\*-C grades in GCSEs and low staff turnover of 9% in the current year.

The heat map below summarises where Burnham Grammar School believed it currently sits against the each of the nine IIP indicators. The shaded cells represent the maturity level against each indicator. The more cells shaded, the more mature and embedded the practices are believed to be within the organisation.

### Burnham Grammar School 'As Is' (self-assessment) Heat Map



## Assessment Approach





Following the Context Discussion with members of the Senior Leadership Team, from which details for the organisational analysis were elicited, the school was assessed primarily using the IIP40 survey and interviews. Staff were informed of the IIP assessment and accreditation process in September, when they were asked to take part in completing the survey and a possible interview. This gave time to deal with any questions or issues that staff raised. The Deputy reported that there were no material issues and that staff were more than happy to be involved. All staff were asked to complete the IIP40 survey with the result that 60 completed surveys were returned (62%). To be viable 49% responses were required.

The survey responses were analysed to determine key themes or issues and these were used as one basis on which interviews were designed and administered. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with 23 staff, from all functions and levels, selected purposively because they were ideally placed to discuss IIP related issues. This was slightly higher to compensate for the fairly low response to the staff survey owing to it being carried out at the beginning of term when staff were especially busy. Each was interviewed either on a one-to-one basis or in pairs with confidentiality assured. Interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. Interviewees appeared to willingly share and discuss their experiences and attitudes.

The Senior Leadership Team were observed working together during the Context meeting. In addition a staff meeting was observed where a member of staff was leaving for promotion to a cross county position – having gained her expertise through development within Burnham Grammar School.

Data on which the assessment was based included that elicited from the survey and interviews, observations and documents provided by Burnham Grammar School. Documents were freely provided and included slides showing results of last year's examinations, plans and priorities for the year 2016-2017, metrics including staff sickness and turnover, career progression, evaluation staff development and other HR procedures.

## How Burnham Grammar School was assessed

	<p>The online assessment was deployed to 97 employees with a response from 60 (62%). This was above the international Investors in People guidelines and therefore the sample was considered statistically significant.</p>
	<p>Based on the findings from the online assessment and size of the school, 23 staff were interviewed from across the school. This was higher than the norm to compensate for the slightly low response to the IIP40 on-line survey owing to the fact this took place at the beginning of term when everyone was busy.</p>
	<p>The Practitioner was able to observe the SLT working together during the Context meeting. In addition a staff meeting was observed where a member of staff was leaving and taking on a cross County role following development within Burnham Grammar School.</p>
	<p>Types of analysis undertaken included results from the on-line survey, outcomes of the interviews with staff and the documents and metrics provided for information.</p>

## Detailed Assessment Outcome

This section provides a detailed analysis of Burnham Grammar School's assessment against the IIP Framework.

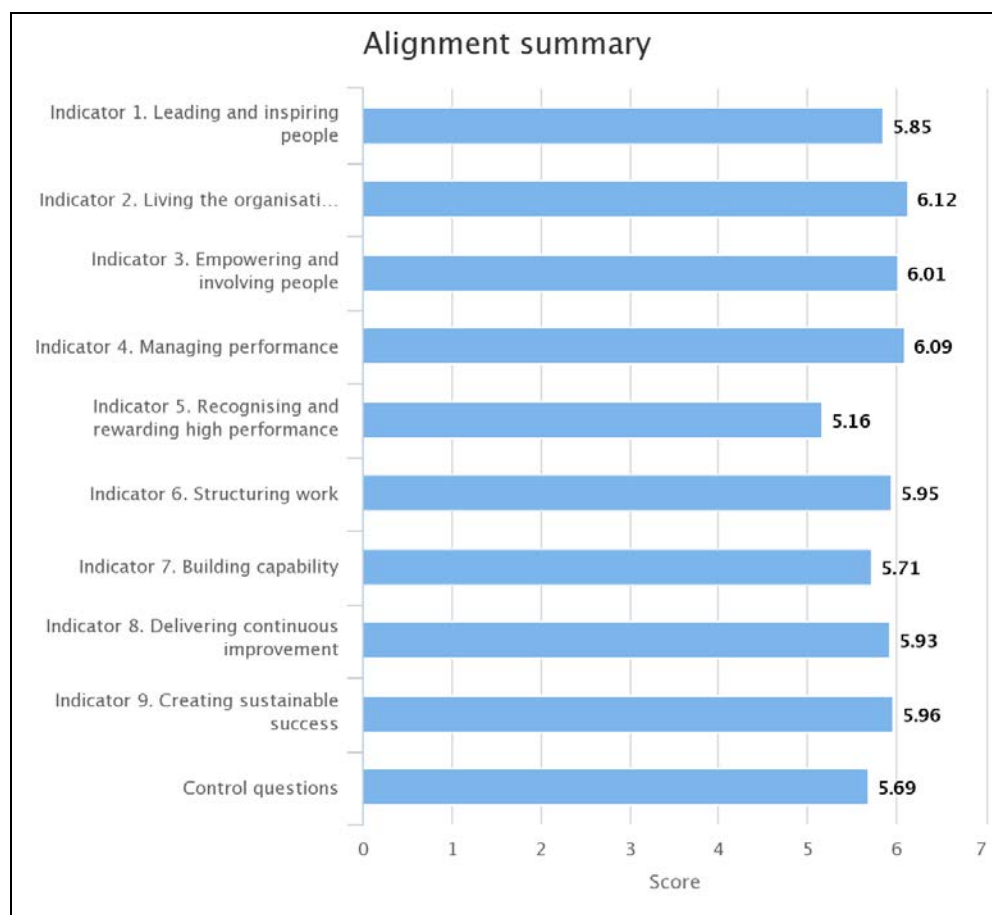
An overview of the results from Burnham Grammar School's online assessment can be found below and are discussed in more detail on the following pages.

