

Wellcome CPD Challenge *School Stories*

Meeting the challenge of providing high quality
continuing professional development for teachers



**Volume 2
2020/21**



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Introduction

Science education is a critical part of an excellent education. We want young people to be enthused by science and encouraged to consider science and science-related careers.

Moreover, science helps young people develop skills such as critical thinking and problem solving, which are essential for decision-making. We know that teachers play a vital role in this - quality of teaching is the most important in-school factor for improving pupil outcomes. It makes sense, therefore, for science teachers to be supported throughout their careers.

We believe that all science teachers should participate in high quality subject-focussed continuing professional development (CPD) every year but we recognise that this is unlikely to happen for science teachers unless there is systemic change for all teachers – of all subjects and in all phases.

With this in mind, we set out to discover what schools and the wider education system would need to put in place in order for all teachers to participate in CPD every year and established the **Wellcome CPD Challenge**.

The CPD Challenge has been funded by *Wellcome* as part of its extensive programme of work on teachers' professional development, managed by *Sheffield Institute of Education*, part of *Sheffield Hallam University*, and independently evaluated by *CFE Research*.

As the CPD Challenge draws to a close, we are delighted to support the publication of this second volume of 'stories' from the second and third years of the Challenge – and we very much hope you will find inspiration from them as your school continues its own professional development journey.



Nan Davies
Education and Learning
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The Wellcome CPD Challenge

The case for sustained continuing professional development (CPD) for all teachers is supported by a robust evidence base.

However, teachers in England generally participate in less CPD than their colleagues in high-performing countries. Furthermore, despite the fact that teachers find it more beneficial – and the evidence supports them – they participate in less subject-specific CPD than generic CPD.

In response to this, the aim of the Wellcome CPD Challenge is to understand what changes need to take place within the education system in order for schools to meet defined criteria relating to the quality and quantity of teacher professional development.

The criteria, based on evidence from research and stakeholder testing, are designed so that, if schools meet them, all teachers are able to participate in a transformational amount of high quality, relevant and impactful CPD every year.

By setting schools the challenge of meeting these criteria, we are learning about schools' approaches to CPD, how they work towards improving its quality and quantity, and the benefits, challenges, enablers and barriers to the changes they make.

Forty primary, secondary and special schools from South Yorkshire and Derbyshire, representing the full range of contexts, have taken part. The full list of schools is available at the end of the booklet.

Each school identified one or two CPD Challenge Champions to lead change in their school.

The CPD Challenge criteria:

- CPD meets the needs of the individual teacher and is predominantly focussed on subject-specific development
- CPD is high quality and aligns to the Department for Education's Standard for teachers' professional development¹
- every teacher participates in a minimum 35 hours of CPD annually



Sai Patel
CPD Challenge Facilitator

The schools are supported by Sheffield Institute of Education through:

- twice-yearly meetings of all schools participating in the Challenge
- ongoing discussions with a CPD Challenge Facilitator, external to the school
- a bursary of £7500 funded by Wellcome



The support provides CPD Challenge Champions with opportunities to access and reflect on the best available evidence about CPD, and to have a critical friend to talk to about their CPD practice. The funding is a recognition of the time needed to engage in the Challenge; it is not intended to provide access to sufficient professional development to meet the criteria.

In the second and third years of the CPD Challenge, we have seen fundamental, sustained changes in schools' approaches to professional development. New practices have been embedded relating to key issues including the identification of teachers' individual professional development needs, the development of subject-focussed approaches to CPD, and how to balance both of these with whole school needs.

During these two years of the CPD Challenge, schools were hit hard by restrictions relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many schools involved in the CPD Challenge found, reassuringly, that their new approaches to CPD were resilient to the pandemic, and, indeed, that COVID-19 led to the development of new, more flexible approaches to CPD through the use of online technologies.

While each school in the CPD Challenge is taking its own approach to meeting the CPD Challenge criteria, the stories here, written by CPD Challenge Champions, offer learning and reflections which are applicable across all schools.

Meeting the needs of the individual

Jonathon Lye
Aston Academy



Prior to 2015 the majority of CPD at Aston Academy was 'one size fits all' whole school sessions. Faculty meetings were scheduled but these often ended up as admin or information giving sessions, which had limited focus on the individual and arguably had little impact on student outcomes.

