



STEP Academy Trust

Professional Development Policy

Introduction

The STEP Academy Trust Board of Trustees has agreed this Policy and as such, it applies to all Academies within the Trust.

The STEP Academy Trust believes that continuing professional development is about lifelong learning which will help us respond to ever-changing situations and exercise judgement in informed and creative ways. In doing so we will expand our professional repertoire, increase our self-esteem, self-confidence and enthusiasm for teaching. We believe that our Academies should be a community of learners working together for the development of all.

Principles

1. The STEP Academy Trust believes that all staff should be involved in a continuing process of improvement. Each Academy is committed to fostering a positive ethos of continuous learning. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the means by which a school is able to motivate and develop its staff community. This development takes place at a number of levels: individual, team, whole school and through wider networks.
2. The STEP Academy Trust believes that a carefully planned programme of CPD improves standards, teaching and learning, raises morale and assists with recruitment, retention and succession planning.
3. All those involved in the academy community shall have an entitlement to equality of access to high-quality induction and continuing development.
4. The Academy will have effective measures in place to audit the professional and personal needs of staff and link to the performance management system.
5. The focus of CPD will be on improving standards and the quality of teaching and learning. The Academy will ensure that mechanisms are in place to disseminate good practice across the Trust in CPD that supports and improves teaching and learning.
6. CPD planning will be integrated within the Academy Improvement Plan and based on priorities identified through self-evaluation.

7. All forms of professional development will be based on the following principles:
 - all staff should be encouraged to develop their knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes to enhance their professional work;
 - opportunities for sharing good practice across The STEP Academy Trust will be investigated;
 - all staff will have regular opportunities to discuss their development needs and professional aspirations;
 - all staff have a responsibility to participate in Academy focused CPD and personal career development.
8. All Academies will use a range of providers/types of provision and endeavour to source the provision of CPD according the best value, including using expertise within the Trust. Quality Assurance mechanisms ensure that the school accesses provision of a consistently high standard.
9. All Academies will support professional recognition, including accreditation of the CPD undertaken.

Strategy

Leadership and management of CPD

1. All Academies will have a named CPD leader, who will have responsibility for the leadership and management of CPD.
2. The CPD leader will have access to appropriate support and training in order to fulfil their role effectively.
3. The CPD leader will be responsible for collating the CPD needs of the Academy and the staff.
4. The CPD leader's main responsibilities will be to:
 - Keep up to date with CPD developments locally and nationally;
 - Promote CPD as a central element of performance management and school improvement;
 - Provide details on the range of CPD opportunities and disseminate information to the appropriate staff. Maintain and develop links with sources of CPD, ensure procedures for accessing information on CPD are available to all;
 - Quality assure providers;
 - Identify the Academy's CPD needs through mechanisms such as: Academy self-evaluation, analysis of performance management targets, local/national priorities, internal/external monitoring, informal/formal discussions with individuals and teams;
 - Discuss with the Headteacher and Strategic Governing Body the main CPD priorities and the budgetary implications;
 - Report to the Strategic Governing Body on the provision and impact of CPD;

- Provide guidance to colleagues on the most effective procedures for disseminating information following professional development training (ie: through staff meetings).

Planning for CPD

Professional development for all employed staff will be linked to objectives or targets as identified in:-

- The Academy Improvement Plan
- Performance management
- Personal and professional needs of the individual

Supporting a range of CPD activities:

Our Academies will support a wide portfolio of CPD approaches in an effort to match preferred learning styles of staff and to maximise the impact on teaching and learning within the Academy. These CPD approaches may include:

- attendance at a course or conference;
- in-school training using the expertise available within the Academy or Trust;
- school-based work through accessing an external consultant/adviser or relevant expert such as an advanced skills or lead teacher;
- secondments, e.g. with a regional or national organisation, an exchange or placement, e.g. with another teacher, school, higher education, industry, international exchange, involvement with Strategic Governing Body;
- shadowing opportunities to observe experienced colleagues in another setting;
- opportunities to participate in award bearing work from higher education or other providers such as the National College for the Leadership of Schools and Children's Centre;
- research opportunities;
- distance learning, e.g. relevant resources, training videos, reflection, simulation;
- practical experience, e.g. national test or exam marking experience, opportunities to present a paper, contribute to a training programme, co-ordinate or support a learning forum or network, become involved in local and national networks;
- job enrichment/enlargement, e.g. a higher level of responsibility; front lining working in someone else's job, job sharing, acting roles, job rotation, shadowing;
- producing documentation or resources such as a personal development plan, teaching materials, assessment package, ICT or video programme;
- coaching and mentoring – receiving or acting in these roles, acting as or receiving the support of a critical friend, team building activity;
- partnerships, e.g. with a colleague, group, subject, phase, activity or school-based; team meetings and activities such as joint planning, observation or standardisation, special project working group, involvement in cross Trust development;
- creating an improved learning environment within the Academy.

Best Value

Monitoring and quality assurance and evaluation

Monitoring the effectiveness of CPD is necessary to provide a sound basis for improvement. All staff should have the opportunity to feedback on all professional development opportunities. The method for feedback will depend on the type of professional development attended. Annually the CPD leader shall conclude his/her report to the governing body with an assessment on the benefits of CPD undertaken (and planned), especially as it relates to:

- pupil and school attainment;
- improved percentages of good and outstanding teaching;
- increased pupil understanding and enthusiasm;
- increased staff confidence;
- increased evidence of reflective practice;
- recruitment, retention and career progression/promotable staff.

Budget

The Academy Improvement Plan highlights our priorities for the year ahead, and in the medium and longer term. Integral in our planning must be professional development and creative use of our INSET budget. The Head teacher, CPD coordinator and curriculum coordinator are responsible for the detailed planning of all professional development. This involves both teaching staff and non-teaching staff.