

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

ASSESSMENT REPORT

FOR

BETHPHAGE

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Key Information

Client:	Bethphage
Address:	Bethphage, Ground Floor, 8 Longbow Professional Centre, Longbow Close, Harlescott Lane, Shrewsbury. SY1 3AS
Assessment Type:	Review
Investors in People Specialists:	Tony Walmsley and Bob Morrison
Visit Dates:	25th to 28th November 2014
Assessment Enquiry Number	ENQ – 92630 – 8H7033

Conclusion

In concluding that the Investors in People Core Standard has been met, the assessors recommend that **Bethphage** should continue to be accredited as Investors in People.

Following the assessment against the Investors in People full framework and concluding that a total of 177 indicators have been met it is further recommended that Bethphage be accredited as **Investors in People Gold**.

The assessors would like to offer their sincere congratulations on this accreditation which reflects the genuine enthusiasm, passion and commitment of everyone we met across the Bethphage sites.

We would also like to express our gratitude for the hospitality and co-operation extended by everyone at Bethphage.

Tony Walmsley and Bob Morrison

Investors in People Specialists
December 2014

Milestone Dates

18 month review of the Continuous Development Plan: (Please note: The 18 month review is a requirement of continued accreditation)	27th May 2016
Date of Next Full Assessment:	27th November 2017

Executive Summary

Bethphage was established in 1994 and, with its current Head Office in Shrewsbury, provides support to adults with learning and physical disabilities in Birmingham, Telford, Walsall, Wolverhampton and across Shropshire. A registered charity, the organisation has built a deserved reputation for the provision of the high quality support to service users.

“Positive about Disability” is the simple but powerful mantra at the heart of everything Bethphage does. It is underpinned by a clear organisational vision to create **“A society where people with disabilities have the same opportunities and use their talents and skills as all other people”**. The organisation is absolutely clear about what it needs to deliver on this and articulates this through its mission statement **“To be an excellent provider of services for people with disability”**. Both the vision and mission are then delivered through the four core values of **Personal growth, Respect, Honesty and Active Involvement**. Bethphage actively live their vision, mission and values.

With a core ethos based around delivering a genuinely “person centred” approach to tailoring and providing individual support, and with a passion for encouraging people to achieve their full potential, the values apply equally to every service user and to each member of the Bethphage team.

Bethphage has been accredited with Investors in People since 2008. In 2011, the three year review provided evidence to demonstrate that the organisation was not only meeting the Investors in People Core Standard, but that they were operating well above it by being accredited at Silver Award Level. In keeping with the organisations approach to continuous improvement the Senior Management Team, supported fully by the Board of Trustees, set themselves the goal of establishing how they could further use the Investors in People Framework to deliver organisational success and to move to achieving Investors in People Gold. This review set out to establish how the organisation is currently operating against that ambition.

In the three years since the last review, the business has evolved and grown in an increasingly changing environment relating to funding and personalisation within the care sector. Bethphage’s continued success is in no small way based and built on the complete passion, commitment and expertise of its people. This passion is complimented by a strong commitment to continuous learning and development and embracing innovative and sector leading approaches examples of which include the Q Team Checkers and the commitment to becoming a Positive Behaviour Organisation. The appointment of Andrew Strong as the new Chief Executive now provides a focus to deliver further growth and future sustainability.

In the context of continuing to deliver increasingly higher levels and quality of support, with a business focus based on securing sustainable future growth, in an economic environment of ever reducing budgets and personalisation, this review provided the opportunity to establish how Bethphage is currently implementing and evolving best people and management practice and to focus on how it could develop further.

This review has confirmed that not only does Bethphage continue to fully meet the Investors in People Standard Core Standard but that it operates at a significantly high level against the Extended Framework. The level to which this was evidenced through the review clearly established that Bethphage is demonstrating that it fully meets the requirements of being an **Investors in People Gold** organisation.

Focus for the review.

Following the discussions at the planning meeting, the assessment was tailored to provide an opportunity to review how you are currently working with the Investors in People Core Standard and the Extended Framework.

As an existing Investors in People Silver Award organisation it was agreed that this review should encompass the whole of the Extended Framework and be focussed at the Gold Award Level. Whilst the provision of highest possible standards of care and support to each and every service user remains the absolute focus, future growth of the business was identified as a key priority for the organisation. In addition, the recent adoption innovative approach to becoming a 'Positive Behaviour Organisation' and the quality of training and staff development.

Review objectives

The review was specifically designed to:

- Review the current accreditation against the Investors in People Core Standard and the extended framework to Gold Award level.
- Highlight the current strengths and good people and management practice across Bethpage.
- Identify potential opportunities for further development.
- Form the basis for ongoing continuous development and improvement.

