

Improvement [supplementary chapter]

Continuing Professional Development

Introduction

In this supplementary chapter on improvement and continuing professional development (CPD), we first look at work on school effectiveness, before moving to the related but more process-orientated school-improvement work. This leads us to explore the concept of the school as a learning organization with the integral role of CPD for teachers. The second part of the chapter introduces issues associated with continuing professional development and performance management – key contributors to the improvement of teaching, learning and professionalism.

Improving Schools

1.1 School effectiveness

Does it matter which school a child attends? What are the features of a school that make a difference? Defining the measures by which school effectiveness is judged is obviously significant. These are frequently related to pupil attainment, and recently more to the 'value added' between attainment when the pupil enters the school and subsequent results.

Governments throughout the world have an active interest in school effectiveness. Indeed, there is a widespread desire to raise the achievement of pupils to strengthen international competitiveness, but this is also usually constrained by the costs of education. So an interest in effectiveness is also an interest in efficiency, or value for money.

Work on school effectiveness began forty years ago in the United States with a concern for equality of educational opportunity. Research efforts were made to separate the impact of family background from that of the school, and to find out whether some schools were more effective than others. In the UK, the influential study *Fifteen Thousand Hours* (Rutter *et al.*, 1979), which detailed research on twelve London secondary schools, and its primary equivalent *School Matters: The Junior Years* (Mortimore *et al.*, 1988) indicated very clearly that the internal policies and practices of schools do influence educational effectiveness. From these and subsequent studies it has been possible to identify a generally agreed set of factors associated with school effectiveness. For instance, the following eleven 'key factors' derive from a review of school effectiveness research (Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore, 1995).

1. Effective headteachers are firm and purposeful, appoint effective teachers, create consensus and unity of purpose; they share and delegate responsibilities and involve all teachers in decision-making; they are 'leading professionals' with an understanding of classrooms and how teaching and learning can be improved.
2. In the school there must be 'shared vision and goals': necessary for lifting aspirations and creating consistency of practice through whole-school policies and contracts.
3. The 'learning environment' is attractive, orderly and encourages self-control among pupils; this is a prerequisite for a positive classroom ethos.
4. There is a clear priority focus on teaching and learning as the school's primary purpose. Four factors: time spent on learning, amount of homework, effective learning time, and learning time for different subjects are measures indicating the practical implementation of this focus.
5. Teaching is purposeful, well organized and clear about objectives, well prepared, appropriately paced and structured, and questioning focuses pupil attention.
6. There is a general culture which has high expectations of everyone: teachers, pupils and parents.

7. Better pupil outcomes follow from positive reinforcement, clear feedback, rewards and clear rules for behaviour. These are more successful than punishment or criticism.
8. Monitoring progress: keeps track of whether the school is meeting its targets and goals; maintains awareness of targets and goals among staff, pupils and parents; informs planning and teaching; sends clear messages to pupils that teachers are interested in their progress.
9. Giving pupils rights and responsibilities and enabling them to play an active role in the life of the school is important for raising self-esteem and encouraging children to take responsibility for their own learning.
10. Partnerships that encourage and foster parental support for learning have positive effects on achievement; successful schools make demands on parents as well as encouraging involvement.
11. Effective schools are 'learning organizations' where teachers and senior managers, as well as pupils, continue to be learners, improve their practice and keep up with change.

Of these, those factors that are concerned with the quality of teaching (factors 4 and 5) and expectations (factor 6) are most significant for fostering pupils' learning and progress. However, the other factors are important in that they provide the overall framework within which teachers and classrooms operate, enable the development of consistent goals and ensure that pupils' educational experiences are linked as they progress through the school. In reviewing the same list of eleven factors, MacGilchrist, Myers and Reed (2004) argue that the four essential core characteristics of an effective school are professional high-quality leadership and management (factor 1), a concentration on teaching and (pupil) learning (factor 4), pupils' rights and responsibilities (factor 9) and on developing the school as a learning organization (factor 11). MacGilchrist and her colleagues place pupils' rights and responsibilities – their agency and engagement in learning – at the heart of an effective school. They do this on the basis of research emphasizing the importance of self-esteem that was available at the time of the review by Sammons *et al.*, as well as on subsequent research which broadens the meaning of pupils' rights and responsibilities (Rudduck *et al.*, 2003).

