



inspiring the journey for  
independence together

## Professional Development Policy

Non - Statutory

Reviewed: 3 Yearly

A small, square box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature appears to be 'GSK' or similar, written in a cursive style.

Signed by: (Chair of the Trust)

Date: September 2023

Date of next review: September 2026

## 1. Introduction

This policy applies to teaching staff including Teachers, Teaching Assistants, and our Therapy Team. Non-teaching colleagues' professional development is overseen by their line managers.

**Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better.**

**- Dylan Wiliam**

**“What we want for children ... we should want for their teachers: that schools be places of learning for both of them, and that such learning be suffused with excitement, engagement, passion, challenge, creativity and joy.”**

**- A. Hargreaves (1995)**

Research shows that powerful continuing professional development helps students succeed and teachers thrive. At Rivermead Inclusive Trust, we value the contributions of all members of staff and want to support and guide colleagues through the different stages of their career.

The Rivermead Inclusive Trust acknowledges that continuous professional development is integral to personal job satisfaction, workplace productivity, reward, and recognition, and is critical to the achievement of our organisation's mission and continuous improvement in the quality of its programmes and services.

This Professional Development policy draws from the DfE's Standard for teachers' professional development<sup>1</sup> and recommendations from the Education Endowment Foundation

The Standard for teachers' professional development should be used by everyone working in, and with, schools to raise expectations for professional development, to focus on achieving the greatest improvement in pupil outcomes, and to develop teachers as respected members of the profession. <sup>2,3</sup> There are five parts to the standard, which all need to be acted upon together to ensure effective professional development:

1. Professional development should have a focus on improving and evaluating pupil outcomes.
2. Professional development should be underpinned by robust evidence and expertise.
3. Professional development should include collaboration and expert challenge.
4. Professional development programmes should be sustained over time. And all this is underpinned by, and requires that:
5. Professional development must be prioritised by school leadership.

Meanwhile, the best available research suggests that successful professional development programmes display alignment between their design, structure and the pedagogic processes being promoted, and suggests that the design of effective professional development should consider the following elements:

- ~~Duration~~: the most effective professional development lasts at least 2 terms - more usually a year (or longer).
- Rhythm: it is important that professional development programmes create a 'rhythm' of follow-up, consolidation, and support activities.

## 2. Planning for Professional Development

The guidance from the DfE's Standard for teachers' professional development outlines that CPD needs to:

Link directly to ~~Design for participants' needs creating an overt relevance of the content to its participants~~—their day-to-day experiences with, and aspirations for, their students.

Creating a shared sense of purpose: achieving a shared sense of purpose during professional development is an important factor for success. Whether teachers were conscripted or had volunteered to take part in an activity did not appear to be a highly significant factor – a positive professional learning environment, sufficient time, and a consistency with participants' wider context were all more important.

**Commented [EP1]:** Where is this research from? Could you quote it and have a starting paragraph as it does not make sense as the opening paragraph to this chapter.

Alignment: No single particular type of activity – or configurations of multiple activities – was shown to be universally effective or crucial to success. What matters is a logical thread between the various components of the programme, and creating opportunities for teacher learning that are consistent with the principles of the student learning being promoted.

Content: Professional development programmes must consider both subject knowledge and subject-specific pedagogy in order to achieve their full potential. Input should allow for the consideration of participants' existing theories, beliefs, and practice, and for opportunities to challenge these in a non-threatening way.

Providers of professional development: Facilitators of the most successful programmes act as coaches and/or mentors to participants.

Collaboration: There is evidence to suggest that access to some form of collegial support for problem solving is essential. Where using collaborative approaches, schools should allow participants to engage in collegial problem solving approaches that are focused on improving student outcomes. Opportunities for career progression

**Commented [EP2]:** Are these the elements that help the planning? Could this be explained? Again - what research is this from as it makes reference to 'was shown'

The Trust has a lot of expertise available to all members of staff as required and requested. Some of the ~~things~~ expertise available are:

- coaching – with opportunities to become coaches, or to be coached using the Trust agreed 'GROW' model.
- observing colleagues – whether in their own subject or across the school and or Trust.
- opportunities to undertake training – such as the National College CPD sessions, or other types of training with different organisations.
- working with partner schools – whether Special, Primary or Secondary.
- mentoring ECTs and trainee teachers.
- opportunities to deliver and attend training sessions.
- support in meeting Performance Management targets.
- the conducting of Research and Development.
- and opportunities to gain NPQ accreditation.

When planning for any professional development activities within school the recommendations from the Education Endowment Foundation are considered. These include:

Commented [EP3]: Do we want to add here about 'Adaptive teaching', Trauma informed, SEND & Therapy etc

# 1

When designing and selecting professional development, focus on the mechanisms.



- High quality teaching improves pupil outcomes, and effective professional development offers a crucial tool to develop teaching quality and enhance children's outcomes in the classroom.
- To improve pupil outcomes, careful attention should be paid to how PD is designed. In particular, those who design and select PD should focus on mechanisms.
- Mechanisms are the core building blocks of professional development. They are observable, can be replicated, and could not be removed without making PD less effective. Crucially, they are supported by evidence from research on human behaviour—they have been found, in contexts beyond teaching, to change practice.
- Examples of mechanisms include revisiting prior learning, goal setting, providing feedback, and action planning.
- Those who select PD should look for mechanisms in prospective programmes; those who design PD should include mechanisms in their design.
- Careful consideration is also required to ensure that PD is evidence-based, and that content is drawn from trusted sources.

# 2

Ensure that professional development effectively builds knowledge, motivates staff, develops teaching techniques, and embeds practice.