Strengths and exemplary practice

One of the features of this review was the frequency with which people highlighted areas of exemplary good practice taking place across the Bethpage. The following points highlight some of the key areas identified through the interviews:

Core values and positive behaviour culture

- The core values and associate behaviours, which have been recently refreshed and aligned to those of a Positive Behaviour Organisation, are consistently at the heart of decision making and inform the way that people chose to perform their responsibilities. They are universally understood across the management team and feature within all aspects of selecting, managing and developing people.
- There are tangible examples of how these behaviours have been used to challenge behaviour, resolve issues and improve the outcomes for both staff and service users. The way that core values have been employed to create a positive behaviour culture represents an aspect of best practice that few organisations could aspire to sustain.

Inspirational leadership and role modelling

- People are motivated and inspired by their managers to engage with their work and strive to improve the services and support they provide. Inspirational leadership extends from the top and is reflected in the behaviours and actions of managers and team leaders. Consequently, people have a high degree of faith in the decisions made by senior managers and remain confident during change and uncertainty. They are also motivated to go the extra mile in achieving outcomes and in supporting service users and colleagues.

Learning culture

- People have access to a rich blend of learning interventions that include coaching and mentoring. Learning is timely, purposeful and tailored to the needs of the individual and organisation. Managers work with teams and individuals to identify learning needs, identify the best way of supporting these needs and ensuring that knowledge and skills are embedded. Mistakes are regarded as a learning opportunity and good use is made of existing talents to help develop others. Several people have been encouraged to access qualifications that have enabled career progression. This learning culture has a significant and positive on staff retention, building the capacity to adapt and continuously improve performance.

Collaboration, diversity and mutual respect

- People intuitively support each other regardless of how busy they are and they have high level of respect for the opinions, suggestions and experience others. Collaboration is part of the ethos of the organisation that makes best use of the diversity of backgrounds, experience and talents providing people with the confidence to take on new roles and responsibilities and develop their own talents.

Work-Life balance and wellbeing

- It is remarkable how effective managers are at facilitating requests for temporary and permanent flexible working arrangements and still maintain services in such a wide range of service needs and locations. Managers and colleagues are also pro-active in monitoring the wellbeing of staff and providing additional support. People feel confident that they can call upon managers for support if required and that it will be there when needed.

Being valued.

- Everyone feels valued by the organisation. They are recognised for their contributions, respected for their opinions and their skills and knowledge are developed beyond expectations. Although they recognise that pay reward in the sector is low, people acknowledge the efforts of the Board and senior managers to provide additional benefits such as additional holiday entitlement for long service, access to healthcare and formally recognise high performance and efforts.

Passionate and committed people

- The strengths highlighted above create an environment which enables people to effectively carry out and perform in their roles. This environment also enables everyone to understand and deliver on what is expected of them in providing high quality support to every service user. Particularly impressive throughout the review was the genuine commitment that everyone brings to their role. Without exception, people are highly passionate about ensuring that every service user develops to the maximum of their potential and they take great pride in each and every success achieved. Providing support, above and beyond what is expected and required is the normal for people at Bethphage. People take real pride in being part of something that is **“more than just a job” – “We are all just one big family, staff and service users!”** One observation that summed most people’s thoughts was **“There are some exceptional people working at Bethphage”** - and there are!

Findings against the Investors in People Standard

The following findings are presented under a number of broad themes to provide constructive feedback.

Focus and direction

- People are generally clear about the direction the business is going in broad terms. They are aware of the current economic climate and most recognise and understand that developing services and securing growth will be important to the organisation going forward.
- There is a general optimism about the future but also some concern about the organisation growing too quickly and the impact this could have on staff. Whilst everyone is focussed on delivering high quality services and support to their own service users, comments indicated that some people would like more frequent updates on how the business is performing and how it perceives the longer term future.
- There is a broad acceptance the business is seeking to grow and this is generally perceived as being good. People generally don't have an impression of what "growth" looks like. Comments such as ***"I know we are looking to grow but I don't know what that actually means"*** and ***"I hope we don't grow too quickly – we need to be sure we can deliver"*** highlight this.
- People understand the values and ethos of the organisation and can identify how they support and deliver on them. They readily identified Respect, Honesty and Personal Growth as being at the heart of the organisation and what they deliver and were able to give many examples of how they achieved this.
Several people felt that it was these very values that made Bethphage the successful organisation it is and expressed some concern about the ability to continue to deliver on these if the organisation grows too quickly and too large in the future.
- The innovative approach to introducing and becoming a Positive Behaviour Organisation (PBO) is already having a significant and beneficial impact on the organisation and is perceived by many as being totally complimentary to and in keeping with the existing Bethphage values. Whilst the approach is still in the early stages of roll out, people are aware that it is being introduced. Several comments from the management team indicate the approach is already impacting positively on the way people behave, manage and address issues. PBO was one aspect of the Bethphage operation that specialists were asked to provide specific feedback and this is included later in this report.
- People are very clear regarding the individual and different roles they play in supporting service users and how this contributes to, and reflects on, the reputation and success of the organisation. This is equally the case in relation to the Green Fingers project, residential and home living support areas.
Support workers, key workers and line management are very focussed on the person centred approach to providing support and totally committed to developing the potential and independence of every service user. There is a genuine pride in instances where service users have progressed to the point where support can be reduced, and particularly where they develop the ability to move to a more independent approach to living and even employment.

