

# Standard for teachers' professional development

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The new challenges facing schools

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Report sponsors Peterborough Learning Partnership would like to thank the following schools, multi-academy trusts and representatives from the education sector who were interviewed for this report in February and March 2017:

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Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust  
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Holme CE Primary School, Cambridgeshire  
Tamara Allen, Headteacher

Ravensthorpe Primary School, Peterborough  
Martin Fry, Headteacher

Regional Schools Commissioner Office,  
East of England and North-East London  
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Rutland Teaching Alliance  
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St Norbert's Catholic Primary School, Spalding  
Joe Burns, Headteacher

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School,  
Peterborough  
Anne-Marie McElhinney, Headteacher

Southfields Primary School, Peterborough  
Yolanda Steward, Assistant Headteacher

Stanground St John's C of E Primary School,  
Peterborough  
Sally Williams, Headteacher

Teacher Development Trust  
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Whaplode Primary School, Lincolnshire  
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William de Yaxley CE Academy, Yaxley  
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# Foreword

It's fantastic to see such a strong focus on high-quality, high-impact professional development across Peterborough, Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire.

This report shows how school leaders are turning their attention to carefully designed, long-term Continuing Professional Development (CPD) plans rather than a series of disconnected one-off experiences. This is absolutely aligned with international research on how we secure effective teaching for every child. Effective leadership of CPD not only delivers better teaching but also improves outcomes, raises morale and contributes to much-improved recruitment and retention.

As my group developed the Standard for teachers' professional development, we were clear that teachers can only learn effectively when leaders make their learning a priority. This is more than just appointing a senior leader with responsibility for CPD, this requires leadership at all levels, from the headteacher, through senior, middle leadership and also those with Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLRs). Any member of staff with a responsibility for any curriculum, any team leadership or any pupil outcome should also have a responsibility to develop knowledge, practice and learning culture.

Of course, resource is also vitally important. There has never been a time when time and money are under such pressure in schools. We know that teachers in England are likely to have the equivalent of four days' worth of professional learning, compared to an international average of 10.5 days, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). We also know that there is enormous variation in schools' own CPD funds, varying enormously by phase, by area and by Ofsted status.

In July 2016, the Department for Education published a new Standard for teachers' professional development for all schools in England.

The standard sets out a clear description of what effective continuing professional development (or CPD) looks like for teachers. The document is intended to be used to improve understanding, to develop effective and long-term plans and to hold other stakeholders to account for their role in the process.

You can view the standard here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standard-for-teachers-professional-development>

The Teacher Development Trust's analysis shows that while schools in Peterborough and Lincolnshire reported slightly above the national average for CPD budgets, for Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire schools the average budget was slightly below. All four areas had average spend of around 30% per school lower than top-spending areas such as Hampshire and Haringey.

It's not just how much you spend, but how you spend it. The most effective schools are creating rich career plans for all staff, with opportunities to progress along non-leadership pathways for teachers and plenty of opportunities for learning and development for teaching assistants, administrative and site staff. They are also identifying and strategically using the highest quality expertise, whether in the form of consultants, organisations or conferences, with a particularly strong emphasis on subject specialist and curriculum-focused development over more generic 'how to be a great teacher' training.

Great development also gives a strong sense of freedom and support to staff. The most effective schools are focusing on ownership of CPD, joint analysis of data, joint planning and carefully structured and collaborative CPD approaches such as Lesson Study or other teacher enquiry models. They are finding regular time, moving administrative discussion out of meetings and replacing it with carefully-planned discussion about pedagogy. They are finding weekly or fortnightly time to start late or close early to give dedicated CPD time to all staff.

None of this is easy, but schools in this region are heading along the right road. Congratulations on your progress so far and good luck with your next steps.



**David Weston** is the Chair of the Department for Education's CPD Expert Group and Chief Executive of the Teacher Development Trust

Follow the Trust and David on Twitter at @TeacherDevTrust and @informed\_edu respectively

# Introduction

I can't recall a time when schools were under so much pressure to deliver improved outcomes for their pupils in such a difficult financial climate.

Quality Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for teaching staff is widely recognised as playing a key role in school improvement. Yet, following on from David Weston's commentary, a recent report from the Teacher Development Trust found that thousands of teachers are working in schools with zero or no budget for providing CPD, and separate research from the OECD highlighted that 60% of teachers feel they don't have enough time and space in their working week to access the CPD they need.

