

Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery

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The Assessment Network Limited

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The key findings of the assessment indicated that Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery (Merry Hill) has met the evidence requirements of the current version of the National Investors in People Standard. The summary below represents the assessment findings within the context of identified strengths and suggestions for further development:

Key strengths and areas of good practice	
Indicators 1 & 5	<p>The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is made up of the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, the Key Stage 1 leaders and the SENCo who joined in 2007. As a result of the wide membership of the leadership team and the allocation of responsibilities, the SLT is very effective and communications with other members of staff is very efficient:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and evaluating the work of the school is very effective and continually improving; • Strategic planning has been successful – library refurbishment; strong links and good liaison with the junior school; • The change from the two-point entry into the Nursery and Reception to single entry has been managed well: parents and staff were fully involved in plans for the change and the evaluation after the change was implemented; • Governors are kept well-informed about the school and wider educational issues through regular visits to the school and the very informative termly reports from the Headteacher. <p>The SLT meets weekly and there is a full staff meeting the following day. Teaching Assistants (TAs) are invited to attend. The Senior Management Team (SMT), comprising the Headteacher, Secretary and Caretaker meet weekly. Briefing sessions, with all staff required to attend, are held twice a week. The TAs have a monthly meeting with the Headteacher to discuss issues and training needs.</p> <p>The Staff-Governor Handbook – “The A-Z of Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery”, which provides general information and guidance about life and work at Merry Hill School, is an exemplar. Good leadership and management have ensured that the teamwork with all members of staff has been strengthened.</p> <p>The governors take pride in taking a “supportive role and being a critical friend” through working with the staff team. The Governor Visits programme is more structured. This has raised their profile and improved their understanding of the school. In this way and through the Headteacher’s termly reports, the Governors monitor the School Plan (SP) and are involved in its development and reviews.</p> <p>The performance objectives within the SP are measured by the attainment of pupil targets which are both realistic and based on value added achievements. The objectives are referenced to the Every Child Matters agenda.</p> <p>The management and leadership skills of the SLT – the Headteacher, her Deputy Head, SENCo and the Key Stage Coordinators have been developed through the INSET training days, the middle management training programmes and the Primary Leadership Programme.</p>
Indicator 2	<p>The school has maintained its strong staff development policy and CPD which have a high priority and have been in place for several years. CPD</p>

	<p>is linked to the School Plan, the outcomes from the Performance Management process and the evaluation of the impact of that CPD on the individual member of staff and the children's performance.</p> <p>The interactive/SMART Whiteboards are fully-established as a key development of teaching and learning throughout the school: teachers, children and the Teaching Assistants (TAs) are all skilled in this area. This was one of the priority training needs identified to ensure that the whiteboards could be used to their full potential.</p> <p>An improved system for Assessment for Learning has been established including peer observations, joint lesson observations and the regular tracking of the children's progress. The assessment reports are used in forward planning, to set targets and to plan lessons. To support the analysis of data, pupil assessment tracking, recording and reports are enhanced through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Nursery Learning Record; • e-Profile (Reception); • the application of the new electronic system called Essex Target Tracker for Years 1 and 2 and Essex SATs analysis for Year 2. <p>Workforce Remodelling has been successfully completed and it was evident that the office staff, regular supply teachers and the TAs are highly regarded and respected by other members of staff, children, governors and parents.</p> <p>Plans and resources are in place to meet the learning and development needs of the teachers and members of the support staff teams. Staff on temporary contracts and supply teachers, employed to cover periods of maternity leave and PPA time for teachers, are always included in the identified training and development activities. <i>“On-going professional development of staff at Merry Hill has always been a high priority and is always clearly linked to performance management objectives and/or to our overall vision of effective teaching. In some cases, training is provided in-house, e.g. the Letters and Sounds Phonics training led by the Joint KS1 Coordinator and the SEN training led by the SENCo.”</i></p> <p>Governors are encouraged to access the training courses available for governors.</p>
Indicator 8	<p>The effectiveness of the learning and development of the new members of staff and those on short term contracts has proved to be excellent. The outcomes in terms of benefit to the efficient operation of the school and their personal development have been exemplary. Key Stage and SATs results are very high.</p> <p>Induction training for new members of staff is led by the Headteacher and supported by the SLT.</p>
Indicators 9 & 10	<p>The Headteacher could explain and quantify how the learning and development of her staff has played a major part in improving the performance of the school.</p> <p>The SLT and other members of staff with some level of management responsibilities – the Caretaker (working with his new Assistant), subject leaders, school secretary, lead TA and lead MSA, were able to give examples of how learning and development has improved the performance of their team (and, themselves as members of those teams) and the school.</p>

