Using Investors in People to support Governors and Schools

This leaflet is for school governors. It provides key information about how to make best use of the Investors in People Standard in schools, and how it can support governors in fulfilling their three key roles – providing a strategic view, acting as a critical friend and ensuring accountability.

There are four sections

Section 1. The Investors in People Standard
information and advice
questions and answers

Section 2. What’s in it for us? Using the Standard in school
information and advice
questions and answers

Section 3. Investors in People Assessment
information and advice
questions and answers

Section 4. Further information and contacts

Each of these sections is self contained. You can start wherever your interest lies and dip in and out of the sections according to your needs.
Section 1
The Investors in People Standard

The Investors in People Standard is written as a series of outcomes. It describes what your school looks like when it is an Investor in People. The Standard is completely non-prescriptive about how to achieve this. You will find the Standard on the accompanying folder.

The Standard does not require any paperwork.

‘Investors in People: Valuing the Standard’ (see back page for how to order) provides additional information.

Information & Advice

Question
I thought Investors in People was for business. How can it be for schools as well?

Answer
The Standard applies to all organisations and has already been adopted by thousands of schools to help them achieve their aims.
Section 1

Question
How do we get started – who can provide information?

Answer
Your local Learning and Skills Council (LLSC) is the first place to contact for further information. A full list of LLSCs can be found on the Learning and Skills Council website – www.lsc.gov.uk or you can ring 0845 019 4170 to find the contact details for your local LSC.

You will be allocated an adviser by the Local LSC or Business Link. The vast majority of advisers are experienced in working with schools using Investors in People.

There is a pack about Investors in People written specially for schools, of which this leaflet is part. The list of other leaflets, and information about how to order the pack free of charge are on the back page. The pack can also be found on the DfES Standards website www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schoolimprovement/iip

Question
How long does it take to become an Investor in People?

Answer
This depends on your starting point. An adviser from the local LSC or Business Link will help you look at your practice and give you an estimate. Some schools have decided to be assessed very soon after starting to use the Standard and have been recognised very quickly. Generally, it takes between twelve and eighteen months.

Question
What does it cost?

Answer
The only direct costs are those for assessment. The maximum daily fee is £550. For a primary school, the initial assessment is typically 1.5 – 2 days. It is important to look at assessment and on-going review as part of your continuous school improvement process, rather than one-off separate events, and to think about value for money, rather than just cost.

There are also person time costs involved in the initial review of the school’s practice in the context of the Standard.

Looking at your practice through the framework of the Standard might make you want to do some things differently, or to introduce something new. There may be cost implications from doing this.

As with the costs of assessment, it will help to consider these in the wider context of school development and continuous improvement.

Some local LSCs offer subsidies towards the cost of assessment.
Section 2

What’s in it for us?
Using the Standard in school

Always think and talk about ‘using’ Investors, never ‘doing’ it. It works best as a coherent framework through which you evaluate and develop your practice.

Looking at your practice using the Standard as a framework may make you decide to do some things differently, or to introduce something new. However, you should only change practice if you decide it will help you achieve what you’re aiming for in school. You should never do anything just ‘for Investors’.

Investors in People makes you consider how you can enable ALL staff to contribute fully to the success of the school. As part of this, it provides a useful framework for discussion with the whole staff about your school’s policy and practice in training and development.

‘Investors in People: Valuing the Standard’ (see back page for how to order) provides additional information about how to make best use of the Standard.

**Question**

If we take it on, what will it mean? Does it mean extra work for us and the staff?

**Answer**

It means using the Standard as a framework for evaluating and developing your existing practice.

It should not mean extra work. Using the Standard should be incorporated into your development/improvement planning, so that the time involved in the school’s initial review of its practice and priorities in relation to the Standard are acknowledged and planned for. Such a review may make you want to change some aspects of practice – in essence doing things differently rather than additionally.

Any changes you do make to your practice should be because you think they will help you achieve your aims more effectively. They may be stimulated by using the Standard, but are in fact part of desirable continuous school improvement, with priorities decided by you.
Question
What are the benefits?
How will Investors affect us?