This research, and other studies, paint a pretty negative picture for the future of CPD and its role in attracting and retaining the best teaching talent, as well as the potential impact on attainment and improvement levels for pupils.

Providing yet further backdrop to the situation is the summer 2016 publication of the Standard for teachers' professional development; a document from the Department for Education (DfE) which outlined the role that high-quality CPD should play in ensuring that teachers have the right knowledge and skills to allow pupils to benefit from the best possible teaching. It makes clear that teachers, headteachers and leadership teams should work together to ensure that effective professional development is implemented across our schools, founded on a set of key common principles to ensure success.

It's not just CPD for teachers that has an impact on learning and standards; everyone from front-of-house staff, school business managers and site managers through to teaching staff, senior leaders and governors should have the opportunity to benefit from professional development. Ensuring this can lead to a great deal of pressure on already tightening budgets.

In putting together this report, representatives of schools, multi-academy trusts and wider representatives from the education sector are all clear on their commitment to professional development.

However, the resounding message is that in a tough financial climate, any CPD must offer value for money, a whole school benefit and a tangible impact on outcomes – long gone are the days when a training course may have been perceived by some as a jolly.

## This report shows that:

- There is a common agreement among education leaders in Cambridgeshire and surrounding areas that whilst the development of the DfE's Standard for teachers' professional development is welcome, **it also reinforces principles and approaches already being taken by schools to CPD.**
- A greater concern for schools is the **lack of time, money and other resources** for the provision of teachers' professional development – and schools are being forced to look at alternative approaches to CPD to ensure maximum benefit at minimum cost.
- Identifying the most appropriate CPD is borne from the whole school development plan and primarily **focuses on the needs of the school rather than the individual**, which restricts personal development plans.
- **Evaluation and feedback are perceived as key** to the implementation of effective professional development, but school leaders have expressed concern about prioritising time to 'close the loop'.

So what role can Peterborough Learning Partnership play in supporting schools to meet the increasingly difficult challenge around CPD provision? We are already using the Standard for teachers' professional development in programming our own courses, ensuring that CPD fits the principles and guidelines laid out by the DfE. We are absolutely committed to working with schools to give them the support they need to raise aspirations and standards, ultimately creating better outcomes for everybody.

**Iain Simper** is the Chief Executive Officer of Peterborough Learning Partnership

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# Standard for teachers' professional development

## – What does this bring to the table?

**“Effective teaching requires considerable knowledge and skill, which should be developed as teachers’ careers progress”, says the Department for Education (DfE) Standard for teachers’ professional development. The document adds that “high quality professional development requires workplaces to be steeped in rigorous scholarship, with professionals continually developing and supporting each other so that pupils benefit from the best possible teaching”.**

The importance of effective Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is already specified in the Teachers’ Standards and Headteachers’ Standards; and every school development plan should outline the professional development needed to take that school forward.

Yet research by the Teacher Development Trust has found over 21,000 teachers are working in schools which have reported zero or near zero budget for CPD, and across the sector the median spend on CPD is just 0.7% of the school’s overall budget – seemingly illustrating that despite the importance being placed on investing in professional development, many teachers are not getting the development they need to make an impact on the children and the school.

So how does the DfE standard address this, and how does it add to what is already in place? How do schools ensure they are implementing the standard in a time of increased pressure on school budgets and teacher workloads?



**“The document has helped me tighten things up in terms of expectations, and what teachers are supposed to understand and do in their roles”**

Kay Horley, Headteacher, William de Yaxley CE Academy

“The standard is an excellent framework for teachers in schools to evaluate their development needs,” explains Jonathan Lewis, Deputy Director for the Regional Schools Commissioner Office, East of England and North East London. “It will particularly help in identifying and evaluating gaps in knowledge or skills that can be targeted to improve children and young peoples’ outcomes.”

The common theme among school leaders interviewed for this report was that whilst the standard is welcome, it mainly serves to reinforce what they already know and what their schools are putting into practice. Martin Fry, Headteacher at Ravensthorpe Primary School, says: “The standard reinforces a lot of common sense principles around professional development. One-off courses can offer a short-term boost but the standard reminds us that we have to consider the impact on the whole school.”

“The document has helped me tighten things up in terms of expectations, and what teachers are supposed to understand and do in their roles,” says Kay Corley, Headteacher of William de Yaxley CE Academy. “It also helps us understand whether teachers have met their targets.”

Becky Waters, Headteacher at Dogsthorpe Infant School, adds: “All heads are aware of and budget for CPD but the standard reminds us of the need for outcomes and feedback. They sum up what CPD is and what its impact should be.”