In the graphic below, results from the online assessment have been aggregated to give a measure of alignment against the Investors in People Standard, per framework indicator.

Alignment is measured on a scale of 0–7. The highest measure of alignment against the Standard is 7, whereby an organisation demonstrates complete alignment with the Standard, according to the responses collected.

*(The control questions are used to validate overall responses and should be ignored for the purpose of this analysis.)*

### Alignment against the IIP Framework



## Table of Results for the Online Assessment

The overview table below provides a summary of the online assessment results, showing a breakdown of all responses at an Indicator level, highlighting areas for focus when considering strengths (green) and weaknesses (red) as well as those who neither agree nor disagree (grey).

For the purpose of this report, positive responses will include those in the Strongly Agree, Agree and Somewhat Agree categories.

The question set covers all Indicators of the whole IIP Standard. Each question asks the respondent to rate agreement with the statement aligned to one of the nine Indicators

### Overview of online assessment results

IIP Indicator	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Indicator 1. Leading and inspiring people	28.25% (68)	43.75% (105)	18.75% (45)	5.50% (13)	1.75% (5)	1.00% (2)	1.00% (2)
Indicator 2. Living the organisation's values and behaviours	36.25% (87)	47.25% (114)	11.25% (27)	3.00% (7)	1.75% (4)	0.50% (1)	0.00% (0)
Indicator 3. Empowering and involving people	36.50% (88)	41.00% (98)	15.75% (38)	2.75% (6)	2.00% (5)	0.75% (2)	1.25% (3)
Indicator 4. Managing performance	39.25% (94)	45.25% (109)	7.00% (17)	5.00% (12)	1.75% (4)	0.50% (1)	1.25% (3)
Indicator 5. Recognising and rewarding high performance	16.25% (39)	38.25% (91)	16.50% (40)	13.25% (32)	6.75% (17)	6.75% (16)	2.25% (5)
Indicator 6. Structuring work	32.75% (79)	46.00% (111)	12.50% (30)	3.25% (8)	3.50% (8)	1.00% (2)	1.00% (2)
Indicator 7. Building capability	21.75% (52)	50.00% (121)	14.25% (34)	9.00% (22)	3.00% (7)	1.00% (2)	1.00% (2)
Indicator 8. Delivering continuous improvement	29.50% (70)	46.75% (112)	14.75% (36)	4.50% (12)	3.50% (8)	0.50% (1)	0.50% (1)
Indicator 9. Creating sustainable success	32.50% (78)	41.50% (100)	18.25% (44)	5.50% (13)	1.75% (4)	0.50% (1)	0.00% (0)
Control questions	22.50% (54)	51.00% (122)	13.00% (32)	5.50% (13)	3.00% (7)	3.75% (9)	1.25% (3)

Please note that some totals will exceed the number of overall submissions due to multiple questions across indicators.

## Principle 1: Leading

Levels of performance achieved in this Principle	
Indicators:	
1. Leading and Inspiring People	Advanced
2. Living the organisation's Values	Advanced
3. Empowering and Involving People	Advanced

This assessment highlighted the continued consultative leadership style within the school resulting in all staff agreeing they were very clear regarding the purpose and priorities of the school as they had been involved in agreeing them during Inset days. Clarity around the purpose, vision and objectives of the school was confirmed by the 90% positive response to the on-line assessment (OLA) statement *'Our leaders clearly communicate the organisation's vision and objectives'*. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) described how priorities had been established through both internal and external reviews including the recent Ofsted inspection, DEF meetings and school evaluations.

Interviews confirmed departmental plans were in place - put together through team consultation. These identified clear links to the overall school priorities and were used when agreeing individual objectives. This works extremely effectively where teaching staff are concerned, although interviews with a few of the support staff highlighted there could be more focus on the work they do to support the success of the school.

Staff all were keen to highlight how the school has a significantly different ethos to other grammar schools as it strives to ensure all students and staff reach their own full potential rather than focusing just on examination results. The majority of staff were clear regarding the vision of the school of *'Embracing Challenge'* although there were a few staff who related it to the Aims of the school - Supporting Active Citizens, Prepared for the Future, Happy, Healthy and Safe, Caring Individuals, and Responsible Learners. These all sum up the purpose of the school very well and although only a play on words, consideration should be given to discussing whether there is a need to differentiate between the Vision and Aims of the school.

