

professional development and ICT

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ICT: essential guides for school governors





This guide is intended to enable school governors to:

- contribute to developing or reviewing a vision and policy for continuing professional development (CPD) for ICT
- monitor the extent to which effective ICT professional development for all staff is taking place.

As ICT is increasingly used in schools to support learning, teaching and administration, there is a need for all staff to be confident and competent users of a wide range of hardware, software and ICT applications. Technology does not stand still – as more schools connect to the internet via broadband and as new devices such as interactive whiteboards become widespread, there is a continuing need for staff to update their knowledge and skills.

Governors need to be aware of the main policies and the range of professional development opportunities

available to school staff and themselves, and should monitor its take-up. They need to be aware of how CPD affects the development of ICT in all areas of school activity, and not least, the role that ICT itself can play in delivering professional development.

Previous publications in this series have indicated the need for continuing professional development of staff throughout the implementation of any ICT programme, and this publication aims to provide governors with further information on this important area.

Effective professional development

If your school is to make effective use of the considerable investment it is making in ICT then a well-planned training programme is essential. Training plays a key part in ensuring the integration of any new ICT infrastructure, facilities or software with learning, teaching, management or administration. However, the school will be also be more effective in involving staff in ICT training if all staff and pupils are engaged in continuous learning as a professional learning community.

Building a CPD plan

Mirandanet have carried out research into the NOF programme of ICT training which was made available to schools during the initial NGfL funding of schools. The result is a draft document intended to help schools plan staff development.

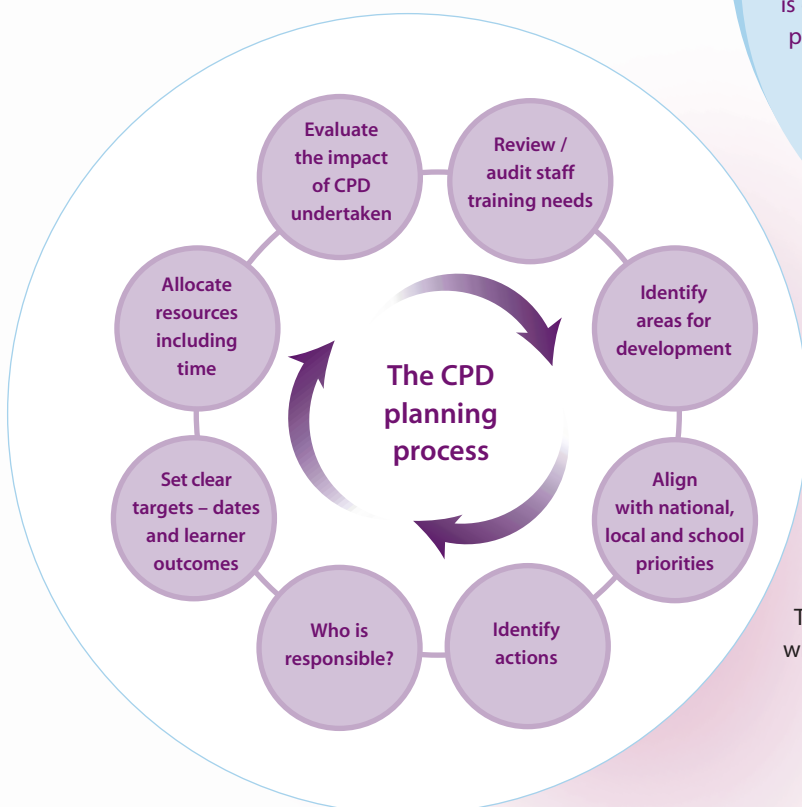
Schools are realizing that learning technology can advance their learning and teaching goals. However this technology is changing all the time and schools need a continuous programme of staff development. The paper provides some of the fundamental questions a senior management team should ask in creating imaginative continuing professional development opportunities

[<http://www.mirandanet.ac.uk/profdev/cpd.htm#2>].

Professional development in ICT should be part of the whole-school CPD plan and not developed as an afterthought.