Over the following two years, we started offering carousels of CPD sessions covering a variety of topics, allowing more choice for staff. In 2017 we began adding specific 'faculty CPD' sessions. To enable Heads of Faculty and their teams to identify the CPD needs of their faculty every teacher had a one to one 'CPD planning meeting'. These supportive and non-judgmental meetings, separate from the appraisal system, provided an opportunity for all teaching staff to work with a colleague to identify their CPD needs for the following academic year. So, by the time we joined the CPD Challenge in 2018 we had already started working towards the criteria '*CPD meets the needs of the individual teacher and is predominantly focussed on subject-specific development*'.

Evaluations showed that teachers appreciated the move towards more subject-specific development. However, as a leader of teaching development I found it harder to monitor the quality of several faculty CPD sessions as opposed to one whole school session.

To improve the quality of faculty CPD we provided training on how to facilitate effective CPD and Heads of Faculty completed a simple plan with their leadership team link outlining the sessions in advance. While there remained some variability between faculties, the most effective ran a series of related sessions with a keen focus on student outcomes that went some way towards meeting the individual needs of teachers in their faculty.

How COVID-19 changed CPD

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, one advantage was that the enforced transition to online CPD enabled staff to participate in CPD that really did meet their individual needs. In addition to numerous free sources of online CPD, our Trust subscribed to two online CPD providers.

I shared an extensive list of courses and webinars separated into different themes and subjects and colleagues were encouraged to participate in the online CPD of their choice. Each instance of online CPD was recorded and evaluated on a short Google Form.

In total 538 instances of CPD were recorded from April-July 2020 across all staff at our academy. Online CPD therefore provided one solution for meeting teachers' individual CPD needs despite the prolonged COVID-19 restrictions.

The CPD Challenge criteria stipulate 35 hours of CPD per teacher each year. Thomsett and Uttley² provide a convincing argument for ring-fencing far more time for teacher development. Like them, I believe that to truly meet individual need there is a strong argument for over 35 hours of ring-fenced CPD time for all teachers. This is something we are now working towards.

A future challenge is how to blend meeting individual CPD needs, for example through online learning, with meeting the needs of the school and faculty.

Building on our progress through the CPD Challenge, we are trialing a peer-coaching model that, subject to a positive evaluation, we hope to roll out across all staff next academic year.

Improving, coaching and disrupting

Lisa Watson
Athelstan Primary School



Improving subject knowledge

We have always placed a strong emphasis on the professional development of our staff, with clear systems in place for recording, monitoring, and reporting to governors. When we joined the CPD Challenge we had begun deconstructing the foundation subjects in our curriculum, with a deliberate focus on subject specific CPD. The CPD Challenge mirrored our own aims and principles, and we decided our participation would help us to ensure that teachers were supported in developing their subject knowledge and improving practice across the curriculum.

As a large, three-form entry primary school, we were very conscious of the challenges of delivering high quality CPD to all teachers which would also meet individual needs. We realised a 'one size fits all' approach wasn't working for us. We had also recognised that a significant number of staff meetings tended to be instructional and generic rather than focusing on subject areas. When there was a focus on subject areas, it tended to be on the core subjects.

Coaching to confidence

Participation in the CPD Challenge prompted us to look carefully at the individual needs of our teachers through an annual evaluation audit. Teachers were asked to think about what they felt they taught the best, least well, what they most enjoyed teaching, and where they felt they needed subject-specific CPD. We then refined our programme of CPD each half term so that it was a subject-focused model, rather than a phase or age group model. As a primary school this represented a significant shift in our CPD practice.

Via teachers' audits we identified that Spanish and PE were development areas. We used some of the funding from the CPD Challenge to help pay for specialist teachers in both subjects. These specialists worked alongside our own teachers in a coaching capacity. We also wanted to support literacy, so the CPD Challenge Champion and reading leader joined daily phonics lessons to team teach and coach all staff in their delivery. This has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning across the foundation stage and key stage one.