	<p><i>“Inspectors agree that Merry Hill is a good, effective and improving school. It provides an exceptionally welcoming, well kept environment for the school community. The school is well led and managed and staff have a secure knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. The Headteacher has a clear vision for how the school can be further improved and this is shared by staff and governors. The leadership team effectively works together to drive standards up and improve provision. Leaders and managers systematically and diligently monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Key issues raised in the previous inspection have been effectively tackled. The capacity to improve is good and the school provides good value for money.”</i> Ofsted Report May 2006.</p>
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Suggested development areas and opportunities to improve	
Indicator 3	<p>Although all members of staff have a “Professional Dialogue” with the Headteacher, the only members of staff who are included in the full Performance Management process – Performance Appraisal/Setting Objectives; Observations; Professional Dialogue; and Performance Review Meeting - are the members of the teaching staff and the Nursery Nurses.</p> <p>The “Professional Dialogues”, the monthly TA meetings and the weekly management meetings with the school secretary and the caretaker do ensure that all support staff are involved in setting and achieving the school’s objectives and in identifying their learning and development needs.</p> <p>It is suggested, however, that by extending the Performance Management process to the support staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they would be in a better position to contribute ideas to improve their own and their colleagues’ performance; • they would be able to take more ownership and responsibility by the agreement of personal and team objectives; • they would be given more formal and regular constructive feedback on their performance.
Indicators 9 & 10	<p>Evaluation Reports are completed after training activities, training costs are identified and value for money is assessed. Action Plans are completed, covering the implementation of the additional skills, knowledge and experience gained. Within the termly report to governors, the Headteacher highlights the extent of staff training and development being undertaken and its impact on the performance of the school which is largely measured by pupil attainment and their well being.</p> <p>The Headteacher is aware that further improvements could be made in the evaluation of the impact on the performance of the school being made as a result of the extensive and comprehensive programme of staff development and training. Progress towards those improvements has been delayed until the SIMS Personnel Management software has been installed and data transferred onto the management information system.</p>

Feedback against client objectives

No additional client specific objectives were requested.

Other comments or findings not related to the Standard

No additional comments or findings.

Main Findings

1. Introduction to the organisation

Merry Hill is an average sized County Controlled Mixed Infant School and Nursery admitting children between three and seven years of age. The school is divided into a morning and an afternoon Nursery, two Reception classes, two Year 1 and two Year 2 classes. From September 2007, the school changed from having two intakes into Nursery and Reception – September and January, to one intake in September. Although several staff expressed some concern initially, the change has been judged to be a success by all members of staff and parents.

Merry Hill performs above Hertfordshire averages and significantly in advance of national expectations. Merry Hill is very highly regarded within the community. Parents who live out of the immediate area apply to the school for places for their children and the school is always heavily over-subscribed with a waiting list. Staff well being is a high priority and the school is judged to be a friendly, caring school with a high proportion of the staff being young mothers – three members of staff are/have been on maternity leave during 2007-2008 and have returned/will be returning to the school.

The school achieved the Investors in People Award in March 1996 and has maintained the Standard with regular Reviews at three-yearly intervals. This year the SLT debated the value for money to be gained from continuing to be reviewed against the Standard: after a full discussion with the Governing Body the decision was taken to continue. Merry Hill was successful in the achievement of the Activemark Award 2008 and is a member of Hertsmere Extended Schools' Consortium formed in Autumn 2007.

An Ofsted Inspection was carried out in May 2006 and the overall effectiveness of the school was judged to be good. ***“Key issues raised in the previous inspection have been effectively tackled and areas of weakness further improved. The leadership and management effectively contribute to the school’s good capacity to improve.”***

The Priority Objectives of the SP are clearly identified and each of the development action plans for the Key Priorities within the School Plan can be linked to the Every Child Matters Agenda and the Ofsted Inspection Report section on **“What the school should do to improve further”**.

2. Assessment and client objectives

The purpose of the assessment is to:

- Establish whether Merry Hill continues to meet all of the evidence requirements of the Standard;
- Review actions against suggested development points identified in the last assessment visit;
- Identify good practice and make recommendations for future development;
- Undertake the assessment in a cost effective manner, against a previously agreed plan.

