VITAL★SIGNS

Organisation
Vital Signs report

1.0   Executive summary

1.1   *Organisation's* **Vital Signs** readings demonstrate emerging issues regarding **values**, and significant issues regarding **relationships** and **performance**.

Values (temperature)	Relationships (blood pressure)	Performance (pulse)
Normal, but getting hot	High	Fast

1.2   Following analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data collected, the following key strengths and challenges have been identified at *organisation*:

1.2.1   Key strengths:
- Strong agreement across *organisation* that change is needed – staff are united in the view that *organisation* can change and improve and achieve the goals that senior leaders and staff share
- Strong alignment of personal and organisational values among all people, from senior leaders to frontline staff
- Strong **relationships** within teams, leading to high levels of support and understanding with immediate colleagues on a day-to-day basis

1.2.2 Key challenges:
- Low levels of operational efficiency – this is affecting **relationships** between leaders and frontline staff and implementation of *organisation's* **values**
- Low levels of trust throughout the organisation – this is limiting collaboration, and alignment with *organisation's* values
- Lack of clarity on the **performance** goals at *organisation* – staff at all levels are not clear about what the goals are, meaning the organisation does not have clear direction in this key area
- Insufficient leadership capacity at all levels – the changes needed to address the other challenges require growth and development in leaders across *organisation*

These key strengths and challenges summarise the issues identified through the **Vital Signs** process.

2.0   Recommendations

2.1   The following recommendations identify how the key strengths and challenges outlined above can be used and addressed to improve *organisation*.

2.2   An outline action plan is below. It is suggested that an initial session for half a day, with external facilitation, is undertaken to finalise the plan, the level of involvement from senior staff cross the Trust and any related budget.

2.2.1

Goal: Build trust, foster collaboration, and ensure alignment with the organisation's values				
Action	**Responsible**	**Timeline**	**Resources**	**Outcome**
Co-create actionable improvement plans with staff.	SLT with external facilitators	*month* to *month year*	External facilitation support if necessary	Increased ownership and collaboration among staff
Develop structured opportunities for trust-building between senior and middle leaders	SLT and middle leaders with external facilitators	*month* to *month year*	Tools like Covey's 13 Behaviours or Feltman's Trust Framework	Enhanced trust and alignment across leadership levels
Embed organisation **values** into daily practices and team strategies	SLT and middle leaders	*month* to *month year*	Internal workshops, facilitated sessions	College **values** are lived and experienced consistently

2.2.2

Goal: Strengthen leadership capacity at all levels to drive unified and effective action				
Action	**Responsible**	**Timeline**	**Resources**	**Outcome**
Provide training and support for middle leaders to strengthen their connector role	Human resources with external leadership trainers	*month* to *month year*	Leadership training budget	Empowered middle leaders bridging staff and SLT effectively
Build a united senior leadership team with a shared voice and direction.	SLT with external facilitators	*month* to *month year*	Team development resources, for example, MBTI, 5 Dysfunctions framework	SLT aligned on vision, strategy, and messaging

2.2.3

Goal: Improve operational efficiency and focus on achieving clear and achievable performance goals				
Action	**Responsible**	**Timeline**	**Resources**	**Outcome**
Resolve IT and logistical deficiencies	Senior leadership team (SLT)	*month* to *month year*	IT department budget, external vendors if needed	Functional IT systems and adequate resources
Rationalise **performance** goals for clarity and focus	SLT with middle leaders	By *month year*	Time for workshops and feedback sessions	Clear, prioritized goals understood by all staff

2.2.4

Milestones	
Deadline	**Result**
month year	Rationalised **performance** goals finalised and communicated
month year	Middle leadership training completed, with initial improvements observed in cross-leadership **relationships**
month year	All actions complete, with visible improvements in operational efficiency, leadership cohesion, and cultural alignment

2.2.5

Success	
Criteria	**Measure**
Vital Signs assessment	Improve all **Vital Signs** to normal/healthy
Staff satisfaction	Improved satisfaction level in regular pulse survey, moving from 61% in *month year* to 80% in *month year*
Staff absence	Reduced staff absence levels, moving from 10% in *month year* to 6% in *month year*
Pupil/student satisfaction	Improved satisfaction level in regular pulse survey, moving from 73% in *month year* to 85% in *month year*