Disrupting CPD practice

The COVID-19 pandemic meant that we had to rethink the delivery of our CPD sessions. We directed teachers to online CPD opportunities and asked them to use their CPD audit to target areas for development so that we were able to meet individual subject specific needs. The accessibility of online CPD meant that there was a sharp increase in the quantity of CPD undertaken, particularly in music, computing and Spanish. The focus on all subject areas, rather than simply English and mathematics, improved the subject knowledge and confidence of our teachers and impacted positively on the quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum.

Since being involved in the CPD Challenge, we have developed a more collaborative approach to professional development. The motivation and buy-in of our staff have been phenomenal.

Our staff has shown unwavering commitment to the Challenge and their own CPD needs. Subject leaders are proactive in supporting their colleagues, and we have noticed that teachers have become much more willing to actively seek support from leaders. This practice is now becoming embedded and working well and has improved the quality of education in our school.

Accelerating school improvement

Claire Bailey
Bents Green School



Bents Green is a secondary school for young people with autism and communication needs.

As a newly appointed deputy headteacher in January 2018, I was responsible for leading CPD for the first time. CPD at Bents Green School (BGS) was largely planned week by week, usually in response to the emerging behaviour, safeguarding or pastoral concerns of the day. Teachers and Teaching Assistants (TAs) alike accessed weekly full staff meetings, with very little opportunity for collaboration, reflection, or evaluation. New to role, I began to plan ahead, inviting 'experts' into school to provide a wide range of training which covered aspects of pedagogy and special needs training. I began to plan CPD sessions specifically for teachers and for TAs to tailor training to individual needs. After meeting our CPD Challenge Facilitator, who enthusiastically presented the 'Challenge' to me, I was sold. The Challenge gave me the much-needed vision of what CPD could look like at BGS.

We were poised for accelerating school improvement. An invigorated leadership team had a clear mission to improve the quality of education for all students at BGS. We knew we had a lot of work to do. The curriculum needed redesigning and we needed to enable staff to effectively implement our core curriculum across a range of abilities and age groups. We are proud of the experience, skills, and knowledge of such a dedicated team of teachers, and they deserved the investment of time, development, and training. The CPD Challenge would provide a framework for us to work within. Staff engaged enthusiastically.

We moved towards a sequenced programme of CPD which focussed upon subject development by:

- 1 ensuring staff had time each half term to discuss subject curriculum development and assessment
- 2 creating subject specific working groups with 'subject experts' to guide and advise curriculum planning
- 3 investing in subject associations
- 4 making links with external subject hubs across Sheffield
- 5 developing internal systems of recording and monitoring CPD and a new CPD request form to encourage staff to seek their own development opportunities
- 6 establishing a Teaching and Learning group, creating time and space for teachers to come together, talk about teaching and develop our school vision for teaching and learning

Creating the Bents Green way of teaching and learning helped staff have ownership of what effective teaching looked like and this underpinned the lesson observation process, which subsequently influenced future CPD planning.

Then the pandemic hit. Dealing with COVID-19 was a steep learning curve. Our priorities changed quickly and sharply. Risk assessments, shielding, testing, remote learning, bubbles, isolation became the language of the day. Where did our CPD vision fit within this landscape?

The leadership remained resolute. We quickly mastered the art of online technology and continued to collaborate safely. Pre-recording training gave staff greater flexibility to access training. We maintained our CPD cycle and kept our focus on subject knowledge and curriculum development. The principle of delivering highly effective CPD remained a priority for school improvement. Except for one or two key events which had to be rescheduled, we delivered all our CPD aims for 2020/21.

Whilst we know we have come a long way, we still have further to go. The Teaching and Learning group has developed into a Research and Development group, with teachers accessing a range of research resources to help shape their thinking and to inform their planning.

Rather than teaching and learning being a 'top down' approach, we are growing a culture of reflective, knowledgeable, and brave practitioners. They are testing the boundaries of their (and their students') comfort zones. We are asking different questions about how our students process, retain, recall and review their learning. We are putting this into practice and sharing with colleagues what we have learnt. We are examining ways of measuring the effectiveness and impact of our CPD.

The strengthening of teaching and learning has been as a direct result of investing time, thought and resources in CPD for teachers and TAs. Developing their skills, knowledge and pedagogy has improved the quality of education for all students at Bents Green School.

