

OLD SCHOOL HOUSE DAY NURSERY

The organisation

This private nursery was established from new over ten years ago and now offers places for 80 children in the 0-5 years' age range. The business has now developed into two companies — one operating the day nursery and the other a training centre for early years practitioners who go on to work in the daycare sector. Around 30 staff are employed. The businesses strives to develop and promote a quality learning and development culture in which staff, students, parents and children all benefit. They appreciate that 'a nursery is only as good as its people', that parents rightly have high expectations, and that the third-party recommendations of parental grapevines within communities greatly influence customers' choices of daycare. Above all, the nursery wants its children to be valued, stimulated and well cared-for.

The challenge

The business set out to be 'leading edge'. It wanted a recognised and valued quality assurance framework to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses at a time of consolidation and growth. For a 'people' business, Investors in People with its focus on business needs and development and independent assessment aligned well with what was needed.

The solution

Work on achieving the Standard resulted in the business being recognised as an Investor in People in 2000. The Investors in People 'Profile' review is now used for its benchmarking data and feedback potential. Old School House has also achieved the Investors in People Leadership & Management Model. Investors in People put the spotlight on the effectiveness of induction and skills training with more sophisticated evaluation to measure outputs against strategic goals. The business realises that valued, trained and well-rewarded staff contribute to effective teams, quality and continuous improvement.

Results

Apart from its Investors in People successes, Old School House has been commended for its excellence by the Rural Development Commission and is a winner of the National Day Nurseries Association 'Quality Counts' award. The turnover of the business has increased year on year, staff retention is excellent and rates of staff absence are well below national averages. In an excellent environment with the resources for staff development from within, the business has grown its own teachers, managers and support staff. And with more development of the business, there come more opportunities for the people. With its reputation and resources the training centre has become a 'trainer of choice' with managing agents

and it has a working partnership with Cambridge Regional College. Modern Apprenticeships and qualifications ranging from NVQs up to level 4 and to degree-level are offered.

Champion status

Old School House is proud to be an Investor in People and has been a strong advocate of the Standard in its business and sector networks. As a learning, education and training organisation it realises the potential in sharing best practice and networking. It has particular strengths in mentoring, communication, work-life balance and motivation issues as well as its vast background of the issues in the developing early years education and care sector.