1.2 School improvement

The pressure is on for schools to show improvement within a context of more and more demanding expectations, regardless of difficulties such as the recruitment and retention of high-quality staff. Gray and colleagues (1999) offer a three-category framework for the way schools attempt to bring about improvement: tactics, strategies and capacity-building. An example of a tactical approach is concentrating on children considered to be on the borderline between National Curriculum attainments in order to help them pass an externally moderated test or examination. A strategic approach would be the focusing on a particular area of weakness throughout the school, for example writing, and the systematic evaluation and development of teaching approaches along with assessing, monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress in writing throughout the school. Both of these approaches may bring improved pupil performance in the short and medium term, but it is the third approach, that of capacity-building, should lead to sustainable, long-term improvement.

The notion of capacity is central to the idea of school improvement, which has been defined by Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994) as 'a distinct approach to educational change that enhances student outcomes as well as strengthening the school's capacity for managing change' (p. 3). MacBeath and Mortimore (2001) suggest using this definition to construct a two-dimensional matrix.

		Capacity for change	
		Low	High
Student outcomes	High	'Coasting' schools	Improving schools
	Low	Ineffective schools	Schools of potential

It is only schools which are high on both dimensions that are 'improving' schools. Those schools with high student outcomes but low capacity for handling change could be thought of as schools which are known as 'coasting' and may be under-achieving relative to their pupil intake. Those with high capacity for handling change but low student outcomes could be considered to have improvement potential, even when these have not yet been realized in terms of student outcomes.

MacBeath and Mortimore (2001) go on to say that 'the challenge of continuous improvement is to marry culture and structure. Structures without an underpinning culture of improvement are doomed to be ineffective. Strong cultures without sustaining structures will not survive from one generation to the next' (p. 18). We consider this issue later in this chapter.

MacGilchrist, Myers and Reed (2004) use the concept of *the intelligent school* as one which is able to maximize its improvement efforts by heeding some of the key messages that have emerged from the school improvement research. They identify six interrelated messages from the research which they believe are particularly helpful for schools (p. 34):

- change takes time
- a school's capacity for change will vary
- change is complex
- change needs to be well led and managed
- teachers need to be the main agents of change
- the pupils need to be the main focus for change.

Teachers being the main agents of change resonates with Frost *et al.*'s (2000) concept of 'teacher-led school improvement'. Frost and his colleagues argue that much of the thinking about school improvement has paid insufficient attention to the role of teachers as active agents, and describe a model of 'reflective action planning'. They argue that the (teacher-led) 'model of school improvement enables teachers to make more of a difference in their schools by making a greater contribution to development work which will result in improved learning outcomes for their students' (p. 154).

Reflective activity

Aim: To consider the notion that teachers need to be the main agents of change.

Evidence and reflection: Think about a school that you know well, and recall two examples of change, one which could be considered to have gone well, and one which did not go well. To what extent were teachers the 'main agents of change' in each of the examples?

Extension: Do you agree with the assertion by Fullan (1991) that 'educational change depends on what teachers do and think. It's as simple and complex as that' (p. 117)? In what ways is it simple, and in what ways complex?

1.3 Learning organizations

A learning organization, as defined by Leithwood and Aitken (1995), is: 'a group of people who are pursuing common purposes with a collective commitment to regularly weighing the value of those purposes, modifying them when they make sense, and continuously developing more effective and efficient ways of accomplishing those purposes' (p. 41). Gray (2000) comments that this definition has obvious links with school improvement, and he emphasizes that schools 'must become committed to the idea of *continuous* improvement' (p. 236, emphasis in original).