Building a CPD community

Helen Adams
Bradfield Dungworth Primary School

Bradfield Dungworth is a small, rural school perched on the edge of Sheffield overlooking the Peak District National Park. We have a large catchment area of over seven miles and some of our children live on isolated working farms whilst others travel from the city suburbs to experience the benefits of a 'family' school.

In 2018, our first CPD audit, as part of the CPD Challenge, indicated that just over half of our teachers felt they had undertaken 35 hours of CPD of which 50% was subject specific, 51% of the instances of CPD were thought to involve expert challenge, and just 62% formed part of a sustained programme.

Addressing our CPD challenges

The CPD Challenge coincided with the school converting to an academy and being a founder member of the Peak Edge Multi-Academy Trust. This strategic move enabled the school to address some of the challenges associated with being a small isolated rural school.

Collaboration

Collaboration across the Trust has meant that subject leaders now participate in termly peer to peer reviews, teachers can share best practice and take part in subject and year group moderation, Recently and Newly Qualified Teachers meet and follow a programme of CPD led by senior leaders, and individual development needs can be met by drawing on visits to schools across the Trust.



When reflecting on our audit, we identified the following barriers to CPD:

Small staff group - each class teacher leads on at least two subjects and teaches a mixed age class, so they don't consider themselves experts. They do not have a year group partner to share ideas or carry out classroom enquiries with.

Isolation - travel to CPD venues, particularly after school, was a barrier in terms of time and cost, as was collaboration with other colleagues beyond our school.

Limited CPD funds - as a small school funding for external CPD was very limited.

'I was enabled to take ownership of my own CPD and identify my own strengths and areas for development.'
Class teacher

'The series of CPD sessions that are revisited every half term are far more beneficial than stand-alone staff meetings.'
Class teacher

'My goodness! I'm coming back to a whole new world – breakout rooms, people in the United States leading the training, attendees from all over the country!'
Assistant Headteacher returning from maternity leave

Expert challenge

We have provided expert challenge via Trust senior leaders sharing good practice and evidence-based approaches, Senior Leader peer reviews across the Trust, local authority support for schools, individualised coaching and mentoring from our School Improvement Partner, and in school support for teacher 'Plan - Do - Review' cycles.

Sustained 'Subject Specific' Programme

Our CPD Challenge data prompted staff to reflect on how CPD was having an impact on their practice and pupils. We introduced a more cyclical approach to CPD. Themes are now identified at the start of the year and visited at least four times across the year. Teachers follow up input with class-based interventions and time for reflection.

By Autumn 2020 the combination of these actions had led to the instances of CPD that involved 'expert challenge' increasing from 51% to 79%. The instances of CPD that were part of a sustained programme had increased from 62% to 94%.

As a small school, we have embraced the new world of online training. It provides the flexibility to access individualised subject specific training often at a lower cost and without the need for travel. Access to recordings after the training allows staff to revisit their learning and embed key messages.

As the Wellcome CPD Challenge comes to an end, we will continue to use the DfE Standard for Teachers' Professional Development¹ to help us evaluate and plan CPD. With Ofsted's current emphasis on curriculum, the importance of subject specific CPD grows and we will continue to work with our partner schools within the Trust to ensure that our CPD draws on expertise and provides challenge.

We originally decided to join the CPD Challenge primarily because of the additional funding, which was a significant amount for a small school. This funding has been helpful, but the real benefits have come through reflection and analysis of our CPD and making 'tweaks' by taking a solution focused approach to our challenges.

New beginnings

Ros Carter and Ann Marie Dowling Buxton Junior School



In 2018 the appointment of Ros as a new headteacher heralded the start of the CPD Challenge at Buxton Junior School. As part of the deputy head role, Ann Marie became the CPD Challenge Champion and took on the leadership of the Challenge in school. It felt like a good opportunity to find out how other schools were developing their CPD and to share our plans and experiences.

After an initial meeting with our Challenge facilitator, we felt reassured that our focus on subject specific CPD was moving the school in the right direction, and this project would offer us the chance to be more strategic. Perhaps we hadn't always fully recorded our CPD and disseminated knowledge with other colleagues as effectively as we might have done.

Sustained over time

Our first action was to set up a central record of CPD so that we could monitor CPD across the school and track how it was being used to inform teaching and learning.