Two-way communication takes place regularly between the SLT and staff – with the SLT being both visible and accessible to staff at all times. Those in the SLT who also have a teaching responsibility are observed doing their lessons the same as other teaching staff. This has helped to develop a sound trust in the SLT as confirmed by the 95% positive response to the OLA statement *'I trust the leaders in my organisation'*.

Staff commented on how the Head leads by example:

*'He is fair, personable, democratic and autocratic when necessary. He often goes with the consensus and our opinions are valued'.*

*'There is definitely a two-way trust in the leadership team'.*

*'The Head has a warm and people centred personality. He believes in the school being cohesive and it is'.*

Staff described the SLT as inspirational in the way they support staff and motivate them to deliver the Aims and objectives of the school. This behaviour had been passed down to line managers. This was confirmed by the fact 90% of staff replied positively to the OLA statement *'Our leaders motivate me to achieve exceptional results'*.

*'My line manager is a 'god'. It is amazing how he always has time to have a chat and encourages me to succeed with my objectives'.*

The Standards and Competency Framework set out expectations of leaders and staff and these are used during Performance Management reviews. The SLT carry out 360 degree reviews between themselves and this gives an opportunity for feedback at that level. Staff feedback is obtained through Kirkland Rowell Surveys as well as ongoing feedback during one-to-one and Performance Management reviews. Outcomes of exit interviews are also taken on board.

The new Middle Leadership development programme has been based on outcomes of feedback from DEF meetings as well as staff feedback. 88% of staff gave positive responses (with 10% neither agreeing nor disagreeing) to the OLA statement *'My organisation develops great leaders'*. Interviews with staff concurred with the survey results and all were confident in the capabilities of the leaders at all levels within the school.

*'The Head feels like one of us. He is part of the team and we are confident the decisions made are with us at heart'.*

*'We feel we are being told everything'.*

The alignment of the IIP indicator around the Values was a striking - 6.12 out of 7. This is a very good result and indicates the Aims are embedded within the school ethos and used as Values by everyone. These were recently reviewed by staff to ensure they were still fit for purpose.

The Values underpin the way staff are led, managed and developed and are constantly articulated during briefings, staff meetings, team and one-to-one meetings. 98% of staff replied positively to the OLA statement *'My day to day behaviour reflects the organisation's values'*. Staff agreed the Performance Management reviews focus on behaviours as well as targets and objectives.

*'The Aims underpin everything. They are the Aims for the whole community of staff and students and everyone has an input'.*

Discussions with all levels of staff confirmed the Values are used when making decisions within the school. An excellent example of this is the recent restructuring to accommodate vertical tutoring groups. This was not an easy decision as students were not entirely sure they were in agreement as they would be separated from their friends. However, *'it felt more in line with our one community ethos and has enabled younger students to be mentored by older students'* in line with in line the Values of *'Prepared for the Future; Happy, Healthy and Safe; Caring Individuals'*. Where staff are concerned, it has given opportunities for workloads to be shared – for example writing references for 6<sup>th</sup> form students as well as supporting consistency of activities across the groups. 95% of staff gave positive responses to the OLA statement *'My organisation's Values guide the way we operate and make decisions'*.

Staff demonstrate their commitment to 'going above and beyond' in the way they support one another as well as the students. The Values look at developing not only the academic potential of the students through interventions after school but also their physical and mental health.



Throughout the assessment staff described how they are involved in extra curricula activities such as sport, trips and theatre events – all of which take up time outside of their day-to-day work including weekends and evenings. This is not always easy when they are stretched already with marking and other administrative work outside of the classroom.

Staff comments included:

*'There are points in the year when you get overwhelmed with work and you can put in a request for support for a couple of lessons. The whole staff can ask for this'.*

The alignment score of 6.01 out of 7 for the IIP indicator 'Empowering and involving people' is once again a very good result. Staff agreed communication throughout the school is effective. This is supported by weekly briefings, the Insights newsletter, e-mails, team and one-to-one meetings, minutes of working groups and good support mechanisms in the communal staffroom. The recently introduced 'Buzz' keeps both staff and students up-to-date with any events or necessary information on a daily basis. Transparency of information helps them to do their jobs well.

There are many ways in which staff are able to develop leadership skills. The structure enables a variety of leadership responsibilities to be in place, including Associate Leadership Roles; opportunities for TLR3 roles and leadership of triads plus the leadership of working parties. Those with expertise are encouraged to take the lead during 'Excellence' meetings to share their good practice. There is a real trust running throughout the school and staff all described how they feel empowered to take ownership of their various roles and responsibilities. This was reflected in the 91% positive replies to the OLA statement *'I feel empowered to make decisions and act on them'*. Comments included:

*'I feel like a leader not a manager here'.*

Collaboration is embedded within the school as its whole ethos is driven by the focus on *'one community'*. Staff are encouraged to join the unions and representatives meet regularly with the Head - acting as a two-way conduit for information and suggestions for improvement. Alongside this there are various staff working parties who contribute to decision making. 93% of staff replied positively to the OLA statement *'I participate in decision making with others in my organisation'*.

