



# 'How-to' Guide PEER OBSERVATION

Learning from  
each other

## WHAT IS PEER OBSERVATION?

- teachers observing each other's practice and learning from one another
- focused on teachers' individual needs and the opportunity to both learn from others' practice and offer constructive feedback to peers
- aims to support the sharing of practice and building awareness about the impact of own teaching in order to affect change

## WHAT ACTIONS ARE INVOLVED?

### PHASE 1



#### Pre-observation meeting

- identify focus of the observation
- agree date/time and duration of observation
- provide background and context for the lesson that will be observed

### PHASE 2

#### Classroom observation

- single observer (note multiple observers can participate, if agreed by all)
- observer records data – what the teacher and students say, do, make and write
- discreet interaction with observed teacher and/or students may occur if appropriate



### PHASE 3



#### Post-observation debrief

- occurs as soon as possible after observation
- observer shares data collected relevant to the identified focus
- observer and teacher share reflections looking at connections between data collected and the teaching and student learning in relation to the teacher's focus
- observer poses questions to prompt further development
- observer reflects on observations in relevance to their own practice
- plan next steps – action to be taken using shared reflections to improve practice, next focus for observations, relevant professional learning required etc.



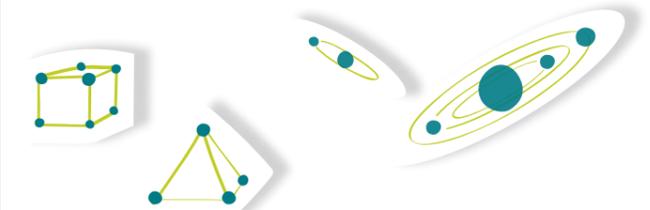
## WHY PEER OBSERVATION?

- provides opportunities to discuss challenges and successes with trusted colleagues
- supports sharing of ideas and expertise among teachers
- builds a community of trust through opening classroom practice to a wider audience
- encourages openness and sharing of practice with a focus on improving impact on learning



## WHAT DO I NEED TO CONSIDER?

- there are many ways to implement Peer Observation
  - > work with staff to agree protocols and procedures and involve staff in the planning process
- can be used for summary judgement of individuals
  - > support staff to provide improvement focused feedback that is based on evidence
- a focus on professional growth should be maintained
  - > provide opportunities for early career teachers to learn from more experienced teachers
- can be perceived as threatening
  - > teachers could self select peers when undertaking classroom observation for the first time



## WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS?

- focus on the needs of the individual teacher informed by their students' needs
- agreement on protocols
- trust between the teachers observing and being observed
- mutual commitment to the sharing and ongoing development of practice



### Where can I find out more?

Rethinking Classroom Observation (Grimm, Kaufman and Doty, 2014)

Teachers Observing Teachers: A Professional Development Tool for Every School (Education World, 2014)

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