The Challenge CPD log, completed for the evaluation, provided us with information on our progress towards the CPD Challenge criteria. It also highlighted what constitutes high quality CPD and prompted us to reflect on whether we were developing a sustained programme of CPD or running a series of CPD events.

We looked for opportunities to be involved in longer CPD programmes, for example enrolling two teachers in a sustained programme of subject focused CPD so that they could support each other's development.

Teaching and Learning Plans

As we began the CPD Challenge we introduced Teaching and Learning Plans (TLPs). TLPs form the bedrock for supportive coaching discussions around practice development. They are a record of lesson observations, subject specific CPD, learning walks and other training, and help teachers to build on strengths and identify areas for development through tweaks to their practice. They provide an individualised approach to CPD set within the context of the school development aims. In this way staff are given more ownership of their development.

Through the TLP approach teachers are now engaged in an ongoing process of professional development. It is no longer incumbent on senior leaders to appear in classrooms to appraise lessons and give instructions on how to improve.

The TLPs have encouraged us all to be far more reflective, active and responsible for our own CPD; sometimes just being signposted in the right direction, for example, the right research article, book or blog, is all we need.

Everyone benefits from having a peer-teaching partner to share ideas and discuss new pedagogical approaches we are trialing. There is a stronger feeling of collaboration, of learning and improving together with self-directed actions that teachers decide for themselves.

The CPD Challenge has provided a tool to support our review and evaluation of CPD provision. Networking with other Challenge schools and learning from their experiences has helped us to reflect on our practice. We have also shared our innovations with other Challenge schools.

Our CPD addresses school development areas and supports individual needs. We are now in a much stronger position and will continue to reflect on and refine our CPD practice.

Reflecting on and refining CPD practice

Sheree Doyle
Dobcroft Junior School



We saw the CPD Challenge as a valuable opportunity to engage with other professionals and thoroughly reflect on and refine our CPD practice.

The beginning

At Dobcroft Junior School staff voice is a crucial for our evaluation and identification of areas of strength and improvement. With the introduction of the CPD Challenge in 2018, we began to more closely link staff voice and staff vision for CPD to the criteria set out in the DfE Standard for Teachers' Professional Development¹. Staff feedback revealed actions which would enable us to meet our shared vision, with clear DfE criteria to evaluate against.

Clear and uncompromised focus areas linked to school and staff development

We are passionate about ensuring that our School Improvement and Development Plan (SIDP), and subsequent CPD programmes and appraisal, are directly driven by staff and pupil needs. The CPD Challenge has prompted reflection around ensuring clarity over CPD focus areas. As a result of this, our CPD strategy is now explicitly linked with our SIDP to the degree that it is instrumental in terms of making progress towards our school targets. We cannot have any wasted CPD opportunities, and each must have impact. We now very carefully consider each CPD input and ensure that it is subject specific and/or focused on pedagogy wherever possible and we carefully consider the quality of what is delivered.

Supporting individuals

Naturally, our staff have individual strengths and areas for development. Therefore, we provide regular opportunities for them to develop in areas which meet their own needs.

The CPD Challenge has provided valuable opportunities for us to hear from other settings, who also prioritise a personalised approach to CPD, and learn from their experiences. Over the course of the CPD Challenge, we have refined our CPD structures to improve the ways that we meet individual need.

This has included:

- auditing individual needs and providing opportunities for staff with similar interests to collaborate on research projects to address those needs
- individual staff evaluation of CPD and the noting of implications for practice or development needs
- a new appraisal system, which is strongly connected to individual strengths and areas for development
- more frequent, formal meetings to discuss individual progress underpinned by teacher self-evaluation

We ensure staff have time to:

- acquire new skills, with a minimum of three consecutive introductory professional development meetings for new CPD themes
- apply new learning, including planned release time from class
- review new or developing practices across the year
- reflect on progress at regular appraisal meetings during school hours via non-contact time

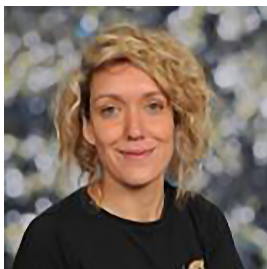
The importance of time

The CPD Challenge criteria included 35 hours of CPD as an expectation for all teachers annually. As we embarked on the CPD Challenge, we reflected on how this time should be used. We reviewed CPD programme timings and decided that staff needed longer periods of time over a sustained period to develop and embed new ideas and practices. As a result, our CPD Strategy now includes detail about time frames, including time for staff to be released from class to refine and embed practice.