Staff talked about the new marking policy and how they have been able to adapt this to their own needs within the departments and teams. Discussions also highlighted how departments are allowed and encouraged to make curriculum decisions as experts in their own areas. Comments included:

*'We were able to write our own marking policy based on common sense. It brought more balance into our work'.*

*'Our professional opinions are respected'.*

Levels of responsibility and decision making are discussed at induction as well as on-going Performance Management Reviews. Staff all agreed they were clear as to what was expected of them and were given the autonomy to carry out their roles. This is supported by the transparent information regarding the school's finances and plans for the current and future three years. Information sharing sessions take place and at the moment there is a focus on the new building plans. A striking 96% of staff replied positively to the OLA *'I am trusted to make decisions in my role'*. This is an excellent result in view of the diversity of roles and responsibilities throughout the school.

*'It is not in our Values to be draconian'.*

## PERFORMANCE LEVELS

All three areas in this section of the IIP Framework have reached the **Advanced** level of performance.

Suggestions for further development

- Consideration should be given to differentiating with staff the Vision of Embracing Challenge and the Aim/Values.
- The School Plan is very focused on teaching and although support staff understand how they contribute to the success of the school, this is not overtly described in the plan.

## Principle 2: Supporting

Levels of performance achieved in this Principle	
Indicators:	
4. Managing Performance	Advanced
5. Recognising and Rewarding High Performance	Established
6. Structuring Work	Advanced

Managing Performance within Burnham Grammar School showed a strong alignment of 6.09 out of 7 to indicator 4 of the IIP Framework. It was clear staff understand what is expected of them and are trusted to do their well as shown by the previous evidence against Empowerment and involvement. Objective setting has been enhanced through the introduction of the new BlueSky software. This enables staff to monitor their own performance and also to take more ownership for agreeing objectives. 91% of staff responded positively (with 5% neither agreeing nor disagreeing) to the statement in the OLA assessment *'I set my objectives with my line manager'*. There was no doubt that teaching staff at all levels have clear objectives linked to the team and school priorities. These objectives are cross referenced against pay grades and moderated to ensure consistency of challenge.

*'We can pick aspects for each of us to develop in the team plan'.*

Stretching individual and team targets are in line with the school priorities and these often relate to staff taking on extra roles and responsibilities outside of their day-to-day tasks such as cross school responsibilities, arranging school trips, research into specific topics such as retention, cross school moderation.

Performance management reviews take place annually with six monthly reviews. However, discussions with staff confirmed additional one-to-one meetings take place regularly – especially at middle management level. Additional reviews for teaching staff include classroom observations when triads provide opportunities for reflection and constructive feedback. The slightly lower response rate of 87% positive (with 7% neither agreeing nor disagreeing) appeared to relate to a few of the support staff who agreed they have performance management reviews, however their perception was that this is not followed-up on a regular basis throughout the year.

Staff were all clear as to how they contribute to the school's success and this was confirmed through the 95% positive response to the OLA statement *'My organisation's success is reliant on all of us achieving our individual objectives'*. Encouragement and support from line managers to achieve objectives was praised by staff and comments included:

*'During our Beyond Outstanding Sessions (BOS) we shared good practice regarding having 'Difficult Conversations. This was also included in the Middle Leaders' Development Programme'.*

*'It is not the school's way to throw the book at you if improvements are needed. Management support always comes first. You are not 'managed out'.*

Middle managers and Heads of Department carry out self evaluations for their teams on performers and these are reviewed with the Deputy Head every two weeks. Additional Department (DEF) meetings take place with the Head or SLT to evaluate and encourage high performance. These plus the regular one-to-one meetings with staff provide information on progress and give opportunities for two-way feedback. This was reflected in the 93% positive response to the OLA statement '*I am encouraged to achieve high performance*'.

Performance data collected as part of these meetings, plus feedback from parents, students, learning walks and lesson observations is used effectively to improve individual and school performance. Examples include a decrease in the percentage of 'requires improvement' in teaching from 3.6% in 2014 to 1% in 2017; an increase in the percentage of Good to Outstanding teaching in the past three years from 96.3% to 99%.

Reward and recognition has always been high profile within Burnham Grammar School – especially led by the Head and SLT. Schools have been in a difficult position regarding financial awards owing to the issue on funding from the Government. In fact teaching staff described how they have not had a rise for the past few years resulting in a drop in pay of 15%. This is reflected in the lower alignment score of 5.16 in this IIP indicator in comparison to the others.

Staff spoke highly of the friendly, caring and family centred atmosphere within the school. They are all amazed and grateful for the way the Head signs off requests for individual personal leave if their children are off sick or even if someone wants to go to a wedding. Often this can make it difficult to sort out cover however this 'Caring' culture was explicit throughout the Practitioner's two day visit to the school. This was reflected in the 87% positive response to the OLA statement '*I feel appreciated for the work I do*'.