Professional development should be linked to whole-school policies on a wide range of issues and to school development planning and performance management.

The diagram (left) shows a possible cycle to undertake when planning CPD.



A member of the senior management team should have clear responsibility to ensure that effective opportunities for CPD are available for all staff (not just teachers) and that CPD plans link school priorities with individual needs and aspirations. It is the role of the governing body to monitor any professional development policy which is implemented.

Effective CPD is likely to be directly related to what staff are doing in their classroom or work area and should provide scope for participants to identify the focus or path of their development. Additional training needs specific to the role of individual staff should be carefully assessed and planned. Ideally, all staff in a school should have access to ICT and all staff should have an opportunity to receive training to develop their personal ICT skills. It is important to remember that there are two aspects to ICT training, particularly for teachers and classroom support staff: skills training to enable staff to know how to use new hardware and software and pedagogical training to enable them to make best use of the new technology in learning and teaching.

Training opportunities

External expertise can be used to provide training and raise expectations. CPD can also include peer support – providing opportunities to work with other colleagues and share practice. Teachers observing and learning from each other and receiving structured feedback is an effective method of professional development, enabling staff to be reflective and focus on their contribution to the work of the school, including children's learning and attainment, whilst working in a supportive environment. CPD opportunities should be sustained over time to embed learning in school practice and should include opportunities for independent self-study.

Case study

Dorset LEA

All LEAs offer a wide range of training, CPD and Inset for their staff. Dorset LEA [<http://www.dorsetcc.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=18017>] offers a range of imaginative and innovative CPD and course delivery styles, that are in use by Dorset teachers, including traditional courses, face to face, cluster and pyramid partnerships as well as innovative online, distance or remote 'delivery mechanisms'.

Governor training is also offered by Dorset [<http://www.dorsetcc.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=5148>].

Case study

NOF-funded ICT training at Bildeston Primary School, Suffolk

The headteacher prioritised the training, and the support received from their trainer was critical to the success of the programme. The trainer met with the headteacher and deputy before training commenced in order to identify the needs of the school and the resources available. This meant that, although they followed the training model provided, they were also able to make adaptations to match their own circumstances. In addition to face-to-face training sessions the trainer provided continuous support by telephone and email, helping staff to see the effectiveness of ICT as a means of professional support

[<http://client.canterbury.ac.uk/research/case-studies/nof/eastern/suffolk/bildeston/bildeston.asp>].



In addition to training and peer support organised within a school, there will be opportunities outside school for training all staff. A range of training opportunities should be available via your LEA, either developed locally or as part of a regional or national initiative or policy. As well as specific training in ICT, professional development opportunities in other areas can be often be accessed via ICT. Further training opportunities, that your school may wish to take advantage of, are listed in the Useful Information section. You may wish to monitor the uptake of these opportunities as part of your role as governor, particularly if you are a governor with responsibility for training.

Funding is currently available from the Standards Fund grant to provide training for support staff (including technical support staff) and to fund the Hands on Support initiative. You can find out more from Teachernet [<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/ictis/funding>].

Governor training

Governors may be included in school-based ICT training. LEA training is provided for school governors through Governor Training units and may contain ICT elements related to curriculum, administration, or just to develop governors' own ICT skills. There is a wide variety of opportunities to address personal ICT skills, including courses offered at local colleges and adult and community learning centres; if the school is a community college then governors may find that suitable courses operate in their own institution.

Governors can also use ICT to find out about other training opportunities available to them: for example, many LEAs have a section of their website dedicated to governors which lists forthcoming courses. Teachernet has a summary of national opportunities for governor training with links to relevant organisations

[http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atozg/Governor_training].

Case study

LEA Inset for Governors

Essex look to provide leadership and support to governors, governing bodies, clerks and schools in order to enable effective governance. ICT has become an integral part of the process insofar as the LEA provides an online booking service

[http://www.essexcc.gov.uk/vip8/ecc/ECCWebsite/display/channels/school_governors_channel_476834_Learning/index.jsp].

