

Introduction

This case study describes the world's first ever e2grow High Performing Teams programme in education.



Glaphorn CE and Polebrook CE Primary School are small, rural schools in Northamptonshire each with approximately 70 pupils. They have recently joined the Rutland Learning Trust and were both rated Good by Ofsted in their last three inspections.



The Headteacher had fully engaged with the strengths philosophy, understood her own Top 5 strengths and was committed to prioritise this project to have maximum impact for her team.

This initiative involved all eleven teachers from both schools and their executive

headteacher. This is a supportive team with a wide range of experience, which having recently joined a multi academy trust, have needed to adapt in a short time frame.

This initiative ran during the Covid 19 lockdown, so participants were exposed to the additional pressures of this time.

“The focus on habit making has become an integral part of how we operate, and the programme has opened up development opportunities that would not have been possible otherwise”

Executive Headteacher, Lou Coulthard

Goals for the project

Our key goals were:

- to visibly invest in the team and establish a culture where team members regularly have open and honest conversations such that the team approach performance improvement and change management with energy and a proactive outlook;
- to build morale and support wellbeing across the team during Covid and beyond;
- to strengthen relationships with a view to improving collaboration within the team.

Process

Key: CS – Coaching session

Week 0	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Half term	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12
Goal setting meeting	Leader ind CS		Leader catch up CS		Leader catch up CS			Leader catch up CS			Leader in CS	
	Team session 1				Team session 2			Team session 3			Team session 4	
	Survey											Survey
e2grow Leader regular strengths tasks and reflections												
Individual CS one						Individual CS two						
e2grow Team regular strengths tasks and reflections												

Impact

Employee survey results demonstrated the following results:

- 14 out of 16 engagement aspects showed engagement had risen during this period.
- 7 out of 16 engagement indicators rose by 20%+
- 91% of team felt that the strengths initiative had positively impacted their performance at work as a teacher and a leader.
- 95% 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 E2Grow programme has been highly effective in driving sustainable change."

*Executive
Headteacher, Lou
Coulthard*

"Staff are able to engage in more open and honest, robust conversations, and this means greater clarity of purpose and shared understanding."

*Executive Headteacher,
Lou Coulthard*

The Headteacher identified how the programme had helped progress in all three key goals:

- Engagement and enthusiasm increased
- Staff had greater understanding of each other
- They thought more deeply about their approach & impact
- Regular use of a shared language to talk about change and conflicting needs in a productive and proactive manner
- All these factors have led to more effective communication and greater clarity of purpose and shared understanding.

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

- All responses were hugely positive and excited about how this approach could drive forward the success of their team, and so their children
- Many identified that they felt happier at work due to these deeper conversations
- Greater trust and understanding across the team so that issues can be raised and discussed productively
- Team members felt heard and valued which had a significant impact on engagement and morale
- Team members were optimistic about their potential and position in the team

"I feel as a team we are much stronger and we praise and recognise each other's strengths, I love going to work!"

"There is a real buzz about the team now."

Middle Leader

Conclusion

This e2grow High Performing Teams programme was the first of its kind in education and delivered huge benefits in terms of engagement and delivery on key goals. The structure of the programme focused on building sustainable habits that build trust and allow the whole team to use their strengths toward team goals instead of personal goals. This goal alignment within a supportive structure helped the team move their culture toward greater team cohesion in a surprisingly short time.

Next steps

"It has given us a chance to reflect and consider what we bring to the team, what we 'need' to function at our best and how we can become a better team"

Middle Leader

The Glaphorn & Polebrook 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 their wider team so that deep understanding and shared goals become the norm across the wider team.

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