3. Assessment methodology

Methods used:

- One-to-one interviews;
- Paired interviews;
- Documentation provided on the management processes in place;
- Additional documentation or evidence requested following discussion during the interviews.

4. Summary position against the Standard

		Indicator 1	Indicator 2	Indicator 3	Indicator 4	Indicator 5	Indicator 6	Indicator 7	Indicator 8	Indicator 9	Indicator 10
Evidence Requirements	01										
	02										
	03										
	04										
	05										
	06										

KEY:

A **RED** status indicates that a significant gap exists against an Evidence Requirement.





An **AMBER** status indicates that a minor gap exists against an Evidence Requirement.

A **GREEN** status indicates that the Evidence Requirement is met.

A **BLUE** status indicates that the Evidence Requirement does not apply to your organisation.

5. Findings by Principle and Indicator of the Standard

PLAN – Indicators 1 to 4

	Indicator 1: A strategy for improving the performance of the organisation is clearly defined and understood				
					
Strength	1.1	Top managers made sure the organisation has a clear purpose and vision supported by a strategy for improving its performance.	100%	0%	0%
Strength	1.2	Top managers made sure the organisation has a business plan with measurable performance objectives.	100%	0%	0%
Strength	1.4	Managers could describe how they involve people when developing the organisation’s business plan and when agreeing team and individual objectives.	100%	0%	0%
	1.6	People could explain the objectives of their team and the organisation at a level that is appropriate to their role, and could describe how they are expected to contribute to developing and achieving them.	90%	10%	0%
Not applicable	1.3 & 1.5	Top managers made sure there are constructive relationships with representative groups (where they exist) and the groups are consulted when developing the organisation’s business plan.	0%	0%	0%

Indicator 1.1 & 1.2

Strengths & good practices

The format of the School Plan and the Headteacher's Termly Report to the Governors continue to be developed. The Headteacher's Termly Reports are very comprehensive and designed to inform the governors about the school's progress towards its measurable objectives as detailed in the School Plan. The SEF is updated annually but is considered to be mainly of value to the Ofsted Inspectors

The Review Assessment interviews demonstrated the understanding by governors and each member of staff of the Priority Objectives and the action plans within the School Plan.

Behaviour Management and the school's "Golden Rules" continue to be developed. This has allowed staff to concentrate on teaching and learning and assessment for learning to continue to improve the standards of attainment.

The School's strategies reflect the vision, aims and values of the school:

- That every child is entitled to be safe and to enjoy their childhood;
- That they should be valued for their individuality, culture and heritage;
- And that they should be encouraged to develop their full potential in a stimulating and caring environment.





Indicators 1.4 & 1.6*Strengths & good practices*

Staff Meetings are held every Tuesday, attended mainly by the teaching staff. TAs, MSAs, Office Staff and the Caretaker are fully informed at a level appropriate to their roles. Short Briefings Meetings are held on Tuesdays and Fridays: all staff are required to attend. The Headteacher has formal weekly meetings with the School Secretary and the Caretaker and monthly meetings with the TA Team. The School Secretary and the Headteacher have developed a good partnership in the Financial Management of the school.

Staff were able to explain the objectives of their team and could explain how they were expected to contribute to developing and achieving those objectives.

Areas to develop

- The SLT could consider the benefits to be gained from updating and using the Ofsted SEF as an additional means of self evaluation and quality assurance;
- The Headteacher could consider using the Hertfordshire Staff Well Being Survey as an additional measure to assess how well the staff believe they are involved in developing the school's business plans and the agreement of team and individual objectives.

	Indicator 2: Learning and development is planned to achieve the organisation's objectives			
				
Strength	2.1 Top managers could explain the organisation's learning and development needs, the plans and resources in place to meet them, how these link to achieving specific objectives and how the impact will be evaluated.	100%	0%	0%
	2.2 Managers could explain team learning and development needs, the activities planned to meet them, how these link to achieving specific team objectives and how the impact will be evaluated.	90%	10%	0%
	2.3 People could describe how they are involved in identifying their learning and development needs and the activities planned to meet them.	90%	10%	0%
	2.4 People could explain what their learning and development activities should achieve for them, their team and the organisation.	90%	10%	0%

Comment:**Indicators 2.1 & 2.2***Strengths & good practices*





The Headteacher, supported by her Governing Body and her staff, has developed a strategy for learning and development for teaching and TA staff in the school. Learning and development needs are identified from the "Professional Dialogues", classroom observations, peer assessment, feedback from support interventions and the performance management process. Training needs are included in the School Plan and recorded in the individual development plans for teaching staff.