The importance of organizational cultures has been asserted consistently. For example, Southworth *et al.* (1989) produced a convincing account of how good staff relationships enhance school effectiveness. Rosenholz (1989) identified 'high consensus' schools in which principals and teachers appear to 'agree on the definitions of teaching', and in which 'their instructional goals occupy a place of high significance' (p. 206–8). She expressed this in ways which echo the concept of a 'learning organization':

A spirit of continuous improvement seemed to hover school-wide, because no-one ever stopped learning to teach. It was assumed that improvement in teaching is a collective rather than an individual enterprise, and that analysis, evaluation and experimentation in concert with colleagues was a collective rather than individual enterprise. (Rosenholz, 1989, p. 73)

However, Rosenholz's model may seem somewhat idealistic and she herself drew attention to schools at the other end of the continuum. In such 'low consensus' schools there was no support for change or improvement; teachers were able to learn little from their colleagues and no one seemed to feel responsible for helping struggling teachers to improve; teachers experienced frustration, failure, tedium; they complained about the pupils and were self-defensive. Rosenholz described such schools as 'stuck', in contrast to the schools which are 'moving' forward. This typology has been further developed by Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994) and by Stoll and Fink (1996) to a model in which schools are said to be 'moving, cruising, struggling, sinking or strolling'. In reality, just as no school is equally effective in all areas for all pupils, any one school may well display different trajectories and pace in different aspects of its provision and work. Reflective teachers find themselves in schools which could be characterized by any one or a combination of the labels, and the particular route to becoming a learning organization will be unique to each of them. As is apparent throughout this chapter, the process of building a collaborative culture is often neither easy nor quick.

Senge's (1992) notion of 'organizational learning disabilities' has been drawn upon and developed by a number of writers (for example, MacBeath, 1998), and similar ideas are represented as 'blocks to improvement' which have been identified through work in schools. These include:

- teachers projecting their own deficiencies on to children or their communities
- teachers clinging to past practices
- defences built up against threatening messages from outside
- fear of failure
- seeing change as someone else's job
- hostile relationships among staff
- seeking safety in numbers (a ring-fenced mentality).

(MacBeath and Mortimore, 2001, p. 17)

Reflective activity

Aim: To reflect upon blocks to improvement.

Evidence and reflection: Consider the examples of blocks to improvement given by MacBeath and Mortimore. Do you recognize any of them in yourself or in teachers you know?

Extension: Discuss with a colleague ways in which those blocks might be overcome. Try to put some of the suggestions into practice in relation to any blocks to improvement you recognized in yourself.

In a discussion of brakes and accelerators of school improvement, MacBeath and Myers (1998) suggest the following seven steps to be taken in sequence and over time en route to becoming a learning school:

- promote a learning climate
- identify the green shoots of growth
- identify the barriers
- share pedagogical leadership
- create intelligence from within
- use critical friends
- build resilient networks

Any school which is, or seeks to become, a learning organization needs information about itself, and in the following section we explore different ways of evaluating schools.

Continuing Professional Development

The concept of 'Continuing Professional Development' (CPD) denotes the steady, career-long process of learning and refinement of their expertise which teachers are encouraged to undertake. In some countries, high levels of achievement are sometimes formally rewarded, such as Advanced Skills Teachers (England) and Chartered Teachers (Scotland). CPD is intimately connected to personal development and career fulfilment, but this can only really be fully realized in a school context with a favourable learning culture. The major manifestation of the school's ambition is reflected in its planning for school improvement, but continuing professional development is now strongly conditioned by performance management requirements. In this section, we address each of these issues.

2.1 Professional and personal development

As we have seen throughout this series, reflective practice makes a significant contribution to the development of expertise. The self-conscious, skill-based emphasis of the trainee is replaced by the experimentation of newly qualified teachers, and then, after some years, is superseded by the almost intuitive judgement of the expert teacher. This progression was represented in Chapter 3 with competence, confidence and expertise spiralling upwards through classroom-based self-evaluation, enquiry and reflective practice. Such teacher-controlled and evidence-informed processes have been, as we saw, strongly supported by the General Teaching Councils and government agencies in each part of the UK. Indeed, the most recent foresight exercise from DfES declared that 'making space for professional reflection' was crucial to improving pupil performance (2006, p31). *2020 Vision* went on to declare that:

Designing a new school experience will involve pupils, parents, the school workforce, local and national government in altering some deeply embedded, and often unquestioned, habits and practices. For the school workforce, we think this means being confident that changes – whether to whole-school systems or to the practice of individual members of staff – are based on understanding the learning needs of their pupils in their wider context. It also means recognising that personalising learning is a journey towards excellence that engages pupils, teachers and support staff in a process of continuing adjustment and improvement: it has no defined end. (DfES, 2006, p29)