Analysing training needs

Professional development should begin with an analysis of need, whether at a personal, staff or whole-school level. An audit of existing skills leading into a training needs analysis of all staff is an essential starting point when developing a CPD programme for ICT. This process should be led by the member of the school management team with responsibility for ICT. One way to approach this is to use a self-assessment tool, which could be paper-based or an online matrix such as those developed by Becta/NCSL [<http://matrix.becta.org.uk/>].

Supplier-based training

It is important to think about the training needs of staff every time new equipment or software is introduced to school. Suppliers of both ICT hardware and software often provide training in the use of their products. Training provided may be at additional cost or included in the purchase price of the hardware or software.

National ICT CPD initiatives

Teachers

The Primary Strategy: Learning and Teaching Using ICT is a range of policies, materials, training and support offered by the DfES to take a holistic approach to supporting primary schools and teachers in the task of embedding ICT in teaching and learning [<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primaryict>].

Hands on Support (HoS) is funded through Standards Fund grant 31a for two years from April 2004. HoS provides teachers with the opportunity to share and spread good practice in using ICT to enhance learning and teaching across all subjects and key stages [http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/ictis/ict_teaching/hos].

ICT across the curriculum (ICTAC) forms part of the Key Stage 3 National Strategy's support for whole-school improvement. The ICTAC pack is a set of training materials designed to promote the use of ICT across all subjects, it includes a series of guides for individual curriculum areas and a management guide for staff

with responsibility for leading and managing ICT across the curriculum [<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/keystage3/respub/ictac>].

The Enhancing Subject Teaching Using ICT (ESTUIC) project ensures that teachers have access to high-quality digital professional development materials that support the integration of ICT with the curriculum at both primary and secondary levels across most subjects. The resources are aligned to the Primary and KS3 Strategies [http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/ictis/ict_teaching/estuic].

In conjunction with the subject associations Becta has organised a wide range of face-to-face and online training events, focusing on the integration of ICT into learning and teaching. There is information on future events, an archive of previous events and links to future professional development events organised by other providers [<http://www.ictadvice.org.uk/index.php?section=il&catcode=oleindex>].

Headteachers

Strategic Leadership of ICT (SLICT) is a national professional development programme for headteachers to address the leadership of ICT in schools. Many other National College for School Leadership (NCSL) programmes, such as Leading from the Middle, include an online element. Course participants have access to NCSL's Learning Gateway which provides an online community, specific elements for individual programmes and general learning resources [<http://www.ncsl.org.uk/slict>].

Teaching Assistants (TAs)

Induction training materials are provided to LEAs to run courses giving new TAs the basics they need in order to support teachers in the literacy hour and numeracy lessons. The course includes ICT in learning and teaching [<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/teachingassistants>].

Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs)

There is a website for support staff who are working towards, or have achieved, HLTA status including a section on training and assessment [<http://www.hlta.gov.uk>].

Bursars

Training is available from the National College of School Leadership (NCSL) to develop the capability of school bursars. The training covers all the main roles of bursars and includes the use of school management information systems (MIS) and financial systems delivered by ICT [<http://www.ncsl.org.uk/bursar>].

Administrators and other school support staff

The DfES has produced a package of introductory training materials for school support staff other than teaching assistants. It covers a limited but important range of knowledge and skills essential for newly appointed school support staff. The materials include a section on ICT [<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/supportstaff/training/introductorytraining>].

What the Research Says

Becta has carried out a review of the research literature on ICT and continuing professional development. This research summarises the benefits of using ICT to support teachers' CPD, and looks at issues concerning effective CPD for the use of ICT in the classroom.

The briefing, along with an annotated bibliography which gives further details on the literature studied, can be downloaded from the Becta Research website

[<http://www.becta.org.uk/research/research.cfm?section=1&id=522>].