According to the DfE standard, effective professional development requires a partnership approach between headteachers and other members of the leadership team, teachers and those who provide training or professional development.

So how do schools ensure that the standard is taken seriously and implemented by both leadership and staff? For many of the headteachers interviewed, the principles of the standard were already being implemented long before the document was produced in 2016; many through their school development plan and performance management process.

Tamara Allen, Headteacher at Holme CE Primary School, says: “Any professional development has to be about securing outcomes and identifying the support needed to achieve this. We have our own teaching standards document which performance management is based on and this includes requirements for professional development.” Ravensthorpe Primary School’s Martin Fry adds: “We have always tried to have a system of joined up thinking in place when it comes to CPD. Performance management targets are linked to the school development plan, with courses and training then linked to the targets which are very specific to the individual’s needs.”

That’s not to say that the standard is not already bringing something new to the way that schools approach and implement professional development. Alison Flack, Headteacher at Whaplode Primary School, says: “When it comes to appraisals we used to focus more on assessing against Ofsted criteria when it came to CPD, but we now assess against the standard and use it to set individual and overall targets. They are more useful as they are broken down into bullets. We also use the standard to support lesson observations.”

Becky Waters of Dogsthorpe Infant School adds: “We haven’t fully implemented the standard at the current time. We are aware that we need to improve how we feedback on CPD; sharing information and finding the best ways to feedback so that it can have an impact on everyone. I hope the standard will help provide a framework for doing this.”

There are five principles within the standard. Of these, the one which all headteachers agreed was key is that effective professional development must have an impact on pupil outcomes. Martin Fry explains: “If CPD has had an impact on the children’s outcomes then we can demonstrate that it is money and time well spent and we’d possibly do that particular training again. If the CPD is not having an impact then we wouldn’t bother repeating it.”



**“It is a state of mind, a way of approach, finding things and reading off your own back – the principles of lifelong learning and continually developing”**

Mark Woods, Chief Executive Officer of Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust (CMAT)

“CPD has been successful if the person doing it takes away one idea that they will use which will improve things for the children,” says Sarah Conant, Chief Operating Officer of the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust (DEMAT). “Impacts aren’t just academic”, adds Holme CE Primary School’s Tamara Allen, “they also include wellbeing and mental health.”

Of course, CPD isn’t just about the impact on pupils, it’s about giving teachers the tools they need to be the best they can. Anne-Marie McElhinney, Headteacher at St Thomas More Primary School, says: “It’s effective if the teachers are inspired, motivated and want to implement what they have learned.” Tamara Allen adds: “It’s about empowering teachers, ensuring they are happy and in control.”

But when teachers’ workloads are ever increasing, how can schools ensure that CPD is not seen as just another pressure on already precious time? Becky Waters says that effective CPD should complement what the school is already doing. “Training has been effective when staff come back with something that works for the children and that they can implement straight away. They shouldn’t have to struggle to fit in what they have learned” she explains.

The new DfE standard describes how effective professional development programmes should be sustained over time. Mark Woods, Chief Executive Officer of Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust (CMAT), says that CPD is much more than sending a teacher on a one-day course. “It is a state of mind, a way of approach, finding things and reading off your own back – the principles of lifelong learning and continually developing. We want to engage individuals in what they want from their career, where they want to go next and supporting that through development in and outside school.”

Karen Muir, Director of Rutland Teaching Alliance, agrees: “We find that ongoing courses have the most impact, for example when teachers have one session a term for five terms. This makes the development more sustainable and allows them to put into practice what they have learned while they are still in the process of learning.”

While there was general agreement that the standard is comprehensive, some heads felt there was room for improvement. Martin Fry says: “I think the standard should also cover wellbeing. We had some training from the YMCA recently about children with mental health issues and it left me concerned about the impact of non-curriculum related issues – is there enough support for teachers to help ensure that conditions are right for vulnerable children who aren’t ready to learn?”

There was a mixed response from interviewees as to whether they were putting the standard into practice, whether they felt it was relevant and brought anything new to the table. All interviewees agreed that the principles behind the standard were helpful, although they might just be reinforcing what an individual was already practising. Overall, despite budget cuts and increasing pressures on schools and teachers, ensuring that staff receive the development they need to make a difference to pupils is key.

