

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

new choices

Post Recognition Review Report

Commercial in Confidence



Tiddlywinks Day Nursery Ltd

UNDERTAKEN BY

Janet O'Brien

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE ASSESSOR

On behalf of Centre for Assessment & Recognition (NW) Ltd

North West Investors in People Centre

3rd February 2009

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Introduction

This is the first post recognition review for Tiddlywinks Day Nursery Limited. Since the last review, two new nurseries have been established – one in May 2007 and another in June 2008. There are now 49 people within the scope of this assessment, employed at the three nurseries – Crumpsall, Hill Lane and Victoria Avenue. The two directors now oversee the three nurseries, supported by managers, deputies and team leaders in all three nurseries.

I would like to thank David and Mel for their help in arranging the interviews, and all employees of Tiddlywinks who took part in interviews, for their openness and co-operation during the Assessment process.

Outcome

Having carried out the assessment process in accordance with the guidelines provided for assessors by Investors in People UK, the Assessor was satisfied beyond any doubt that Tiddlywinks Day Nursery continues to meet the requirements of Level 1 of the IIP new choices Framework. On behalf of Centre for Assessment & Recognition (NW) Ltd the Assessor would like to congratulate the organisation on its achievement to date.

The next review will take place in February 2012

Objectives

- Establish the status of the organisation against the Standard
- Identify good practice and provide feedback on how the organisation may continue to use the Standard to improve performance
- Link the organisations future aims and objectives to appropriate areas of the Investors in People New Choices framework for the next review

Executive Summary (Linked to new choices Framework Topic Map and Evidence Assessed Matrix)

Key Strengths and Areas of Good Practice

- Leadership is strong and hands on.
- There is a very inclusive approach to developing the business – involving all staff in looking at areas for improvement, ideas and self evaluation.
- There is a very open and friendly culture within the nursery, with ongoing development through informal discussions, feedback and coaching.
- Continuous professional development is greatly encouraged at all levels, there is a strong commitment to everyone improving their skills to provide a better quality of care, through involvement in NVQs, degrees and the cascading of knowledge, skills and good practice.
- The nursery keeps up to date with childcare developments nationally through significant involvement in external networking groups.
- People are encouraged and feel at ease to comment, ask questions and feedback their views and suggestions, both informally and during team and staff meetings and individual reviews.
- People are very clear about how their contribution to the nursery has an effect on the development of the children and the reputation of the nursery.
- Team working and communication continues to improve following the management training, role modelling by the directors and the introduction of peer observations.
- There is good evidence of succession planning and talent spotting and developing potential from within, such as managers, team leaders, deputies and play leader.
- An effective congratulatory culture has been developed resulting in people feeling appreciated.
- There is a good understanding of the importance and benefits of the way people are managed and developed and there is an increasing culture of empowerment and involvement in decision making.

Continuous Improvement Opportunities

- Although people are aware of the main priorities for organisation and are involved in contributing ideas and areas for improvement within the planning process, consider producing and communicating a summary of the key strategic business objectives/key performance indicators, which can be reviewed regularly.
- Discussions with people confirmed that they are aware of the required approach of managers. However, it may be beneficial to include in the induction for new staff and highlight for existing staff, a summary of the roles of the managers, team leaders and deputies in the way the company expects them to lead, manage and develop people. Consider monitoring and assessing people managers against the knowledge, skills and behaviours required of them in leading, managing and developing people, during their job chats and appraisal sessions and identifying specific areas for their development relating to people management and development. Go to www.management-standards.org.uk and click "standards" then "full list of standards" which will take you to all the management standard units including behaviours. This may be useful when assessing people managers and identifying development needs.
- Consider the new choices approach to the Profile Framework (linking your business priorities to the Profile topics) prior to the next review as discussed at the feedback meeting. This is designed to help you to continuously improve your business. See the linkages to new choices Topic Map at the end of this report and go to www.investorsinpeople.co.uk and search for New Choices and Interactive, for further information.
- Consider conducting an annual staff survey through the Investors in People new choices approach.

