

## **Premier Farnell and Farnley Park Maths and Computing College Community Partnership**

### Premier Farnell

A leading small-order, high-service, multi-channel international distributor of electronic components with approximately 5,000 employees worldwide. The company is based in the UK, with its head office in London and Group office, International Distribution Centre and European business headquarters in the Leeds.

### Farnley Park Maths and Computing College

Farnley Park is situated in Farnley, Leeds. Classed as an 'inner-city' school, its catchment area supports a range of social backgrounds. The school has been awarded specialist status for maths and computing and is undergoing a new build development, which the head teacher is taking as an opportunity to develop a culture of change in the delivery of the curriculum and the staffing structures.

### **Context**

This case study provides a snapshot of the work that Premier Farnell has engaged with Farnley Park Maths and Computing College. This example illustrates that there are significant business benefits to be gained from entering into sustainable, planned partnerships with local community organisations – particularly with regards to providing staff with engagement and training opportunities. At the same time, it is possible to provide support and expertise to organisations in a business' local community that help them to develop in the services they deliver and the skills and resources that are available to them.

### **Business process improvement and change management case study**

Premier Farnell and Farnley Park have entered into an enduring partnership that delivers benefits to both the business and the school. The school gains access to business and technical expertise, pertaining particularly to project management skills.

Concurrently, the business benefits from improving community management within the company. The partnership provides the participants with the opportunity to develop their skills in listening to, reaching an understanding of and responding to the specific needs of both individuals and an overarching organisation entering a period of significant change.

Working with the school allows the team to practise these skills, which are integral to a department that operates across a global business in the field of change management and business process improvement. The school environment provides a non-competitive arena to receive feedback and to engage with teams and individuals from different organisational cultures and functions that would otherwise be unavailable to the Premier Farnell employees.

This partnership results in a mutually beneficial arrangement with increased incentive to continue for both parties.

Premier Farnell has engaged with the school through Leeds Ahead and is subsequently contributing to fulfilling the School Improvement Plan, which is reported to the governing body.

## The School Improvement Plan

1. Create an inclusive learning community, with high standard of student behaviour.
2. Raise levels of student achievement.
3. Develop a modern, relevant curriculum to meet the needs of all learners.
4. Grow staff expertise through professional learning.
5. Build a school for the future.

The Headteacher recently appraised Premier Farnell's contribution to the Improvement Plan as providing the following:

- The community links created by Premier Farnell, Farnley Park and Armley Helping Hands has led to extended families becoming increasingly engaged with the school, which "helps with social inclusion and promote [sic] positive student behaviour". Additionally Premier Farnell has engaged with key community leaders alongside Farnley Park, such as the local MP.
- Premier Farnell has provided project management expertise to assist with the development of the specialism programme at the school to meet achievement targets by working with the Deputy Headteacher and Director of Specialism.
- Premier Farnell's Business Process Improvement and Change Management Office Manager is a member of the Business Steering Group that aims to develop a modern, business-relevant curriculum for the school's specialism. Premier Farnell is supporting the development of promoting courses in logistics, financial services, IT and Creative Media.
- Premier Farnell's Global Business Process and Change Programme Director is supporting the Headteacher in a critical friend/mentor position to develop strategies for creating a culture of change in the school as part of developing the school's staff and also preparing the school for the future.

### **Summary of current inputs from Premier Farnell**

- Project management expertise for the Deputy Headteacher and Specialism Director
- Change management expertise for the Headteacher
- Positive female role models from a business environment for year 8 girls.
- Professional development opportunities for Farnley Park staff in a business setting.
- Membership of the business steering group.
- Work placement scholarship opportunities for students
- Support with curriculum projects

### **Summary of current outputs from Farnley Park**

- Increased family and local community engagement with the school.
- Development of project management skills for the Deputy Headteacher and Specialism Director.
- Off-site personal and professional development opportunities for Premier Farnell staff who are directly linked to the partnership, particularly in the area of community management skills and experience.
- Extended personal and professional development opportunities for Premier Farnell who are not directly linked to the partnership and change management programme – for example in active listening and mentoring skills.