

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™

We invest in people

Feedback



The LETTA Trust

Project number: SOU-22-00474

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**This is an excerpt from the IIP Assessment Report;
At a glance and What to be proud of.
(Pages 1-9 from the full report)**

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We invest in people Platinum

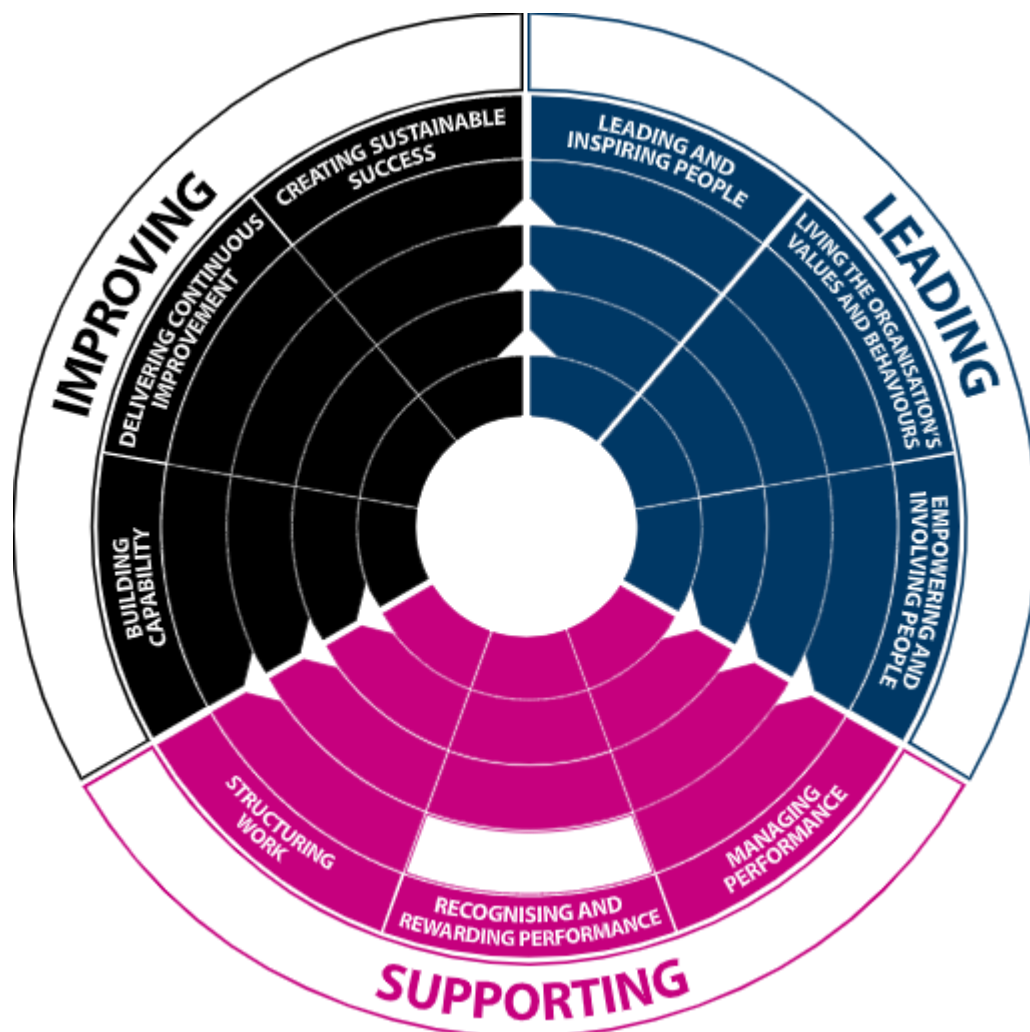
You're at the Platinum level of our We invest in people accreditation.

Key dates

Accreditation date	12-month meeting	24-month meeting	Accreditation expiry
June 2022	June 2023	June 2024	June 2025

At a glance

The heat map below summarises the overall assessment outcome. It shows that The LETTA Trust has attained High Performing (Platinum) level in eight of the nine indicators. This therefore results in Platinum accreditation being awarded.



Everyone at The LETTA (London East Teacher Training Alliance) Trust should be congratulated for having achieved Platinum accreditation as an Investors in People organisation.

You have been effective in maintaining an impressive run of continuous improvement since both schools' initial recognition as Investor in People organisations especially since the current Leadership Team arrived in 2012/13. Bygrove originally achieved Platinum in 2016.

The LETTA Trust achieved Gold Investors in People accreditation in 2019 and have been embedding and improving people practices. In the last three years in particular, the culture has become more embedded, refined during the challenges of COVID-19. There has been good stability in the top layers of management and that has enabled the vision, values and behaviours to permeate and gain a consistency across all the teams. There is now truly values-based leadership in evidence and the values are at the heart of the way the organisation operates with all stakeholders - Trustees, partners, parents and pupils.