Answer
Investors in People is not just about personnel issues. It touches on and brings a whole school coherence to many aspects of a school's agenda. These include:

Direction and purpose
"With Investors in People at the heart of the school, we know that it helps to build that management capacity at all levels that is required to deliver."
LEA Head of Training and Media Service

Values, vision, aims and mission
"It was interesting during the interviews to learn how staff at all levels are very positive and open as to how review and development initiatives associated with Investors have genuinely improved their ability to understand and better meet the school's aims and objectives."
Investors in People Assessment report

Planning – strategic and operational
The school's involvement with the Investors in People award programme has resulted in the school having a clear set of long-term strategic goals to which everyone aspires and which inform its ongoing work... Sound procedures for formulating the plan involve the headteacher and deputy headteacher working in close partnership with the governing body and staff."
Investors in People Assessment report

The core business of teaching and learning
"When we had our second Ofsted inspection, one of the things that was noted in the feedback report was the strength of staff development. It was clear that the improvement in training and development and the whole staff issues had impacted on raising standards."
Headteacher, Infants' School

Clarifying roles and responsibilities
“The Investors in People award given recently is a clear indication of the very good standards achieved in management. To achieve this award the school needed to ensure that all staff are provided with relevant training; there are clear roles and well-defined expectations for the governing body, subject leaders, senior managers and administrative support staff.”
Ofsted inspection report 2000 (Special School)

Performance Management, threshold assessment and Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
“Performance Management has been introduced for all teachers, with an intention to extend it to all members of staff, as part of the school's commitment to Investors in People. This represents a very appropriate combination of strategies and, even at this early stage, is having a positive impact on raising teaching standards.”
Ofsted inspection report 2000 (Secondary School)

Cost effectiveness, including monitoring and evaluation, value for money/best value
“This school has a good understanding of how to achieve best value. It compares its standards and costs with those of other schools. For example, it has successfully had its provisions re-evaluated through Investors in People, a challenging and searching review.”
Ofsted inspection report 2000 (Primary School)

Equal opportunities across all the school's employees
“Certainly when I came here, and particularly with Investors in People, it encompassed the whole of the staff in training. And we were seen as ‘the school team’. This is the first place I have ever worked where I haven’t been a ‘non-person’."
Finance Manager, Secondary School

A stimulus to involve the wider community
“I think Investors is making a difference to the whole community.”
Secretary and Governor, Infants' School

Section 2
Question

How does Investors in People help us with other Human Resource Development (HRD) issues?

Answer

Investors in People helps develop the whole climate and culture in a school.

- Staff see their development and performance as essential contributions to raising achievement for all.

  "Staff gave a number of examples through INSET days, staff and team meetings of how they are encouraged to consider and suggest ways that training might complement their development and improve performance."

  Investors in People Assessment report

- Staff feel valued, know they have opportunities for development and therefore want to join and stay in

  "The difference it's made is that in all areas, we now have a staff that feel valued, have been part of making the decisions, have been part of policy change, and this has impacted also into the students and into our lessons."

  Headteacher, Secondary School

  "Moreover, schools which are known to be good at professional development find it a real advantage in attracting and retaining staff."

  Learning and Teaching: A strategy for professional development, DfEE, March 2001

- It supports and enhances effective Performance Management and positive attitudes among staff to their own Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

  "Through the Investors in People process, non-teaching staff have increased their commitment to enhance their own professional development and have asked to have their own version of performance management."

  Ofsted inspection report 2001 (Secondary School)

  "It is part of the culture, where people are so involved and training is so important in the school that it becomes each person's expectation and a way of life. People see their target setting interviews as a right, rather than an imposition. There is a different mindset and it takes on a life of its own."

  Headteacher, First School
Question

How will it help the pupils?
Will it help us raise achievement?

Answer

The good staff development practice promoted by the Standard helps to support the learning of pupils. It makes schools look at the impact of staff training and development on their own performance and on pupil achievement. It is the performance of all staff that makes a difference to how well pupils achieve in every aspect – attainment, their qualities as learners and in their social and personal development.