Flexible ways of giving reward and recognition include – Thank You cards from the Head following information of good performance during SLT meetings by middle managers and other members of SLT, Christmas and Easter gifts, donuts and apples on Friday, staff meals provided during training and other meetings. The culture of verbal praise is further referenced through a Thank You board in the staffroom and cards given to students so that they can thank and give praise to staff. 73% of staff responded positively (with 13% neither agreeing nor disagreeing) to the OLA statement '*My organisation has a flexible approach to reward and recognition*'. This was also reflected in the excellent 93% response to the OLA statement '*My organisation is a great place to work*'.

Comments indicated that middle managers are effective in the way they recognise good performance within the teams, although this information is not always passed on to SLT for further recognition. The fact there are many millennials now working within the school there is a need to give more instant gratification to keep them motivated. This is an area that could be reviewed.

Staff described how a questionnaire goes out to staff each year to ask for any 'Tiny Noticeable Things' that can be made to rewarding and recognising staff and these are actioned where possible.

The Pay Policy is reviewed regularly as this is now related to performance for teaching staff. Evidence of increased staff engagement and motivation can be shown by a drop in staff turnover from 12% to 9% as well as improvements in student progress. The policy rewards outstanding performance by enabling teaching staff to rise up the Upper Pay Scale – supported by opportunities for career development activities and professional qualifications.

A recent move has been to internally appoint teaching staff into Head of House roles. This has given them more pastoral responsibility so that they can gain a further pay award. Honorarium awards can be used to thank staff for 'above and beyond' projects. However, this is not always the case where a small proportion of support staff are concerned.

*'I have been taking on extra responsibilities, but not been given any extra pay for doing them'.*

The Head gives public recognition and cards to individuals and teams during staff meetings. This was shown by the 72% positive response (with 13% neither agreeing nor disagreeing) to the statement *'I/my team are consistently recognised when we exceed expectations'.*

All staff agreed they enjoyed their jobs – especially the variety of different activities and responsibilities. Competencies are linked to pay scales, with the result staff can see what skills and capabilities they need to progress their careers. An excellent 96% of staff replied positively to the OLA statement *'My work is interesting and uses my skills and capabilities'* and 88% gave a positive response to *'My role allows me to develop the skills needed to progress'.*

*'I wouldn't be here now if it was not for the opportunities we have to challenge ourselves and to try out interesting areas of work'.*

*'I love it here because I have been able to get involved in so many different activities'.*

Everyone confirmed they understand their roles and responsibilities and that they have accountability and empowerment to carry them out. Discussions highlighted there are many opportunities to take on extra responsibilities. These include action research, working parties, leading Excellence sessions, mentors and a variety of other roles that focus on extra curricula activities.

The structure within the school allows for effective career progression as there are opportunities for staff to act-up into leadership roles – examples include associate positions, deputies, deputy Heads of House. Each job description provides clarity around decision making and authority.

Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly to review if they are still fit for purpose. These are consistently used across the school, although there is room for each team to adapt procedures to suit their situation. This enables them to take ownership.

Collaboration is part of the ethos of the school – the focus being on creating 'one community'. Examples of these include the teams of triads that get together to observe one another in the classroom, peer observations, cross school working groups, action research with other schools and organisations, recognition of expertise in the Excellence sessions where good practice is shared. The staffroom is particularly well used to collaborate and share ideas across the whole school. The new vertical tutoring groups encourages students to collaborate from year 7 to 13 – with the older students mentoring and leading by example for the younger students. 88% of staff replied positively to the statement *'Our roles are structured to enable us to work well together'.*

*'A group of 12 teachers got together to design the language and criteria for collecting lesson observation data to make sure it would work for them'.*

*'Teaching is amazing here. Triads of different teachers watch each other teach and give feedback'.*

*'We do a lot of collaborative work with other schools to share good practice'.*

*'Decisions are made collaboratively. It is the way we work here'.*

## PERFORMANCE LEVELS

As highlighted at the beginning of this section, the indicators focused on Performance Management and Structuring Work all had strong evidence to show they are at the **Advanced** level.

Reward and recognition is more difficult in a school situation as it is not possible to give large bonuses as in a commercial organisation although Burnham Grammar School has definitely tried to compensate for this with its flexibility and support where work life balance is concerned. The reward and recognition strategy shows a strong focus on teaching staff. It is acknowledged that this is done with the purpose of retaining good teachers as they are difficult to keep with the increase in housing within the Burnham area. Interviews highlighted a need to give attention to some of the support staff who are not feeling quite so well recognised for the work they do. With this in mind, this indicator has reached **Established** under the theme of Adopting a Culture of Recognition.

Only 55% responded positively to the statement '*I/my team receive higher levels of recognition and reward for higher levels of performance*'. Within the IIP Framework this comes under 'High Performing' and was not part of this assessment. The focus here is more on rewarding individuals and teams for high performance, and this might be an area for improvement to be included in future assessments although it is more difficult to carry this out in schools.