Learning and development takes place during INSET Days, weekly staff meetings and a programme of external training courses and workshops where required. By reference to the School Plan Objectives, the Headteacher and her staff were able to explain fully the school's staff learning and development needs. It was noted that teachers regularly lead staff meetings and deliver training sessions during INSET days.

Indicators 2.3 & 2.4

Strengths & good practices

Peer observations and assessments have been instrumental in gaining the involvement of a wider range of staff in the identification of learning and development needs. The introduction of the interactive SMART Whiteboards highlighted the need for additional ICT training in order to derive the full benefits from interactive working. The Headteacher and her SLT have been effective in motivating and challenging their 'teaching teams' to develop higher levels of teaching and learning and to expect high levels of children's achievements. ***"There are clear lesson plans in place to ensure continuity and progression. Effective planning of lessons is in place which clearly details the learning targets for each class."***

	Indicator 3: Strategies for managing people are designed to promote equality of opportunity in the development of the organisation's people			
				
Strength	3.1 Top managers could describe strategies they have in place to create an environment where everyone is encouraged to contribute ideas to improve their own and other people's performance.	100%	0%	0%
	3.2 Top managers recognised the different needs of people and could describe strategies they have in place to make sure everyone has appropriate and fair access to the support they need and there is equality of opportunity for people to learn and develop which will improve their performance.	100%	0%	0%
	3.3 Managers recognised the different needs of people and could describe how they make sure everyone has appropriate and fair access to the support they need and there is equality of opportunity for people to learn and develop which will improve their performance.	90%	10%	0%
	3.4 People believed managers are genuinely committed to making sure everyone has appropriate and fair access to the support they need and there is equality of opportunity for them to learn and develop which will improve their performance.	100%	0%	0%
	3.5 People could give examples of how they have been encouraged to contribute ideas to improve their own and other people's performance.	90%	10%	0%

Comment:**Indicators 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3***Strengths & good practices*





The Headteacher, the SLT members and their staff could describe strategies they have in place to encourage ideas to improve performance. There are supportive and advisory partnerships with the School Improvement Partner (SIP) and the local Junior School to which most of the Merry Hill children transfer.

Indicators 3.4 & 3.5*Strengths & good practices*

The excellent levels of teamwork and the friendly environment within the school have ensured that all members of staff believe that their managers are genuinely committed to making sure everyone has appropriate and fair access to the support they need and that there is equality of opportunity for them to learn and develop to improve their performance.

It was notable that a number of staff – teachers, SLT and the nursery nurse have been on maternity leave during the past 12-18 months. This has been managed very well:

- The new KIT days have been effective in progressing the School Plan and encouraging staff on maternity leave to be involved in decision-making;
- The teacher and the Nursery Nurse employed on temporary contracts to cover the maternity leave are very much part of the school team and included in the development and reviews of the School Plan. There is equality for them to learn and develop. Induction training for those on temporary contracts has been effective and, where possible, the opportunities for them to become established members of the team are explored;
- Staff, on completion of their maternity leave, are supported back into full or part-time employment.

	Indicator 4: The capabilities managers need to lead, manage and develop people effectively are clearly defined and understood			
				
4.1	Top managers could describe the knowledge, skills and behaviours managers need to lead, manage and develop people effectively, and the plans they have in place to make sure managers have these capabilities.	100%	0%	0%
4.2	Managers could describe the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to lead, manage and develop people effectively.	90%	10%	0%
4.3	People could describe what their manager should be doing to lead, manage and develop them effectively.	100%	0%	0%

Comment:**Indicators 4.1, 4.2 & 4.3***Strengths & good practices*





The Headteacher and her SLT have a good understanding of the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to lead, manage and develop their middle management and members of staff. They were able to discuss the training and development plans which they have in place to ensure that their staff teams have the capabilities to meet the performance targets for each of the Priority Objectives detailed in the School Plan.

All staff are fully involved in the planning process: teachers are responsible for writing and implementing subject action plans; TAs are part of the teaching team and work with teachers on collaborative planning.

