



# **Professional Development for Teaching Staff**

**Abingdon Learning Trust  
2019-20**

## Ethos

**“If we are concerned with the learning of students, we should pay greater attention to the professional development of teachers themselves.” (Muijs et al, 2014).**

In an extensive review of research conducted in 2014, Muijs et al concluded that there are 6 evidence-supported features of great teaching<sup>1</sup>:

- A deep knowledge of subject content and pedagogy.
- Quality of instruction
- Classroom climate
- Classroom management
- Teachers’ beliefs
- Professional behaviours

The report also concluded that judgemental lesson observations and analysis of classroom artefacts (e.g. lesson plans, student work) do not reliably correlate with quality of teaching, and therefore are poor tools from which to build professional development.

Muijs et al supported the findings of Timperley (2008) which highlighted a number of broad principles that sit behind effective professional learning. Strategies that are effective at improving the quality of teaching include the following features:

- Focus on and be measured against student outcomes,
- Encourage ‘self-regulation’ among teachers who are empowered to act as independent learners
- Multiple opportunities for to learn new information, digest the implications for practice and be adapted to classroom context in a sustainable way
- Collaboration with peers

In the Abingdon Learning Trust we understand that good-quality teachers are essential to effective education. We know that good-quality teaching needs work and effort to sustain and develop. We recognise that development only occurs when teachers are given time to understand why and how a particular approach is likely to support their students’ learning. We are committed to giving teachers the resources and opportunities to develop as professional in line with these principles.

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<sup>1</sup> Defined as “that which leads to improved student achievement using outcomes that matter to their future success.” (Muijs et al, 2014: 2)

## **Classroom Pedagogy and Practice**

Teachers are reflective practitioners who are often the best judges of their own developmental needs. However finding time to reflect and develop can be hard amid the day-to-day demands of teaching. To support your development, in the Abingdon Learning Trust we believe in:

- Allocating time for reflective activities: whether it is reading, writing a reflective log or attending a ResearchEd conference we will help you find time and ensure this is reflected in your directed time hours.
- Keeping meetings and briefings to a minimum to allow maximum time for teacher development.
- Treating teachers as professionals and giving you as much choice over your own development pathways as possible, to ensure that CPD is relevant to your own professional development.

In addition to individual programmes of INSET, staff, faculty and phase meetings and moderation sessions, the following professional learning pathways are available in Abingdon Learning Trust:

### **Hosted at John Mason School:**

**Determined to be the best that you can be** – An optional course for staff who wish to brush up on pedagogy and best practice. Sessions include: engaging with research, using data, using technology, meeting the needs of all learners, assessment.

### **Pedagogical Learning Groups** with the following foci:

- Knowledge versus Performance goals
- Metacognition
- Meeting the Needs of all Learners
- Implementing a Knowledge-Rich Curriculum

Groups meet 6 times a year and focus on applying research to classroom practice. Directed time is given to the completion of reflective journals and for action planning to apply innovations to teaching. Staff can be given cover to facilitate peer observations and support.

Lesson observations are non-judgemental and teachers will choose a developmental focus from their learning group. A joint planning process with the observer helps to empower teaching staff to ensure that lesson observations are a useful developmental tool. Lesson observations are not used for performance management. Read more about our lesson observation philosophy here:

<https://jmsreflect.blog/2019/02/24/reflecting-on-lesson-observations-that-are-supportive-and-helpful/>

### **Hosted at Fitzharrys School:**

**TeachMeets** will be held three times a year with staff from each faculty sharing strategies they have developed to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in their classrooms. The focus of TeachMeets is to reflect on innovations in pedagogy and practice and to share ideas across the learning community.

**Responsive CPD Workshops** a series of skills workshops are planned and delivered during the course of the year, led by teachers with a wide variety of classroom experience. These are planned in response to staff needs and requests. Sessions planned for 2019-20 include differentiation and using data to enhance learning. Further sessions will be planned in consultation with teachers to ensure that the programme is responsive to needs.

### **Hosted at Rush Common:**

Rush Common works closely with the Abingdon Partnership of 27 schools to share and build expertise. Rush Common hosts a number of events during the course of the year including developmental sessions on: , Maths and English specialist teaching, understanding strategies for dyslexia and developing understanding of pupil's mental health.