3.0   Full report

3.1   Introduction
- The work for this report was conducted over three days on-site at *organisation* in *month year*
- Each day covered one of the **Vital Signs** elements. Sessions with senior and middle leaders were run on each of the three days. Two sessions with frontline staff were also run each day, with a different group of staff attending each session
- Over the three days, all senior leaders and middle leaders and about 90 frontline staff attended at least one session, making sure views were gathered from staff across *organisation*
- Each session gathered quantitative and qualitative data from participants to contribute towards the **Vital Signs** assessment
- Feedback from each session was collected to gauge the satisfaction of participants with the process

3.2   Summary

3.2.1   Positives
- Strong recognition of *organisation's* **values** – strong individually and stronger as teams
- **Relationships** have more strength than the gut feeling reaction shows
- Senior leaders are aware of the broad issues with **relationships**
- Strong agreement on top three **performance** goals for the organisation

3.2.2   Negatives
- Strong thread of inconsistency and incoherency through most aspects of all three elements
- Staff did not always see the **values** in their experiences outside of their immediate team
- Middle leaders' **relationships** issues are within their middle leadership team as well as outside it
- Lack of recognition and understanding of strategic **performance** goals – weak individually and weaker as teams
- Low confidence in achieving strategic **performance** goals across the *organisation*, particularly for the two key goals related to staff development
- Some anger that basic housekeeping is not dealt with, for example, chairs for students, IT that works, safe facilities

3.2.3 Key issues identified

- Teachers more negative than professional services staff
- **Relationships** issues most prevalent with middle leaders
- Belief that new ways of working are started, but not allowed to embed before further change
- Broad agreement on **performance** goals but clear differences in key issues to address to achieve them
- Lack of connection within senior leadership team
- Mismatch between senior leadership team philosophy and ethos and how this is perceived by staff – self-management vs. laissez faire - lack of scaffolding for staff for self-management and autonomy
- Lack of ownership of targets and goals in senior leadership team – observed through discussion in **Performance** session
- Conflict in senior leadership team between focus on short-term goal of achievement and how other approaches might be getting in the way of that

3.3   Values

3.3.1   Key points from data:
- Strong recognition of the **values** – 70% of **values** listed by staff when asked individually were the same as *organisation's* **values**, rising to 97% when asked as a group
- Moderate correlation between senior leaders and staff on the importance of the four **values**
- Weaker correlation on the prevalence of the four **values,** indicating that senior leaders and staff see different **values** as prevalent in *organisation* – the most significant difference was in the prevalence of **Genuine**

3.3.2

Values data	
% staff recognising **values** as individuals	70%
% staff recognising **values** as groups	97%
Correlation on importance of **values**	0.76
Correlation on prevalence of **values**	0.29
Most important **value** as individuals	Supportive
Most prevalent **value** as individuals	Supportive
Least important **value** as individuals	Ambitious
Least prevalent **value** as individuals	Ambitious
Most important **value** as groups	Supportive
Most prevalent **value** as groups	Involved
Least important **value** as groups	Ambitious
Least prevalent **value** as groups	Ambitious

3.3.3 Key points from comments:

- Lack of support for teachers
- **Values** are there but they are not lived and breathed, personal values are stronger – but they do fit in with *organisation's* values
- Two **values** missing are communication and direction
- In-team communications are good, but not up and across *organisation*
- Direction is also needed, a focus on an endpoint is needed so that strategic and non-reactive decisions can be made
- Staff feel the important **values** are lived and experienced in their teams, but not across the organisation
- There is some confusion between the **values** and the Attributes
- There were themes of respect, community and accountability when staff were asked what **values** were missing from *organisation's* current set

3.4 Relationships

3.4.1 Key points from data:
- Stronger correlation between senior leaders and staff on the gut feelings about **relationships**
- Weaker correlation on the detailed feelings about **relationships**
- Senior leaders' perception of staff's views of **relationships** upwards are very accurate
- Middle leaders' scores on the five areas were the lowest of all the groups
- The scores across each part of the five areas were very similar
- The highest score in each staff group was for **relationships** with students, followed by within their own team, then **relationships** up – for senior leaders, the highest score was within their own team, followed by with students, then **relationships** up
- While all involved were positive about **relationships** with students, there are different views about each aspect, leading to a weak correlation senior leaders and staff

