



Learning Together

Leading professional development

TPLF04

GTC

General Teaching Council
for England

“Core features of CPD ... linked, in combination, to positive outcomes included:

- observation
- feedback (usually based on observation)
- an emphasis on peer support rather than leadership by supervisors
- scope for teacher participants to identify their own CPD focus
- the use of external expertise linked to school-based activity
- processes to encourage, extend and structure professional dialogue
- processes for sustaining the CPD over time to enable teachers to embed the practices in their own classroom settings.”

Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education,
The Institute of Education University of London, 2003

How this leaflet was developed

This leaflet aims to:

- give insights into the importance of CPD
- show what is involved in being a CPD leader
- promote ideas drawn from CPD leaders' experiences
- tell you how to find out more about CPD.

This leaflet was written by secondary, primary, middle and special school teachers who belong to the GTC's Connect network, with support from the General Teaching Council for England (GTC), principally during a three-day writing workshop. It has been informed by feedback from other teachers and school stakeholders as well as Council members and staff of the GTC.

The leaflet builds on the three previous leaflets in the GTC's Teachers' Professional Learning Framework (TPLF) series (see inside back cover). The TPLF itself offers guidance on the range of learning opportunities and activities – formal and informal – that make up effective professional development for teachers. It also complements the guidance from the National Strategies, particularly that for leaders and co-ordinators of CPD offered as part of the Key Stage 3 strategy.

Learning together is written for staff who lead continuing professional development (CPD) in their school.

Contents

Being a CPD leader	2
CPD benefits for pupils, schools and teachers	4
Questions leaders ask	6
Building capacity for CPD	9
Experiences that support CPD	10
Find out more	11
The Teachers' Professional Learning Framework series	12

Being a CPD leader

The continuing professional development (CPD) leader is a key link between people and teams both within and outside the school.

When you lead or co-ordinate continuing professional development, you play a critical role in helping all staff contribute to the achievement of school priorities. You support an improvement in both the quality of teaching and pupil outcomes.

You also make performance management, and teaching and learning review processes, work for both staff and the school through ongoing learning, and professional and career development.

You gain knowledge of:

- the work of professional, subject and specialist associations
- national strategies for CPD
- local authority support and programmes
- regional initiatives
- Investors in People
- the role of the Training and Development Agency for Schools* for initial teacher training and continuing professional development
- programmes of study available through the National College for School Leadership
- consultancy, support and courses offered by higher education institutions and private providers.

* This change of name from the Teacher Training Agency is planned to take effect during 2005.

You work with individuals and teams within and outside the school. You achieve coherent, transparent and equitable access to, and opportunities for, teachers to engage with CPD.

You may liaise and work with:

- the senior leadership team
- the school CPD committee
- CPD leaders from other schools and areas
- networks and learning communities
- local authority advisers in many fields as well as CPD – such as school improvement, the National Strategies, initial teacher training, induction
- tutors and lecturers from higher education
- performance managers or teaching and learning review staff
- subject or specialist leaders or teachers.

You seek to ensure that the needs and aspirations of all staff are met in respect of:

- school development and improvement plan priorities
- personal development plans
- opportunities to work towards career progression and advancement
- recognition, accreditation and verification of staff professional learning.

CPD benefits for pupils, schools and teachers

Benefits for pupils and learning

A recent systematic review* shows that when teachers learn with each other, supported by specific external expertise, the benefits for pupils include:

- improvement in pupil performance such as better test results, greater ability to understand tasks set and improved fluency in reading
- more positive responses to specific subjects
- improvements in pupils' organisation of their work.

Pupil attitudes also change. They become more confident and motivated. They gain greater satisfaction from, and take a more active part in, the school day.

Benefits for the school and improving outcomes

New research on what happens when teachers are given responsibility to lead school development found a positive impact across the school. Teacher collaboration and networking are powerful forms of professional development, as well as being drivers for school improvement.

In addition, the National Audit Office is emphatic about the importance of high staff morale and motivation for a school's success.

* *How does collaborative CPD for teachers of the 5-16 age range affect teaching and learning?*, Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education, The Institute of Education University of London, 2003

Benefits for staff and teaching

Research shows that where teachers work together on their own professional development, with the benefits of appropriate expertise, they:

- acquire greater confidence
- have a stronger sense of their power to make a difference to their pupils' learning
- show a greater commitment to improving the way they teach
- are more willing to try new approaches to teaching and learning
- become increasingly enthusiastic about collaborative working.

Research commissioned by the GTC, in partnership with Saga, shows that CPD is a major factor in the continuing motivation, development and effective deployment of older teachers.

Central to improvements in teaching and learning is excellent professional development for all teachers – with more emphasis on classroom observation, practice, training, coaching and mentoring.

Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners,
Department for Education and Skills, 2004.

Questions leaders ask

Many of the questions CPD leaders ask are about how to make and take opportunities and time to support the learning of all school staff. Here are some examples.

I co-ordinate CPD in school but it is not high on the agenda for the head teacher or staff. How can I start to change this?

See the case study 'Getting started at the school level'

I have worked as a mentor to trainees, graduate teachers and newly qualified teachers in my school. How can I begin to share my expertise with other staff?

See the case study 'Supporting staff to develop expertise'

I have limited resources to support CPD. What should I do to provide staff the time to access appropriate CPD opportunities?

I want to use the enthusiasm and specialist knowledge and skills of some staff to help other staff change their practice. How do I do this?

Further examples of how schools and individuals have answered these questions are available on www.gtce.org.uk/cpdcases

The two case studies that follow draw on the experiences of CPD leaders and present some ways of tackling the development of CPD policy and practices in schools.

Getting started at the school level

I co-ordinate CPD in school but it is not high on the agenda for the head teacher or staff, how can I start to change this?