### Suggestions for further development

- Consideration should be given to implementing regular one-to-one reviews with support staff to follow-up the targets and objectives agreed during the annual Performance Management Reviews as well as for two-way feedback.
- There are a few staff such as technicians who work in the background – often during weekends or holidays. Although verbal praise and feedback is given, more formal performance reviews would be appreciated.
- The pay awards for teaching staff are increased with added responsibilities. This does not always appear to be the same for support staff and needs to be reviewed.
- There are a considerable amount of millennials now working within the school and research has shown they are motivated by instant gratification whereas the more mature staff do not necessarily need this to keep them engaged and motivated. Comments highlighted that line managers are effective in their recognition within the teams, although there is a perception that this is not always passed onto the SLT for higher level recognition. This is an area for discussion.
- Those teaching staff who have taken on the role of Head of House commented they are finding it difficult to carry out their roles effectively within the time allocation and have had to use 'free' time for their teaching roles. This is an area to be discussed.
- Although the Governors are seen to be very supportive, there could be more recognition coming from them to celebrate high performance by both individuals and teams.

### Principle 3: Improving

Levels of performance achieved in this Principle	
Indicators:	
7. Building Capability	Advanced
8. Delivering Continuous Improvement	Advanced
9. Creating Sustainable Success	Advanced

There is no doubt in the commitment to developing staff to reach their full potential. This is underpinned by the Values/Aims and confirmed by the 95% positive response to the OLA statement '*My organisation believes it is important that we all learn and develop our capability*'. Regular one-to-one meetings are used to follow-up on the annual Performance Management Reviews and these are used to discuss agreed objectives and targets. Where teaching staff are concerned, the lesson observations and learning walks also highlight any areas for development that might be required. Some support staff commented that they would like the opportunity to carry out peer observations – something that was done in the past.

The outcomes from DEF self assessments and feedback from other internal and external sources have influenced the middle leader development programmes run by a member of SLT and these are followed-up by two weekly one-to-one meetings. 90% of staff responded positively (with 8% neither agreeing nor disagreeing) to the OLA statement '*I develop my capabilities to reach my full potential*'. Interviews indicated the 2% disagreeing were from the support staff.

There is a strong focus on using the expertise within the school champion change and to develop others, and this is working very effectively during the Excellence sessions. Teachers sign themselves up for the most appropriate sessions. Other flexible and innovative methods of development include action learning, collaboration and visits to other schools, INSET days, visits to external agencies such as examination boards, plus professional qualifications such as NPQH.

There is a training plan in place, and the Deputy Head is involved in communicating any development opportunities available to staff. Staff all agreed they have good opportunities to take on new responsibilities that both broaden and develop their careers and described how this had kept their jobs interesting – influencing the low staff turnover of 9%. Data given to the Practitioner confirmed 31 promotions – mostly into leadership roles - since the last assessment. This is a good outcome that has been supported by the restructuring within the school to provide opportunities for career development to retain and stretch staff to keep them engaged and motivated. This was confirmed when 85% of staff gave positive response to the statement '*I have every opportunity to grow my capabilities to be the best I can be*'. There were examples where support staff had been given opportunities to develop their careers although there were just a few who felt more could be done to support their professional careers.

New staff agreed their recruitment had been carried out very professionally and they had been given all the information and support they needed. Vacancies are advertised internally through the weekly Insight newsletter and those who had applied internally and had not been successful agreed they had had good feedback and support following their interviews. Discussion confirmed staff are involved in the interview process in the majority of cases – although this could be improved where support staff are concerned. This had influenced the 74% positive response (with 15% neither agreeing nor disagreeing) to the statement *'People are selected for roles in my organisation based on their proven capability'*. The Practitioner investigate as to whether the recruitment and selection process was fair and discovered this to be the case although a recent restructure resulted in a support appointment without staff involvement.

Resource planning is on-going within the departments as well as across the school. The SLT are very aware of the need for succession planning and there has been a focus on ensuring there are seconds in departments as well as associates/deputies where the Leadership Team is concerned.

Burnham Grammar School is continually focused on improvement in all areas of the school. This includes carrying out a very comprehensive evaluation of the investment it has made in staff development. This is reviewed even further following the lesson observations. This confirmed the percentage of Good to Outstanding teaching has increased over the past three years from 96.3% to 99%. It also showed a decrease in the percentage of 'requires improvement' in teaching from 3.6% in 2014 to 1% in 2017. Examination results have also improved with 29% gaining an A Grade in AS examinations – the highest ever – and 97% gaining A\*-C Grades in their GCSE examinations.

Information from Ofsted inspections, visits to other schools and IIP assessments are taken on board – an IIP assessment example being the improvement in rigour when evaluating the impact of learning and development. Internally information for improvements comes from a variety of ways including staff surveys, student/parent feedback, self assessment reviews (DEF), outcomes of Union meetings and information from exit interviews. This was confirmed through the 94% positive response to the OLA statement 'We are always seeking new ways to improve'.