# Effective professional development

## – How can we deliver impact?

**“It’s important to consider how you can make sure CPD has an impact in school; it’s key with any learning that it’s followed up and embedded into the school” says Sarah Conant, Chief Operating Officer at DEMAT. “The most important thing is that the training must have an impact on the children. What has been learned must be cascaded through feedback in staff meetings or projects based on what has been learned.”**

All school leaders interviewed agreed that professional development must offer value for money and have a tangible impact on pupil and school outcomes. Joe Burns, Headteacher at St Norbert’s Catholic Primary School, says: “We quality assure any CPD before we take part. A budget case is put forward which includes how it would be used, what the benefit would be and what is the impact. This, in turn, helps us to assess whether to approve the request.”

So how do leadership teams ensure that the right development is matched to the right individual and the needs of the school to deliver impact?

Alison Flack, Headteacher at Whaplode Primary School, says: “The targets set through our appraisal process cover what the school needs, what the pupils need, subject leadership development and personal development. We use these targets to understand what CPD is required and this will be monitored through the appraisal process.” Tamara Allen, Headteacher at Holme CE Primary School, echoes this: “Professional development and performance management is interwoven. As part of our performance reviews we evaluate teaching and learning to understand where there are gaps and how we can meet them through CPD.”

Ravensthorpe Primary School is embracing cloud-based technology to support the appraisal process. Headteacher Martin Fry explains: “The online performance management system we use allows teachers to log in and view their targets and upload evidence including photos and documents. This makes professional development feel more like it’s part of the day job rather than another thing to think about once a year. We can monitor targets each term and target the CPD the teachers need to help them meet their targets.”

With the wide array of professional development on offer, what have school leaders found to work best? “Professional development is most effective for us when I can send more than one person, or when it’s something we can all do together”, says Becky Waters. “We often have CPD on our training days so that we can share the experience.” Sally Williams, Headteacher at Stanground St John’s Primary School, agrees: “The most effective training for us has been when more than one member of staff undertake the training and they can work together afterwards to implement what they have learned.”



**“Professional development is most effective for us when I can send more than one person, or when it’s something we can all do together. We often have CPD on our training days so that we can share the experience”**

Becky Waters, Headteacher, Dogsthorpe Infant School

Many schools are looking at in-house training methods to meet gaps in development. Mark Woods, Chief Executive Officer of CMAT, says: “In my experience, coaching and peer mentoring works incredibly well, as does bringing whole departments together. We underestimate the impact of peer-to-peer discussion.” Alison Flack, Headteacher of Whaplode Primary School, agrees: “Sending staff on courses to do something specific is rare because of the cost and lack of impact. We use coaching and mentoring when we can; teachers working alongside other teachers. This has worked well if we have teachers that are struggling or Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) who would benefit from the experience of others.”

Anne-Marie McElhinney has taken a slightly different approach to raising standards at St Thomas More Primary School: “We have weekly book scrutiny sessions where we take in all the work books for a year group at a time and review quantity and quality of work as well as marking. The teachers are then RAG rated and the feedback is shared with the whole school. Over the course of a term, everyone gets to see what everyone else has been doing and we use this as a tool to raise standards.”

DEMAT has taken a Trust-wide approach to sharing knowledge: “Within the Trust, we have talent mapped everyone so that we can identify individuals who have certain skills that can be used elsewhere and would benefit others,” says Sarah Conant. For those schools which are not part of multi-academy trusts, there is still an increasing use of sharing knowledge and skills with other schools. Tamara Allen at Holme CE Primary School, says: “As a small school, cross-working with other schools has been the most successful form of development for us. We are working on an initiative with a school in Lincolnshire regarding the redeployment of teaching assistants, and with schools in Peterborough on the ‘No More Marking’ initiative which helps our year two and year six teachers with their own standards.”

In Peterborough, all local authority run schools work in triads – groups of three schools which have specifically been matched to work together. The schools within the triad have different strengths, challenges and experiences allowing them to share knowledge and expertise. Says Yolanda Steward, Assistant Headteacher at Southfields Primary School: “The teachers love finding out what’s happening in other schools and what their challenges, successes and similarities are. The triads are a really good way of sharing information and experiences and working collaboratively. We can all learn from each other; in fact we have used a teacher from one of our triad partners to deliver training at our school, which was at minimal cost but had huge impact.”

