



# Castleford Academy Trust

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## Professional Development Strategy



*Working together to achieve excellence for all*



## Continuing Professional Development Strategy

### Introduction

*‘Supporting high quality teaching is pivotal in improving children’s outcomes. Indeed, research tells us that high quality teaching can narrow the disadvantaged gap.*

*Promoting effective professional development plays a crucial role in improving classroom practice and pupil outcomes’*

Professor Becky Francis, Chief Executive, Education Endowment Fund

The Education Endowment Fund guidance report ‘Effective Professional Development’, defines professional development as structured and facilitated activities for teachers, intended to increase their teaching ability and might include a broad range of skills including communicating and modelling language, exploring ideas, instruction, and assessment. The emphasis on ‘teaching ability’ is fundamental to the Trust’s CPD strategy.

A professional development programme is likely to involve many activities designed to sustain and embed practice, including, but not limited to: individual and collaborative teacher activity; well-designed formative assessment and evaluation; whole-school leadership; and expert input. Given that there is often a cost associated with professional development, it should be well-designed, carefully selected, focused on ability rather than merely teaching knowledge and implemented effectively so that the investment is justified and intended to improve pupil outcomes.

Over the past ten years there has been a range of evidence and guidance focusing on effective professional development. This strategy draws on the following credible sources and guidance and the Education Endowment Fund guidance is outlined in more detail within the implementation:

- Teacher Development Trust – Developing great teaching in 2015 [Developing Great Teaching - Teacher Development Trust \(tdtrust.org\)](https://www.tdtrust.org/)
- DfE publication – Standards for teacher professional development in 2016 [Guidance overview: Standard for teachers’ professional development - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standards-for-teacher-professional-development)
- Education Endowment Fund - Guidance report - Effective Professional Development 2021 [Effective Professional Development | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/guidance-reports/effective-professional-development-2021)

Within the Department for Education (DfE) Teachers’ Standards there is an emphasis on professional development to improve teaching within standard eight: ‘take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues.’ Through the DfE Recruitment and Retention Strategy, the recent new initiatives and reforms from the DfE recognise the importance of teacher quality such as the Early Career Framework and the new National Professional Qualifications, providing clear frameworks for training and support.



## Intent

'Castleford Academy Trust is an exceptional place to work and has a team of dedicated and committed staff. We strongly believe in developing and nurturing talent by providing opportunities for staff training and development' George Panayiotou, Chief Executive Officer, Castleford Academy Trust.

At Castleford Academy Trust, we firmly believe in developing high-calibre staff and nurturing talent. We are committed to providing a range of staff development opportunities, partnerships and support to enhance staff skills, talent and expertise within their own academy, throughout the Trust and the across the wider education system. This is outlined in the trust's three-year strategic plan and is deeply rooted within our vision '*Working Together to achieve excellence for all*'. Providing effective professional development opportunities is fundamental to the development of exceptional classroom practice, high pupil outcomes and outstanding leadership. Within the trust we have a core offer within each academy, with activities happening on a weekly, fortnightly or termly basis, as well as a wide range of well-planned professional development programmes which are informed by individual, departmental and academy priorities and regional and national initiatives. We embrace the use of evidence-based research to drive professional development and ensure that there are opportunities for teachers to share best practice and engage in professional discussion. When planning and delivering professional development we are mindful of staff workload and take this into account.