Subject Leaders, TAs, MSAs and office staff were able to discuss and comment on:

- The ability of their managers to set clear direction and SMART performance objectives;
- The effective monitoring and improvement of the children's achievement and behaviour in order to meet the challenging targets, through the quality assurance and self assessment processes being applied across the school;
- The promotion of equality of opportunity so that all children achieve their potential – inclusion;
- Ensuring that staff and specialist learning resources are adequate and effectively and efficiently deployed to achieve value for money;
- Encouraging the involvement and support of the Governing Body through the structured governor visits and the Governing Body's Committees.

DO – Indicators 5 to 8

	Indicator 5: Managers are effective in leading, managing and developing people			
				
Strength	5.1 Managers could explain how they are effective in leading, managing and developing people.	100%	0%	0%
Strength	5.2 Managers could give examples of how they give people constructive feedback on their performance regularly and when appropriate.	100%	0%	0%
Strength	5.3 People could explain how their managers are effective in leading, managing and developing them.	100%	0%	0%
Strength	5.4 People could give examples of how they receive constructive feedback on their performance regularly and when appropriate.	100%	0%	0%





Comment:

Indicators 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 & 5.4

Strengths & good practices

The members of the Governing Body, Headteacher and Deputy Head, Key Stage Coordinators, Office Staff, TAs and MSAs acknowledge that the self evaluation approach to the preparation of the School Plan, peer assessment and curriculum development and planning in consultation with their colleagues have developed their skills in leadership, management and staff development. Interviews with staff confirmed their levels of involvement in compiling the subject action plans and the agreement of individual performance targets. Individual objectives are closely linked to the School Plan.

Performance objectives are agreed and reviewed as part of the performance management process and the weekly staff meeting agenda: this has enabled each individual member of staff to understand how they are expected to contribute to Merry Hill School's performance improvement. The School Plan was evaluated in February and updated.

		Indicator 6: People’s contribution to the organisation is recognised and valued		
				
Strength	6.1 Managers could give examples of how they recognise and value people’s individual contribution to the organisation.	100%	0%	0%
	6.2 People could describe how they contribute to the organisation and believe they make a positive difference to its performance.	100%	0%	0%
	6.3 People could describe how their contribution to the organisation is recognised and valued.	100%	0%	0%





Comment:

Indicators 6.1, 6.2 & 6.3

Strengths & good practices

Managers and their team members were fully aware of the importance of valuing individual contributions to the school’s performance improvement. The contributions made by staff are recognised and valued through informal discussions and personal congratulations at briefing meetings, staff meetings and the Professional Dialogues. Teachers and support staff were able to give many examples of how recognition is given through praise from the Headteacher, Deputy Head and the Key Stage Coordinators.

The Headteacher and her SLT use the classroom observations, peer assessment, staff meetings and the performance management process to give praise for performance improvement and to demonstrate how they recognise and value people’s individual contributions to the school. The members of staff interviewed were able to describe, with reference to their individual performance objectives, how they were contributing to school improvements and making a positive difference to its performance.

		Indicator 7: People are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility by being involved in decision making		
				
Strength	7.1 Managers could describe how they promote a sense of ownership and responsibility by encouraging people to be involved in decision-making, both individually and through representative groups, where they exist.	100%	0%	0%
	7.2 People could describe how they are encouraged to be involved in decision-making that affects the performance of individuals, teams and the organisation, at a level that is appropriate to their role.	90%	10%	0%
	7.3 People could describe how they are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility for decisions that affect the performance of individuals, teams and the organisation, at a level that is appropriate to their role.	90%	10%	0%





Comment:

Indicators 7.1, 7.2 & 7.3

Strengths & good practices

Staff Meetings, training sessions and INSET Days are all designed to promote a sense of ownership and responsibility by encouraging staff to be involved in decision-making and the review process. This has served to promote and develop a sense of ownership throughout all staff teams.

The Governing Body is very supportive of the school, ensuring that the work of the school continues to meet expectations. Governors with specific responsibilities such as Child Protection, SEN, Curriculum and Health & Safety liaise with the Headteacher and report back progress and achievements to the Governing Body.