Leadership and management

- People have a genuine respect for the leadership and management of the organisation. Whilst there is a particular respect in the vast majority of cases for the support, leadership and development provided by line managers, people generally respect and trust the strategic and operational leadership provided by the Senior Management team.
- Words used to describe the style and approach to leadership and management include **“open”, “approachable” “accountable” “responsive” “flexible” “caring” “fair” and “supportive”**. These descriptions were all backed up with numerous examples of how individual managers, at all levels had supported, motivated and helped individuals with both professional and personal issue. Examples ranged from formal and informal coaching in their professional role to supporting people through sickness, family trauma and childcare issues. **“nothing is too much for them – they are always there”**
- Several instances were highlighted where people, now operating in team leader and management positions are there due to the encouragement and opportunity of the wider management team. Clear evidence emerged to demonstrate how managers at all levels act as role models to others and how their actions genuinely inspire others to operate to, and at, the highest level.
- A feature of the current management approach is the clarity of roles and responsibility that are defined at each level and for each post. The consistency of this approach and the supportive leadership behaviours exhibited all members of the management team inspires confidence in people. **“You can speak to anyone – they will always listen and support you” “If you need anything you just have to ask – they will provide it if they can”**
As a result, people have a high degree of faith in the decisions made by senior and middle managers and remain confident even through periods of change and uncertainty
- **“Communication is generally effective – it’s good”** - One comment that generally sums up people perception to communication across the organisation. People were able to describe how they find out what is going on within and about Bethphage both through formal and informal channels. Team meetings, management meetings, the Bethphage Bulletin, emails, and particularly the staff conference were all cited as being relevant and important in ensuring effective communication up and down the organisation.
- The annual staff conference provides a key opportunity for the organisation to review the previous year, look forward to future challenges and opportunities and recognise and celebrate success. It brings together people from across the organisation, including Trustees, to share their experiences and is highly valued by all that attend. For obvious operational reasons it is not possible for everyone to attend on the same day. Some people have missed the conference for more than one year in a row and there are indications that this impacts on communication.
- Staff surveys are used on an annual basis to gauge the feelings of the whole company on an annual basis and to secure feedback on matters such as communication, management and motivation.

Engagement, reward and recognition

- People across Bethphage, at all levels, are actively engaged. They are committed to the service users and to the organisation. Support Workers, Key workers, Team Leaders and management are all making and taking decisions every day. Examples, too numerous to mention, were provided to demonstrate how people are prepared to take initiative and responsibility within their role.
- People want Bethphage to be successful. They are proud to work with and for Bethphage and most believe that they really make a difference to the lives of the service users and through that to the organisation. Comments such as ***“It is the best place I have ever worked”*** and ***“I want to make my career here”*** give an indication of how many people feel about working with and for the organisation. People really do think it is a great place to work.
- People feel valued. Managers and other colleagues recognise people’s contributions on a regular basis. Recognition is given for people’s efforts and highlighted through personal letters, newsletter articles, personal reviews and supervisions and at the annual conference.
- There is a genuine culture of mutual respect both across the organisation and between colleagues and service users reflecting one of the four core values. Whilst people recognise that pay reward in the sector is low, people generally acknowledge the efforts of the Board and senior managers to provide additional benefits such as additional holiday entitlement for long service, access to healthcare and formally recognise high performance and efforts as part of the approach to reward and recognition. That said, some comments did indicate that not everyone was fully aware of the reward and recognition strategy and package.
- The approach across the organisation to work life balance is exemplary. When asked ‘what is the one thing that people would never want Bethphage to lose’, the ***“flexible and compassionate approach”*** and that managers take to accommodating and supporting personal requirements and issues is at the top of the list. Managers will always seek to be flexible and support people whenever they can. People recognise this flexibility and value it highly. ***“It is one of the main reasons I work here”***, ***“They really do care and try to help you when you need it”*** ***“We mustn’t lose the way we care for the staff as well as the service users”***