The development of expertise has been characterized in many ways, but it certainly involves the exercise of informed judgement and skills. We emphasized this in Chapters 3 and 16, in pointing to the problems, issues and dilemmas which teachers routinely face – and in suggesting the importance of evidence in the formation of professional judgement. Building on TLRP's cumulative work, in Chapter 4, we reviewed 'ten principles for effective teaching and learning' which provide an agenda for professional reflection and act as a guide in deciding on responses to new challenges. They are deliberately intended to represent key, enduring, long-term issues. As teachers we will engage with these issues repeatedly through our careers and build cumulative understanding and skill. The conceptual framework on this website represents a way of both representing and 'deepening' this expertise.

Learning is more than acquiring new knowledge and skills. It is also about making sense of the world and creating new knowledge. It involves testing new experience against previously learned ways of thinking and doing things, and changing habits of mind. And it involves using the ideas of other people expressed through what they say, write or make. New knowledge is always, in this sense, a joint production.

TLRP's Ten Principles developed in exactly the way described above, from a sustained professional conversation over some six years between practitioners and researchers involved in the Programme's 22 school-focused research projects. Mary James and Andrew Pollard (2006) collated and refined these thoughts in an attempt to provide a concise and accessible representation for practitioners and policymakers. They represent enduring educational issues, and are underpinned by empirical evidence and by a holistic rationale. In a sense, they represent a TLRP's summary of 'what we think we know' about teaching and learning.

From a government perspective then, Continuing Professional Development helps teachers and others to accommodate to new initiatives, requirements and challenges. The teaching workforce is thus able to fulfil its designated roles more effectively. For such reasons, across the UK there are improved structures for ensuring high-quality induction provision and continuing opportunities for training of subject specialists and senior managers. These may take the form of school-initiated activities – which this book is explicitly designed to support. Alternatively, there may be external courses or personal research activities supported by local authorities or government agencies or accredited courses offered by higher

education institutions. In England a 'National Framework for Mentoring and Coaching' has been introduced to support professional school-based learning (CUREE, 2007). It is based on ten principles you can see [here](#).

High-quality professional development activities certainly do enable teachers to build higher levels of expertise, and this is worthwhile in itself. However, professional development also normally offers a great deal of personal fulfilment too, both from processes of enquiry, training and study, and from the pleasure of accomplishment. This is particularly true if CPD is undertaken in a sustained way with like-minded colleagues, when mutual support and 'critical friendship' are easily available (see, for example, Dadds, 1995). The achievement of higher levels of understanding, deeper insight, additional skills or knowledge, etc. is thus in itself fulfilling. In favourable circumstances, such conscious knowledge gradually becomes embedded and thus enhances intuitive judgement, skills and expertise.

At its best, as Solomon and Tresman (1999) argue, continuing professional development thus makes a connection with the 'self' and identity of the teacher and with the quality of their work. They see professionalism as a value-led activity in which the personal commitments of each teacher become entwined with their professional role. The self of the teacher is thus realized through professional development – and each person's unfolding biography become both a personal and professional narrative (see also Nias, 1989).

This ideal is greatly affected by the culture of the workplace. The ideal is a school in which the goals of each individual teacher can be realized through attainment of the school's goals and targets. Personal and institutional fulfilment are aligned. The TLRP Research Briefing on page XXX [that is the one for Chapter 5] showcases the most recent evidence on this and demonstrates how professional commitment is linked to teacher effectiveness (Day et al, 2007). We discuss this issue further below.

2.2 School culture and professional development

A great deal is written about 'school culture' without problematizing the concept itself. From the sociological point of view, all sorts of normative assumptions are embedded within the idea. For instance, Southworth has proposed that individuals working in a school may identify personally and collectively with official goals and values – a 'culture of collaboration' (Southworth *et al.* 1989). Fulfilment is thus achieved *through* institutional policies, practices and achievements. But to what degree can aims, understandings, conventions, habits and routines really be held collectively by a school-staff and fulfilled corporately though the organization? Arguably, the concept implies more consensus and commitment than is realistic in most situations.