“There is good evidence that Investors in People supports school improvement. An NFER study in June 2000 found a clear positive link between achievement of the standard and OFSTED’s assessment of teaching quality. For this reason, Investors enjoys the support of key national partners, including OFSTED. The great majority of schools which have achieved the Standard say that it has directly contributed to raising pupil achievement, through a more focused approach to training and development. This view seems to be shared by schools of all shapes and sizes.”  

Peter Housden, Director General for Schools, DfES, letter to LEA Chief Education Officers, February 2002

“And it (the Standard) really relates well to all the areas that you need to think about as a Head, particularly raising standards, which sounds the stock answer, but actually, Investors is all about people, and the way you raise standards in my school is through the people.”

Headteacher, Infants’ School
Question

How will Investors in People help with Ofsted?

Answer

OFSTED recognises the contribution that using Investors in People can make to improving a school’s performance and has provided the following advice to inspection teams.

“There are many similarities between the Ofsted criteria for inspection and the criteria used in the quality models available to schools. Just as we welcome self-evaluation using OFSTED’s criteria, we should welcome the use of suitable quality models to enhance a school’s performance... The role of the inspector is to focus on how the school has made use of the model in its path to improvement, and how effective (or otherwise) this has been. For example, the focus on planning in Investors in People can help to sharpen the priorities in the school development plan so that action taken is more likely to bring about the desired improvement.” Ofsted Update 34

There is a particularly close link between the practice that Investors in People promotes and the evidence for which inspectors look under the heading ‘How well is the school led and managed?’

- leadership ensures clear direction for the work and development of the school, and promotes high standards
- the school has explicit aims and values, including a commitment to good relationships and equality of opportunity for all, which are reflected in all its work
- there is rigorous monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching
- the school identifies appropriate priorities and targets, takes the necessary action, and reviews progress towards them
- there is a shared commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed
- governors fulfil their statutory duties in helping shape the direction of the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses
- the best value principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition are applied in the school’s management, procurement and use of services and resources
“The school's involvement in, and commitment to, Investors in People proved to be the catalyst which has ultimately resulted in very good improvement in all aspects of leadership and management of the school.”
Ofsted inspection report 2000 (Primary School)

“The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and the senior staff. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. Her clarity of vision and ability to communicate it ensure clear educational direction and have led to the establishment of a very secure platform for growth and improvement. This was reflected in the assessment for the Investors in People award, which the school gained in 2000.”
Ofsted inspection report 2001 (Secondary School)

“The school has gained the award of Investors in People and the impact of this is seen in the extensive and high quality practice in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the teaching force and in the support given to them and the non-teaching staff. This has raised teaching quality and pupils' learning benefits as a result.”
Ofsted inspection report 2000 (Primary School)

“The quality of development planning and the systems for monitoring have improved since the last inspection. The development plan has been written after a process of review involving the staff and some of the governors. The plan has much merit and has benefited from the school gaining the Investors in People status, which has helped to sharpen the planning process.”
Ofsted inspection report 2002 (Secondary School)

“Governors are fully involved with staff in evaluating the school's work and in prioritising school improvement planning. This was one of the benefits stemming from gaining the Investors in People award.”
Ofsted inspection report 2001 (Infants' School)

“Teachers, support staff and governors work together as a team to improve the education provided for the pupils and meet the aims of the school. Work for Investors in People supported this well.”
Ofsted inspection report 1998 (Infant School)

“The headteacher and the governing body are very aware of the principles of best value and have applied these to the management of the school and resources for some time. The school's involvement in Investors in People has allowed it to develop a high level of awareness of this area.”
Ofsted inspection report 2000 (Primary School)
Section 3

Investors in People Assessment

In order to be recognised as an Investor in People you are assessed by a qualified assessor.

During the assessment, the assessor talks to a cross section of staff and some governors to gather their views.

The assessor looks at the effect and impact of the processes and procedures you have in place, not the paperwork itself.

You do not have to prepare any paperwork, though the assessor will find your School Development/Improvement Plan helpful. There may be other documents which you already have that you and the assessor agree to share, but there is no need to prepare anything special for the assessment.

Once you are recognised, you maintain your Investors in People status by participating in a review – any time of your choice within a three year period.

