

Introduction



Brooke Hill Academy is a popular primary school in the small market town of Oakham, Rutland. In September 2013 they federated with Edith Weston Academy and formed the Brooke Hill Academy

Trust. South Witham Academy joined in 2016. This successful collaboration allows all three schools to offer a richer curriculum and more opportunities for pupils including shared resources, a comprehensive gifted and talented programme, a broad extra-curricular activity timetable and staff expertise.

The school has a long history of high performance and was awarded good by Ofsted in 2017 in one of the first new framework inspections. It is a popular choice with local families and has been oversubscribed for many years.

This programme of strengths development was initiated by the Executive Headteacher and Headteacher and was led by the KS2 co-ordinator after the success of a similar programme at South Witham Academy. They wished to raise the levels of self-awareness, engagement and collaboration across the team to support sustained and rapid school improvement. The programme took place during the second lockdown period (Oct – Dec 2020) and reducing isolation and supporting the team through this period of uncertainty was also a key driver.

This initiative involved upper Key Stage 2 class teachers including the key stage co-ordinator who was new to role. This is a team with a wide range of experience and the programme took place during the Covid 19 period. The team had not used CliftonStrengths as a developmental tool before.

Goals for the project

Our key goals were:

- to bring the team together to support, understand and learn from each other during the Covid period
- to connect the team during lockdown and maintain good communication.
- to develop the KS2 co-ordinators leadership capacity in her new role

“We’ve been able to chat openly and honestly with Karen, it’s been a safe and friendly environment in order to share thoughts without feeling vulnerable or that you’ll be judged.”

Key Stage Two
Coordinator

“Highly recommend it. The nudges and videos have been really insightful and caused us to really think about things and led to really engaging, professional discussion.”

Key Stage Two
Coordinator



Process

Team Alignment Programme Brooke Hill Key Stage 2 Teaching Team

		12-Oct	19-Oct	02-Nov	09-Nov	16-Nov	23-Nov	30-Nov	07-Dec	14-Dec
		Week 0	26-Oct	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7
For the leader	Alignment session (60 mins)			Leader coaching session (60 min)	30 min	Leader coaching session (60 min)	30 min		Leader coaching session (60 min)	
	Set up activities									
For the team	Team session 1 (120 min)							Team session 2 (120 min)		
	Set up activities									
Half Term										
Online nudges, reflection activities and insights										Review activities
Online nudges, reflection activities and insights										Review activities

Impact

Employee feedback survey results demonstrated the following results:

- 93% of the team felt that the behaviour and attitudes of the team had changed in a positive manner.
- 90% of the team felt that this was a great investment of time for them and for their organisation in terms of their professional development and impact.
- 85% of the team felt that the insights gained, and progress achieved would be sustainable over time.
- 80% of the team would recommend this process to a colleague and felt that it had been a good investment of their time.
- 75% of the team felt that the insights gained have enhanced their professional relationships and raised performance within the team

"It was empowering and helped to develop the majority of the team."

"I can understand my strengths more clearly and where these come to play in my every day work life. Also, I know what I need from others in order to promote my strengths."

"The team know more about me and know that I value and respect them."

KS2 class teachers



The Key Stage co-ordinator and team identified further impact of the programme:

- Greater openness, understanding and confidence in each other
- Several members mentioned that they were able to take feedback and decision making less personally and were more able to see a bigger picture within the team dynamics
- Team members felt that through the process they were understood and listened to.
- They also understood the viewpoints of others far more clearly.
- All responses were positive and focused on how this approach could drive forward the success of their professional development and the success of the team

Conclusion

The structure of the programme focused on building sustainable habits that build trust and allow the whole team to use their strengths for greater collaboration, raising performance across the Trust.

The team and team leader were extremely positive about the impact that this programme had on their own leadership development and the development of the team. They intend to continue to use the language and knowledge that the programme has given them to drive forward their most important goals.

Next steps

The Brooke Hill Academy Team have successfully explored the discovery stage of strengths development. They now will embed the benefits, language, and behaviour to get maximum and sustained impact on raised performance, expectations and engagement.

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



Karen Muir, Rutland Coaching
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For further testimonials please see
www.rutlandcoaching.uk and
www.soar.com/KarenatRutlandCoaching

When asked what they would do more of because of the programme

“appreciate my strengths more!

“Consider the strengths of others and use them”!

“To have a closer relationship with the KS2 team as they know me better.”

*Brooke Hill Team
Members*

“We all now have a more fully rounded understanding of ourselves as individuals, and as a team, what we offer, and what we need.”

*Key Stage Two
Coordinator*

