**Portsmouth Education Partnership Peer Review**

**Draft**

The PEP Education Strategy 2020 - 2023 prioritises strong leadership and ambition at all levels within schools and education settings to improve effectiveness and outcomes for children and young people. A key action in achieving this priority is to establish a framework for Peer Review that all schools can sign up to regardless of designation, whether part of a Multi Academy Trust or LA Maintained.

A broad literature exists to demonstrate that school-led improvement reflects best what David Hopkins has called the 'third age of school improvement'. This is characterised by being school-led and focuses on reducing differences in performance, both within and across schools. A positive outcome of the Covid-19 pandemic has been the exceptional collaboration and communication across the Portsmouth Education Partnership, so it is timely as we move towards a new 'normal' to refresh our aspirations. The PEP Peer Review process aligns very much with the principle of 'Improve, not prove'. We do not seek to simply verify that school intention and actions are in operation as that merely reinforces the status quo, but rather, to seek to improve. It is the action of continuous incremental improvement that, over time, leads to cumulative and exponential effects.

Within the PEP framework for Peer Review we set out below our minimum expectations, clearly describing the standard that can be expected.

PEP Peer Reviews will:

* Be based on collaborative agreement, principles and ways of working, so that mutual trust and confidence are key factors in its success.
* Have both a school-selected focus of enquiry (theme 1) but also rightly a focus lens related to the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils/outcomes for learners (theme 2).
* Acknowledge localised, individual context and identity through each school's improvement planning but reflect professional challenge and dialogue in our drive for outstanding practice e.g. ‘family’ group benchmarking.
* Utilise and scrutinise individual school improvement plans so that high support and high challenge are levers to raise standards.
* Include a range of activities, so that there is a comprehensive evidence-base that reflects the day to day work of the school, the areas of development it is currently working on and its roadmap to future improvement.
* Recognise that the language used is crucial and should never be judgemental, utilising the 'To what extent …' question stem of the Education Development Trust Schools Partnership Programme of peer review.
* Result in a record that is owned by the school but shared with the relevant Local Governing Board or Multi Academy Trust, with 'so what' considerations and impact subsequently identified and agreed by both the school and the review team members.
* Promote training and continuing professional development, in addition to building networks and developing longer-term relationships between organisations.
* Develop outward-facing opportunities that ensure we see our city within a national and global context, always striving for the very best for our children and young people.

**Principles**

To clarify, we set out what the PEP Peer Review process is, and is not.

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| --- | --- |
| What it is … ✓ | What it is not … 🗶 |
| DevelopmentalObjectiveDone withEvidence-basedSuitably challengingOpportunity to celebrateContext recognitionDrive for further improvement | Judgemental SubjectiveDone toOpinion-basedCosy chatOpportunity to be complacentContext mitigationLacking ambition |

The PEP approach to peer review is not about one school being better than another, it is about schools acting collaboratively to learn from each other and support improvement, where both the reviewers and recipients gain from the experience. The peer review cycle is a continuous process from training, pre-review, through the review in school itself to post-review where teasing out discussions establish agreed further school improvement actions and access to support or networking that will aid the successful implementation and impact.

Our PEP peer reviews will be:

* Mutually beneficial
* Co-created
* Honest and open
* Evidence-informed
* Impact driven
* Outward facing

Through the sharing of priorities, successes and challenges in a low stakes, trusting and collaborative relationship, schools will be able to establish who is best placed for them to work with on the PEP Peer Review process where they will reap the maximum benefit. As such, schools will identify 3 H’s in order to help them to self-select who they may want to work with in the peer review process:

Highlight - going well or having a positive impact

Headache - not yet having the desired impact

Horizon - possibility of significant impact in the future

With wide-ranging representation the PEP School Leadership and Effectiveness Board can also support schools to establish pairs, triads or small groups. These will then be able to utilise the process between themselves through an academic year to ensure that each of the schools both receives a peer review and their staff participate in at least one other. There is also the potential to invite other colleagues onto peer review teams from outside the pair/triad/group if desired, appropriate and agreed e.g. Senco, middle/subject leader.

Peer review is not an easy option and requires commitment and strong partnership working. We expect that all schools across the PEP will participate in some form of peer review annually, whether through the Portsmouth Education Partnership or otherwise.