However, external training continues to have immense value to schools, and it is clear that a range of approaches need to be taken to meet a school’s needs as well as the confines of its budget. “The success of professional development is dependent on the individual and the need,” explains Anne-Marie McElhinney. “Some of our professional development is for individual teachers and some is for the whole school. We’ve organised in-house training, for example on reading standards, as well as local authority training and that run by other providers. Recently, we have been working with the Primary Matters consultancy on improving standards across the school, particularly for the recording of foundation subjects. Not only has it been a success for our school, but other schools have been looking at what we have achieved and want to take it on board themselves.”

Martin Fry at Ravensthorpe Primary School agrees with this sentiment. “Successful CPD depends on the individual and the subject. Good training has to have a whole school impact and while there is some development that can be delivered in-house, there are other needs that can only be met externally. We have recently signed up to the ‘PixL’ programme, looking at how we can support key marginal children’s progress and outcomes. The good practice we have learned has been brought back to the school and we are now looking at how we can ensure it is successfully implemented to have the desired impact.”



**“We use staff meetings to feedback on CPD; courses are expensive so we must ensure as many people as possible feel the benefit. As a large school we strive to ensure that information is shared across the board”**

Yolanda Steward, Assistant Headteacher, Southfields Primary School

Every school leader reported that when staff have been on external training it was essential that the learning was fed back to the rest of the staff through staff meetings or report sharing to gain maximum benefit. Yolanda Steward from Southfields Primary School says: “We use staff meetings to feedback on CPD; courses are expensive so we must ensure as many people as possible feel the benefit. We are also looking at implementing a monthly staff bulletin for training so that people know what courses other members of staff have been on and what has been effective. As a large school we strive to ensure that information is shared across the board.”

It would seem that finding the most effective forms of professional development can be dependent on the strengths and challenges of the school and its teachers; there is no ‘one size fits all’ approach to success. Jonathan Lewis, Deputy Director for the Regional Schools Commissioner Office, East of England and North-East London, concludes: “There is a huge amount of CPD out there and it is of varying quality. Schools need to think carefully about what they do, making sure they are giving the right people the right training. It’s essential to look at how the CPD will benefit the school.”

# The continuing importance of CPD

## – How are schools meeting the challenge?

A recent report by the Teacher Development Trust found that 700 schools have wiped out their budgets for CPD, and the average spend on staff development per pupil is just £33. With recruitment of teachers being an issue for many schools, alongside the additional challenge of retaining the best staff, what role does investment in professional development play?

“Every school must have a USP that will make it stand out against others”, says Sarah Conant, Chief Operating Officer of DEMAT. “When you are recruiting, being able to demonstrate you support CPD and take it seriously is important.”

Every school leader interviewed cited a link between recruitment and the offer of investing in CPD – regardless of what level the individual teacher may be at in their career. Martin Fry, Headteacher at Ravensthorpe Primary School, says: “We have a ‘Good’ Ofsted rating, new building and fantastic team here, but it can still be a struggle to recruit teachers. Our CPD offer, alongside a wellbeing support and rewards scheme, aims to help us attract good teachers. We are taking on one new teacher a year to 2020 and the majority of these will likely be NQTs. We make sure they have an effective induction and invest heavily in the NQT programme, which we reference in our adverts and interviews as we recognise that offering good quality development is important at every level.”



**“We have a ‘Good’ Ofsted rating, new building and fantastic team here, but it can still be a struggle to recruit teachers. Our CPD offer, alongside a wellbeing support and rewards scheme, aims to help us attract good teachers”**

Martin Fry, Headteacher, Ravensthorpe Primary School

Kay Corley, Headteacher at William de Yaxley CE Academy, also recognises the desire for development. “We have been stable in terms of our staff for two years, but when we did need to recruit rewarding staff was key; with pay, recruitment and retention allowances and CPD.

Being able to be upfront in terms of the professional development support available is helpful in recruiting at all levels – a lot of middle leadership candidates feel they need to be rewarded.”

However, when your school is small and the same opportunities for promotion are fewer, how can a CPD offer help recruit? Tamara Allen, Headteacher at Holme CE Primary School, says: “Recruitment is a huge issue in Cambridgeshire so an NQT pool was set up to get more teachers into the profession. As a small school, we don’t have the same trajectory for promotion so we focus on depth of development as part of our sell, rather than acceleration.”

School leaders were split when it came to a link between investing in professional development and retention. DEMAT’s Sarah Conant says: “If a head takes CPD seriously and values it, staff are more likely to stay. If the head is not seen to value CPD then staff are more likely to look elsewhere for someone who is committed to investing in them.” However, Becky Waters, Headteacher at Dogsthorpe Infant School, wasn’t so convinced of the link between investing in CPD and retaining staff. “If people are looking to move, it’s not usually linked to professional development. It can perhaps make a difference if they are considering a leadership role but they may well still leave anyway.”