3.4.2

Relationships data	
Correlation on **relationships** gut feeling	0.99
Correlation on **relationships** detail	0.68
Average score on trust	2.8
Average score on conflict	2.3
Average score on commitment	2.5
Average score on accountability	2.4
Average score on results	2.7
Correlation on **relationships** in your team	0.62
Correlation on **relationships** up	0.95
Correlation on **relationships** with students	0.02

3.4.3 Key points from comments:

- Socialising versus learning spaces – attitudes to learning; MAT versus organisation; lack of clarity about resources
- Feels like two camps of staff – those who embrace change and those who do not – there is no judgement in this
- Accountability and commitment – lack of structure, e.g. deadlines, etc., and following up, is not in place
- It is unclear what we are accountable for collectively
- Lots of disparity and inconsistency in **relationships** – depends on individual leader and people in particular
- Biggest issue is communication – students cannot always speak to teachers, but can speak to progress coaches and not everyone follows restorative practice – poor communications lead to poor **relationships**
- No accountability from the senior leadership team leads to negative conflict and poor meetings – senior leadership team need to take accountability for decisions

3.5   Performance

3.5.1   Key points from data:
- Moderate correlation between senior leaders and staff in relation to knowing the **performance** goals. when staff asked individually
- Much weaker correlation between senior leaders and staff in relation to knowing the **performance** goals when staff discussed these questions as a group
- Very strong agreement on the three most important **performance** goals
- Very strong agreement on the relative importance of resources goals
- Generally low confidence in achieving the goals, particularly the two important staff development goals – on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being the lowest confidence, the average across all 12 goals was 1.9

3.5.2

Performance data	
Correlation on **performance** as individuals	0.76
Correlation on **performance** as groups	0.00
Correlation on importance of goals	0.77
Correlation on confidence of goals	0.48

3.5.3   Key points from comments:
- Student development and staff development **performance** goals are a higher priority for staff and senior and middle leaders
- Staff are unclear on their roles and responsibilities in relation to resources **performance** goals, and how they can impact on them
- Transparency and clarity are really important – too many goals? - needs to be some rationalisation to make them more meaningful and coherent
- Changing students is an issue – over time, and their needs now and their prior experiences
- All three organisations have different students so are the same **performance** goals applicable across the Trust?
- Staff did not feel involved in the setting of **performance** goals and were unclear on the role of the organisation and the Trust in setting these

Appendix 1 – Vital Signs participant feedback summary

- Participants were asked to what extent they agreed with the statement that they got to express their opinions on the **Vital Signs** element the session focused on
- Overall, 85% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they got to express their opinion in the session, with this varying from 100% in the **Values** session, to 77% in the **Relationships** session
- The participants were asked what would have improved the sessions and these responses generally covered the following issues:
  - More time to look at the issues
  - Look at issues in more depth
  - Work in own team, rather than a mixed group
  - Opportunity to discuss issues one-to-one

Session	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Values	9	17	0	0	0	26
Relationships	8	15	5	2	0	30
Performance	7	10	2	3	0	22
Total	**24**	**42**	**7**	**5**	**0**	**78**

Session	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Values	35%	65%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Relationships	27%	50%	17%	7%	0%	100%
Performance	32%	45%	9%	14%	0%	100%
Total	**31%**	**54%**	**9%**	**6%**	**0%**	**100%**

Appendix 2 – Vital Signs definitions

	Low/Slow	Normal	High/Fast
Values	Weak alignment of values and conflict between personal and organisational values	Strong alignment of values throughout the organisation	Weak alignment with organisational values but strong and prevalent personal values lead to positive practices and behaviours
Relationships	Weak relationships throughout the organisation	Strong relationships throughout the organisation	Weak relationships between leaders and staff and stronger relationships between staff in general
Performance	Goals and targets not keeping pace with values and relationships	Goals and targets fit with your values and are supported by the relationships	Goals and targets are too ambitious for the current alignment of your values and relationships