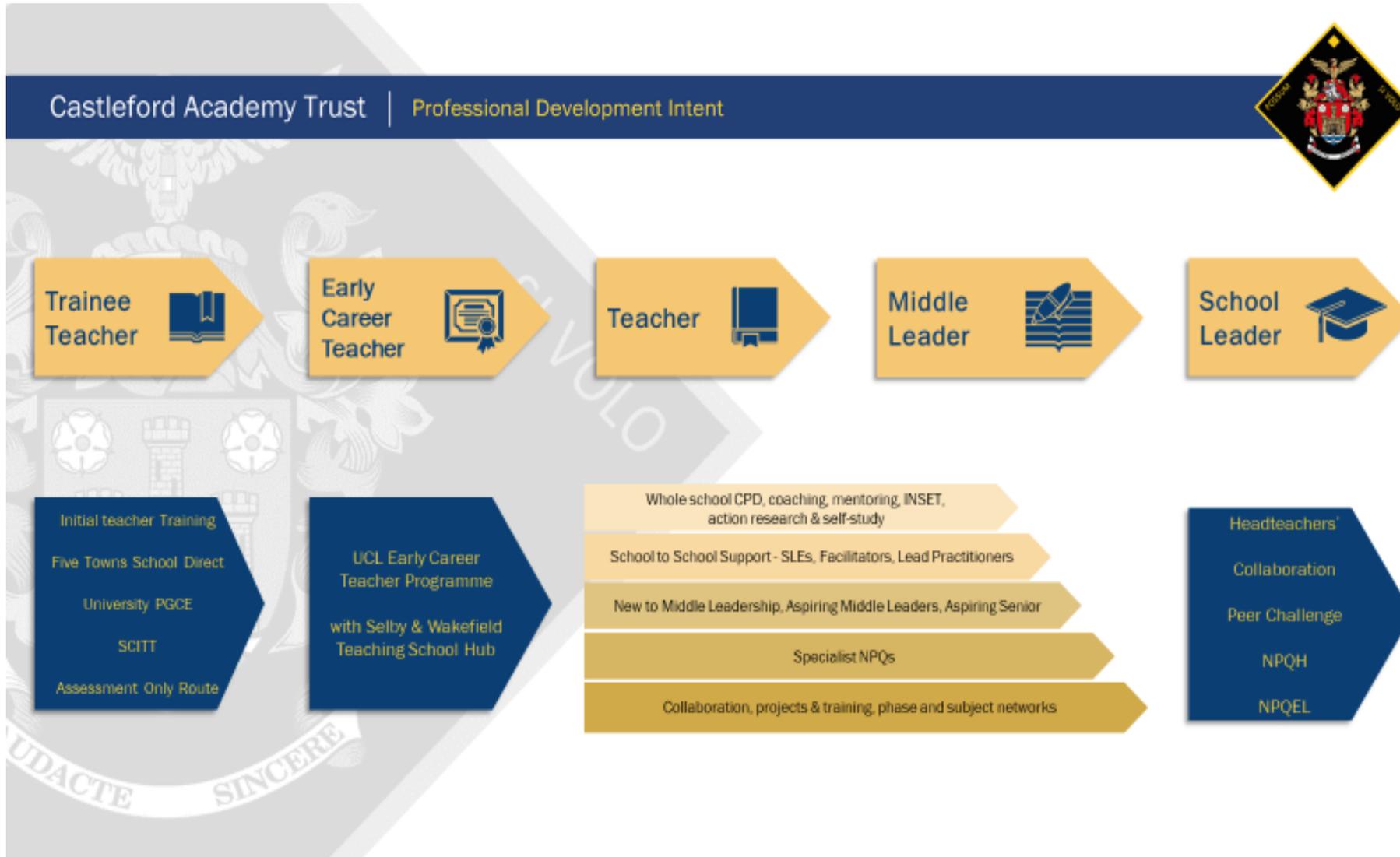
## Implementation

### **Core offer**

Within each academy, throughout each week and each term, teachers have access to a range of timetabled CPD opportunities. These are in addition to the CPD opportunities and programmes outlined below. Within primary academies these include coaching cycles which may be pedagogy or subject specific, regular support from subject leaders which may include plan-do-review cycles or lesson study, weekly staff meetings, weekly senior leadership team meetings and INSET sessions. Within secondary academies these include weekly teaching and learning briefings, weekly departmental CPD meetings, middle leaders and year group leaders' meetings, bespoke CPD options, coaching opportunities with leading practitioners, peer coaching through IRIS connect, PIXL membership, Wakefield Learning Community membership, twilight sessions and INSET sessions.



## Overview of professional development opportunities





## Partnerships and External Professional Development Support

We give high priority to the continuing development of all staff within the trust and offer a wide-ranging and well-planned programme of development opportunities, working within the trust, our partnerships and with external providers.

