

## 'CPD. The Wider Picture'

As Heads of schools, it is important that we keep CPD as one of our key priorities. A successful CPD programme will not only further develop each staff member, it will also develop colleagues, improve classroom practice and support staff retention.

CPD occurs in many different forms. It can be as formal as a course or as informal as a discussion with a colleague over a coffee in the staff room. Whichever way it is undertaken and delivered, a successful school will ensure that CPD is ever present.

Earlier I mentioned a variety-of benefits that a strong CPD programme bring to a school. I would like to look at these individually as they are not always realised in our busy schedule.

Providing formal CPD training for-staff sends a very strong message. To staff it is saying that they are valued and that the organisation wants to support their professional development. Such a message can only be highly motivational. The message does not only stop with that particular member of staff. It also informs all staff of the value the school is placing on CPD, along with the fact that the school is willing to invest in its people and that there is an agenda for continual improvement. Once again, an extremely positive message from the school and huge value beyond the cost of any course.

CPD linked to classroom practice should have the intention of improving the learning experiences of students. However, it is not only course material and content that supports classroom practice. It is also the networking and sharing of good practice with other staff on the course. Hearing how they may tackle a particular area differently from the approach you may have can be enlightening. A CPD course is a great means to access a much wider knowledge base.

Staff retention is an important aspect of any school. A strong philosophy for CPD supports this area as it shows a school is investing in its greatest resource, its people. Although good staff retention is a goal, I believe any Head does want a controllable turnover and a commitment to CPD also supports this. Training staff will lead to some leaving the organisation for promoted posts. This sends a strong and positive message and-also allows others to step into the vacated position.

As Principal, I am always proud to see former staff from my school in senior roles in other schools. It means your CPD programme has supported individual development to such an extent that staff can confidently move to leadership positions. Again, another incredibly strong message which can be readily linked to the culture established in your organisation.

To conclude, a positive ethos towards CPD for all staff has far greater benefits than just the actual training the individual staff member receives. It promotes a positive attitude for staff development and the development of student learning; it also markets the school and most importantly sends a very strong message that your school values continual improvement. What great reasons to invest wisely in CPD.