Nevertheless, the idea of schools having a 'learning culture' is important as an ideal. To the extent that it is achieved, teachers will have the confidence to respond constructively to change; disagreement and debate will be possible because relationships are secure; individuals and groups will feel able to take risks; values and their relationship to school practices can be continuously considered; and both individuals and groups will feel collectively affirmed.

However attractive the ideal, a culture of collaboration may turn out to be more apparent than real. Hargreaves (1994) has suggested the idea of 'contrived collegiality' in which the management attempts to build collegiality but the hearts and minds of staff do not follow. A common factor that can impede the development of a collaborative culture is the existence of strong pre-existing group identities – sometimes referred to a 'balkanization'. Such separated cultures are particularly evident in secondary schools where there is a strong subject–department structure and identity, and they may produce concerns and struggles about territory in terms of time, space, resources, practices and procedures – but the same problem may occur in a primary-school setting. Another common problem is the situation which may be characterized as 'comfortable collaboration' where teachers work together in well established, warm and casual ways. There are many shared understandings, but not much questioning, enquiry or investigation of the status quo. Processes associated with systematic reflective practice are not in evidence (Levine and Eubanks, 1989).

Phenomena such as 'balkanized' cultures or 'comfortable collaboration' may be better understood in terms of micro-political analysis (Ball, 1987; Hoyle, 1986). In this form of analysis, school policies and practices are seen as temporary and negotiated products which reflect the existing balance of power and influence within a school. In a sense, they reflect an apparent consensus, which hides continuing conflicts concerning issues which are constantly being contested within ever-changing circumstances. The influence of any one individual at any given time will depend on their degree of status, power, charisma and authority. The role of both internal alliances and of other external factors, such as parental views and governor, LA or government policies must also be recognized.

The most important player is likely to be the headteacher, who has both formal authority and a great deal of power. As Ball concludes, in one way or another this position is likely to be used to 'dominate' so that apparent agreement is achieved:

I have tried to indicate the conflictual basis of the school as an organisation. Concomitantly, I have attempted to indicate that the control of school organisations, focused on the position and role of the headteacher, is significantly concerned with domination (the elimination or pre-emption of conflict). Thus domination is intended to achieve and maintain particular definitions of the school over and against alternative definitions. (Ball, 1987, p. 278)

Ball offers an interestingly provocative analysis of forms of participation in school decision-making:

	Forms of participation	Responses to opposition	Strategies of control
Authoritarian	Prevents public access to voice	Stifle	Insulation, concealment and secrecy
Managerial	Formal committees, meetings and working parties	Channel and delay	Structuring, planning, control of agendas, time and context
Interpersonal	Informal chats and personal consultation and lobbying	Fragment and compromise	Private performances of persuasion
Adversarial	Public meetings and open debate	Confront	Public performances of persuasion

We are thus left with an image of school organizations as settings in which values, priorities and practices are contested by headteachers, management teams, departments, faculties and individuals. Sometimes such micro-political activity may be considerable, such as when a new headteacher arrives. There may also be periods of relative stability when 'comfortable collaboration' may exist for a while.

During the 1990s, the growing emphasis on external accountability, school effectiveness, school development, target setting and inspection meant that schools could no longer be considered as relatively closed and semi-autonomous institutions. Whether a school is best characterized in terms of its collaborative culture or its micro-politics makes little difference to the accountability and performance requirements which have to be met. The consequence of this structuring of external requirements, pressures and constraints is that schools are now *managed* in much more purposive and explicit ways than many were in the past. The major means of doing this are though target setting and school improvement planning, to which we now turn.

Reflective activity

Aim: To consider micro-politics in schools.

Evidence and reflection: Thinking of a school in which you have worked, reflect on the various groups of staff and their perspectives and actions within the school. What relationships exist between these groups? Thinking of a significant incident or event, what variations were there in the responses of different individuals and groups? What strategies does the leadership team use in managing the different positions? To what extent do you feel that the culture of the school is affected by the influence which particular groups or individuals exert?

2.3 School improvement planning

School improvement planning is a process of schools establishing priorities for development. These priorities are recorded in a school development plan, which is updated annually and, as part of the policy of encouraging individual school

autonomy, such plans have been seen as enabling schools to become 'empowered' (Hargreaves and Hopkins, 1991). They are the prime means by which staff and governors can exercise coherent and forward-looking control over curriculum and school development. They also provide the context for the personal staff development of each individual teachers. School development plans are detailed for the coming year, and look ahead to the following two to five years in outline. Longer-term priorities are identified and sketched in, but in the knowledge that the further ahead they are, the more likely they are to be revised and amended.