The refining of CPD structures has been well received by staff. We will build upon these systems next year, including supporting subject leaders by facilitating high quality subject specific CPD. We will also continue to utilise impact measures and staff voice, to steer our strategy, and CPD will remain at the forefront of our school development.

Rethinking professional development

Laura Watton
Mossbrook School



Mossbrook is a primary special school in Sheffield. We believe that CPD is invaluable to providing up to date knowledge and skills for the individual and whole school. In the past, we found the impact of CPD was limited due to factors such as cost, time out of class, finding high quality CPD relevant for our context, and the time to disseminate knowledge and skills throughout school.

The CPD Challenge has caused a real shift in our thinking about what constitutes effective CPD and we have made a number of changes as a result.

Resourcing CPD

Initially, we used the CPD Challenge funding to open up more CPD opportunities. After seeing the impact throughout school, we have now increased our own budget allocation for professional development.

Subject specific CPD

We have moved from generic to subject specific CPD and in the coming academic year, we will have an increased focus on developing subject knowledge for all staff. We have researched resources relevant to our curriculum and the development of specialist knowledge to support our subject leads in their work. We will be providing time for teachers to observe their subject being taught throughout school, support planning, and ensure strong subject knowledge across the teaching staff.

Staff development

Our involvement in the CPD Challenge has changed the way we use staff meeting time. Meetings now have a clear focus on CPD and the increased focus on staff development has helped further strengthen the quality of our provision. This shift to more regular and ongoing CPD means that time has been freed up in INSET days and we now have time allocated for individual staff to disseminate relevant aspects of their CPD to colleagues.

Recent themes have included Attention Autism, Numicon, Rainbow talk linked to literacy, and musical interaction. The increased time for CPD allows teachers to share their successes with colleagues, and this sharing of resources and ideas helps to embed new practice across the school.

Supporting individual needs

The CPD Challenge has helped us to change from a 'top down' model to one which is better informed by individual needs; staff now take responsibility for their own professional development and use this to shape their classroom practice. Our 'Ideas and Innovations' template allows staff to suggest what they feel would support the development of Mossbrook further.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has prevented face-to-face training, we have found some positive outcomes. Remote access to online training has given staff opportunities to access a wide range of CPD across the country; the lack of travel has meant a saving of both time and money. Online courses have also meant that staff have had more flexibility in when they access training.

Our involvement in the CPD Challenge has transformed CPD in our school. It has prompted us to reassess what CPD is delivered and how we deliver it. Our staff are now more engaged in their own development and in developing others.

The impact of our changes to CPD provision have strengthened our resolve to maintain the momentum the CPD Challenge has created in school.

Responding to needs and challenges

Helen Round
Oasis Academy Fir Vale



We are a unique primary school located in the North of Sheffield. Most of our children are new to English and new to school, we have high in-year mobility, most of our children are of a Roma cultural background and most of our children are disadvantaged. Our unique context is challenging; we have found that generic or 'off the shelf' CPD programmes do not fit with our bespoke approaches to learning and teaching, which are focused on language development, first-hand experiences, and trauma-informed practice.

We wanted to join the CPD Challenge as we saw it as a great opportunity to learn from other schools and find new ways of doing things. At the start of the project, we reflected that most of our CPD did not take account of individual needs and areas of expertise. CPD was a priority in school and included our teaching assistants working alongside teachers, but it was mainly focused on whole school priorities, English or Maths or general learning and teaching strategies. This might have reflected our Ofsted grade at the time!

Meeting individual needs

Through the CPD Challenge we had time and space to reflect as a leadership team on the need for a strategic approach to CPD that not only focuses on the current school priorities but also takes account of the individual stages of development of our teachers and teaching assistants.

