



**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE  
REVIEW REPORT**

**for**

**Chuckles Day Care Wales Limited**

[www.chucklesnursery.com](http://www.chucklesnursery.com)

**Prepared by: Dr. Patricia Weslake-Evans FIC  
Investors in People Specialist**

**On behalf of: Investors in People Wales  
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**Report date: July 2014**



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## **1. Introduction and Context**

Chuckles Nursery now has 24 staff supporting 54 children. The Director, since my last visit 6 years ago, is less hands-on, and the day to day running of the Nursery is in the hands of the Manager, who works with a team of team leaders, and childcare practitioners, at various stages of their development. Groups range from babies to pre-school - Chuckles Bunnies, Little Cubs, Tidy Tigers, and Proud Peacocks.

The commitment of the Director, Manager and team emanates from their conversations, and the formal literature, such as job descriptions produced.

**"When you chose to become a Childcare Practitioner, you chose a profession where each day you would take care of the most precious gift any person could wish for! It is your duty to ensure that they can rest easy knowing their child is safe, secure, happy, well fed and rested and helped in every way possible to learn and grow."**

Chuckles Nursery has downsized since the last IiP review in 2011 - due to the political and economic climate (changes in tax credits, for example). Flying Start, the partnership with the local school, was also taken back into the Council, with a subsequent loss of staff to Newport County Council. The Director's focus is very clear - to build the existing team to strengthen its performance. At the time of my visit there was a restructuring - a move to more downstairs usage, and a restructuring of work space to emulate good practice seen elsewhere.

## **2. Agreed Objectives for the Review**

The following feedback was requested based on the context above: -

- Do staff understand why we have values - do they share them and the vision for the business?
- Give feedback on the people management processes. How can values be integrated?
- Suggest ways to improve staff input. Do staff understand why feedback is so important, and are they able to give it to anyone at any level, in the team?

### 3. Feedback Against Objectives

#### Do staff understand why we have values - do they share them and the vision for the business?

The mission statement and values highlight the type of environment envisaged at Chuckles Nursery. Words such as safe, supportive, happy, healthy and homely definitely signify the way it works, with staff obviously committed to eating healthily, providing a safe environment and planning fun activities for the children in their care.

People's responses to 'what are the values for?' were mixed, such as: -

**"Our values are to give the best care for the children."**

**"Values are what L would like the nursery to be like. They are her expectations."**

**"Values help you decide your role. You put them into practice."**

**"Values are about the way we are with children."**

None of these responses are wrong - there is an understanding that values affect behaviours. Everyone talks about healthy eating and using the safe external environment. Giving a full picture however is key to engaging staff. The vision of the Director is to grow a mature team which will eventually own the business. This is not openly conveyed. In fact, one comment was, **"we don't know L well. Where is the business going?"**

Having established the vision - a few values linked to behaviour may help people understand the approach, and leadership style.

For example, individuals said that these 'values' were also apparent:

Effort

Growth

Learning

Work ethic

Creativity

Empowerment

Role-modelling

Confidence

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Trusting

Reliable

One team

Consideration of how values such as these can be demonstrated will strengthen the performance of individuals (see values in performance management processes).

From a strategic leadership point of view how these impact on parents and staff relationships are just as important as how staff relate to the children. In fact - adherence to these values and behaviours, based on shared beliefs, creates the unique branding and ethos of Chuckles Nursery.

**Give feedback on the people management processes. How can values be integrated?**

Much work has already been done to ensure that efficient and user-friendly people management processes are in place - for example: - appraisals, supervisions, learning and evaluation, recruitment and selection and induction. Most information to devise these has come from a short course, and Google research. I was able to sit in on two supervision meetings, which were focussed and structured. The biggest lesson to be learnt is to allow time for the 'supervisee' to reflect and talk (70% of the conversation should be from the supervisee, with the supervisor inputting prompting questions (30%).