Jonathan Lewis, Deputy Director for the Regional Schools Commissioner Office, East of England and North-East London, responds: “Retention of staff is one of the biggest challenges in the current climate and a great CPD offer which allows staff to keep on top of good practice is absolutely key. Schools that don’t offer great CPD will fail in keeping their best people.”

Teachers have an increasing amount of pressure on their time and workloads and a number of headteachers interviewed feared that encouraging professional development would be viewed as additional pressure. Says Sarah Conant: “The link between investing in CPD and wellbeing can be a double edged sword. If you put too much pressure on staff to take CPD it can have a negative impact on wellbeing.”

Karen Muir, Director of Rutland Teaching Alliance, believes that failing to consider wellbeing, especially in those new to the job, can lead to wider issues. “If you don’t have the right training for the right people then it can be detrimental. Research has shown that millennials are more impacted by wellbeing than any other generation. To them it’s important to be part of a plan; a job is not just a job – it needs to have a purpose.”



**“If you don’t have the right training for the right people then it can be detrimental. Research has shown that millennials are more impacted by wellbeing than any other generation. To them it’s important to be part of a plan; a job is not just a job – it needs to have a purpose”**

Karen Muir, Director of Rutland Teaching Alliance

A number of headteachers had tried some innovative approaches to improve wellbeing. Alison Flack, Headteacher of Whaplode Primary School, has used staff training days to focus on helping staff feel valued: “We use some of our training days for things like yoga and at our next training day we are offering staff a health check. We want them to know we are bothered about them and their health.” Ravensthorpe Primary School’s Martin Fry adds “We try to maintain a work/life balance for our teachers. For example, there is one week each half-term where we have no after-school meetings so staff can do something they enjoy out of school and they don’t take work home. This also gives everyone time to recharge, reflect and evaluate.”

Alongside improving outcomes for children, the other long-term goal for successful professional development is improving the outcomes of the school. School leaders interviewed agreed that there is a strong link between investment in professional development and school improvement. When asked what the main barriers were to a school being able to implement professional development and the new DfE standard, all heads agreed on time and money.

A recent report by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) found that 60% of teachers feel they do not have enough time and space in their working week to access the CPD they need. Martin Fry at Ravensthorpe Primary School says: “Work/life balance is really important and the extra time investment needed for CPD can be a barrier to this. It’s important not to overload teachers.” Dogsthorpe Infants School’s Becky Waters agrees: “In the current climate, there can be the fear of CPD being ‘another change’.

People are always unsure of more work or change so it’s important to get everyone on board and make sure that CPD is in the school and individual development plans.”

How can schools ensure that budgets are not a barrier to providing their teachers with professional development and ultimately improving school and pupil outcomes? Anne-Marie McElhinney, Headteacher at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, says: “We have to be very picky in the CPD we approve; we have to consider whether it will have an impact on the standards in school. We will research any opportunities in-depth first to try to understand what the impact will be on the school and learning.” For Sally Williams, Headteacher at Stanground St John Primary School, there is a fear that the financial pressure is only going to get worse: “There is some really good CPD available but we are limited in what we can take up because of our budget and the time it takes plus the costs related to this. I think this will be even more so going forward when budgets are further reduced.”

Research from the Teacher Development Trust showed that schools which has been rated as ‘Inadequate’ by Ofsted spend around 20% less on CPD than other schools, as a proportion of their total budgets. In a time when Government funding is decreasing and schools are tightening their belts, investment in CPD can be one of the first things to go. But experts have warned that this decision is short-sighted. Professor Robert Coe, director of the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring at Durham University, said in response to the Teacher Development Trust report: “Research evidence is very clear that investing in high-quality support for teachers’ professional learning is not just one of the most effective things schools can do to raise standards, but one of the best-value choices they can make. Cutting spending on CPD, even in a time of tight budgets, would be one of the most counter-productive, short-sighted and evidence-averse things a school could do.”

# Future planning

## – How do headteachers intend to raise the bar?

### With a focus on demonstrating a tangible impact on outcomes for pupils and improvement, further driven by DfE's Standard for teachers' professional development document, how are schools planning to raise expectations for CPD?

Organisations such as Peterborough Learning Partnership support schools in making considered strategic decisions on CPD engagement and development. By working on behalf of member schools they can ensure the best value for money and impact when working with leading national organisations and individuals in their fields. This allows schools to ensure that CPD is targeted to their specific requirements and offers maximum benefit to staff and pupils.