Development plans generally include consideration of:

1. Aims and philosophy
2. A review of the previous year's plan
3. The present situation
 - catchment and enrolment
 - organization
 - staffing
 - curriculum provision
 - resources
 - achievements
4. Assessed needs and priorities for future development
 - organizational development
 - staff development
 - curriculum development
 - resource development
5. Success criteria and monitoring arrangements
6. How the assessed needs are to be met.

The last point is a significant one, for it brings the planning process up against practicalities – for instance, budgets. School budgeting should be 'curriculum-led' rather than be driven by financial considerations but this is not always possible. Nevertheless, in the words of HMCI (1992) development planning provides:

A more rational and coherent framework in which to identify priorities, plan for change and allocate resources. In the best practice, development plans paid attention to teaching and learning, specified manageable time scales, and outlined arrangements for monitoring and evaluation. (HMCI, 1992, p. 20)

The whole-school development process is designed to lead to change and Miles (1986) identifies three overlapping stages in such innovation:

- Initiation – deciding to start, developing commitment, defining purposes and processes, appointing key people, making links with key issues for whole school explicit, guaranteeing support for involvement
- Implementation – the first cycle, a learning process; focus on co-ordination, adequate and sustained support in the form of INSET, supply cover; positive reinforcement. Skills and understanding are being acquired; groups of teachers may become self-governing as they move forward
- Institutionalization – development planning becomes part of the normal pattern of how the school does things; management arrangements have evolved to support further development and maintenance – they also are part

of the pattern. The impact of development planning is seen in classroom practice and the innovation is no longer new.

Where there are a number of priorities and initiatives, developments are likely to overlap and interconnect, and each will have its own timescale. A coherent planning and development process will permeate the normal work of the school and, as Miles suggests, will eventually become encompassed in routine activity.

However, there are a number of reasons why some schools do not succeed with improvement planning. As with 'contrived collegiality', development can become a 'bolt-on' activity which happens procedurally but has no fundamental impact on the way the school works. Equally, it is possible to underestimate the need for the process to be managed, especially where this itself requires significant changes in established management practice. Associated with this is a failure to create the conditions under which change and innovation can happen; to be unaware, for example, of the distinctive nature of the three stages identified by Miles and of the different management and support required by each phase.

Finally, it is possible to produce a development plan as a management document but give little or no thought to the processes by which it might be implemented.

Anning (1983) suggested that new headteachers attempting curriculum innovation face a course rather like that of the Grand National. The first jump, the improvement of the environment, and the second, that of producing new policy statements and curriculum guidelines, are accomplished smoothly. Beecher's Brook looms when it is realized that actual practice in the classroom may not be changing as fast and cannot be influenced by aesthetics and documents alone. This is a problem which faces everyone – for it is never easy to bring practice into line with ideals, let alone in the difficult circumstances which schools have faced in recent years. Indeed, many headteachers have found that the apparent ordered rationality of school improvement planning is disrupted by the turbulence of external events (Wallace, 1994), so that the whole process becomes something of a diversion from managing the 'real world'.

MacGilchrist *et al.* (1995) identified four types of school development plan. The 'rhetorical plan' (no sense of ownership by head or staff) the 'singular plan' (produced by the headteacher alone), the 'co-operative plan' (with partial involvement of teaching staff) and the 'corporate plan'. The latter was 'characterised by a united effort to improve . . . and a focus on teaching and learning' (p. 195). Of the four types, the rhetorical plan had a negative impact, while the corporate plan had 'a very significant positive impact on both the efficiency and the effectiveness of the school'.

Clearly, implementing a school development plan is far from easy, and is intimately connected with school culture, and management of the school's micropolitics.

2.4 Professional development and performance management

In management terms, continuing professional development (CPD) and performance management flow directly from, and feed into, school improvement planning. The process of planning school improvement may well identify areas that should be the focus for CPD and performance management. Conversely, teachers' training and development needs, whether identified through informal discussion or performance management, should become incorporated within the school development plan. In this section we consider continuing professional development and performance management and their relationship with reflective teaching.