Capacity and capability

- Bethphage has an excellent track record when it comes to promoting people from within and providing career and individual progression. All posts are advertised internally as a matter of cause. Several people were able to describe their career journey from support worker through key worker to team leader and into management.
- In supporting the organisational priority relating to growth, steps are already in place to provide develop people, identified as having potential, with learning and development that will develop skills and experience needed as the business grows.
- The recruitment process was described by a number of new people as being ***“totally fair and professional”***. People new to the organisation are particularly impressed with the approach to

involve service users and team members as an integral part of the recruitment process. ***“It adds a whole new dimension to the process and was really good”***

- The recent appointment of the new Chief Executive demonstrated a highly professional approach to recruitment. A multi stage approach was used, led by the Trustees, including candidate meetings with the management team and Q Checkers. The process was robust and thorough and reflects best practice.
- Learning and development is at the very heart of everything that Bethphage does. From supporting the development of the ability and potential of every service user to the development of each member of the Bethphage team, learning is embedded as part of the culture and Ethos. It is highly valued and resourced very effectively. Management manage and monitor the impact with the Board being updated through the quality and other specific impact reports.
- Comments from people highlighting the commitment include ***“ they are brilliant at training and developing their people”*** to ***“If you want to develop or just need some training, you just have to ask”*** and ***“we are always training and refreshing – they are really supportive”*** reflect how people regard the approach. Everyone spoken with could give examples of how learning and development activity helped them in their role.
- Coaching and mentoring is embedded across the organisation. Numerous examples were given regarding how colleagues coach and mentor each other and how managers coach and mentor their teams albeit very often on an informal basis. It is an integral part of induction and is also highlighted as being a key approach within the concept of Positive behaviour Support and becoming a Positive Behaviour Organisation.
- Learning and development was another specific area that specialists were asked to provide feedback on, and this is included later in this report.

Performance management

- The Board of Trustees and the Senior Management Team set, monitor and manage all business performance objectives and metrics on a regular basis
- Trustees have a good understanding of their responsibilities and are very clear about their role in terms of Governance. Whilst they provide clear guidance in the development of the vision and mission, and the implementation of strategy, and are fully supportive, they work everything through the Chief Executive Officer and leave all operational and tactical decisions to the Senior Management Team (SMT).
- Performance is managed effectively across the organisation through a hierarchy of meetings including quarterly Board meetings, monthly meetings of The Executive Management Team, bi monthly Area Manager and Service Manager meetings and then a raft of team and group meetings. At service user level, hand over and communication books ensure that people are aware of information and issues in relation to performance in addition to the welfare of the service users.

- Individual performance is monitored primarily through regular supervision meetings – two monthly - with line management and through an annual personal development review (PDR). The PDR process provides feedback on performance, sets and agrees performance objectives and considers development needs with the individual.
- Without exception, people had received their PDR and described the process as be effective and helpful. Various comments included ***“It lets you know how you are doing and what training you need to do” “ it is good to get feedback” “ The review gives me an opportunity to discuss what I want with my manager”***
- In terms of performance everyone is clear about their role and what is expected of them. One key aspect that people consistently mentioned was the degree to which everybody works with and for each other. – ***“we all work for each other and support each other”***
- In terms of service delivery, performance is monitored by team leaders on a day to day basis and by Service and Area Managers on a regular basis. This is achieved through site and home visits and observations as well as through the quality auditing processes and procedures.
- In what is probably one of the most innovative and unique approaches to monitoring and managing the quality of support to service users is through the Q Team Checkers. This is a team of people who have a learning disability and visit people that use the Bethphage services to check out the quality of the service that they receive. They sample areas of support and produce reports which tell Bethphage about the quality of service being provided. Reports go to management and the Board and are used to inform and improve services to users.

Specific feedback on the introduction of becoming a Positive Behaviour Organisation (PBO) and the quality of staff training and development.

As part of the review against the Investors in People Framework, the Senior Management Team indicated that they would value some specific feedback relating to people's perceptions on the organisation becoming a Positive Behaviour Organisation (PBO) and also to their perceptions around the quality of the current staff training and development provision. The bullet points below seek to provide this.