The supervision paperwork is well-formatted - simple to complete and focussed on progress against objectives and learning and development. Another 'item' could well be 'behaviour' linked to values.

The appraisal and review forms are similarly formatted, and open questions are asked. The question 'how do my practices (perhaps this could be 'behaviours') reflect the nursery's core values' is great - perhaps the values should be listed, to give a bit more structure / prompting.

In the recruitment process, it is clear that, (having learnt lessons from the past) getting a correct 'fit' with the rest of the team - that is, the one team, is paramount. Listing your beliefs and required behaviours, and testing these out to see if they are shared in a structured way will improve the process.

A comment for improvement was made about the induction process. Those who have gone through this suggested that policies need interpretation - that is, someone to talk them through with - as the familiarity of the language is not in a newcomer's experience.

To achieve the culture and environment Chuckles Nursery requires, some in-house one team development, and some within teams development could be arranged around behaviours -for example, what do we consider to be a good work ethic? What is meant by empowerment? What is the expected leadership style? Clarity and reinforcement will uphold the values.

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Evaluation is not a particular strength - although the notice-board showing shared learning is a good idea. How will you demonstrate that behaviours of staff have improved as a result of learning?

**Suggest ways to improve staff input. Do staff understand why feedback is so important and are they able to give it to anyone at any level in the team?**

The way that information is communicated through team leaders is effective, as is the way people **within** teams are given opportunities to plan and share. Numerous creative ideas come from within teams.

To achieve a one-team, whole Nursery focus, to build loyalty and strategic understanding, staff input must also be at another level. This will involve getting the whole team together more often, which is, understandably logistically difficult.

Teams are very much 'siloed' at present. Several people said that they would have liked input at an earlier stage before the new routine was issued:

**"It would have been nice to be consulted rather than just given it. There is not a lot of planning together (as a whole team)."**

Should whole team development occur on a more regular basis - for example, around how people interpret the values - some of the staff say they might well be reticent to take part. This barrier can be broken down, if you split the whole group into pairs, or fours, (who don't normally work together) and then ask for feedback.

To improve performance further, the essence of managing the whole team is for the up-front facilitator to control the enthusiastic input and to bring out the reticent. Develop the Manager's facilitation skills.

Feedback on performance is very highly valued, which says much for the way in which supervisions and appraisals / reviews are conducted. There is a strong learning culture. However, it takes time to build a working relationship with line management, and youngsters new to the role do not have the same levels of confidence to feedback upwards. This can be easily broken down by exploring the one team vision / ethos, and how **all** are responsible for feeding back at whatever level. There is still, for newcomers a perception of hierarchical management. The right balance, when conveying leadership style, must also be achieved by the Manager and Director. Explaining 'why' when having conversations and putting behaviours into context, can prove very useful.

## **4. Areas of Strength**

- The culture is one of continuous improvement - people learn, share ideas within teams and grow as a result.
- Everyone has access to learning and development. Necessary qualifications are promoted. Everyone is encouraged to reach level 3 (Child Care Practitioner). CSSIW requires 50% to be at this level.
- Staff are involved in planning and bounce ideas off each other in teams. They are developing as creative groups.
- The training evaluation board is valued as a resource, and demonstrates how people share learning. It will be important to keep it updated, and to draw people's attention to it.

## **5. Areas for Further Development**

This is a summary based on the previous written text. There are suggestions for continuous improvement which will improve performance and strengthen the whole team.

### **Core values**

Explain **why** core values are so important and base some simple behaviours on these. (At present there is too much detail in job descriptions - much of which is overlooked). Work with the team to discuss how they will demonstrate the behaviours, relating to children, parents and each other.

**BELIEFS → VALUES → BEHAVIOURS → CULTURE → BRANDING**

### **People management / values**

Place agreed behaviours / values into the appraisal and supervision processes. Supervision is not just about what is done, but how it's done.

