

# Case study

## Attendance improved leading to savings of 40K



### Barley Lane Primary School

#### Introduction

When Mark joined Barley Lane Primary School he introduced An Even Better Place To Work™. Mark had enjoyed success with the initiative some two years previously when he used it at a school in Leicester. The benefits to staff there included the opportunity to break down “emotional barriers” and help them to conduct open conversations and discuss their own needs as well as understand the needs of colleagues. This allowed staff to share and embrace new ideas leading to the building of teams working together towards raising standards of education in school. As Mark said, “people felt able to talk openly and eliminated the perceived threat of doing so.”

#### The Need

Mark arrived at Barley Lane to find “lots of staff were in a fragile, emotional state and not understanding their own emotional needs. Many were not able to work properly or efficiently and not working to capacity. They were easily upset by other people’s opinions suffering stress and emotional strain. The children’s educational needs were not being met as well as they could have been.”

#### The Results

As a result of these findings, Mark decided to use An Even Better Place To Work™ to help the staff to “know themselves” and improve performance by creating a culture of more supportive working relationships.

Mark’s positive experiences with employing An Even Better Place To Work™ in his previous school gave him the confidence to engage the staff in it at Barley Lane.

The school employs a total of 96 staff, 70 of whom teach in class.

All staff were logged onto the system and 87% engaged. Staff were encouraged to take responsibility for holding team meetings at times convenient for them. Most chose to meet either before school time in the morning or after school.

#### The Results

After just 18 months of employing the initiative, Barley Lane Primary School has recorded impressive results in raising educational standards. The latest school data shows that the school has now attained its best-ever results across a wide range of measurements. The hard work of teachers and children is reflected in the results. The most progress has been made by teams engaged in An Even Better Place To Work™ and who call their team meetings “happy time”.

Mark reports that staff are now visibly calmer and less stressed with the result that problems are aired but resolved in teams. Self-management has improved considerably and has changed attitudes to a more collaborative and supportive one benefiting all staff.

Mark is very happy that the attendance record for all staff has increased from 93% to 97%. That improvement is significant with an even bigger increase in attendance from the support staff group where it has increased from 83% to 99%. The figures suggest that staff are now much happier to come to work and support colleagues.

As a direct result of improving teacher attendance Barley Lane Primary School has made significant savings in costs related to employing supply teachers. The savings amount to an impressive £40,000 annually. This money is now being put to better use for the benefit of the school and its children.

#### The Benefits

Apart from the critical financial savings, An Even Better Place To Work™ has allowed staff to engage with their colleagues with greater openness and confidence.

Teams are now teams in the true sense sharing best-practice and facing issues in a collaborative and professional manner. Stress and emotional strain has largely been replaced with a calm and productive environment.

The following comments from Maria who is a Team Leader reinforce this. "When An Even Better Place To Work™ was introduced to us, I felt that it would open the channels of communication and help us to get on better as a team." Maria goes on to state, "we benefited as a team as we have worked closely together on a daily basis and deal with issues as they arise. It has enabled us to develop and grow as a team and as individuals."

As a result of the staff engaging with and embracing the changes, Mark will commit to upskilling staff with the objective of increasing their 1:1 time with children and improving their results. Cascading the opportunity for staff to understand their own and colleagues' needs down to helping them truly understand the needs of

the children is seen by Mark as a natural extension to the initiative.

Asked how he had personally benefited from engaging in "An Even Better Place To Work™", Mark replied, "It has made me bolder. It has improved the way I handle conflict as it has helped me talk, listen and be more open. I am also better able to cope in stress-related situations." He added, "I will continue to use it as it works and it makes a difference to the staff."

All the feedback points to Barley Lane Primary School being An Even Better Place To Work™.



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