



INSPIRE

Principles for supporting successful teacher development

Professional development (PD) has the potential to bring about powerful change for teachers and improved outcomes for learners.

To help you achieve the highest possible impact from your PD initiatives, we have developed **INSPIRE**. This collection of evidence-informed principles will guide you to choose or design and implement successful programmes that transform teaching practice.

The **INSPIRE** principles can be applied to PD programmes for teachers and trainee teachers of English and other languages, and for those who teach through the medium of English.



IMPACTFUL

PD programmes should result in impactful learning not only for teachers, but also for their learners.

The main goal of professional development programmes is to effect change in teachers' expertise, so that this change results in better teaching. Improvements in teaching should then lead to changes in learners' knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or values, resulting in improved performance and outcomes. This means that learners' needs – and not just teachers' needs – should be both the starting point and the end goal when making decisions on the content and approach of PD programmes.

NEEDS-BASED

Effective PD programmes address the daily challenges faced by teachers and their students.

Each teacher's learning needs should be taken into account in the context of their work to ensure that PD programmes are relevant. The key question that programme designers need to answer is not just what works (i.e. what does the research evidence say?), but what works in this context, for these learners, teachers and leaders, at this point in time to apply insights from research judiciously. It is important to engage the teachers in answering this question, as they will be more invested if the programme relates to their experiences in their classrooms.

SUPPORTED

Active and continued support from institutional leadership and peers is crucial.

The attitude and actions of leaders are a fundamental driver of effective teacher development. In the most effective institutions, professional development is a leadership priority, with leaders fully supporting, adequately resourcing, explicitly endorsing and participating in the PD programme. Practical social support throughout the professional development programme has been shown to be extremely positive in making change happen. This support can be from experts or through collaboration with peers who have experience of the practices that the programme promotes.

PRACTICAL

Practical components support teachers to apply and embed new strategies and approaches.

A key purpose of professional development programmes is to enable teachers to transfer what they learn to their classroom practice and to embed it into their own practice. The practical components of PD programmes are fundamental in supporting teachers to effectively apply new ideas into their own practice. Programmes that ask teachers to try out new approaches and see the effects on their students tend to be more successful than those that focus on changing attitudes first in the hope that this will lead to changes in practice.

INSIGHTFUL

Evidence-informed input helps teachers gain new insights.

Another key purpose of PD programmes is to help teachers gain new evidence-informed insights, which they can implement through their practice. Providing opportunities for engagement with evidence-informed input and using provocative questions that force teachers to re-examine familiar events can be extremely effective. This can foster those 'self-generated "aha!" moments', moments of discovery, leading to new insights that may result in changes in their perspectives and ultimately their behaviour.

REFLECTIVE

Inquiry cycles offer teachers opportunities to reflect critically on their practice.

Reflection enables teachers to embed new practices, such as goal setting, action planning and self-monitoring. By engaging in critical reflection teachers are more likely to apply the evidence base judiciously, adapting approaches to work around contextual constraints. The practical component of PD programmes is more powerful when it is structured within action research or inquiry cycles of investigation, action, evaluation and refinement. These offer teachers opportunities to reflect critically and systematically on their practice and improve it as a result, while developing new perspectives.

EVALUATED

Regularly evaluating the quality and impact of teacher learning programmes is highly beneficial.

It is important for institutions to frequently evaluate both the quality and the impact of their PD programmes on the teachers who take part as well as on their learners. PD evaluation enables identification of what has and has not worked, capitalising on those strategies that best promote teaching and learning. It also generates evidence of both organisational learning and individual teacher progress, which makes the organisation (more) accountable for its investment in PD.



Learn more about INSPIRE

Promoting deep and actionable teacher learning in the age of cognitive overload

In this webinar, Silvana Richardson discusses the INSPIRE model and provides support to put the principles into practice.

Learn more at

cambridge.org/INSPIREwebinar

Promoting Professional Learning

In this practical book, Silvana Richardson explores the critical role of teacher development in improving student learning. The book draws on recent research to provide a framework for planning and leading effective and measurable teacher learning programmes. It also includes practical scenarios, case studies and examples to demonstrate how the guidance can be successfully applied in a variety of contexts.

Available soon

cambridge.org/PLD

