



News release

9 May 2014

Graphite Capital sells leading supply teaching specialist, Education Personnel, to ICG

Graphite Capital, a leading UK mid-market private equity specialist, has sold Education Personnel, the largest provider of supply teachers and educational support staff to schools in England and Wales, to its management team in a buy-out backed by ICG.

Graphite originally backed the management buy-out of Teaching Personnel in 2010. In a fragmented sector, Graphite, together with the management team, saw the opportunity to develop the business through organic growth and by acquisition. The following year the business was merged with Protocol Education to form Education Personnel. The two businesses were highly complementary with little overlap between the branch networks. The combination created the clear leader in the teaching supply sector and has generated approximately 100 additional jobs at the company since the merger.

Education Personnel's revenue has grown by approximately 60 per cent over the past four years. The number of branches has risen from 52 to 67 and the number of candidates placed has increased to over 16,000 per annum in more than 7,200 schools. With a national branch network, best in class systems and the largest pool of candidates in the country, Education Personnel provides the highest levels of service and enjoys close relationships with schools at a local level.

The success of the group reflects the range of staffing services it offers schools, the high quality of service it provides and its access to the best candidates. In the face of increasingly stringent regulations and vetting requirements, and with reduced support from local education authorities, more schools are turning to external providers such as Education Personnel. Growth prospects are underpinned by the government's drive to improve education standards combined with rising pupil numbers.

The transaction builds on Graphite's successful track record in the business services and education sectors. In the last 18 months, Graphite has sold Alexander Mann Solutions, the leading provider of talent acquisition and management services, for £260 million, and NES Global Talent, the international technical recruitment group, for £234 million. Its remaining investments in these sectors include TMP Worldwide, the recruitment marketing agency, and Explore Learning, a specialist provider of after-school tuition.

Commenting on the transaction, John Bowman, Education Personnel chief executive, said: "Graphite has worked in partnership with the management team and helped us drive our ambitious growth strategy over the past four years. From the outset they shared our vision to create the market leader through the acquisition of Protocol Education. They understand our business and the recruitment marketplace extremely well."

Graphite senior partner Mike Tilbury added: "Education Personnel is a high quality business run by an exceptional management team. The company's stellar performance has been driven organically and through a transformational acquisition which was extremely well executed. The company provides very important services to schools, has the leading position in its market and is well positioned to continue to take advantage of the substantial growth opportunities available."

Mike Tilbury (senior partner), Mark Hall (partner), Simon ffitch (senior partner) and Mudassir Khan (partner) managed the transaction for Graphite. Deloitte Corporate Advisory, led by Byron Griffin, advised Graphite on the deal.

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