**Process**

The Peer Review process is made up of 3 stages:



High support ~ High challenge

Stage 1 - Pre-review

Training is held for all head teachers on principles, process and agreed ways of working.

Once agreement is reached by each group of head teachers on the timing of the peer review and the size of the review team required, then the following actions can take place:

* Each recipient school should decide their focus line of enquiry in relation to their own school improvement plan and share this with the other group head teachers, as this may determine if there are specific staff who should be invited onto the peer review teams e.g. subject leader, specialist, Senco, external member from beyond the group.
* Agree and confirm the make up of the review team. Finalise dates. Identify lead reviewers for each review.
* Hold an afternoon or twilight pre-review meeting in the recipient school, where any additional documentation/information can be shared (e.g. school self-evaluation, data analysis, action plans, external reports, monitoring and evaluation, PIE QM, LA information e.g. traded services), the two enquiry themes discussed and the peer review activities planned. This is also an opportunity for the review team to meet the recipient school staff and gain a greater understanding of the school and its context.
* Agree the timetable for the review day itself and the school staff who will work jointly with review team members.
* It is expected that review team members will be respectful of the recipient school, its policies and practices, and maintain confidentiality. In return each recipient school will offer hospitality (e.g. refreshments and a base room) and be accommodating to their visitors.

Stage 2 - The Review

* Review team arrive punctually in line with agreed timings. Ensure that the recipient school does not need to add any further information or up-to-date happenings that could affect evidence-gathering activities.
* School staff and review team members jointly undertake agreed activities in line with the two enquiry themes established.
* For each activity, time should be built in to discuss what has been seen, heard and noted before strengths and possible areas for development/discussion are agreed. These should be shared with the review team as a whole at appropriate times.
* Towards the end of the afternoon, the review team should have some quiet reflective time where they are able to synthesise the information that has been gathered from the range of activities undertaken during the day. This will result in a summary record which can be shared with the recipient school senior leaders after the school day.
* The summary should include:
* The two agreed enquiry themes
* The names of the lead reviewer, review team and recipient school staff involved
* The range of evidence gathering activities and what information they tell us
* The strengths of the school in relation to the enquiry themes
* Areas that the school can consider further in their school improvement work from what the evidence has suggested on this day, at this point in time, bearing in mind it is a 'snapshot'
* The summary is shared with the recipient school and wording agreed. This record becomes the property of the school and may be shared with the school's own Local Governing Board or Multi Academy Trust.

Stage 3 - Post-review

* Within 2 - 4 weeks of the review day, the lead reviewer and any available team members return to the recipient school to meet with senior leaders to discuss and reflect further on the review. This will be an afternoon or twilight session that is mutually agreed.
* The recipient school should prepare their thoughts in advance of the meeting and use this time as an opportunity to explore next steps. The lead reviewer and any review team members act as a trusted sounding board.
* Together, in collaboration and with the use of knowledge, experience and extended networks, opportunities to support the recipient school in driving their agreed actions forward to impact are teased out so that the fullest possible solutions are explored. Any possible longer term relationships are agreed at this point.
* A brief statement is agreed between the lead reviewer and recipient headteacher that will be shared with the PEP School Leadership and Effectiveness Board which encapsulates the summary above but focuses on the 'so what' factor for the recipient school and how the peer review will enable them to improve further. Additionally, it should provide some feedback on the peer review process itself, with the option to use a tool such as De Bono's PMI model.

**PEP School Leadership and Effectiveness Board**

It is the responsibility of the School Leadership and Effectiveness Board to have oversight of the peer review process to ensure that it abides by the principles stated and to consider outcomes from the statements submitted. This will enable the following:

* Evaluation and development of the process
* Opportunities for new learning or different CPD
* A better understanding of how school leadership can be supported across the PEP
* Further development of good practice and impactful networks
* Where resources and support can be best targeted

**Further documentation and reading**

Education Development Trust (March 2018) *Schools Partnership Programme Handbook 2018 - 2019*.

Hattie, J. (2015) What works best in Education: The Politics of Collaborative Expertise. London: Pearson.

Hopkins, D. & Reynolds, D. (2001) The Past, Present and Future of School Improvement: Towards the Third Age*. British Educational Research Journal.* 27(4) pp 459 - 475.

NAHT (Sept 2019) The Principles of Effective School-to School Peer Review