**One Wakefield** is a system-led partnership which aims to engage with and apply evidence-informed practice across the Wakefield Local Authority. There is a particular focus on improving outcomes for all pupils, especially those facing disadvantage.

**Wakefield Traded Services** was originally sited within Education & Inclusion in the Children & Young People's Directorate but has expanded to include a wider range of Local Authority Services across Wakefield and beyond. Schools can purchase Service Level Agreements, conferences, training and physical products from the Local Authority. A range of professional development for all phases, network meetings and the annual headteachers' conference is provided by the Local Authority, booked through Traded Services.

**Wakefield Learning Community** is comprised of a group of secondary schools, academies, colleges and PRUS who work together to share high quality CPD and professional learning opportunities. The community is driven by its active forum group who meet to plan for the needs of the whole community. A wide range of secondary subject networks meet regularly to share good practice. Staff from across the trust contribute to the organisation and content of the subject networks. Running alongside this, are a number of meetings and conference for senior leaders – including the Wakefield Learning Community Forum Group which meets half termly and 'Improving Schools' conferences which are held twice yearly.

**Teaching School Hubs** designated by the Department for Education are integral to our professional development offer. We are strategic partners for the Barnsley and Doncaster/Selby and Wakefield teaching school hub which is part of a consortia of prominent partners. Hubs are responsible for the delivery of the DfE's golden thread for recruiting and retaining teachers, providing the very best in initial teacher training, newly qualified teacher induction, early career teacher support and CPD pathways to retain and develop expertise in schools. The hub also offers the full suite of new national professional qualifications for school leaders, headteachers and executive leaders.

### University College London

Our ECTS are registered with UCL and follow the full induction programme which consists of 9 modules over 2 years. The 8 standards of the Early Career Framework (ECF) (which themselves are mapped to the Teachers' Standards) are combined into 5 modules in Year 1 that fully address the content of all standards. The 4 modules in Year 2 deepen ECTS' knowledge and practice in relation to aspects of the ECF that are most pertinent to each individual. Programme modules are sequenced in order to address key priorities for ECTS and their schools across a typical school year. ECT learning in each half term is through a programme of self-study, mentor meetings as well as online and face-to-face training events. Learning activities address ECTS' knowledge of the ECF content and their ability to put this into practice to bring about high-quality pupil learning. Mentors are provided with professional development throughout the programme via an online learning community.

**Education Development Trust** is the chosen provider for the new suite of NPQs. They work in partnership with experts from Sheffield Hallam University's Institute of Education and Evidence Based Education and a national network of school Delivery Partners, including the Teaching School Hub to deliver research informed professional development and support to school staff

**The Research Schools Network** is a collaboration (EEF and IEE) to create a network of schools that support the use of evidence to improve teaching practice. There are many evidence-based resources and tools available to help improve teaching practice and raise the attainment of pupils. Research Schools lead the way in the use of evidence-based practice, sharing what they know about putting research into practice, and supporting schools to make better use of evidence to inform their teaching and learning.



**Higher Education Institutions** within the region support the initial teacher training provision available in the trust. The Five Towns ITT Partnership is a school direct alliance in partnership with the University of Huddersfield and Leeds Beckett University. The alliance offers primary and secondary training places in partnership with schools within the trust and the wider region. Trust schools also work with the local SCITT (Yorkshire Three Counties Alliance) Sheffield Hallam & Leeds Trinity to support the ITT provision. Each HEI provides specific mentor training for school-based mentors as part of the preparation for placements.

**B11 Education** provide trust schools with objective feedback to identify strengths and areas for development to ensure that trust schools work towards better outcomes for pupils, teachers and school leaders. B11 consultants are experienced Ofsted inspectors, former HMI, DfE Education Advisers and school leaders. Each has the skills and experience to support your establishment in building its capacity.

**The Confederation of School Trusts (CST)** is the national organisation and sector body for school trusts in England. CST has a strong, strategic presence with access to government and policy makers helping to drive change for education. CST provide regular updates, networks and professional development.

