



Glaphorn CofE Primary School is a small, happy village school of approximately 70 pupils. The school has been rated Good by Ofsted in its three recent inspections (2017, 2012 and 2009). It has recently joined the Rutland Learning Trust.

Their strengths initiative involved the whole team. Headteacher, five classroom teachers and five teaching assistants. This is a supportive team with a wide range of experience and time served. They had recently joined a multi academy trust and so needed to adapt to successfully manage a lot of change within a short time frame. Strengths-based development was deployed as a vehicle to develop the team during this time of change and ensure that the whole team invest in each other and make the necessary adjustments to benefit the children's learning and raise achievement.

Process

The Headteacher had fully engaged with the strengths philosophy and we had worked together for some time. She had explored the potential of her own top 5 and so understood how this process could work for her team.

Teacher team:

- Teacher and Teaching Assistant team took the StrengthsFinder survey and received their top 5 report
- Teacher team had two individual coaching sessions with Karen over an academic year.
 - Session 1 focused on understanding their profile and exploring new areas of potential
 - Session 2 focused on identifying success so far and future goal setting on individual and team goals
- Teaching Assistant had two individual coaching sessions with Karen over an academic year.
 - Session 1 focused on understanding their profile and exploring new areas of potential
 - Session 2 focused on using insights to raise performance on individual and team goals
- The teacher team had three team strengths discovery and engagement sessions to share insights and feedback to others. The teaching assistant team had two strengths discovery and engagement sessions.

Impact

Employee survey results demonstrated the following results

- 100% of team felt that the strengths initiative had positively impacted their performance at work as a teacher and a leader.
- 100% of team felt that this time was a great investment of time for them and for their organisation in terms of their professional development and impact in the classroom and leadership goals.
- 90% of team felt that the insights gained, and progress achieved would be sustainable over time.
- 100% of the team would recommend this process to a colleague.

The team identified that strengths development had helped them with the following areas:

- A better understanding of their strengths to apply to their role and wider life
- Opportunity to share insights with the team and support each other's development
- Encouraged teachers to think about what was next for them resulting in more aspirational goal setting
- An opportunity to discuss, be heard and problem solve during a period of intense change

Comments received about the experience include:

"Coaching has been invaluable in helping me to understand more about how to get the most from myself and my team. " Teacher

"Excellent from start to finish - it's given me a much better understanding of my strengths and how to best use them, both in my own practise but also to help the school. It's helped me to understand other people in school, knowing their strengths and how they tick. The sessions with Karen were done really well - very informative, sensitively managed and have had a fab impact both at work and at home. Thank you :)" Teacher

"I found the sessions really engaging and thought provoking. Thank you!" Teaching Assistant

"It helped me understand 'me' and know that it's ok for me to be as I am and I will still be successful." Teaching Assistant

"I found the experience fascinating and loved that it was so positive focusing on strengths. It was good to have the opportunity to express thoughts and feelings and it has helped me to plan for the future." Teacher

Next steps

The Glaphorn team have successfully explored the discovery stage of strengths development with the whole team. They now face the challenge of embedding the benefits, language and behaviour to get maximum and sustained impact on raised performance, expectations and engagement. They also plan to develop strengths with another local school that they work closely with.



If you would like to discuss how initiatives like these can support and develop your team then please get in touch.

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For further testimonials please see www.rutlandcoaching.uk and www.soar.com/KarenatRutlandCoaching