

School Effectiveness+ Case Study: North East Three School Federation

Strengthening practice within a primary federation through collaborative evaluation and development planning

Background

The federation comprises of three schools within the same town all of whom were involved in this case study.

Number of Pupils: 1,359

Ofsted Profile: Good, Good, Requires Improvement.

Pupil Profile: All three schools are larger than average with the majority of pupils of White British background. The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals, and/or in receipt of pupil premium is much higher than the national average.

Staff Profile: In the last year the MAT has created the post of an executive headteacher across all three academies, with a head of school in the executive headteacher's 'home' school and headteachers in the other academies. The headteachers have been appointed since the formation of the MAT. Staffing is largely stable in two of the three schools but the school rated as Requires Improvement has had significant staffing turmoil since the last inspection.

Timeline

All adviser visits involved time spent with each individual school leadership team and a meeting with the executive headteacher.



School Aspirations and the Impact of School Effectiveness+

Aspiration 1

Embed a shared framework and language to facilitate collaborative working.

Impact

Despite facing different challenges, the schools have all found the shared framework a useful tool. Leadership discussions both within and across the academies are more focused now that the framework for school improvement is consistent.

The schools were all using differing approaches, formats and foci for self-evaluation and development planning, as each was in a very different phase of the Ofsted cycle. The SE+ process has brought the schools much closer together in terms of focus, shared processes and language.

Aspiration 2

Secure parity of judgement across all academies to ensure collaborative working is appropriately targeted.

Impact

The academies all have confidence that their collaborative working has been enhanced by the SE+ process. The schools shared an SE+ adviser who worked with leaders to ensure that each school's self-evaluation judgements, particularly targeting the Leadership dimension, were standardised across the MAT and compared to other schools nationally.

Aspiration 3

Support individual academies in identifying improvement priorities.

Impact

Each of the academies has found that working with a framework that sits as distinct, but not disconnected, from the Ofsted inspection schedule facilitated the identification of clear areas to improve on their current practice.

For those academies who already have strong outcomes, this has often been focused on moving good practice, with good outcomes, to 'great'. Working with a SE+ adviser has ensured external challenge and ensured that maximum value has been extracted from the SE+ process in furthering this aspiration.

All of the senior leaders have found the process has further clarified their self-evaluation and helped them develop professionally despite each of the academies having very different levels of leadership experience in their senior teams.

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