Positive Behaviour Organisation

- The introduction of the PBO concept and the Role modelling this from the top has inspired others to follow with confidence and ensured it is universally understood once it is fully cascaded. Those people actively engaged find the whole approach appropriate to their role.
- It has made a significant difference to behaviour and practice already. People are challenging behaviour and statements that are not positive, and doing so in a way that seeks to explore what has gone wrong and identify solutions to ensure it doesn't happen again.
- People are feeling even more valued and respected as a result of using a PBS and PBO approach.
- Some comments indicate that the concept is even impacting on the way people behave outside of work – improving feeling of wellbeing and confidence.
- The ethics and values of the organisation have been enhanced in the perception of many which gives a heightened sense of pride.
- There are examples of long term negativity and condescending attitudes disappearing in a short timescale.
- ***“It was a great place to work before we started PBO. It is even greater now”***

Quality of staff training and development

- Comments suggest that the training they attend is generally well designed and delivered with relevance to the context of individual roles and the ethos of the organisation. People highlighted the range and variety of training undertaken including NVQs, MAPA, Makaton, Dementia awareness, medication, manual handling, health & safety and many more.
- People consider that the follow up to events is effective with generally good follow-up and embedding of the learning. People confirmed that their training and development was routinely and consistently followed up and discussed in supervision and appraisal meetings.

- That said, people do not appear to know what happens to feedback from training events and any subsequent impact evaluation.
- People like the fact that mandatory training is now known as essential. Several comments indicated that whilst, on occasion, people in some ways resented having to attend mandatory (and particularly refresher) training, attending essential training was perceived by people as more acceptable and appropriate.
- People value the opportunities to access learning and to progress careers within the organisation. Several people gave examples of how they were developing their careers and others expressed their hope that there would be promotion and progression opportunities in the future.
- Several people in management roles highlighted how ILM training and qualifications has helped them develop their “people” management skills and develop their confidence in their roles.
- Comments and observations suggest that a significant amount of formal, and more often, informal coaching and mentoring takes place. Whether this is the shadowing that is part of induction or supporting people through their qualifications it is highly valued but often goes unnoticed and evaluated.
- Induction is described as being effective and thorough. The introduction to the organisation and the corporate induction sessions are valued and helpful. Shadowing forms a major element for support workers and people find this extremely helpful.
- People value opportunities to learn from best practice, mistakes and each other. Time taken to share knowledge and good practice and this would appear to becoming a routine and valued activity following team and other meetings.

Moving Forward

The Investors in People Standard and Framework supports support organisational success through the development of excellent management and people practices. The Framework is designed to encourage continuous improvement and development by enabling those using it to build and evolve their practices in a way that is appropriate to their organisational circumstances and needs.

This review has clearly established that Bethphage operates at an extremely high level of best practice and is now accredited as **Investors in People Gold**.

The challenge is now to take this to an even higher level!

Prioritising and actioning potential development areas

In the **Building on strengths and good practice** section above, six areas have been highlighted which logically build on and extend the already high level of good people and management practice established and being implemented within Bethphage.

The development of a continuous improvement plan would provide the basis for moving forward, and developing your management and people practices further over the coming years.

Following the publication of this report, we will call to arrange a final meeting associated with this review so that we can discuss if and how you would like to move forward and agree the development actions that you feel are appropriate to both support the achievement of the business ambition and priorities and to build on the already high standards that you are aspire to.

I have included a template for a Continuous Development Plan at Appendix 1 for information and trust this will be of interest.

Personal note

Bob Morrison and Tony Walmsley would like to express sincere thanks to everyone involved in this review for their time and honest and open comments and observations. We would particularly like to thank Rae Evans for her support in facilitating the review and arranging the schedule of interviews.

We trust that we have managed to reflect the comments and observations provided accurately and objectively and that this will be helpful in both supporting the future development of your people and management practices and delivering the level of growth and success you aspire to achieve.

It is hoped that this report will stimulate discussion across Bethphage and that you will continue to work with the Investor in People Framework as you move the organisation to the next level!

Congratulations once again on continuing to meet the Investors in People Standard and on achieving the prestigious status of **Investors in People Gold**.

Appendix 1 – Continuous Improvement Plan template

Appendix 2 – Assessment Results Summary

Appendix 1 – Continuous Improvement Plan Template

Business Issue - What	Suggested Actions - How	Potential Benefit - Why	Priority - When	Solutions/Support Available - Who

Appendix 2 – Assessment results summary

The Investors in People Framework - The Evidence Requirements

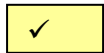
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The total number of evidence requirements met is **177**

Key:



The Core Investors in People Standard



Evidence Requirements met in Extended Framework



Areas of Extended Framework not yet met



Not part of the Investors in People Framework