We used the broader definition of CPD discussed in the CPD Challenge briefing sessions. We worked on changing staff perception and implementing a range of opportunities in addition to 'going on a course'. This included instructional coaching, peer

'It has been so helpful as an Early Career teacher to have the opportunity to do some 1:1 CPD with the Geography Association. This has been followed with whole staff meetings to develop staff confidence and understanding around the subject. As a result of this I feel like my awareness of the subject has grown and my confidence in taking a leadership role has developed.'

Geography Lead

coaching, good practice visits, reading/watching clips with reflection, use of video to self-reflect and work with consultants to plan and model teaching in a particular subject. We found that 'little and often' was successful in developing a quality, individualised CPD programme that impacts on development of high-quality day-to-day classroom practice.

Subject specific

We also reflected on the subject specific element of our CPD. Through engaging in the CPD Challenge, we have strategically planned CPD across the whole curriculum. Membership of subject organisations has been invaluable. This has enabled us to access a range of subject specific CPD that has supported our recently qualified teachers as new subject leaders to develop their expertise and confidence, not only in being a model of good practice themselves but also developing their expertise to lead other more experienced staff in school.

CPD in the pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the way we deliver CPD in school. We were determined to find creative solutions to make sure that we maintained the momentum we have built over the last three years.

Our coaching has been adapted to include doorway lesson visits or use of video. Group CPD has been delivered online, with staff either logging on at home or in their class bubbles in school. At first engagement was poor, we had many 'tumbleweed moments' working online so we worked on building staff confidence and supported contributions using simple technologies available in the online system, such as the online chat. Staff have responded with creative ways to engage colleagues in online CPD. For example, our D&T lead planned an interactive subject knowledge session for staff in which prepared resources and scaffolds were distributed to class bubbles, and staff shared photos of their class work in the online chat. He then called in to the doorway of bubbles in person to provide feedback and answer any questions.

The future

We aim to keep the focus on individualised CPD through our new coaching policy. We are also continuing to develop our subject specific CPD through links with specialist providers and coaches.

From the CPD event to the CPD process

Sean Murphy
Saint Pius X Catholic High School



Before the CPD Challenge, in my quest to improve the quality of teaching and learning, I had observed countless lessons, interviewed swathes of teachers, met with subject leaders, pored over data, and spent many hours with our Leadership Team writing our Self-Evaluation Framework and School Development Plan. I was confident in my judgements and more importantly, I knew which aspects of teaching needed improving.

I researched the findings of a host of educational gurus: Petty, Dweck, Willingham, Claxton, and I had planned my INSET day to perfection, and it went well. My presentation was applauded. Members of the Leadership Team reported deep discussion in the breakout groups. The next week subject leaders sent their revised Department Development Plans containing, to my delight, how they were going to use my INSET to improve teaching, learning, and outcomes for students. Indeed, I was a happy man!

Later that term after giving teachers a few weeks to embed the new practices I carried out a series of lesson observations and learning walks. However, I found no evidence that my training had influenced the practice of one solitary teacher! There was no evidence in their planning, resources, craft, or presentation. I wondered what had gone wrong, as there was no evidence that any teacher in my school had even been in the same room as me on that first INSET day!

It was this experience that attracted me to the CPD Challenge, as I clearly needed some help. In our first meeting, I learned that my experience was not unique, and that schools across the country were investing millions of pounds and hours of time for negligible measurable impact on the quality of teaching or on outcomes for

students. It struck me that we had not only been using the wrong training model, but the words of Geoff Petty were also ringing true: *'The delivery of content doesn't guarantee its arrival.'*³ We had been delivering a glib, one size fits all, generic brand of CPD that inspired no ownership, no action and subsequently no impact!

After attending the CPD Challenge briefings and collaborating with school leaders from other schools, the path ahead began to emerge. Our first act in school was to abandon CPD of the generic kind: no longer is it a key vehicle for school improvement.

The next step was to promote the concept that CPD is not an event but a continual process of improvement. Time is now allocated to a CPD slot in weekly department meetings in which aspects of how topics are taught are shared, discussed, improved, and evaluated via shared observation.

This in turn has inspired teachers to take ownership of CPD and provided the freedom to carry out their own research via podcasts, twitter, the National College CPD platform, and publications from professional organisations. There is an appetite for developing teachers' own subject specific CPD to improve teaching and learning in their own classrooms and curriculum areas.