### Planning for effective professional development

At Castleford Academy Trust we draw on the guidance from the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) – Guidance report – Effective Professional Development to set fundamental expectations when designing and delivering or selecting (purchasing) professional development. We embrace the following recommendations within the report:

- When designing and selecting professional development, focus on the mechanisms.
- Ensure that professional development effectively builds knowledge, motivates staff, develops teaching techniques, and embeds practice.
- Implement professional development programmes with care, taking into consideration the context and needs of the school

In line with the EEF guidance, we ensure that professional development programmes and activities are balanced in design, including all four groups; A. BUILD KNOWLEDGE B. MOTIVATE TEACHERS C. DEVELOP TEACHING TECHNIQUES D. EMBED PRACTICE and at least one of the following 14 mechanisms from each group as follows:

#### Build Knowledge

- Managing cognitive load
- Revisiting prior learning

#### Motivate teachers

- Setting and agreeing on goals
- Presenting information from a credible source
- Providing affirmation and reinforcement after progress

#### Developing teaching techniques

- Instructing teachers on how to perform a technique
- Arranging social support
- Modelling the technique
- Monitoring and providing feedback
- Rehearsing technique



## Embedding Practice

- Providing prompts and cues
- Prompting action planning
- Encouraging monitoring
- Prompting context-specific repetition

In addition to the EEF guidance, we also draw on models of adult learning to plan and scaffold professional development activities and sessions, following Glaser’s (1990) model. Glaser expanded Kolb’s learning model by showing how the cycle could be used to underpin the design and facilitation of a learning programme. The steps in Glaser’s development of the experiential learning cycle are described below (taken from National College for School leadership – facilitator toolkit)

Seven steps in planning a learning activity or event:

| Step | Focus   | Examples of activities (from facilitators toolkit)  |
|------|---|---|
| 1    | <b>Warming up and getting the group on track.</b><br>This step helps participants leave behind the day job and focus on learning. It can often be incorporated into a warm-up. It can help to clarify a shared understanding of what the event or activity is for between facilitator and participants. | Ice breakers<br>Sharing aspirations for the day<br>Speed dating around a key question                             |
| 2    | <b>Giving the group a structured learning experience.</b><br>This is usually a group activity during which participants engage with concrete examples of the concepts or area of learning. It allows participants to identify what they already know about the theme or topic.                          | Case studies (written or presented)<br>Postcards summarising case studies<br>Video<br>Games<br>Simulations        |
| 3    | <b>Processing and presenting.</b><br>This is usually a fairly short step as participants reflect on their prior knowledge in discussion with others. Often, they are asked to identify common areas of understanding or to categorise their thinking in some way.                                       | Small groups identifying three common areas of understanding from their discussion –<br>Categorisation activities |
| 4    | <b>New knowledge and theory input.</b><br>Relevant theory is introduced. This is often a presentation but it could also be a video or a piece of written material to consider.  | PowerPoint presentation<br>Think pieces<br>Mantle of the expert   |
| 5    | <b>Assimilating knowledge (synthesis)</b><br>At this point the participants consider their existing knowledge alongside the theoretical input. This very often creates much discussion (especially if the input has been interesting, thought-provoking and well presented)                             | Enablers and barriers<br>Using base boards to sort and categorise ideas<br>Diamond nine<br>Futuring activities    |
| 6    | <b>Application</b><br>Crucially the learning so far has to be placed back in context for the participants. This step requires them to consider the implications for them, others they work with and their organisations.  | Scenario-planning<br>Carousels<br>Coaching  |
| 7    | <b>Summarising</b><br>This step helps participants capture the key learning points for them and consider their next steps. It may also contribute to the evaluation of the event or activity.   | Pentagon review sheet   |



## **Impact**

At Castleford Academy trust the access to a wide range of effective professional development will:

- Enable all our teachers and school leaders to continuously develop their knowledge and skills throughout their careers
- Help teachers to improve through evidence-based professional development that is explicitly focused on improving classroom teaching
- Ensure pupils make at least expected progress from their statutory assessment point with some making better than expected progress to achieve excellence
- Develop expertise at teacher and leadership level in order to share best practice and provide support across the trust
- Ensure succession planning and develop future leaders
- Secure the recruitment and retention of high calibre of staff