For many of the headteachers interviewed, the key to raising the bar is ensuring that CPD fits into part of a wider, more holistic plan. Kay Corley, Headteacher at William de Yaxley CE Academy, says: "We have to understand where we need to be as a school, this goes hand in hand with the new expectations of outcomes. Development needs to raise attainment and progress and be linked to the school development plan."

Sally Williams, Headteacher at Stanground St John's School, explains that there is an expectation on teachers to understand the whole school plan and how this links into their own objectives: "When it comes to raising expectations, ownership and discussion of the school development plan are key, alongside making sure all staff understand it. We expect proactive management when it comes to an individual's CPD."

All school leaders described how CPD was a key part of an individual's appraisal process, and as such is key to ensuring teachers are clear in their own role in driving the school forward. Becky Waters, Headteacher at Dogsthorpe Infant School, says: "Teacher targets are school driven, thinking about where we want to go both as individuals and holistically. But there is also a need to focus on particular areas needed by the school at a specific time, for example literacy and maths."

It seems it's not all about improvement plans and performance management when it comes to raising the bar, with many schools taking alternative approaches. As Anne-Marie McElhinney, Headteacher at St Thomas More Primary School, describes: "It's about improving the quality of professional development. We've tried a whole range of approaches, with the aim of benefitting the whole school, and we have found that staff want CPD to support them to do their job better in the classroom." For Martin Fry, Headteacher at Ravensthorpe Primary School, seeking opportunities to share knowledge between schools and external partners is key to raising expectations: "Working with schools in our cluster, we provide opportunities for collaboration between leaders for different subjects, early years and behaviour and have found that sharing ideas with colleagues has a positive impact right across our school. Seeing ideas in action is of real benefit."

And what does the future hold for the role CPD might play in Ofsted success? Will investment in professional development have an increasing role to play in getting a school to 'Outstanding'? Headteachers have mixed views.

Mark Woods, Chief Executive Officer at Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust, says: "It is great leadership and management that defines an 'Outstanding' school. It is the state of being in continuous development. So every day, moving things on, nudging things in the right direction. You can't separate CPD from this approach, but great leadership and management – and fostering mutually supportive relationships focused on the end goal – is key."

Becky Waters, Headteacher at Dogsthorpe Infant School, says: "We had our Ofsted inspection last year and CPD wasn't discussed specifically. There's pressure on the budget and every penny is measured on the impact of outcomes. It would be beneficial for Ofsted to consider professional development targets and outcomes as they need to see the impact of the plans on teaching."

The current role of CPD in an Ofsted inspection can also depend on a school's rating according to some headteachers interviewed. Tamara Allen, Headteacher of Holme CE Primary School, says: "It depends on the context of the school – if you are in special measures then investment in CPD will be very important to Ofsted as they will want to know what you are doing to improve. For a good school, they don't have time to look into it during an inspection as they are more interested in accountability and senior staff."

Jonathan Lewis, Deputy Director for the Regional Schools Commissioner Office, East of England and North-East London, confirmed: "Currently, inspectors have discretion on how they report CPD. A school's greatest resource is its staff; I believe Ofsted should consider factors like staff turnover and whether effective CPD is being undertaken."

Alison Flack, Headteacher at Whaplode Primary School, thinks the standard will have an impact in getting her school to the next level: "I'm hoping that the standard, especially accurate assessment and data improvement, will help us get to 'Outstanding'. We are already 'Outstanding' for behaviour and safety, if the standard is implemented properly it will have an impact on attainment."

Sally Williams, Headteacher at Stanground St John's Primary School, feels that CPD should play an important role in every school's inspection: "Professional development is part and parcel of Ofsted looking at how you are moving the school forward. CPD is an integral part of the school development plan, they will look at how it is filling the gaps you have in skills and knowledge. It's not about the amount of professional development, it's about the impact."



**"If you reduce the amount of money spent on staff and CPD, will we see standards start to drop?"**

Sarah Conant, Chief Operating Officer, DEMAT

But Sarah Conant, Chief Operating Officer of DEMAT, is not so sure there will be an increased impact in Ofsted judgements. "As part of Ofsted inspections, a school has to demonstrate how money has been spent. Many schools are using an increasing amount of internal training as budgets tighten. Demonstrating the impact of spending money is therefore crucial, but when there is less money will this be less so? If you reduce the amount of money spent on staff and CPD, will we see standards start to drop?"