Inclusion

Becta manage a number of online communities which focus on different aspects of special educational needs and inclusive education. One forum, 'SENIT' focuses on the use of ICT to support pupils with special educational needs and another, 'senco-forum', supports Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators in their role. Research has shown that senco-forum was perceived as important for enhancing professional knowledge, for exchanging ideas and providing personal support. Users valued the immediacy, open ethos and democratic stance which the forum provided

[<http://www.becta.org.uk/inclusiononlinecommunities>].



Technical support staff

Becta has developed a range of resources to help schools manage technical support more effectively [<http://www.becta.org.uk/ntss/display.cfm?section=1>]. This includes a technical competencies framework, designed to allow technicians to assess their competences in relation to providing technical support [<http://www.becta.org.uk/techcomp/index.cfm>].

The website also provides links to a range of information on ICT skills, courses and qualifications for technical support staff, including information about modern apprenticeships [<http://www.becta.org.uk/leaders/display.cfm?section=40&id=2989>].

Ultralab at Anglia Polytechnic University offer an online work-based degree for ICT technicians and school support staff [<http://degree.ultralab.net>].

Governors should note that many of the 'industry standard' courses which network managers, particularly in large secondary schools, need to attend may seem very expensive (courses leading to internationally recognised Microsoft or Cisco qualifications, for example). However, it is essential that this investment is made to enable staff to have the expertise to maintain and develop the school's ICT infrastructure.

Useful information

Where can you go for further help regarding ICT?

Your own LEA team, particularly the ICT adviser, should be your first contact for advice on CPD. Your LEA's Governor Training section may be able to direct you to support.

Becta

Information on CPD opportunities.

<http://www.becta.org.uk/leaders/display.cfm?section=7>

DfES

Access to a range of routes, via the Primary National Strategy into CPD including Advanced Skills Teachers, Hands On Support, ICT in the Curriculum Inset and the National ICT Register.

http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/features/embedding_ict/939253/profdev

GovernorNet – LEA websites

For information on governance, governor support and training services, sample school policies or education generally in an LEA area.

<http://www.governor.net.co.uk/lealinks>

London Grid for Learning (LGfL)

CPD about learning and teaching involving ICT

<http://www.lgfl.net/lgfl/leas/redbridge/web/ICT%20in%20curriculum/documents/CPD%20overview.doc>

Learndirect

Learndirect has been developed by University for Industry (Ufi) with a remit from government to provide high-quality post-16 learning

<http://www.learndirect.co.uk>

Research Machines (RM)

RM's picture of professional development initiatives.

<http://www.rm.com/secondary/articles/ArticleDetail.asp?cref=HA301966&PAGE=ARTICLEHOME>

Special Educational Needs

Free ICT Training Resources for SEN were originally produced for the NOF ICT Training Programme but anyone can now download and use them.

<http://www.inclusive.net/resources/resources.shtml>

Other training opportunities

The following are examples and should not be regarded as a definitive list.

The European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) equips learners with practical ICT skills. One training provider, Aston Swann, has designed an ECDL for Educators to enable teachers to acquire their ECDL skills in a school context. The European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) equips learners with practical ICT skills. One training provider, Aston Swann, has designed an ECDL for Educators to enable teachers to acquire their ICT skills in a school context. <http://www.educatorsecdl.com/> Microsoft Innovative Teachers Programme is a CPD programme in three steps: Learner, Creator, Developer, all accredited by Microsoft. It is free and generally available via clusters of schools, often through an LEA <http://www.microsoft.com/uk/education/training/teachers>

TeachandLearn.net, created by the Open University and BBC Worldwide, provides training in the whole curriculum, not just in ICT, offering accreditation towards higher-level qualifications. <http://www.teachandlearn.net>

This document is one of a series, developed during Autumn 2004, by Becta to support school governors. Each guide, together with supporting material, will be made available for downloading in the Governor Support area of Becta's website [<http://www.becta.org.uk/leaders/display.cfm?section=13>].

department for
education and skills



Becta is the Government's key partner in the strategic development and delivery of its information and communications technology (ICT) and e-learning strategy for the schools and the learning and skills sectors.

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