



Consultation

Teachers & Staffing

Headteachers

Action: Responses by
20th April 2000

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Professional development

Support for teaching and learning
Questionnaire and Summary

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February 2000



Department for
Education and Employment

Excellence
in schools

Overview

This summary of the consultation paper on professional development seeks views from professionals on a proposed framework for professional development. We hope that the framework will support all teachers and teaching assistants to feel motivated to take advantage of a broad range of good quality professional development opportunities. We suggest that all teachers should have time to reflect on achievements and set objectives as part of an entitlement to professional development. We want to recognise and deepen the commitment to professional development amongst teachers, schools and local education authorities. We believe that there should be a broader range of development opportunities on offer to teachers. We want to support decision-making by schools and teachers and help schools to become learning organisations. We want to raise the quality of development opportunities and recognise that the GTC may play a key role in this.

Action required

We seek views from professionals by **20 April 2000**.

Please send your response to:

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Copies of the consultation paper reference number 0008/2000, this summary reference number 0009/2000 and the accompanying poster reference number 0010/2000, can be obtained by calling 0845 6022260 or on www.dfee.gov.uk/professionaldevelopment.

Summary

Professional development is all about making sure that teachers have the finest and most up-to-date tools to do their job. This means, above all, developing the most important elements in teaching – the extraordinary talent and inspiration of so many teachers and, especially, their classroom practice which is central to our shared determination to raise standards and achievement in every school. All teachers need the continually updated knowledge, skills and commitment to improving learning that so many confident teaching professionals already demonstrate. We need teaching to become a learning profession. Continuing improvement requires a user-friendly, relevant framework for teachers' professional development, allowing access to best practice in teaching and learning and providing opportunities for continuing learning on and off the job.

Principles

Agreement across the profession on the principles of professional development would give a foundation for the framework. As a starting point, we suggest the following principles:

1. that effective teachers should **take ownership and give high priority** to professional development, and schools and teachers should **share responsibility and commitment** for development, supported by Government;
2. that professional development should be centred **on raising standards** in the classroom, and therefore take account of objectives to enhance pupil learning, as well as supporting broader professional skills such as working with external partners;
3. that a **wide range of development opportunities** should be available, to suit different needs;
4. that there should be **equality of opportunity** for professional development;
5. that teachers should **learn on the job and from the best**, working alongside other professionals in the classroom;
6. that continuing efforts should be made to look for **better ways to use the time and resources** available for professional development;
7. that **ICT should play a central role** to support opportunities for self-learning at times and places to suit individuals;
8. that professional development should be **high quality**, and teachers and schools should be discerning customers;

9. that **good planning and evaluation** are essential to make the most of professional development;
10. that **information should be shared widely** about lessons learned and good practice, making the most of the potential of ICT.

Time to reflect and set objectives

All teachers should have an entitlement to good professional development. As part of this, they should have time to reflect on achievements and consider objectives. The performance management process will give every teacher the opportunity to do this, building on the good practice that already exists in many schools and linked to school development planning. We believe it would be helpful for teachers if we set out the standards of practice most already aspire to in a national framework which all professionals could use to monitor progress and plan professional development. We intend to consult widely later this year on how this could be used in schools. We want to encourage in-depth career planning at regular points and have made a start on enabling teachers to focus on core activities through our efforts to remove unnecessary bureaucracy and our investment in teaching assistants and administrative support.

Recognition and commitment

We know that many teachers, schools and local education authorities are already committed to professional development. We want to deepen that commitment in the profession. We seek views on the benefits of establishing an entitlement to professional development alongside a contractual obligation. We plan to support teachers giving up their own time for professional development by piloting ways to make money for professional development available to individual teachers. We hope that the new pay system will ensure that teachers receive fuller recognition for their achievements. We suggest that all teachers should have their own development portfolio, which could be available through a disk or on the Internet. We want schools and local education authorities to signal their commitment to professional development in the school development plan and through commitment to the Investors in People standard. We have increased significantly the level of spending on professional development because it is so crucial to raising standards. We plan to target funding through the School Improvement Grant and to continue to support the greatest possible delegation of resources to schools.