	Indicator 8: People learn and develop effectively			
				
Strength	8.1 Managers could describe how they make sure people’s learning and development needs are met.	100%	0%	0%
	8.2 People could describe how their learning and development needs have been met, what they have learnt and how they have applied this in their role.	100%	0%	0%
	8.3 People who are new to the organisation, or new to a role, could describe how their induction has helped them to perform effectively.	100%	0%	0%

Comment:

Indicator 8.1

Strengths & good practices

Staff training and development has a high priority within the school and is led and managed by the Headteacher. There are clearly-focused and well-managed INSET Days for all staff and CPD programmes for the teaching staff. Coaching and support is readily available from colleagues. **“Staff are encouraged to be creative, to try out something they have read, seen or observed and then reflect on its effectiveness.”**

Staff skills audits, at various times, have resulted in additional training from the training needs identified, which has had a beneficial effect on the quality of teaching and learning. Extensive programmes of ICT training have ensured that ICT is used more effectively within the whole curriculum, particularly with the introduction of the interactive SMART Whiteboards and the increasing use of laptops by the teaching staff for lesson preparation and communication. All members of staff have been trained on Child Protection. Other examples noted included:

- TAs are regularly encouraged to consider going for the STAR and HLTA training programmes;
- One of the TAs is being encouraged to achieve qualified teacher status;
- TAs attend the annual County TA Conference;
- MSAs have been trained as Registered First Aiders and attended the “Huff and Puff” training session;
- The Nursery Nurse has been supported to achieve the Early Years Foundation Stage Degree

Indicator 8.2*Strengths & good practices*

Staff confirmed that they received targeted information on relevant courses, directly from the Headteacher, which were relevant to their training needs. Internal and external training events generally had clear learning objectives which in almost all instances were met.

Indicator 8.3*Strengths & good practices*

The induction programmes provided for the new members of staff, including the supply teachers and the Nursery Nurse were commended.

The learning and development of the new members of staff has been very effective. The outcomes in terms of benefit to the efficient operation of the school and their personal development are very high.

REVIEW – Indicators 9 to 10

	Indicator 9: Investment in people improves the performance of the organisation			
				
	9.1 Top managers could describe the organisation's overall investment of time, money and resources in learning and development.	90%	10%	0%
	9.2 Top managers could explain, and quantify where appropriate, how learning and development has improved the performance of the organisation.	90%	10%	0%
Area for development	9.3 Top managers could describe how the evaluation of their investment in people is used to develop their strategy for improving the performance of the organisation.	90%	10%	0%
	9.4 Managers could give examples of how learning and development has improved the performance of their team and the organisation.	90%	10%	0%
	9.5 People could give examples of how learning and development has improved their performance, the performance of their team and that of the organisation.	90%	10%	0%

Comment:**Indicator 9.1***Strengths & good practices*

The Headteacher is the staff training and development coordinator and she is most effective in identifying individual, team and organisational training needs. The Headteacher, supported by her SLT and her staff bring evidence together using the key findings from classroom observations, peer observations, assessment data, benchmarking, informal dialogues and formal questionnaires in order to determine the impact of the CPD on the performance of the school. Data analysis has become more effective since the implementation of the Essex Tracker software.

Indicator 9.2, 9.3, 9.4 & 9.5

Strengths & good practices





During the Review Assessment interviews, the Headteacher and her staff were able to provide many examples where learning and development has improved performance. This was confirmed when interviewing members of staff who had been involved in the training activities discussed. The improvements made could be quantified by reference to the children’s attainment targets and completion of the action plans agreed.

Examples where strategies have been developed to improve performance include:

- The introduction of the interactive SMART Whiteboards: teachers and TAs are proficient in ICT and the use of the Whiteboards as an aid for teaching and learning;
- The improved proficiency in ICT has also enabled staff to make more effective use of the school’s management information systems for improved communication and the assessment and tracking of children’s’ performance’;
- The principles of self assessment have been embedded

Areas to develop

Further improvements are possible in the evaluation of the impact on the performance of the school being made as a result of the extensive and comprehensive programme of staff development and training. The Headteacher and her SLT should ensure that they discuss the measurable outcomes expected from the full range of training activities, much of which are delivered in-house, with their staff teams. It is suggested that the training outcomes and the effect on performance are discussed as part of the performance management and review process, recorded in the training section and summarised in the appropriate sections of the School Plan.

