

How can we make CPD work better for teachers?

Today we have published a [report](#) on the current state of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for teachers, informed by your responses to survey questions last term. As we approach the General Election, the future of CPD provision is emerging as a crucial aspect of educational policy discussion. Notably, the Labour Party has proposed a “CPD entitlement” for teachers, and there is an ongoing review of the Early Career Framework.

In this post, we highlight three significant findings from the report.

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1. INSET days have limited focus on classroom practice

In-service training (INSET) is a cornerstone of schools’ CPD offer and is often delivered in the form of ‘Baker Days’ at the start of the school year. However, our findings reveal that only 40% of teachers considered the last INSET day they attended to be ‘somewhat’ or ‘very’ useful.

One reason may be that these sessions rarely prioritise classroom practice and instead tend to focus on policies and procedures. As such, they are far more effective in meeting heads and senior leaders’ needs, than the needs of teachers in relation to instructional practice. In contrast, out of school (online and in-person) CPD is much more likely to be subject specific or to focus on curriculum, and SEND and inclusion.

2. Teachers question the impact of CPD on enhancing classroom skills in several areas

The daily reality of teachers’ engagement with CPD is complex and nuanced. An overwhelming majority, nine out of ten teachers, report a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their teaching methods. While they do seek CPD to address certain weaknesses, their trust in formal CPD courses is selective, influenced by their perceptions of the effectiveness of such training. For example, even though many identify behaviour management as a key area for improvement, only 4% believe that training in this area would

significantly enhance their expertise. This scepticism regarding the utility of training in certain domains is a contributing factor to why teachers often choose courses that align with their existing strengths.

3. Secondary teachers of smaller subjects are particularly keen to engage in subject specific CPD

Teachers' top two priorities for professional development are expanding their subject knowledge and improving their classroom instruction. Secondary schools in particular find it difficult to provide in-school CPD that meets this desire for subject specific courses. Whilst in general, teachers expressed a preference for online CPD that can be completed at a time of their choosing, it was notable that secondary school teachers working in small specialist subjects who might be somewhat isolated have a particular desire to meet colleagues from other schools who share their specialism.

Conclusion

Despite the occasionally disappointing tone of our [report](#) regarding the current state of CPD, you have communicated a continued optimism about the potential of CPD to enhance your teaching in the future. A strong emphasis was placed on the significance of having the autonomy to select your own CPD, or at the very least, for Headteachers to approve your choices. There is a keen interest in more subject-specific training, coupled with a desire for assurance that CPD will be directly relevant and applicable to your classroom practice.

We hope you find the [report](#) useful and interesting. Thank you for your contributions.

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Nine-out-of-ten



teachers believe that they have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their instructional practice

TOP TWO



Teachers' **top two** priorities for professional development are expanding their subject knowledge and improving their classroom instruction

Around*
4 in 10

teachers would **'probably'** attend a meet up in a cafe organised by a local teacher from another school

5x more likely

Teachers who would opt to attend a two-day course on curriculum planning or on whole-class instructional pedagogy are **five times more likely** to already perceive this as a strength, than to consider it a weakness

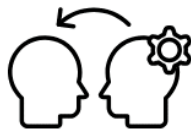
The Current State of Professional Development For Teachers Report
Teachertapp

Only 4%



of teachers believe that training on behaviour management would result in significant improvements to their expertise in the area

6-in-10



classroom teachers say they have taken part in **peer-to-peer learning** such as coaching, observation or a teacher professional development network at some point in the **last 12 months**

Only 1-in-10

teachers **favour** an external approval system for funded-CPD



Only four-in-ten

teachers found the last INSET day they attended 'somewhat' or 'very' useful.