These achievements are compounded by the positive response from interviewees as to how Trust has responded to the extraordinary challenges presented by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Many of those interviewed were very positive about the LETTA Trust in spite of the difficulties brought about by COVID-19. In fact, many stated that they were more positive about The LETTA Trust now as a result of their response to COVID, than at any point previously. The LETTA Trust have responded to the pandemic with exemplary leadership, pace and agility to the challenges presented. Leaders subsequently worked with staff to establish protocols that keep staff and pupils safe and prioritised online learning.

Everyone at Trust should be congratulated for having achieved Platinum accreditation as an Investors in People organisation. It was evident from the Trust's many accolades (e.g. IQM Flagship award at Bygrove), the survey results and desk-top review, through conversations with people and from spending time with the organisation that The LETTA Trust has continually improved over the last three years as a place to work. The school cultures have evolved and even more managers have been developed and are adopting the same 'people first' philosophy as the Leadership team, so that both centrally and in local teams everyone reported an even more positive and engaging working culture. In recognition of the progress made since the last assessment, the direction of travel and the capacity to continue to improve, The LETTA Trust has once again achieved Platinum accreditation. All those interviewed agreed that professionalism, learning and coaching, expertise, collaboration, teamwork, innovation and the people culture are what make the LETTA Trust the success it is today and they are happy working there.

What has improved:

- Managers better understand the power and importance of regular recognition
- Joint planning of year groups across the schools and collaborating as teams to reduce workload and share expertise
- Positive impact in the community throughout Covid distributing food and technology
- Investing and developing local people through the Level 3 apprenticeships for Teaching Assistants and Team Leaders through the Lead London programme with staff trained as coaches and mentors
- People empowered to learn and improve through reading and research projects and share that through presentations to colleagues

The style of leadership is distributive and works using an approach that delegates, engages, develops, manages and motivates people to perform through every class and year group in the school. Leadership contracts are in place to clarify expectations. Discussions with members of the Leadership Team revealed they are open to adjustments and improvements to the way in which things are done, giving a clear indication of a journey of continuous improvement and adjustment, and supporting scrutiny. In turn, levels of trust in leadership are high at 79% strongly agree and agree and 91% are positive.

The result of this assessment confirms that the commitment to people, both the pupils who attend The LETTA Trust and to staff, is genuine and is applied with levels of maturity. The positive ethos of LETTA is lived day-in, day-out and is focused on the whole person, both for children and staff. The importance of people is thoroughly understood by the organisation and is clearly demonstrated by the CEO, Heads of School and the Leadership Team, as is the relationship with the families and the wider stakeholder network within

the sector. LETTA have delivered very well during challenging times and the Covid-19 pandemic. The Trust is outward facing, supports other schools and is proactive in the education sector and goes above and beyond to work with the local community and have a positive impact.

In many ways London East Teacher Training Alliance is best viewed as a training organisation that runs two schools such is the prominence and reach of the learning and development internally and externally. There is a proactive school improvement arm who have been accredited as an apprenticeship provider and one of only 80 SCITT (May 2022) providers where only one in three were reaccredited. It is graded outstanding by Ofsted. There are going to be 70 new trainee teachers starting with the Trust in September 2022, a number that is really bucking the trend nationally as others struggle with teacher recruitment and retention (lowest number of trainees nationally in three years).

Significant investment is made in internal learning and development, for example, with support staff in Teaching Assistant roles being encouraged to become HLTAs and teachers and trained to be coaches and mentors to apprentices. Teachers encouraged to deepen their subject knowledge and leadership skills with some using the LETTA apprenticeship pathway. The learning and development strategy applied is demonstrating positive outcomes, not only in relation to people's experience and perception but also in relation to school performance and pupil outcomes. CPD is an integral element of the overall Educational Development Priorities and progress has been made in delivering CPD against priorities with people each completing a reading and research project and having the time to practise new ways of working and pedagogy. The schools use EEF research well e.g. investing in training Teaching Assistants to be as effective as possible and the recent focus on Metacognition.

The positive results from the survey were reinforced by feedback at interview with the Assessor. Your people confirmed a culture which incorporates openness, real support from the leadership team and the managers, trust, and a willingness to communicate and involve all people at all levels within the organisation. The above points are recognised as influencing the high levels of loyalty and pride in the education provided.

People reported The LETTA Trust as being a friendly organisation that cares deeply about its staff and lives the ethos it has defined for itself. It has very high standards, but this is matched by high levels of care and support for people, both pupils and staff. There is a healthy balance between the high standards expected of individuals at LETTA and the support and recognition people receive for their hard work and dedication.

Despite the very high standards and expectations placed on staff, interviewees spoke of a relatively stress-free school, with clear roles and colleagues who are happy to share their experiences with each other. This is a highly collaborative environment and a key area of progress in the last three years has been greater collaboration between the two schools with joint planning sessions that involve teachers and teaching assistants. There is now real excellence in planning through collaboration which is helping share workload and expertise. It was seen that the school does build in time for reflective practice and research as individuals and groups. The transparency of communication has become even more a part of the culture and staff feel an integral part of the future. There are genuine high expectations of pupils and staff and the commitment to continuous improvement is evident in many of the developments since the last assessment including the introduction of Explorers to embed values and behaviours amongst pupils.