The collaboration with other schools in the area, as part of the Training Partnership, helps to share good practice and highlight improvements. There is a strong relationship between the school and its alumni – enabling opportunities for ex students to come into the school to talk about their roles in a wide variety of organisations. When vertical tutoring was being planned, students from another school came in to do a presentation to the students during assembly in order to convince them of the benefits of the change. As stated earlier there is also a focus on using and sharing expertise within the school to develop new ideas and practices. This includes excellent support from the Governors who have a range of different skills and knowledge. 95% of staff responded positively to the statement *'I look for improvement ideas from within and external to my organisation'* and 85% agreed *'I am responsible for improving the way we do things'*.

The culture of continuous improvement encourages staff to try out new ways of working without fear if they do not succeed. This has not only built up two way trust between staff and their leaders, but also given them a feeling of empowerment and autonomy – all of which sits well with the younger staff within the school. This was confirmed with 90% of staff agreeing *'I can experiment without feeling worried about making mistakes'*.

*'You can be creative here and we can try out things outside of your comfort zone'*.



There is certainly a real passion for innovation and throughout this assessment it was clear there is a desire to 'think outside of the box' in order to ensure practices and procedures are fit for purpose for Burnham Grammar School rather than continuing with outdated ways of working. The ethos of not ranking students against each other, but looking at their personal progress is a good example. Where staff are concerned, innovative ideas are publicly recognised and shared throughout the school wherever possible. This links back to the vision of 'Embracing Challenge'.

*'There are great entrepreneurial opportunities to innovate here and that is what has kept me at the school'.*

There is a clear plan for the future of the school and this has been communicated with staff through INSET days and other staff/departmental meetings. The inclusive culture has enabled staff to feel part of both short and long term planning and this was confirmed with 95% of them giving positive response to the OLA statement *'My organisation has a plan for the future to ensure our continued success'*.

Staff were all enthusiastic about working at the school and were eager to talk about their progress and the support they have. The fact the school has such a diverse intake of students and staff could cause difficulties, however the culture of 'one community' is led from the top. Both students and staff are extremely friendly and whilst the Practitioner was visiting the school the excellent manners and behaviour of the students was amazing. An excellent result of 95% positive response from staff to the OLA statement *'My organisation is a great place to work and has a bright future'* confirms the trust in the leadership to drive the school forward to sustainable success.

*'The socio backgrounds of the students can often mean they have no background of aspiration and it is up to us to push the boundaries. For some coming here is actually changing their lives'.*

There is constant change in Burnham Grammar School – some of which comes through external Government decisions beyond the control of the school. Staff all agreed they are kept up-to-date with information they need, and as already highlighted in this report, decision making is mostly carried out through consultation.

The benefits of change are measured and data is captured. An example being the triad lesson observations and revised observation tool plus the Excellence sessions – resulting in 99% Good to Outstanding lessons as shown by the data recorded from lesson observations and confirmed through the recent Ofsted inspection; changes to vertical tutoring has broken down barriers between the various year groups of students, students feel safer and each group is carrying out the same activities across the school.

There is always a lot to celebrate within Burnham Grammar School although areas that have not been successful such as the recent Ofsted Inspection are also communicated openly with staff. The school had worked hard to become 'Outstanding' however a very small inconsistency had kept it at 'Good'. The report was available for all staff and parents to read.

There is a clear understanding regarding the stakeholders in the communities in which Burnham Grammar School serves. This is reflected in the diverse student intake as well as the diversity in age and culture of the staff. The school drives the Burnham Teaching Partnership as well as the Multi-Academy Trust. It gives operational support to the Dorney School by way of helping it with policies and procedures as well as mentoring and coaching. Joint INSETs are often carried out in areas such as Child Protection and Performance Management.

Staff were all very positive about the school's work in the community as shown by the 91% positive response (with 7% neither agreeing nor disagreeing) to the statement '*A positive relationship with the community is key to my organisation's continued success*'. Additional involvement includes providing a Christmas dinner each year for pensioners and collaboration with Burnham Council during a sustainability week. The school has the Silver Environmental Award and has set up an allotment where students and staff can grow vegetables.

## **PERFORMANCE LEVELS**

As highlighted at the beginning of this section all three indicators covering Building Capability, Delivering Continuous Improvement and Creating Sustainable Success reached the **Advanced** level of performance. All had good alignment scores with the IIP Framework showing 5.71, 5.93 and 5.96 scores out of 7.

### **Suggestions for further development**

- Consideration should be given to providing opportunities for Learning Support Assistants to carry out peer observations in order to share good practice and broaden their experiences.
- In most cases the recruitment panels include appropriate staff as well as SLT members. This opportunity should be given to support staff as appropriate.
- The school logo of Diversity, Dynamism and Distinction appears on all of the school's literature. Many staff were not exactly clear how this is used or what it stands for. Perhaps this can be included in discussions regarding the Vision of the school.

## Recommendations and Next Steps

The following recommendations are based on the professional judgement and assessment of Burnham Grammar School undertaken by Cath Parish.