Findings against the Standard

PLAN: Developing Strategies to Improve the Performance of the Organisation

- 1. A Strategy for improving the performance of the organisation is clearly defined and understood**
- 2. Learning & development is planned to achieve the organisation's objectives**
- 3. Strategies for managing people are designed to promote equality of opportunity in the development of the organisation's people**
- 4. The capabilities managers need to lead, manage and develop people effectively are clearly defined and understood**

The nursery has developed a vision statement and ethos which is communicated to staff *"Tiddlywinks provides a flexible, high quality childcare service and constantly thrives to meet the needs of children and families...aims to build an outstanding reputation within the local community where families have 100% trust in the service.....value staff and actively recruit from the local community, encourage staff to develop and create an ethos that enhances the lives of children, a nurturing environment and cultural and linguistic diversity"* The directors described the priorities for the organisation, which have been captured within the business plan objectives and the individual nursery operational development plans, all of which have a common purpose, vision and values. The main focus has been the development of two new nurseries opening in 2007 and 2008 and the recruitment and development of new staff. Other priorities include occupancy targets, exceeding the national childcare standards (Ofsted) and the implementation of the new framework following the early year's foundation stage guidelines. Budgets are delegated to the three nursery managers and include food, hygiene, staff costs and marketing. The directors described how they involve people when they develop the plans for the nursery: through monthly district meetings, monthly staff meetings and team meetings.

Those people interviewed were clear what is expected of them in their roles, through induction training, reading policies and procedures, the operational development plans in each nursery, one to one reviews and regular meetings. People described nursery priorities, such as: ensuring the children develop effectively and are safe, well cared for and comfortable; improved team working by helping each other.

“The business plan was put together in the staff meeting – our vision for the next 12 months with ideas from everyone”

“In the operational development plan, there is a section for our own room and we plan what we want, with reviews and ongoing ideas at staff meetings, such as redecoration, events, job chats, training, celebrations, festivals and new children”

“Every staff member has a voice”

The directors and managers described the main priorities for staff development linked to the business objectives and improvements in the service provided and regulatory requirements. These include: a staff conference on the new early years foundation stage for all staff, linked to the four themes; training for managers on self evaluation for Ofsted; safeguarding children; paediatric first aid; NVQs in childcare; special educational needs; telling stories; treasure baskets and behaviour management. Five members of staff are undertaking an early year’s foundation degree including one director and another director is undertaking a business and finance degree. Another target is for each nursery to have an early year’s professional by 2015.

The directors described how a lot of the training is subsidised, or free of charge, and is sourced through Manchester City Council. They have arranged for each nursery to have one extra member of staff to allow staff time to train. The organisation evaluates the impact of learning and development by comments from families, discussions with staff informally and in staff and team meetings, ongoing observations and feedback by managers, team leaders and peers to highlight practice amongst teams, discuss issues and share good practice.

Discussions with people confirmed that people are involved in identifying their own learning and development, through formal mechanisms such as the appraisals, job chats and meetings and informally during discussions in their unit. They understand the reasons for their development and the need to improve their knowledge and skills in order to provide better care for the children.

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The directors described how everyone is encouraged to contribute ideas and receive support, advice, training and guidance, through the regular meetings and individual appraisals and job chats. Managers and directors are pro-active in encouraging staff to contribute their ideas by asking their opinions in staff meetings and listening to people as they walk around the nurseries. Managers and people described ideas which have been implemented, such as new menus, re-designing of rooms and activities for children. People described how they believe there is an open and approachable environment where their views are listened to.

The directors and managers described how they offer training to everyone, linked to experience, knowledge and skills and the requirements of the nursery. People are assessed when they join the nursery to identify learning and development needs and existing staff are monitored whilst they are working, with frequent discussions, both during formal reviews, following observations and informally, to identify any support required. Discussions with people confirmed that they were all provided with the opportunity to discuss their development and other issues and received appropriate, individual support.