Particularly in the review, but also in the initial assessment, you can identify key development areas for the assessor to use as ‘routes into’ finding out whether the Standard is being met. This gives you the chance to have an external perspective and feedback on your own priority areas, that both recognises good and developing practice and offers ideas for further development, thus bringing added value.

Question
What does assessment cost?

Answer
It costs a maximum of £550 per day.

For a primary school, the initial assessment is typically 1.5 – 2 days.

It is important to look at assessment and on-going review as part of your continuous school improvement process, rather than one-off separate events, and to think about value for money, rather than just cost.
**Question**

Is it pass/fail?

**Answer**

No. It is more helpful to think of the first assessment as ‘the start’ of the assessment process.

The current assessment arrangements mean that you can choose to be assessed at any time.

Many schools wait until they (and their local LSC or Business Link adviser) think they are likely to meet the Standard fully. In this situation, most schools are recognised on the first assessment.

However, if the assessor finds you meet some of the indicators and not others, all the positive evidence is ‘banked’ and carried forward for when the assessment continues (provided that it is within a reasonable amount of time).

---

**Question**

How do we make sure we get value for money?

**Answer**

Before you start using the Standard, weigh up the costs and benefits carefully, so you make a considered value for money judgement at the outset.

The assessor has to make sure your school is meeting the whole of the Standard, but the approach is very much ‘doing with’ rather than ‘doing to’. Think about assessment as ‘bought in consultancy’, contributing to your overall strategy for school improvement.

Talk to the assessor about your individual context and current issues as well as longer term priorities. These will provide a valuable focus for you and the assessor for both the confirmation of good practice and developmental feedback.

In assessment and review, identify some key development areas for the assessor to use as ‘routes into’ your practice in the context of the Investors in People Standard. This gives you a chance to have an external perspective and helpful feedback about whether developments are working as you want them to and having the desired impact. This brings added value to the assessment and review processes.
Section 4

Further Information about Investors in People in Schools can be found in:

‘Raising the Standard – Raising Achievement: Investors in People in Schools’

Adviser pack reference: IIP/A
School pack reference: DfEE 0156/2000

The school pack contains the following leaflets:

Investors in People:
Valuing the Standard Ref: DfES/0806/2001
Explores how schools can make the most of using Investors in People

Investors in People and Continuing Professional Development Ref: DfES/0628/2001
Makes the links to the DfES Continuing Professional Development Strategy

Investors in People and Performance Management Ref: IPA/PM
Makes the links to the DfES Performance Management arrangements

Investors in People – questions frequently asked by schools
Explores some myths about the Standard and clarifies its contribution to schools’ priorities

Supporting school governance through Investors in People
Makes the links to governors’ strategic roles (This leaflet is being superseded by ‘Using Investors in People to support Governors and Schools’)

Supporting leadership and management through Investors in People
Makes the links with key issues for schools and other frameworks they use, e.g. Ofsted and NPQH

Investors in People in Schools
Some case studies and quotes

The Investors in People Standard, the Principles and Indicators
Information about achieving recognition and the kinds of practice in schools that can contribute to doing this

Please note: If you order the pack using the School Pack reference (above), you will receive all the leaflets listed. The three leaflets with individual references can also be ordered separately.

Investors in People Achieving Excellence through Partnership – post conference report (CD ROM) Ref: IIP CD CONF REP

Further copies of this leaflet, the School and Adviser packs, and the CD ROM are available from:

DfES Publications
P.O. Box 5050, Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 6ZQ
Tel: 0845 60 222 60
Fax: 0845 60 333 60
Minicom: 0845 60 555 60
email: dfes@prologistics.co.uk

The schools’ pack can be found on www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schoolimprovement/ip

Case studies of schools using the Investors in People Standard can be found on www.investorsinpeople.co.uk

For general information about Investors in People in schools please contact Christine Eaton 0114 259 1174

For further information about general school governance matters, please contact the DfES School Governance Unit – Trevor Gordon, email Trevor.GORDON@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

This pack has been written with the help and support of representatives from Information for School and College Governors (ISCG), National Association of Governors and Managers (NAGM) and the National Governors Council (NGC).