## Case Study

### St Norbert's Catholic Primary School

"We are very lucky to have great staff here and we don't have to worry about their teaching practice. CPD is about providing that additionality to their roles. For example, two of our teachers recently completed 'Teaching for Mastery', which keeps their teaching fresh, is pedagogical and links to ensuring pupils make the best progress and attainment. We took a baseline before and after the training to understand the progress made, and we have now decided to adopt this approach across the whole school. We want our colleagues to be risk-takers. 'Outstanding' is not a destination it's a journey. We look at ways of encouraging innovation and creativity and different ways in which we can develop learning. We have open discussions with all staff; there is no blame if a teacher tries something and it doesn't work. We look for colleagues to come up with ideas but I also look at opportunities which fit into what the school wants to do. CPD is for both the individual and the school so it's important that staff have a say. It needs to make a difference."

Joe Burns is Headteacher of St Norbert's Catholic Primary School, rated 'Outstanding'

## Case Study

### Southfields Primary School

"CPD is linked to our school development plan, we focus on how we can improve our school further and training is an integral part of this. The teachers' objectives and needs are important and we ensure that training is identified to support them. We use a system called 'pitching perfect' for performance management and if a teacher needs specific support it helps identify what is available and the next steps. Investing time into appropriate training, which meets the needs of and improves outcomes for children, is essential. We are lucky that our teachers are keen on their own personal development and each keep portfolios of ideas which would help develop the school and themselves, and they have an element of control over their personal targets. We take a long-term approach to development as we want to help staff progress to further their own good practice, reflect and progress within their career path. There is always a need to reflect on what we've done, what we found useful, what has benefitted people and making sure training is good value for money."

Yolanda Steward is Assistant Headteacher at Southfields Primary School, rated 'Outstanding'

## Closing remarks

The current climate means that schools and their leadership teams are having to seriously consider different approaches to providing the best possible professional development for staff, whilst retaining the aim of a noticeable impact on pupil progress and attainment levels.

With the average spend on CPD across the sector being just 0.7% of a school's overall budget, alternative ways of providing low-cost development opportunities have come to the forefront – whether this be sharing expertise and knowledge through mentoring or other in-house training, or maximising the use of school networks, such as the triads within the Peterborough local authority area highlighted in this report.

Then there is the ongoing issue of time. With teaching, planning, marking, meetings and pastoral care, a teacher's diary leaves little room for undertaking CPD. We're told that 60% of teachers feel they do not have enough time and space in their working week to access the CPD they need to improve outcomes for their pupils.

A new report from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), "Empowering and Enabling Teachers to Improve Equity and Outcomes for All", describes how the teaching profession must undergo a profound transformation to prepare students for the world in which they will live and work.

While teachers currently undergoing training may be lucky enough to learn these skills, for those already in-service it is exactly the approaches described above: mentoring, network collaboration and exchange of good practice, which will help upskill those teachers who trained in a more traditional time.

What is clear is that CPD in schools is no longer undertaken for the sake of it. Opportunities must be assessed before approval is given, and evaluated and implemented to understand the impact and value for money of what has been learned. Training rarely now benefits just one individual – schools are looking for development which benefits as many as possible.

The DfE Standard for teachers' professional development document, published in summer 2016, aims to provide a framework and guidance for the implementation of effective CPD in schools. Although viewed by many as a formalisation of what is already good practice, in a time of pressured workloads it is clear that any new advice or guidance must fit naturally as possible into the day-to-day running of a school.

These may be difficult times when it comes to finding that balance between time and money, and ensuring that staff receive the professional development they want and need. Is it a realistic possibility that failure to consider and adopt different approaches, rather than the traditional 'one size fits all' training, could lead to a negative impact on school and pupil outcomes?

## Peterborough Learning Partnership

"PLP provides good support for individual staff career development"

80%  
of teachers agree that



87.5%  
of teachers agree that

"PLP meets my school's CPD needs"

Saving on CPD across PLP member schools

£62,500



95%  
of teachers agree that

"PLP is having impact on my school"

"PLP offers good value for money"

Learners supported by the teachers attending PLP courses

40,000+



£835

Average saving on CPD for PLP members

Delegates took part in our CPD in 2015/16 and 2016/17

3,000+



72%  
of teachers agree that

"PLP has helped my school make a positive impact on the achievements of young people"



**Peterborough  
Learning  
Partnership**

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