“They always ask for contributions during the team and staff meetings and job chats”

“I am looking at completing my NVQ 2 in catering”

“When I moved to pre-school I discussed taking baby boogie sessions and organised training on what to do”

“We observe each other working, record and feedback – it’s part of our quality control tools”

Management requirements are detailed in job descriptions. The directors expect managers to: lead by example; conduct one to ones through appraisals, job chats, observations and feedback sessions, to enable them to be aware of the skills levels of all staff; construct weekly plans and self evaluation forms; provide guidance; be hands on practitioners; create the right culture by practicing the values and beliefs agreed and discussed during managers meetings; encourage self development and highlight achievements. The directors and managers have undertaken the ILM level 3 and are studying towards the early year’s foundation degree. The directors support managers with individual development requirements such as time management and prioritisation of tasks.

People understand what their manager should be doing to support them and provided examples: ensuring everything runs smoothly; ensuring the children are safe and happy; dealing with problems; observing and monitoring staff; conducting appraisals, job chats and team meetings; ensuring staff are happy and have no problems; being approachable, professional and available to discuss any issues; guide staff; plan and record.

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"I shadowed the director to learn how to carry out managerial tasks such as fees, documentation, monitoring and self evaluation forms"

DO: Taking Action to Improve the Performance of the Organisation

- 5. Managers are effective in leading, managing and developing people**
- 6. People's contribution to the organisation is recognised and valued**
- 7. People are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility by being involved in decision-making**
- 8. People learn and develop effectively**

Discussions with directors and managers provided examples of how they carry out their role in leading, managing and developing people, such as leading by example, supporting staff by ensuring they can perform their role, have adequate resources and observe their practice, feedback, organise peer observations to develop staff and share good practice. Managers and directors described how they demonstrate an appreciation of what their people do, through: daily feedback and comments on their approach to work; their approach to asking people to perform tasks and thanking them following completion; praise for displays and other activities, public praise during team and staff meetings, incentives such as chocolates, cards, vouchers, comments in log books, creating a happy atmosphere, arranging social occasions, funded Christmas "Do", emails from directors and bonuses, including an attendance bonus.

Managers described how they encourage people to take responsibility for decisions which improve performance. Examples include: the introduction of team leaders, the development of existing staff into nursery managers; key workers, which involves taking responsibility for the development and well-being of individual children and recording comments; lead practitioner role development, such as the every child a talker initiative, involving external meetings, developing practices across the three nurseries; organising trips, such as to a pantomime. People have also been encouraged to take on specialist responsibility and train for additional roles in the nurseries, such as equality officers, special needs and child protection officer, health and safety co-ordinator, charity co-ordinator, book co-ordinator.

Discussions with people demonstrated that they believe there is a very positive approach to managing and developing them. Examples include frequent feedback on their performance, frequent one to one discussions, encouraging ideas for nursery improvement and their own development. They described how managers carry out frequent observations, invite feedback, are very understanding and always visiting rooms.

Those interviewed also described examples of how their contribution is recognised: by the managers writing comments in the log book; chocolate, wine, vouchers; flowers and bonuses for special efforts; attendance bonus; thanking them individually for their efforts; well done's in staff meetings; cascades of parents' comments; praise when tasks are done well; supportive with personal issues such as changing hours. Discussions with staff confirmed that they are encouraged to own decisions and take responsibility and ownership of tasks in a variety of ways: taking charge of activities; key worker activities; organisation of events such as red nose day for the charity co-ordinator; monthly checks on the nursery by the health and safety officer, followed by a report of actions required.

"We get to know staff so they know who does what and encourage buddying with another"

"We listen when people ask for responsibility"

"She knows when you are down and listens, gives encouragement and is easy to approach"

"The directors are fantastic – very approachable – you can ask for anything – they are relaxed and ensure you know everything"

"I was promoted from playworker to playleader following training"

"There is always praise and I often get bonuses in my wages"

"I did fire marshall, risk assessment and health and safety training so I could become the health and safety officer"

"Students are allocated a mentor"

Managers described how the appraisals, job chats and observations are an important part of ensuring people's learning and development needs are met appropriately, as is spending time in each room daily to pick up on issues. Records are kept of learning and development activity and individuals evaluate the effectiveness following the activity by completing a questionnaire and discussion with the managers, who provide support in implementing new knowledge and skills through an action plan and cascades of learning to others within meetings, informal discussions and training notes. Managers determine the effectiveness of the activity by improvements in understanding of childcare, confidence in dealing with tasks in the nursery and play activities and their creativity with new ideas.