Opportunity

We believe that there should be a broader range of development opportunities available to teachers. We are going to introduce pilot professional bursaries to make money available to teachers directly for professional development. We want to encourage all teachers to experience opportunities for work-based learning by collaborating with other professionals, for example by teacher

exchanges, business placements, research, mentoring and networking and to reflect back into classroom practice the experience and insight they gain by doing so. We invite views on whether the role of Advanced Skills Teachers should be more strongly focused on sharing good practice in professional development and leading professional learning teams in schools.

We want to support teacher research in partnership with higher education institutions and other schools. We are investing in a national programme of Best Practice Research Scholarships to enable research into priority areas such as: boys' achievement, gifted and talented pupils; children with special educational needs; transition from primary to secondary school; social barriers to achievements and closer working between home and school. We seek views on whether experienced teachers should be given a "sabbatical" period away from the classroom for development activity and research. We want to take advantage of the opportunity that ICT represents for professional development, and are investing in the infrastructure of ICT and in making sure that teachers have the opportunity to develop the skills to use it.

Focus on schools and teachers

We want to support decision-making about professional development by schools and teachers and invite views on what support would help schools to become learning organisations. We welcome ideas on how schools could manage their budgets for professional development more effectively, including ideas for minimising the use of supply teachers to cover absences for training and development to avoid disruption in the classroom and ensure that resources are focused more directly on teachers' development. We also seek views on whether schools would welcome funding for professional development to be identified more clearly in the funding they receive, and how best INSET days should be used in schools. The relationship between partners such as teachers and schools, local education authorities, training providers and higher education institutions and Government will be vital and the GTC will be in a good position to act as a broker between these partners.

Quality

The quality of development opportunities is crucial. It will be important to raise the level of awareness and knowledge about professional development and what is available, what is effective and how it is planned and evaluated.

The GTC is likely to be concerned about the quality of development opportunities for teachers and may well play a key role, for example, by providing the means for teachers to evaluate provision and to exchange views on it; by auditing provision and teachers' experiences; by developing guidance and evaluation criteria or some form of teacher approval for provision. This would help schools and teachers make choices about professional development opportunities. We will back this up by providing a Code of Practice for training

providers to offer a checklist to schools and teachers of what to expect.

The Code seeks to ensure that providers prepare effectively by agreeing the purposes and success criteria of the development activity and setting out how pupils and teachers are expected to benefit; deliver good provision informed by recent research, delivered by those with expertise using high quality materials; evaluate achievements in improving pupil learning, meeting the aims of the activity and the quality of the provision; and respect equal opportunities by ensuring that access to professional development is open to all teachers.

We want to encourage organisations such as professional associations to share information about professional development, and to invite Ofsted to carry out specific exercises to identify and share information about provision. We plan to work with providers to produce development materials. We will support the use of ICT to disseminate materials and information about practice and quality.

Conclusion

Our vision is that all teachers and teaching assistants will feel motivated to take advantage of the broadest possible range of good quality professional development opportunities. We want to encourage them to consider their changing professional needs at regular intervals and to set clear objectives.

We believe that a framework of standards will assist progress and will be a useful tool in planning development. We believe that professionals' commitment to their development and to learning from the practice of others should be celebrated.

In our proposed framework, schools will be at the centre of decision-making, maximising the potential of their resources.

We know that ongoing professional development is already a part of the lives of good teachers. We are committed to making it an entitlement for every teacher, and the foundation of the trust that must exist between teachers, pupils and their parents that the teaching pupils receive is of the highest possible quality. Above all, we are certain that teachers must feel a sense of control and ownership of their own development. Any model of professional development imposed on the teaching profession without careful and thorough consultation can only fail. We therefore ask teachers to tell us what they think of the ideas and suggestions we have laid out.

You have just finished reading a work in progress. Please help us to complete it.

Thank you for taking the time to read this summary of the consultation document. We hope that you will find time to respond to some (or all) of the questions posed in this document.

Questionnaire

These questions are intended as a guide only. We believe it is essential for teachers to feel they own the professional development framework. Please feel free to let us have your views and own experience of professional development and to continue on separate sheets if you wish.