- The mechanisms that make up effective PD can be split into 4 groups, each of which fulfils a different role.
- PD may aspire to include a mechanism from each of these groups:
  - A. Build knowledge**
    - Managing cognitive load
    - Revisiting prior learning
  - B. Motivate staff**
    - Setting and agreeing on goals
    - Presenting information from a credible source
    - Providing affirmation and reinforcement after progress
  - C. Develop teaching techniques**
    - Instruction
    - Social support
    - Modelling
    - Monitoring and feedback
    - Rehearsal
  - D. Embed practice**
    - Providing prompts and cues
    - Prompting action planning
    - Encouraging monitoring
    - Prompting context specific repetition

# 3

Implement professional development programmes with care, taking into consideration the context and needs of the school.



- Provide guidance on how participants can adapt professional development. Programme developers should signal to those selecting and delivering PD programmes where adaptations can be made, ensuring that the mechanisms are protected and prioritised.
- Ensure that professional development aligns with the needs of the school and is supported by school leadership. Gaining ongoing leadership buy-in can facilitate successful implementation.
- Recognise the time constraints faced by teachers and adapt professional development accordingly. Those designing and selecting PD should critically assess how a PD programme will fit in with the school routine.

When designing and selecting professional development, the key mechanisms which we consider are:

## Building Knowledge

- Managing cognitive load
- Revisiting prior learning

## Motivating Teachers

- Setting and agreeing goals
- Presenting information from a credible source
- Providing affirmation and reinforcement after progress

## Developing Teaching Techniques

- Instructing teachers on how to perform a technique.
- Arranging social support
- Modelling the technique
- Monitoring and providing feedback.
- Rehearsing the technique

### **Embedding practice**

- Providing prompts and cues
- Promoting action planning
- Encouraging monitoring
- Promoting context specific repetition

The following document provides further detail around what these may look like in practice:

[Planning-professional-development.pdf \(d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net\)](https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net/Planning-professional-development.pdf)

## **3. Specific Professional Development sessions during the scholastic year**

The following staff development activities are mandatory and line managers should ensure staff participation in these where appropriate:

- Induction/Initial Health and Safety Training
- Equality and Diversity
- Safeguarding including FSM and PREVENT
- IT systems and security including GDPR, Data Protection and Cyber Security

In addition, each new member of staff will have a personalised induction plan.

In addition to the mandatory training provided to all staff, staff will receive training that is fundamental to the success of our strategic themes and will be delivered through the weekly and termly professional development meetings.

As the Rivermead Inclusive Trust recognises the need to align the professional needs of all staff the professional development programme will be split between meeting the needs of:

- The individual staff in our schools
- The school
- The Trust

In recognising this the Trust have split the statutory five staff development days into the following:

- 3 x Trust planned and delivered sessions
- 3x School based sessions
- 3x ~~P~~ersonal ~~D~~evelopment sessions

These will be 2 hours each in length and will be agreed with all staff at the start of each academic year.

### 3. Performance management and appraisal

Although we recognise that continuing professional development is key to the success of the Rivermead Inclusive Trust and sits both part of and separately to the appraisal cycle, professional development will be a key element of the appraisal process and as such this policy should be read in conjunction with the Appraisal Policy.

In its performance management cycle, the Rivermead Inclusive Trust shall, in every case, encourage the person concerned to explore their CPD options.

During all one-to-one progress review meetings, the development of skills and capabilities to match the changing demands and priorities of both the Trust and our individual schools will be discussed.

Our induction and probation programme will be used to identify any specific training needs.

Where an employee wishes to pursue further education or training, but the line manager, ~~Executive Headteacher~~, Headteacher, Head of School, ~~Executive Headteacher~~ or Core Executive Trust Team has not required that person to acquire a particular skill, to learn specific material, or to acquire specific qualifications to carry out the duties attached to their existing position, ~~the~~ the organisation shall endeavour to facilitate such education or training through

- permitting (at the discretion of the aforementioned and considering the efficiency of the workplace) any rearrangement of working hours that would assist the employee.
- permitting (at the discretion of the aforementioned and considering the efficiency of the workplace) any use by the person of the organisation's equipment or services that would assist the employee.
- permitting (at the discretion of the aforementioned and considering the efficiency of the workplace) any annual leave or unpaid leave arrangements that would assist the prospective employee granting up to two days study leave as necessary to attend examinations.

Educational or training requirements involving reimbursement of fees or provision of paid

study leave may also be negotiated as part of the contract of employment between the employee and the organisation.

An account of the training needs of teachers will form part of the Executive Headteacher, Headteacher / Head of School's annual report to the Local Advisory Board about the operation of the appraisal process in the school.

With regard to the provision of CPD in the case of competing demands on the Trust / School budget, a decision on relative priority will be taken with regard to the extent in which

- The training and support will help the ~~Trust / School~~ / Trust to achieve its priorities.
- The CPD identified is essential for an appraisee to meet their objectives or complete their actions in pursuit of the relevant standards.

#### 4. Requesting and Reporting

All professional development must be requested via the line manager of the employee and agreed by at least one of the following:

- Trust Executive team including CEO, Deputy CEO, Director of School Improvement and Executive Headteacher
- Headteacher / Head of School
- School CPD lead

Once professional development is undertaken it must be recorded and evaluated on the ~~School~~ Trust CPD tracking system.

Commented [EP4]: This will be EVERY next year - do you want to change it now?

Ongoing professional development across the Trust will be monitored and overseen by the Director of School Improvement and HR Manager. This will include regular checking of the school professional development undertaken against the annual budget for professional development.