### **Whole team development**

Consider how to bring the whole team together more often. When they are incentivised, have fun, and are fully involved giving input, loyalty and business understanding will grow.

### **Leadership**

Management skills have much improved since my last visit. Consider the essence of good leadership. Research distributive / dispersed leadership / delegation, as a means of working differently to develop the whole team. Facilitation skills are required.

### **Evaluation**

Make a value for money link through evaluation of **all** the learning which takes place. Consideration of this will result in your doing more in-house, thus developing the capability of staff to follow the "Chuckles Way".

### **Communication**

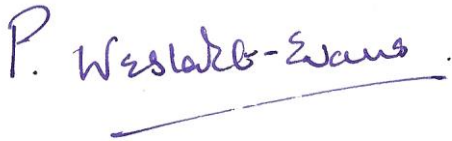
Always check people's understanding when communicating.



## **6. Outcome**

Having carried out the review process rigorously and in accordance with the quality assurance guidelines maintained by Investors on People Wales, I conclude that Chuckles Day Care Wales Limited continues to be an Investors in People organisation and has achieved 6 additional evidence requirements of the extended framework. Achieving the Standard represents a true commitment to your employees and demonstrated that you have a solid foundation of good practice.

Accreditation as an Investors in People organisation is therefore maintained from 9<sup>th</sup> February 2014.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "P. Weslake-Evans". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Specialist Signature: **Dr. Patricia Weslake-Evans**

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> July 2014

On behalf of Investors in People Wales

Date of 18 month interaction: August 2015

Date of three year review: February 2017

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**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE - CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

<b>Organisation Name:</b>	<b>Chuckles Day Care Wales Limited</b>	<b>Date of interim Review:</b>	<b>December 2015</b>
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<b>Area for development (identified in assessor's report)</b>	<b>Action proposed</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>By whom</b>
<p><b>Core values</b> Explain <b>why</b> core values are so important and base some simple behaviours on these. (At present there is too much detail in job descriptions - much of which is overlooked). Work with the team to discuss how they will demonstrate the behaviours, relating to children, parents and each other.</p>			
<p><b>People management / values</b> Place agreed behaviours / values into the appraisal and supervision processes. Supervision is not just about what is done, but how it's done.</p>			

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<b>Area for development (identified in assessor's report)</b>	<b>Action proposed</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>By whom</b>
<p><b>Whole team development</b>            Consider how to bring the whole team together more often. When they are incentivised, have fun, and are fully involved giving input, loyalty and business understanding will grow.</p>			
<p><b>Leadership</b>            Management skills have much improved since my last visit. Consider the essence of good leadership. Research distributive / dispersed leadership / delegation, as a means of working differently to develop the whole team. Facilitation skills are required.</p>			
<p><b>Evaluation</b>            Make a value for money link through evaluation of <b>all</b> the learning which takes place. Consideration of this will result in your doing more in-house, thus developing the capability of staff to follow the "Chuckles Way".</p>			
<p><b>Communication</b>            Always check people's understanding when communicating.</p>			

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<b>Area for development (identified in assessor's report)</b>	<b>Action proposed</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>By whom</b>

Investors in People Wales, Ty'r Afon, Bedwas, Caerphilly, CF83 8WT  
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Ref: Assessment – Review Report September 2012





## Appendix A - Summary of Evidence Requirements Results

	Indicator										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1
2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2
3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	3
4	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓		4
5	✓		✓						✓		5
6	✓										6
7	✓										7
8											8
9											9
10											10
11	✓										11
12											12
13	✓										13
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17	✓										17
18											18
19	✓										19
20											20
21											21
22											22
23	✓										23
24											24
25											25
26											26
27											27
28											28
29											29
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Total number of evidence requirements met = 45

**Key**

	Core Standard
✓	Evidence Requirement Met
-	Evidence Requirement Not Applicable
	Evidence Requirement Not Considered in Context of Review