### **Other opportunities for pedagogical development in the Abingdon Learning Trust:**

All NQTs are given a free subscription to the Chartered College of Teaching for one year.

If you are interested in pursuing further professional qualifications we are willing to offer time and financial support for those who wish to pursue Master's courses in learning and teaching or leadership. Our partnership with Oxford University's Education Deanery enables access to the Enhanced Master's Course. Not ready for a full Master's? Ask our research leads about Deanery Action Research Fellowships.

The Abingdon Learning Trust is building a growing library of CPD resources for teaching staff. We have an extensive lists of books for loan and allocate funds for the purchase of new resources each year. We are keen to purchase resources requested by staff. We understand how pressured time can be and so are happy to allocate some directed time hours for staff reading and reflection.

The JMSReflect blog can be found at: <https://jmsreflect.blog>. Short blogs (under 1000 words) are regularly posted on current research and pedagogy with a focus on implications for the classroom and reflection. Recent posts include:

- Reflecting on ... "Boys Will Be Boys": Inadvertantly Reinforcing Gender Expectation
- Reflecting on ... how research is helping me to redesign our department's curriculum.
- Reflecting on ... mistakes I've made when trying to support SEND students

Reflections to share? The Blog is a shared space and we welcome contributions from throughout our learning community. If you have an idea for a blog post or would like support turning your idea into writing please speak to Robin Conway, Director of Research and Innovation and John Mason School.

### **Career Development Programmes**

We also understand that teachers wish to develop in their own careers. We know that development opportunities are vital for retaining staff; and for helping them to move on in a positive way when they are ready. We run a series of programmes designed to support career development and recognise this with directed time. We do not believe that developing your career is something that should happen on your own dollar or in your own time – it is something we are happy to support and help with.

#### **Career stage: NQT**

Each school runs a support and development programme of NQTs. Speak to your professional tutor for further information. In addition to the core provision for NQTs (reduced timetable, mentoring, CPD programme) we offer access to a range of external sessions through our partner organisations (Abingdon Partnership, OTSA) and links with the local private schools. NQTs will be given a one-year membership to the Chartered College to help facilitate your professional development.

#### **Career Stage: Early Careers Teachers (1-5 years' teaching experience).**

Research shows that some of the most challenging years for teachers can be their second and third years – if they lack the proper support. John Mason School and Fitzharrys both host a support group for early careers teachers with a range of sessions including: classroom practice, adaptive teaching, managing behaviour, how pupils learn, high expectations. We are keen to support early teachers in attending external events and are happy to arrange support with finances or transport to attend: ResearchEd conferences, Oxford University Early Career Teachers' Conference and other Teachmeets and events.

#### **Career Stage: Rising to Middle Leadership**

John Mason delivers an in-house course designed to support those aspiring to or new to middle leadership. Sessions include: building your vision, leadership or management, working with team members, using data to monitor progress and assessing the impact of your work

Fitzharrys School works in partnership with OTSA to provide a rising middle leaders development course held over 6 twilight sessions.

Rush Common School hosts subject leadership training in which new subject leaders develop their understanding of the role and how to drive improvements in their own school.

## **Career Stage: Aspiring Senior Leaders**

Rush Common School hosts a series of “Day in the Life of” monitoring events. Participate in a one-day focus on individual year groups including observations, book looks and pupil voice for senior leaders to develop their understanding of the primary curriculum.

Fitzharrys School offers rising senior leaders placement opportunities to get a feel for senior leadership and deliver impact across the school or partnership. Participants on this course will be given the opportunity to lead on a whole school project, mentored by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. This year’s project foci are: Mental Health and Careers.

## **Further Opportunities:**

Interested in pedagogical research? Speak to research leads in Fitzharrys and John Mason about opportunities to become a Research Leader. Both schools run groups to read and analyse the latest research and offer supported opportunities for team members wishing to conduct action and practitioner research, whether on a small scale in your own classroom, in association with Oxford University as a Deanery Fellow or as part of an external course, such as a Master’s.