In order to meet **Advanced Performance** in all areas of the IIP Framework the following improvement needs to be made:

### Reward and Recognition

- The strategy for reward and recognition appears to be focused mainly on teaching staff. Although verbal praise is given to support staff, this is not as high profile as it could be. There is also a perception that although some may take on extra responsibilities outside of their job role, they are not always rewarded for this appropriately. This is an area that needs to be reviewed.

### Suggestions for further improvement

- The OLA indicated staff were all clear regarding the vision of the school. During interviews with staff a variety of different versions of this were given – all totally in line with what the school is working towards. This may need some further discussion to ensure it is absolutely clear.
- The school logo of Diversity, Dynamism and Distinction appears on all of the school's literature. Some of the newer staff were not clear how this is used or what it stands for and perhaps this can be included in discussions regarding the vision of the school.
- The school plan is very focused on teaching and learning and although support staff understand their part to play in the success of the school, this is not overtly described within the plan.
- The LSAs agreed they had regular annual performance reviews, but there perception was that these are not followed-up to monitor progress throughout the year. They would also like to have the opportunity to be involved in peer observations to broaden their knowledge and skills – something that has happened in the past.
- The pay awards for teaching staff are increased with added responsibilities. This does not always appear to be the same for support staff and needs to be reviewed.
- It is clear the Head and SLT are very good at giving recognition through verbal praise and thank you cards. However, this is reliant on middle managers putting forward individual staff or teams for this recognition and comments indicated this could be improved. There are a considerable amount of millennials within the school, and research has shown that they are motivated by instant gratification more so than the more mature staff. This needs to be taken into account when reviewing the reward and recognition strategy in order to keep them engaged. The Practitioner is however aware of the real focus on opportunities for career development and this has been factored into the low staff turnover.
- Although Governors are seen to be very supportive, there could be more recognition coming from them to celebrate high performance by both individuals and teams.
- The new role of Head of House is working well although it appears they are finding it difficult to carry out all of their responsibility in the time allocated to them. Most agreed they need to use free time originally set aside for their teaching duties.

## Key dates for next stages

The key dates for the next stages of Burnham Grammar School's journey are set out below:

BURNHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL Accreditation date	BURNHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL 12-Month Review	BURNHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL 24-Month Review	BURNHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL Expiry
15 November 2017	30 September 2018	30 September 2019	30 September 2020

A follow-up meeting between the Practitioner and the Leadership Team for Burnham Grammar School should be arranged in order to develop an action plan to include the suggestions for improvement highlighted in this report. This action plan will be the focus of the 12 and 24-month reviews in 2018 and 2019.

## Annex 1 – Table of outcomes against the IIP Themes

<b>BURNHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL 2017</b> <b>Final outcome against 27 themes – Overall</b> <b>INVESTORS IN PEOPLE GOLD AWARD</b> <b>Note: Lowest theme level dictates final indicator outcome</b>		Developed	Established	Advanced	High Performing
<b>1. Leading and inspiring people</b> <b>ADVANCED</b>	Creating transparency and trust				
	Motivating people to deliver the organisation's objectives				
	Developing leadership capability				
<b>2. Living the organisation's values and behaviours</b> <b>ADVANCED</b>	Operating in line with the values				
	Adopting the values				
	Living the values				
<b>3. Empowering and involving people</b> <b>ADVANCED</b>	Empowering people				
	Participating and collaborating				
	Making decisions				
<b>4. Managing performance</b> <b>ADVANCED</b>	Setting objectives				
	Encouraging high performance				
	Measuring and assessing performance				
<b>5. Recognising and rewarding high performance</b> <b>ESTABLISHED</b>	Designing an approach to recognition and reward				
	Adopting a culture of recognition				
	Recognising and rewarding people				
<b>6. Structuring work</b> <b>ADVANCED</b>	Designing roles				
	Creating autonomy in roles				
	Enabling collaborative working				
<b>7. Building capability</b> <b>ADVANCED</b>	Understanding people's potential				
	Supporting learning and development				
	Deploying the right people at the right time				
<b>8. Delivering continuous improvement</b> <b>ADVANCED</b>	Improving through internal and external sources				
	Creating a culture of continuous improvements				
	Encouraging innovation				
<b>9. Creating sustainable success</b> <b>ADVANCED</b>	Focusing on the future				
	Embracing change				
	Understanding the external context				

---

**Get in touch:**

Call us on 0300 303 3033 today

Follow us on Twitter: @IIP

Go online: [www.investorsinpeople.com](http://www.investorsinpeople.com)



The Investors in People brand, trademarks, methodology and assets are owned by Investors in People Community Interest Company (Company registered in England and Wales No: 10420361).

©2017 The Investors in People name, designs, mark and logo are protected by copyright and international trademark law. For more information or to report a possible infringement please contact [info@investorsinpeople.com](mailto:info@investorsinpeople.com). No part of this publication should be reproduced, sold or copied without the permission of the copyright owner.