Find out about teachers' needs and what they have to offer by way of knowledge, skills and effective practice.

Work with staff in building the school improvement plan to make sure that their needs are embedded within it.

Create a school policy for CPD. Develop individual and school recording systems.

Agree a model of provision appropriate to the school. Build in references to your school's size, phase and budget as well as its stage of development of CPD provision and practices. Include a date for review.

Define the role of CPD leader. Include a job description. Remember and understand the 'denial, change, and compliance' change process. Be realistic about how much you can change.

Identify a timetable of key events in the school year. These might include the school improvement plan and the budget and performance management cycles. Link CPD activities to these events.

Use the workload agreement and the national remodeling agenda to maximise time for teachers to engage in CPD. The GTC Teacher Learning Academy can accredit work carried out in school and offer professional acknowledgement – see www.gtce.org.uk/tla

Share information by using e-mail and other information and communications technology. Find websites that can aid on-line learning.

Supporting staff to develop expertise

I have worked as a mentor to trainees, graduate teachers and newly qualified teachers in my school. How can I begin to share my expertise with other staff?

The teacher who asked this question wanted to train up to eight colleagues and needed a half day meeting to do this. These suggested approaches are based on a head teacher's experience.

External funding can go some way to finding a solution, but more effective use of the five in-service training days can also contribute time to support initial work with colleagues.

Two colleagues can plan together who would visit which other teacher(s). This can be a very informal arrangement, using non-contact time where appropriate. If supply is available a more formal arrangement can be made.

Peer observation, followed by a professional dialogue using a guideline sheet, can help focus the process, but in general staff can generate their own ideas and areas for discussion.

Report back to staff, CPD committee, or the senior leadership team. Highlight outcomes and good practice, and feed them into school's improvement planning and priorities.

Individual teachers can continue to offer support in mentoring and coaching, and develop their expertise in regular meetings with the initiating teachers.

Building capacity for CPD

It is important to show how CPD can become integrated into a school's day-to-day work and the impact it can have on pupil learning and outcomes.

CPD is expected to contribute to improving the quality of staff knowledge, skills, practice and pupil learning. It is central to the plans for developing and improving both the individual staff member and the school.

It takes account of the particular local context of the school and the experiences of staff – individual and institutional histories, practices, and circumstances – so that CPD is ‘context-dependent’ and differentiated.

A CPD leader works towards establishing continuing professional development that is both an entitlement and a responsibility for staff. The leader is focused on the learning and teaching issues that matter within the school.

Self-evaluation of the needs and aspirations of the individual, team and/or school as a whole is necessary. It is facilitated by the CPD leader, but owned by the staff who take part in the learning activities and experiences.

CPD is part of ‘on-the-job’ learning where staff practise and develop learning activities in a climate of trust, and where there are opportunities to take risks and learn from experience.

It is important to monitor and evaluate CPD. This will demonstrate its impact on staff knowledge, skills and practices as well as the improvement of pupil learning.

CPD leaders take part in the wider educational enterprise to improve the quality of education through working with others, both within and outside the school setting. Wherever possible, CPD leaders should belong to the school's senior leadership team.

Experiences that support CPD

Provide opportunities for staff to observe and learn from each other, through peer support, feedback and learning conversations.

Set high expectations, and give every learner confidence that they can succeed.

Establish what learners already know and build on it.

Structure and pace the learning experience to make it challenging and enjoyable.

Inspire learning through passion for developing knowledge, skills and practice.

Help individuals be active participants and partners in learning.

Develop knowledge, skills and practice using a range of strategies to suit the learning styles of participants.

Draw on internal and external expertise as appropriate.

connect.

Join **connect**, the network for school CPD leaders.

connect gives you a regular e-mail newsletter and an online forum to share good practice, engage views and develop a community of practice.

Visit www.gtce.org.uk/connect

Find out more

Our website www.gtce.org.uk has many pages on CPD and related issues.

For more information on CPD, go to www.gtce.org.uk/gtcinfo/cpdhome.asp

Our work with LEAs to support CPD capacity at local and regional levels is on www.gtce.org.uk/cpd_pages/lea.asp

Access and contribute to current debates and issues through our on-line discussion forum at <http://community.gtce.org.uk/>

The GTC Teacher Learning Academy offers public and professional recognition for teachers' learning, development and improvement work. Details are at www.gtce.org.uk/tla

The GTC website also links to many other useful websites. See www.gtce.org.uk/links/links.asp

One particularly useful external site is Teachernet. It includes an e-portfolio that teachers can use to record career and professional development at www.teachernet.gov.uk/development

Achieve.

The **Achieve** network brings together teaching professionals who promote racial equality and diversity in schools. They share ideas and influence policy through termly electronic newsletters, discussion forums and network groups.

Visit www.gtce.org.uk/achieve

The Teachers' Professional Learning Framework series

Useful leaflets from the General Teaching Council for England

Commitment: The Teachers' Professional Learning Framework

Opportunities for CPD take many forms. Find out more from the TPLF.

A Guide to Peer Observation

How to conduct peer observation, and what it can do for CPD in your school.

The Learning Conversation: Talking together for professional development

Insights into how school learning conversations work, how to structure them, and the skills you need.

For copies please write to or telephone the GTC's Birmingham office, details on the back cover. The leaflets are also available on our website at www.gtce.org.uk/tplf



TPLF04

Learning Together

Publication date: April 2005

Publication code: P-LTOG-0405

Birmingham: Victoria Square House,
Victoria Square, Birmingham B2 4AJ

London: Whittington House,
19-30 Alfred Place, London WC1E 7EA

0870 001 0308 www.gtce.org.uk

info@gtce.org.uk