It is true that some departments are further on with this process than others, but hopefully with the end of the COVID-19 lockdown and the pockets of self-isolation that have disrupted our work, we have a clear run at establishing consistency in the coming year.

So, now armed with a copy of Thomas Guskey's Levels of Professional Development Evaluation⁴, I am confident that our new approach is making a marked difference and ultimately improving the quality of teaching and learning and the outcomes for students in our school.

Sharing the responsibility for professional development

Mark Cocken
UTC Sheffield City Centre



UTC Sheffield City Centre has a specific focus on technical education. Our mission is to help fill the skills shortages in the areas of Engineering and Creative Digital Media in the Sheffield region. Our staff body includes staff who have worked in industry before becoming teachers.

The fields of Engineering and Creative Digital Media are constantly evolving to meet the needs of the job market, and it is therefore essential that our technical knowledge and understanding reflects the needs of industry. Our technical staff work closely with industry contacts to gain insights into the skillset needed by the current job market, and this means that high-quality subject specific CPD is essential for our organisation.

The CPD Challenge has helped us to move away from a 'top-down' model of compulsory weekly sessions of CPD to a model of giving staff far greater autonomy to explore subject specific training that will enhance their teaching. Staff know how their subject contributes to the aim of producing well-rounded employees of the future and recognise the value of effective CPD in their practice.

As a staff body, we explored the notion of CPD and staff defined what they believed were the key characteristics of 'good CPD'. This was formed into a statement of intent, leading to collective ownership, and aided 'buy in' to the CPD Challenge.

Through the support of the CPD Challenge Facilitator and working with another CPD Challenge school (All Saints Catholic High School, Sheffield), we refined our CPD offer to include small scale research projects. The outcomes of each project

are showcased in an academic conference poster displayed by staff in an end of year celebration. These projects form part of the appraisal process for each teacher which has aided the monitoring of progress through normal line management meetings.

The completion of records of CPD for the Challenge had, at times, been problematic. When the pandemic struck these issues were exacerbated. The partial closure of our site, and staff meetings being delivered remotely, had the additional impact of taking away the feeling of community and collective ownership of CPD.

The pandemic impacted on what CPD was being delivered. It meant much of the available time was directed to upskilling all staff in the delivery of remote learning and a plethora of online training relating to safeguarding and well-being. This was necessary and worthwhile; by the end of May 2020, we were delivering a full online curriculum to all year groups across the UTC.

As we emerge from the pandemic, our plan for CPD is simple – a return to high-quality subject-specific CPD that impacts directly on student outcomes. We have learned that as a team, we are adaptable and resilient. Staff continue to be encouraged to develop 'leaner' ways of working, and staff use the staff use the 'Kaizen' process to suggest improvements across the UTC as the need arises.

Our involvement in the CPD Challenge has helped us in our journey to achieving high-quality subject specific CPD for our staff. The move away from a centralised model of delivery has helped to meet individual needs more effectively. This has led to greater engagement and ownership of CPD by our teachers.

Participant Schools

All Saints Catholic High School	Holgate Meadows Community School
Aston Academy	Malin Bridge Primary School
Astrea Academy Sheffield	Maltby Manor Academy
Athelstan Primary School	Meadow View Primary School
Bents Green School	Meersbrook Bank Primary School
Birkwood Primary School	Monteney Primary
Bradfield Dungworth Primary School	Mossbrook School
Bradfield School	Nether Edge Primary School
Buxton Junior School	Newfield Secondary School
Dobcroft Infant School	Oasis Academy Fir Vale
Dobcroft Junior School	Saint Pius X Catholic High School
Emmaus Catholic and Church of England Primary School	Sheffield Springs Academy
Firth Park Academy	Shirebrook Academy
Forge Valley School	St John Fisher Primary
Great Hucklow Primary and Peak Forest Primary	Swinton Academy
Hallam Primary School	Talbot Specialist School
Handsworth Grange Community Sports College	Tapton School
High Storrs School	Thorpe Hesley Primary School
Hinde House Secondary	UTC Sheffield City Centre
	UTC Sheffield Olympic Legacy Park
	Wybourn Community Primary School

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