Name*
Organisation*
Address*

(*Please print)

Your response may be made public unless you indicate otherwise.

YES NO

Would you prefer your response to be kept confidential?

Please tick one of the following boxes that best describes you as a respondent (please tick only one option)

Teacher LEA School Union Diocesan Individual Provider

Principles

1. Do you agree with the ten suggested principles for professional development?

YES NO

COMMENTS

2. Do you have views about what you think the framework for professional development should provide and about the opportunities, support and structure that you think would support more effective teaching and learning?

YES NO

COMMENTS

Time to reflect and set objectives

3. How can individual teachers best be supported in the setting of clear objectives for their professional development?

COMMENTS

4. Do you agree that identifying standards of good teaching would be helpful to teachers seeking to benchmark their progress and plan their professional development?

YES NO

COMMENTS

5. a) What do you think of the suggestion that in-depth career planning could happen at key points in the teacher's career?

COMMENTS

- b) What other ways could be used to maximise the effectiveness of career planning?

COMMENTS

6. a) Are the initiatives to help teachers focus on core activities through reducing the time spent on administrative tasks and the bureaucracy schools have to deal with helpful?
b) Do you suggest any other approaches we might employ to help teachers focus on professional development?

YES NO

COMMENTS

Recognition and Commitment

7. Do you think there would be benefits to establishing an entitlement to professional development alongside a contractual obligation?

YES NO

COMMENTS

8. Do you think professional development should be recognised and celebrated systematically, for example through a development portfolio?

YES NO

COMMENTS

9. What should schools, local education authorities and other partners do to respect and promote the individual's professional development?

COMMENTS

Opportunity

10. What level of commitment might teachers be willing to make if they were offered a professional bursary?

COMMENTS

11. How can teachers be supported to reflect back into classroom practice the experience gained from work-based learning?

COMMENTS

12. Should ASTs have a central role in sharing good practice in terms of professional development and leading professional learning teams?

YES NO

13. a) How valuable do you find working with other schools?

COMMENTS

- b) How important do you think it is to improve the opportunities to gain new experience through working with other schools?

COMMENTS

- c) How important are broader opportunities, such as international exchanges or placements outside the teaching profession?

COMMENTS

14. a) Do you agree that the national Best Practice Research Scholarships Programme should support research in priority areas such as boys' achievement, gifted and talented pupils; children with special educational needs; transition from primary to secondary school; social barriers to achievements and closer working between home and school?

YES NO

YES NO

- b) Are there other areas that you think should be included?

COMMENTS

- c) How can research and scholarship dovetail with, and inspire, good practice in professional development?

COMMENTS

15. a) Should experienced teachers be given a "sabbatical" period away from the classroom for development activity and research?
b) What sorts of activity do you believe would lend themselves to a "sabbatical"?

YES NO

COMMENTS

16. In addition to training, and help in purchasing equipment, are there other ways in which we can help maximise the potential of new technology in enhancing the development opportunities on offer to teachers?

YES NO

COMMENTS

Focus on schools and teachers

17. a) Do you agree that the bulk of decision-making about development activities should take place at school level?
b) How can this best be supported?

YES NO

COMMENTS

18. a) How can school budgets for professional development be managed effectively, and should school funding for professional development be identified more clearly?

COMMENTS

- b) How can the use of supply teachers to cover absences for training and development be minimised?

COMMENTS

19. How can INSET days be used effectively and imaginatively in schools?

COMMENTS

20. How can the relationship between key partners such as schools, LEAs, providers and Government work effectively?

COMMENTS

21. The GTC will want to know the views of teachers in relation to professional development provision. Do you have any suggestions you wish to record here?

COMMENTS

Quality

22. How can schools and teachers be supported to make more discerning choices about professional development?

COMMENTS

23. Do you agree that the focus of the draft Code – in terms of what should be expected of providers – is right?

YES

NO

COMMENTS

24. How can high quality and value for money in provision of professional development be identified and monitored?

COMMENTS

25. How can high quality materials and experiences best be disseminated and applied in the classroom?

COMMENTS

Thank you for taking the time to tell us your views.

Copies of this publication can be obtained from:

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