What to be proud of

- Everyone described a great culture and high morale. Excellent progress in working across the schools and greater collaboration leading to improvements in planning, workload and sharing expertise.
- You responded quickly and effectively to Covid-19, put people first and have invested in solutions that will provide long-term benefits to staff around workload, support, community and communications.
- Many people have a leadership role in the organisation. Your line managers are well-liked by their people and contribute to the overall feeling that LETTA is a friendly place to work with supportive colleagues. People described a real sense of belonging, loyalty and teamwork. Leaders were viewed as approachable and have a true open-door policy.
- Highly embedded coaching culture with weekly line management meetings timetabled in for everyone. Many schools aspire to such a culture but very few have committed to it and made it a reality in the same way. The benefits are plentiful but include excellent relationships, high retention, communication and development.
- You have genuinely high expectations of pupils and staff and have structured systems for both around those high expectations.
- You have identified what needs to be improved and are not complacent. You develop skills internally but also buy skills in and welcome new perspectives. Examples included since the last assessment delivering Level 3 Teaching Assistant and Team Leader qualifications via apprenticeships with high levels of coaching and mentoring to support apprentices.
- Your attitude and visibility to the pupils and your people is very much appreciated. Your commitment to supporting the community with English workshops, employability, school trips and financial support where appropriate is a great example of your values in action. Everyone was motivated by the challenges many of the local population face. Many loved the idea that they had a social purpose and at times were delivering genuine social inclusion and advocating for families.
- Your people want LETTA to succeed and are very positive about the strategy and educational priorities. Your communication is good through the meetings, survey and emails. These channels help to give everyone a voice and there is a deeper listening culture. There is now excellence in planning through collaboration which helps to share expertise and workload with regular timetabled planning. Observation of these lessons that are planned together is proving beneficial and is impacting on pupils learning.
- People described a real learning culture in the school for both children and adults. Staff are aware of the many ways LETTA invests in its people. People have been able to grow their careers at LETTA without having to leave, for example, Teaching Assistants becoming HLTAs and ultimately teachers. There is weekly CPD for teachers and a weekly training session for Teaching Assistants. You are growing highly capable middle leaders which will help with succession planning.

- The LETTA Trust gives people access to high quality learning and everyone interviewed confirmed they have the training they need to do their jobs and grow their careers. There has been targeted investment in leadership development via coaching and mentoring including an accredited programme delivered by the CEO. As an accredited SCITT, Apprenticeship provider and Kickstart Gateway organisation LETTA is delivering a huge amount to the benefit of education in Tower Hamlets and beyond.
- You have continued to go beyond mandatory training to promote intellectual and life enhancing learning where everyone can continually evolve. This includes leaders as cohort educators, best practice dissemination pathways and ensuring that learning is going beyond ticking a box and is purposeful, focused on the whole person. The School Improvement team deliver high quality learning both inwardly and externally for the benefit of the whole sector.
- ‘Grow our own’ approach evident through internal promotions across The LETTA Trust. High staff retention rate achieved through targeted strategy. In addition, people are encouraged to gain external qualifications using the apprenticeship levy.
- LETTA is evolving and innovative with ideas for improvement coming from every level in the organisation. Everyone is involved through the reading and research projects that contribute to evolving pedagogy and general ways of working. Clear whole school priorities are in place based on a five-year cycle.
- There are plenty of socials and recognition events to build the team and keep spirits high. Leaders delivered celebratory ‘peaks’ throughout Covid.
- 89% of your people say it is a great place to work. You have responded well to recommendations made at the last Investors in People assessment including reviewing behaviours, collaboration, embedded 360-degree feedback and deepened consultation.
- You responded quickly and effectively to COVID-19 and have invested in solutions that will provide long-term benefits to staff and students and are aiding learning, sense of belonging and communications. LETTA Trust proved that it can be flexible and agile to respond to emerging situations.
- Many managers and leaders have been in post for some time and this stability of good leadership is helping to deliver a high-performance culture. A good, engaging and enabling management style has been reached, helped by the modelling from the top.
- More of a listening culture around change and transformation with higher levels of genuine staff participation and consultation. The people closest to the pupils and families are being listened to, there are bottom-up ideas being heard encouraged by the annual reading and research projects. Stop-start-continue-change discussions were held throughout the Trust as you emerged from the pandemic.
- Many positive relationships between line managers and staff that leave staff feeling genuinely cared for and supported. Health and Wellbeing initiatives are being given more attention and people are positive about the commitment to staff wellbeing during COVID.

- The LETTA Trust has a deep-rooted commitment to community involvement. This is long-standing and pre-dates the food and technological help the Trust provided families during Covid.
- The continuous improvements over the past 3 years are an illustration of how a very good organisation has absorbed feedback to become a high performing one in some of the indicators, and thoroughly deserves its Investors in People Platinum recognition.

Congratulations on achieving Platinum Accreditation!

You care about your people, and we know that you're ambitious to do even more for them.