A reflective teacher would find it hard to disagree with the reasons given by the DfEE (2001a) for encouraging continuing professional development:

- the demands on teaching are changing all the time. Becoming and remaining a good teacher, keeping knowledge of curriculum subjects up to date, and being able to make the most of new technology all require continuing professional development
- good professional development enables you to build the skills to enhance your career – whether that is in teaching, in education more widely, or beyond
- a strong professional culture in a school frequently makes it a much better place to work, with open, supportive relationships, and more enthusiastic, self-confident staff

- schools which offer teachers regular opportunities for professional development find it easier to attract and retain good staff
- we want pupils to develop enthusiasm for lifelong learning, since this is increasingly the key to success in adult life. That is more likely if they see their teachers involved in regular learning.

Nevertheless, there may well be other reasons that we would expect to see in such a list, such as finding out about and applying knowledge about how children learn, and keeping up to date with relevant research.

Professional development 'continues' in that it begins with initial teacher training, followed by the induction year (the focus of Chapter 16), and should carry on throughout a teaching career. Almost by definition, reflective teachers think about their own performance and progress and that of their pupils, and take responsibility for their own ongoing development. There are many routes to continuing professional development, including the traditional in-service training courses, ranging from stand-alone half-day courses to extended programmes lasting two or more years and leading to a Masters degree. Courses have an important place in CPD provision, but more varied opportunities also exist. These might include mentoring and coaching arrangements, secondments, business placements, short sabbaticals, and most powerfully leading or working with colleagues in school on a particular area of development.

These approaches to CPD provide opportunities for individual teachers to pursue personal areas of interest, within the context of school improvement. Teachers who habitually reflect upon their own practice and the learning that goes on in their classrooms will undoubtedly be aware of questions and issues which they want to investigate. Investors In People, Leading Edge Partnerships, Primary Strategy Learning Networks, Advanced Skills Teachers and standards for teachers with subject and specialist leadership responsibilities illustrate other schemes through which the DfES in England has sought to promote CPD and broaden its impact. Perhaps one of the most potentially powerful forms of CPD is peer observation which, when undertaken in a mutually respectful, enquiring way, with adequate time for preparation and follow-up discussion, can be professionally affirming and an excellent learning experience, for both the observed and the observer. The concept of 'co-coaching', as set out in the national framework for mentoring and coaching (DfES, 2005a) is very akin to this process.

Whatever the particular combination of CPD activities in which an individual teacher engages, it is essential that a record is kept. This should go beyond logging the dates and titles of courses attended (although many teachers have had cause to regret not keeping even this most basic information as a matter of course). It should include reflections on such things as the content of the course and the process of learning, skills developed, implications for teaching and impact on children's learning. A variety of formats for 'personal portfolios' are of course possible, for example Frost (1997) provides practical guidance for maintaining a portfolio. A reflective journal, an approach which is explored for example by Mary Louise Holly in her book *Writing to Grow* (Holly, 1989), is both a particular kind of record and at the same time a form of CPD in itself.

Arrangements for 'performance management' have been introduced into England and Wales, and like external inspection these too have been revised over time. The revised arrangements that came into place by autumn 2007 (DfES, 2006) directly link performance, CPD and pay. The DfES sets performance management within the context of revised professional standards for teachers, and all teachers are expected to have access to high quality training and development opportunities. The planning meeting involves setting objectives for the next cycle of performance management, making arrangements for classroom observations, discussing sources of other evidence, agreeing CPD/support and the performance criteria to be used to review performance. The subsequent review of performance includes recommendations about pay progression for eligible teachers, cementing the direct link against which teacher associations argued when teacher appraisal schemes and then early forms of performance management were introduced. Analysing this, sociologist Stephen Ball identifies a 'triumvirate of reform' consisting of performativity, new managerialism and markets, and comments that:

Performance management does not simply change the ways in which schools work; it changes the way we think about schools and learning and it changes how teachers think about their work and their relationships with pupils. (Ball, 2007, p27)

It is expected that each teacher's performance management objectives should reflect any relevant team, year or school objectives. Objectives should be challenging but realistically achievable, and it is in everybody's interest to ensure that they are, and that the objectives set can be reviewed unambiguously. Teachers who continually reflect upon their pupils'

learning and their own professional practice are well prepared to negotiate objectives which strike that delicate but crucial balance between challenge and realism.