## **Trust-Wide Opportunities**

As a learning trust we are able to work collaboratively to offer opportunities for our team members beyond individual schools. If there is an opportunity that is not hosted in your school, please discuss with your line manager who can support you in accessing all that we have to offer.

We are also happy to create individualised opportunities and programmes to support your development. Please speak to your teaching and learning lead about any of the following:

- **Secondment to another ALT school**
- **SLT shadowing in another ALT school**
- **Cross-school responsibility posts**

Interested in pursuing an M.Ed in Leadership? We are happy to support you in this ambition financially and with time off. Speak to your teaching and learning lead about the financial and practical support available to you.

## **External Training and Support**

Of course we cannot do it all ourselves. We recognise the importance and value of high quality external training for teachers' development and are committed to supporting this with funding and time where needed. We currently work in partnership with the following organisations and groups to provide developmental support for teachers:

## **Networks and Support Groups**

Deputy Heads Network Group (Abingdon Partnership): 20<sup>th</sup> November, 17<sup>th</sup> March, 9<sup>th</sup> June.

English Network Group (Abingdon Partnership): 25<sup>th</sup> September, 12<sup>th</sup> November, 27<sup>th</sup> January, 6<sup>th</sup> March, 13<sup>th</sup> May.

Maths Network Group (Abingdon Partnership): 7<sup>th</sup> October, 19<sup>th</sup> November, 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 5<sup>th</sup> March, 18<sup>th</sup> May, 25<sup>th</sup> June.

Science Network Group (Abingdon Partnership): 14<sup>th</sup> November, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 14<sup>th</sup> May.

EYFS Network Group (Abingdon Partnership): 17<sup>th</sup> October, 26<sup>th</sup> November, 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 10<sup>th</sup> March, 14<sup>th</sup> May, 16<sup>th</sup> June

PE Network Group (Abingdon Partnership): 9<sup>th</sup> September, 14<sup>th</sup> January, 27<sup>th</sup> April.

SEND Network Group (Abingdon Partnership): 26<sup>th</sup> September, 28<sup>th</sup> November, 16<sup>th</sup> January, 19<sup>th</sup> March, 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2<sup>nd</sup> July

Pupil Premium Network Group: 14<sup>th</sup> October, 20<sup>th</sup> January, 8<sup>th</sup> June.

Research Champions (Oxford Deanery): 4 meetings and 2 ResearchMeets over the course of the year, dates tbc.

## **Membership and Partner Organisations**

Trust schools have membership of/affiliation with the following external organisations that support professional development. Please speak to your teaching and learning or research lead for more information on how to access resources or training from these organisations:

**Chartered College of Teaching:** extensive website of resources, research and articles. Regular journal (*Impact*) of key research developments with articles by teachers and other professionals about their implications for classroom practice. <https://my.chartered.college/>

**Oxford Education Deanery:** supporting Oxfordshire schools to access research papers and seminars through Oxford University. Regular research-based events. “Deanery Fellowships” support teachers to conduct one-year research projects in the context of their schools. <http://www.education.ox.ac.uk/about-us/the-oxford-education-deanery/>

**Oxfordshire Teaching Schools Alliance:** provides professional development courses to support all levels of leadership and aspiring leadership including the exploring leadership programme, middle leadership programme and aspiring senior leadership programmes. Provider of national qualifications including NPQML (National Professional Qualification for Middle Leadership) and NPQH (National Professional Qualification for Headship) <https://www.otsa.org.uk/professional-development/leadership-pathways/>

**Abingdon School/Abingdon Preparatory School:** we have a close partnership with Abingdon School and are developing networking and training opportunities. They are particularly keen to work with subject specialists to develop cross-school links and share good practice.

**PiXL:** Fitzharrys is a member of the PiXL club and uses its resources and support to help improve students’ achievement. Maths, English and Science receive a range of resources and attend PiXL courses. However, there are a number of courses for other subject areas. If you are interested in finding out more, please speak to Will Speke, who co-ordinates our PiXL provision.

### **Statutory Training**

ALT schools support and offer the following training programmes:

Safeguarding

First Aid at Work

Epipen

Organising and Running Trips

Minibus Driving Qualification

DSL Training