People described different kinds of learning and development activities and provided examples of what they learned and how this has helped them in their job, such as learning what to look out for following child protection training – marks, bruising and the nature of the child.

Discussions with people who had recently joined the nursery confirmed the effectiveness of the induction programme and the support provided in the new role. This includes: fire, risk assessment, how the nursery is run and expectations, policies and procedures and training such as safeguarding children and behaviour management. A mentor is allocated and weekly reviews have now been introduced for all new starters in addition to the six and 12 month induction reviews.

REVIEW: Evaluating the Impact on the Performance of the Organisation

9. Investment in people improves the performance of the organisation

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

The directors and managers were very clear about how learning and development activity has improved the performance of the nursery. Examples include: the good reputation of the nursery developed by word of mouth within the community; requests to become involved in leading initiatives such as the national strategy ECAT (every child is a talker). This has involved the support of a speech therapist to develop the framework to provide a language friendly environment amongst staff and children; due the directors' involvement in external networks, the organisation has been involved in projects such as the "playing to learn" with Manchester University, involving a director conducting a workshop at a conference on "creating our ethos". The nurseries have also participated in learning videos such as "parents as partners in early learning" which highlights good practice within the nursery in this area. Increased knowledge of child development as a result of participation in NVQs and other training has increased self-esteem and led to better childcare; staff are taking greater ownership and responsibility as a result of their involvement in learning and development. Greater emphasis has been placed on an effective induction programme for new starters. Weekly reviews have been developed to provide extra information and support where necessary for new starters. Targeted occupancy levels have been exceeded and outstanding/good gradings have been achieved in inspection reports.

As a result of ongoing coaching and training, staff retention is high and people were promoted from within to team leaders and nursery managers following the opening of two new nurseries. As a result of evaluating the effectiveness of people management, there have been many improvements, such as: the manager's weekly plans to ensure that activities are planned and resources and training linked to these; involvement in early years cluster and network meetings; involvement in quality counts – a quality assurance scheme for national nurseries; a director has now become an assessor for this and conducts one assessment per month; the nursery has been restructured to include an area manager and three nursery managers, with greater delegation of responsibilities from the directors to managers, such as budgets and nursery management.

People were able to provide many examples of how learning and development has improved performance at individual, unit and nursery levels and of improvement in the way the nursery manages and develops them:

“Training sessions on a language friendly environment to promote better communication has resulted in people using open ended questions and shorter instructions so the children understand, learn more and increase their confidence”

“Following the ILM team building training, there is greater understanding of how people react in teams and pick up on peoples’ needs – there are good ideas on approaches which are discussed, staff development needs are identified more readily and there is more awareness of what to look for when recruiting new staff”

“After attending the first aid training, I am more confident and have been able to use the techniques when a child was choking”

“Everyone has heard about us due to the training from the directors which has gained us a high reputation and we have been chosen to do a training video”

“I learned how to use different techniques to promote a language friendly environment”

“I learned how to handle individual behaviour and understand the causes so now I take a step back”

“Following the enabling environment training, we promote a happy, exciting environment now to ensure the children have choices of activity, colours, textures etc.