Continuing professional development is a core professional activity that makes a vital contribution to performance management processes, but should not be reduced to or limited by them. It can also make a vital contribution to personal fulfilment.

Career development and performance management are among the areas on which the General Teaching Councils are often required to provide advice. Legislation for the GTCs in England and Wales was passed in 1998, whereas the GTC for Scotland, the first professional council for teaching in the world, has been operating since 1966.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we reviewed the main findings of school-effectiveness research, and the processes and factors associated with school improvement. Ideas connected with learning organizations were specifically related to schools, and to continuing professional development. Finally, CPD, performance management and their role in linking reflective teaching and school improvement were discussed.

Understanding such factors is important for a reflective teacher, for personal and classroom performance is enabled or constrained by circumstances. Nor should teachers think passively in such situations, for our schools are largely what we make of them. And in respect of continuing professional development, the case for taking personal responsibility is even stronger.

Key readings

The classic and outstanding guide to educational reform, recently revised and expanded is:

- Fullan, M. (2007) *The New Meaning of Educational Change*. London: Routledge.

A practical and easily read book, which draws together the inter-related areas of research on school effectiveness, school improvement, teaching and learning, is:

- MacGilchrist, B., Myers, K. and Reed, J. (2004) *The Intelligent School*. London: Paul Chapman.

For a contemporary rationale for New Labour's policies for school improvement, see:

- Hopkins, D. (2007) *Every School a Great School*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

A sustained critique of school effectiveness and school improvement is offered through a collection of wide-ranging chapters in:

- Slee, R. and Weiner, G. with Tomlinson, S. (eds) (1998) *School Effectiveness for Whom? Challenges to the School Effectiveness and School Improvement Movements*. London: Falmer Press.

A critical but constructive view of inspection, incorporating international and historical perspectives as well as questions to prompt reflection at the end of each chapter, is:

- Learmonth, J. (2000) *Inspection: What's In It For Schools?* London: Routledge Falmer.

The new relationship with schools, and especially the relationship between inspection and self-evaluation, comes under scrutiny by MacBeath in:

- MacBeath, J. (2006) *School Inspection and Self-Evaluation*. London: Routledge.

For an engaging example of how the continuing professional development of a reflective teacher can influence her workplace, see:

- Dadds, M. (1995) *Passionate Enquiry and School Development: a Story about Teacher Action Research*. London: Falmer Press.

For how to develop school-based CPD, and coaching, see:

- Earley, P. and Bubb, S. (2004) *Leading and Managing Continuing Professional Development: Developing People, Developing Schools*. London: Paul Chapman.
- Eldridge, F. (2006) *Coaching Teachers and Teaching Assistants*. London: Paul Chapman.
- CUREE (2007) *National Framework for Mentoring and Coaching*. Coventry: CUREE.

Two important studies from the National Commission on Education set out how schools in disadvantaged areas can be effective and whether improvement can be maintained:

- National Commission on Education (1995), *Success Against the Odds*. London: Routledge.
- Maden, M. (ed.) (2001), *Success Against the Odds – Five Years On: Revisiting Effective Schools in Disadvantaged Areas*. London: Routledge Falmer.

A book with a focus on schools in challenging circumstances, but also taking a big picture look at policy and school improvement, is:

- MacBeath, J., Gray, J., Cullen, J., Frost, D., Steward, S. and Swaffield, S. (2007) *Schools on the Edge: Responding to challenging circumstances*. London: Paul Chapman

Finally, a principled polemic on how teachers and headteachers should work together to make change happen is:

- Fullan, M. and Hargreaves, A. (1992) *What's Worth Fighting for in Your School? Working Together for School Improvement*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Articles relating to school development can be found in many journals such as:

Educational Leadership
Educational Management and Administration
Improving Schools
Journal of In-Service Education
Management in Education
Managing Schools Today
Professional Development Today
School Leadership and Management
School Effectiveness and Improvement
Teacher Development