

# Case study

## Matthew Holland School



Matthew Holland School is a County Co-Educational day school with 900 mixed ability pupils from 11 to 16 years.

The aim of the school is to enable students to be well educated, confident and responsible so that they can fulfil positive roles in society. The stimulating and caring environment of the Matthew Holland School allows excellence to develop through the best possible learning experiences, which are related to individual needs and abilities.

The school also aims to create a fulfilling, well-ordered and purposeful community within which staff and pupils can develop and work co-operatively and in mutual respect in the pursuit of educational excellence.

**“Through the use of PPA and the profiles we are much stronger as a management team. OFSTED inspected the school in 2004 and subsequently commented in their report ‘Leadership is good at the senior level...’”**

### **PPA is used to develop the senior management team**

Thomas’ Personal Profile Analysis (PPA) was used to develop the senior management team at the school. This team consists of the Head, Deputy Head and four assistant Heads and is responsible for the management of the school.

PPA assesses an individual's behaviour in the work environment. It can answer questions such as – What are their strengths and limitations? Are they self starters? How do they communicate? What motivates them? The PPA enables people to become more self aware, which in turn gives them the means to consolidate their working strengths and compensate for their limitations. PPA is a series of 24 questions on a forced choice "first impressions" basis, taking no longer than seven minutes to complete. The answers are charted on a graph under the four headings of Dominance, Influence, Steadiness and Compliance (DISC).

The management team were profiled as part of a team building activity.

Helen Hogg, Assistant Head, explained "We looked at the Strengths and Limitations report in conjunction with each person's role. We wanted to look at the profiles in relation to people's current responsibilities. For example, I am not very good with administrative details, this is one of my limitations, so we identified the need for me to have secretarial help with this. At the same time profiles demonstrated that some people were good at one thing and others something else. It highlighted that its not wrong to be inefficient with paperwork, I have other strengths the school needs."

"We were also able to have an honest and open discussion about what our roles involved. One of mine is professional development which some of my team thought involved handing out leaflets and carrying out administrative tasks. However, the role is much more strategic in focus - formulating development plans and performance management. The team came away from the day with a much clearer idea of each others role and what they personally contribute to the team."

"The team building exercise using the profiles really helped the team understand how we needed to

communicate with each other to be effective. People prefer to communicate in different ways - some face to face whilst others prefer email. In a school environment it is difficult to communicate well but its so important to get it right. Profiling reinforced our understanding of one another and meant we were able to come up with practical solutions to the problem. One of these solutions was to use blue memos as one method of communication between team members. Profiling each of the team and being able to discuss these profiles has encouraged an openness with each other. People are now more willing to put their hand up and say "I messed up on this – its my profile".

**"We looked at the Strengths and Limitations report in conjunction with each person's role and so were able to have an honest and open discussion about what our roles involved. The team came away with a much clearer idea of each others role and what they personally contribute to the team."**

"We are also much stronger as a management team because of it. OFSTED inspected the school in 2004 and subsequently commented in their report 'Leadership is good at the senior level. It has high aspirations for the school and the drive and energy to achieve them'. We would not have been in such a strong position had we not examined ourselves and the way we interact with one another."

