

Portsmouth Education Advisory Board

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Education Advisory Board is to give elected members the opportunity to regularly review and scrutinise the performance of education in Portsmouth and the impact of the work to support the progression and achievement of our children and young people.

The Education Advisory Board is the key mechanism by which the elected members of the local authority hold senior officers to account in terms of improving school standards.

The Education Advisory Board is a formal committee of the council and will therefore have a formal agenda and minutes. Meetings will where possible be open to the public to attend.

The Board operates in an advisory capacity to the Cabinet Member for Education and to the representatives from the relevant Scrutiny Panel, in order to support them in matters relating to early years settings, schools, post-16 providers and education policy. The Board provides a conduit for the views of some specific stakeholders to inform the Cabinet Member for Education and Scrutiny Panel representatives. However, the Board can, if it is considered necessary, prepare a report on progress to the relevant Scrutiny Panel of the council.

2. Local context

To make the step change that is required to improve standards and accelerate the progress of our pupils' will require a collaborative approach that acknowledges the changing educational landscape and the limited resources of the local authority for school improvement. The local authority will harness the collective resource that is available in the City in a way which adds value and supplements the work that already goes on in individual schools, Multi Academy Trusts and Teaching Schools.

Headteachers and other partners in the city have committed to establishing an education partnership and collaborative programme of school improvement that can embed shared values and build on the historically strong relationships between the local authority and the education sector in Portsmouth, supplementing without duplicating the work within MATs. The partnership will seek to establish clear and accountable arrangements to support sector-led school improvement and capitalise on potential economies of scale. It will provide a structure to support the transition from local authority to sector led school improvement arrangements. The local authority will continue to deliver its statutory duties in relation to school improvement and act as a strategic commissioner and champion for parents, children and young people, and in particular those who are vulnerable to poor outcomes including disadvantaged pupils and white British boys.

The local authority will work closely with the Regional Schools Commissioner to oversee a smooth transition towards academisation and will look to capitalise on the opportunity to increase the capacity for sector led school improvement through Multi Academy Trusts and the establishment of a second teaching school in the City, as well as addressing long standing structural issues in terms of transition dips (infant, junior, primary, secondary and post-16) through vertical alignment where appropriate.

The Education Advisory Board will have a key role to play to review and scrutinise this approach, the role of the local authority and the impact on outcomes.

3. Principles

- Schools have the responsibility for their own improvement
- The local authority's role is to monitor, challenge and intervene where there are identified risks to children receiving an adequate quality of education. In the case of local authority maintained schools this will be a direct intervention; in the case of Academies this will be through the Academy Trust or if necessary through the Regional Schools Commissioner
- Support to schools to improve may be commissioned / brokered from a range of providers, one of which may be the local authority.

4. Terms of reference

The primary remit of the Education Advisory Board Panel is to advise the Cabinet Member for Education in relation to:

1. The performance of Priority 2 of the Children's Trust Plan and the Council's education strategy 'Achieving Excellence', but noting this will be replaced in 2016/17 by a more comprehensive strategy led by the Portsmouth Education Partnership.
2. The performance of other Children's Trust priorities which have an impact on the educational outcomes for children and young people, notably Priority 1 (Multi Agency Teams); Priority 3 (Looked After Children) and Priority 4 (SEND)
3. The implementation and monitoring of the council's Action Plan in response to the Ofsted inspection of the LA's school improvement arrangements (published in March 2016)
4. To monitor, evaluate and scrutinise the impact of the local authority's programme of challenge and intervention, and support where it is provided
5. The sufficiency of places for early years, schools and post-16.

5. Statutory context

The establishment of an Education Advisory Board assists the council in meeting its statutory responsibilities to promote high standards of education and to exercise its functions in respect of schools causing concern.

The general duty for local authorities to promote high standards of education and training is set out under sections 13, 13A and 14 of the Education Act 1996 which require local authorities to: ensure that efficient primary, secondary and further education is available to meet the needs of their population; ensure that their education functions are exercised with a view to promoting high standards, ensuring fair access to opportunity for education and training, and promoting the fulfilment of learning potential; and secure that sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education are available for their area.

Section 72 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a statutory duty on all local authorities in England, in exercising their functions in respect of schools causing concern as set out in Part 4 of the 2006 Act, to have regard to any guidance given from time to time by the Secretary of State. The current guidance for local authorities from the Department for Education is dated March 2016 "Schools causing concern: Intervening in failing, underperforming and coasting schools."

6. Membership

The membership of the Education Advisory Board is as follows:

- Cabinet Member for Education (Chair)
- Chair of the Education, Children and Young People (ECYP) Scrutiny Panel
- Opposition spokespersons from the Children and Education portfolio
- Diocesan representatives - Church of England and Roman Catholic
- Teacher Liaison Panel representative

The Board shall be supported by the Director of Children's Services and the Deputy Director of Children's Services - Education.

7. Chairing, frequency and administration

The meetings will be chaired by Cabinet Member for Education.

The Board will meet termly and will be open to the public.

The Council's Democratic Services will co-ordinate and administer the meetings and take minutes.