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IiP (new choices) Framework Topic Map – The areas highlighted indicate Strengths or Continuous Improvement Opportunities

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Business Strategy	Learning & Development Strategy	People Management Strategy	Leadership & Management Strategy	Management Effectiveness	Recognition & Reward	Involvement & Empowerment	Learning & Development	Performance Measurement	Continuous Improvement
Level 1	<p>Vision Purpose Strategy Plan</p> <p>Involving people</p>	<p>Learning needs</p> <p>Plans & resources</p>	<p>Encouraging contribution</p> <p>Equality of opportunity for development and support</p>	<p>Clarify the leadership and management capabilities needed</p>	<p>Managers are effective and can describe how</p>	<p>Recognising and valuing contribution</p>	<p>Ownership and responsibility is encouraged</p> <p>Involvement in decision making</p>	<p>People's learning and development needs are met</p>	<p>Investment in learning can be quantified</p> <p>Impact can be demonstrated</p>	<p>Evaluation results in improved people strategies</p>
Level 2 & 3	<p>Core values</p> <p>Use of KPIs</p> <p>Social responsibility</p> <p>Involving people and stakeholders</p>	<p>Learning and development strategy to build capability</p> <p>Innovation and flexibility in developing people</p>	<p>Recruitment</p> <p>Diversity</p> <p>Work life balance</p> <p>Constructive feedback is valued</p> <p>Structure makes the most of talents</p>	<p>L&M capabilities for now and the future</p> <p>Review and support managers to acquire capabilities</p>	<p>Top managers as role models</p> <p>Coaching is used</p> <p>Plan and develop people's careers</p>	<p>Reward and recognition strategies</p> <p>Understand what motivates people</p> <p>Success is celebrated</p>	<p>Effective consultation</p> <p>Sharing knowledge and information</p>	<p>Effective use of internal and external resources</p> <p>Innovation and flexibility of approach</p> <p>Opportunity to achieve full potential</p>	<p>Contribution of people strategies is measured and evaluated</p> <p>Impact on KPIs can be described</p>	<p>Self review is used</p> <p>Information from external review is used</p> <p>Effective feedback methods are used to understand peoples views</p>
Level 4	<p>Values at the heart of strategy</p> <p>Social responsibility at heart of culture</p>	<p>A culture of continuous learning</p>	<p>Recruitment ensures a diverse, talented workforce</p> <p>Diversity links to business strategy</p> <p>Work life balance links to business strategy</p>	<p>L&M strategy links to business strategy and takes account of external good practice</p> <p>Everyone encouraged to develop leadership capabilities</p>	<p>Top managers as inspirational leaders</p> <p>Coaching is part of the culture</p> <p>Culture of openness and trust</p>	<p>Reward and recognition strategy externally benchmarked</p> <p>Benefits strategy beyond legal requirements</p>	<p>Consultation and involvement is part of culture</p> <p>A culture of continuous improvement</p> <p>People can challenge the way things work</p>	<p>All learning is valued</p> <p>Mentoring is used</p> <p>Support for personal development</p>	<p>Flexible and effective approaches to measuring return on investment</p> <p>Return on investment in people is reported to</p>	<p>Internal and external benchmarking is used</p> <p>People's views of how they are managed improves</p>

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									stakeholders	
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Possible areas of focus prior to and at next review

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The Evidence Requirements assessed were as follows:

Level	ER	Indicator									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Key: 1	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	
	5	✓		✓						✓	
	6	✓									
2/3	1										
	2										
	3										
	4										
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	13										
	14										
	15										
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	6										
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	8										
	9										

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✓	Evidence Requirement Met		D	Evidence Requirement Just Met
X	Further Evidence Required			Evidence Requirement Not Assessed

Levels

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Level	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/ACTION PLAN
(to be discussed at a follow up meeting)

Aims/Objectives or Levels required	Link to IIP Standard/ Framework	Suggested Development Activity	By whom and when	Progress Reviewed	IIP Centre or Assessor Support
	(Add indicators, evidence requirements or themes etc)				

Continuous Improvement/Action Plan

See the Continuous Improvement Opportunities within the Executive Summary

Conclusion

The assessor would like to thank Mel and David for arranging the schedule for the on site visits. Congratulations also on all the continuing efforts to identify changes required, resulting in the improvements and in the continued recognition.

Janet O'Brien FCIPD, MCMI

Investors in People Assessor

3rd February 2009

07767 884869