	Indicator 10: Improvements are continually made to the way people are managed and developed			
				
10.1	Top managers could give examples of how the evaluation of their investment in people has resulted in improvements in the organisation’s strategy for managing and developing people.	90%	10%	0%
10.2	Managers could give examples of improvements they have made to the way they manage and develop people.	90%	10%	0%
10.3	People could give examples of improvements that have been made to the way the organisation manages and develops its people.	90%	10%	0%

Comment:

Indicators 10.1, 10.2 & 10.3

Strengths & good practices

The overall investment in learning and development is understood through regular discussion at staff meetings led by the Headteacher who has the responsibility for managing and evaluating staff training and development activities.

The Governors, the Headteacher and the SLT are confident and were able to demonstrate that Merry Hill School has the capacity to continue improving the development of the staff within the school, especially in maintaining and continuing to raise the achievement of its children.

In addition to the training budget there is considerable support time given for learning and development through coaching and mentoring through team meetings and classroom support.

Staff interviewed during the Review were able to discuss the outcomes from their training and development programmes, courses and the INSET Days.

Areas to develop

Training programmes and courses are evaluated at immediate level through reporting the outcomes at staff and team meetings following the training and development activities. Training Evaluation Forms are completed and collected for analysis by the Headteacher. Some forms of intermediate and impact assessment are carried out as part of the Performance Management process. The Performance Management process covers the evaluation of training and development activities but there could be a clearer link made with the potential benefits to performance improvement and the achievement of the performance targets.

The Headteacher is aware that further improvements could be made in the evaluation of the impact on the performance of the school being made as a result of the extensive and comprehensive programme of staff development and training. Progress towards those improvements has been delayed until the SIMS Personnel Management software has been installed and data transferred onto the management information system.

6. Conclusion and next steps

Having conducted the assessment in accordance with Investors in People UK and The Assessment Network's guidelines, I am pleased to confirm that **Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery** continues to meet the requirements of the Investor in People Standard.

May I also extend my thanks to all those who took part in the assessment process for their open and honest feedback in respect of their experience within **Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery**. In particular I would like to thank the Headteacher and the Deputy Headteacher who coordinated the Review and provided the requested documentary evidence. It was a very pleasant and enjoyable process.

7. Next review

Recognition as an Investor in People is subject to reviews against the Investors in People Standard every three years. Therefore **Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery** will be required to be assessed no later than 6 May 2011 although it is entirely possible to be reviewed prior to this date. For guidance in respect of future Investors in People review options please refer to The Assessment Network Ltd, telephone number 01480 479222

Email: info@tan.org.uk.

8. Quality Assurance

The Assessment Network Ltd is responsible for the Quality Assurance of this assessment and will invite a representative from **Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery** to take part in a Quality Assurance Questionnaire. This questionnaire was devised and developed by Investors in People UK, with the objective of receiving client feedback in order to provide for a consistent approach to the assessment and recognition process. Further details will be forwarded by The Assessment Network Ltd in due course.

Kind regards,

Robert Thomson
Investors in People Assessor

8 May 2008

Appendix: The Assessment Network Limited Scoping Document

Assessor: Robert Thomson	Date assessment plan submitted: 21/03/08
Project reference: 07/1363	Assessment type: New Standard Review
Client: Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery	On site dates: 6 May 2008
Size of organisation: 34 & 8 (external) Governors	Scoping size: 42 (incl 8 non-staff governors & PPA/ Maternity Leave/ Maternity Leave Cover)
Number of sites: 1 Number of sites in scope: 1	Number of sites included within interview sample either by telephone or visit: 1 Telephone: Nil On site: 1

Scoping Rationale				
Job Role/Title	Number in scope	To be interviewed	Percentage	By exception note if p/time
Headteacher	1	1	100	
Deputy Headteacher	1	1	100	
Class Teachers Includes 1x maternity leave	9	6	66.7	Includes DH, SLT (2) & PPA Cover (3)
Teaching Assistants	11	4	36.4	
Lunchtime Supervision: Senior and MSAs	1 + 6	3	42.9	IncludesTAs who also provide Supervision
Secretary & Admin Assistant	2	2	100	Paired Interview
Caretaker & Assistant	2	1	50	
School Governors	11	4	36.4	Includes Staff Governors
Nursery Nurses	2	1	50	Incl. NN on maternity leave
Totals	42	18	42.9	

Number of 1:1 interviews	14
Number of group interviews	2 x paired interviews
Number of telephone interviews	-
Additional client specific objectives (E.g. how the assessment will add value for the client.)	
Relevant / useful information for consideration. (E.g. change to organisation structure, new IIP Champion etc.)	