

# St Mark's Church of England School

## Professional Development Policy



## What is Professional Development at St Mark's Church of England School?

At St Mark's CE School we will expect excellence from everyone. This means that leaders will seek to find the most appropriate innovative practice from national and international sources. Leaders will expect the best from the staff and students across the school, and support them to achieve. All staff, in partnership with parents and the wider community, will be expected to give their best at all times to ensure excellent future outcomes for students. Opportunities for professional development will be identified through appraisals, requests from staff and actions following monitoring processes.

### **Teaching and learning**

As a school we firmly believe that supporting high quality teaching is pivotal in improving children's outcomes. As stated by Rauch and Coe, developing the quality of teaching is 'arguably the single most important thing that teachers and leaders can focus on to make a difference in children's learning' (p.5). Professional development at St Mark's can be defined as planned and facilitated activity for **all** teaching staff and leaders that is intended to improve their knowledge and teaching/leadership ability.

As recommended by the Education Endowment Foundation (2022), all professional development at the school aims to effectively **build knowledge, motivate staff, develop teaching techniques, and embed practice.**

- A. **Build Knowledge** - (managing cognitive load and revisiting prior learning)
- B. **Motivate Staff** - (setting and agreeing on goals, presenting information from a credible source, providing affirmation and reinforcement after progress)
- C. **Develop Teaching Techniques** - (instruction, social support, modelling, monitoring and feedback, rehearsal)
- D. **Embed Practice** - (providing prompts and cues, prompting action planning, encouraging monitoring, prompting context specific repetition)

### **Forms of Professional Development at St Mark's**

**Coaching:** Working with teachers and leaders to discuss and observe classroom practice on a one-to-one, regular and sustained basis, focusing on the practice of specific teaching and leadership skills. Coaching can also be used to support improvement in other roles in school.

**Lesson Study:** Observation of live classroom lessons by a group of teachers who collect information on teaching and learning and collaboratively analyse and discuss it.

**Teacher Learning Communities/Departments (PDMS):** Where teachers come together in groups, to discuss and analyse practice, curriculum and pedagogy, aiming to gain new knowledge and skills.

**The Early Career Framework:** a two year structured programme providing the key knowledge and competencies that those entering the teaching profession should look to master.

**National Professional Qualifications:** a suite of training programmes accessible to teachers looking to further their expertise in school leadership or specialist areas of practice. The available programmes are Leading Teacher Development, Leading Teaching, Leading Behaviour and Culture, Senior Leadership, Headship and Executive Leadership.

**External CPD:** External CPD may be provided through organisations such as Maths and English Hubs as well as other subject specific organisations. Other opportunities may include working with school partners, whole school improvement investment (e.g talk for writing), Quality Mark Awards, assessment training or specific training for the job (e.g First aid or Finance training).

**Apprenticeships:** This is an external course which is completed alongside on the job training. This can be offered to all members of staff and for qualifications from NVQ2 to Masters level.

## Coaching

The coaching of all staff is vital to support our professional growth and development towards excellence in all areas. Various members of staff may act as a professional coach such as phase team leaders, mentors, subject leaders, and the senior leadership team who will coach leadership and management across the school. The impact of coaching is constantly analysed and explored through quality of provision reviews and **all** staff are entitled to coaching in order to reflect on and improve their practice.

### Why is coaching an important form of Professional Development?

Empowering – Coaching is not dictated from above. Staff will often collaboratively choose the area they want to focus on and feel empowered and motivated to improve.

Fosters team spirit – Coaching is not definitively hierarchical and is non-judgemental. It is grounded in the belief that everyone can improve and get better – and that everyone has something to offer to support this process.

Continuous and personalised CPD Model - As educational professionals, we all have our own areas of work that we want to develop – coaching allows each of us to focus on what we want to improve. It also allows for constant reflection and development, which is proven to be a far better model of CPD than 'one off' events.

Developing the Leaders of the Future – When educational professionals are able to solve their own problems through coaching, you are building capacity for future development as problem solving is an important quality in school leaders.

Developing a dialogue about pedagogy – as coaching develops across a school, there are more conversations taking place about teaching and learning and the pedagogical approaches and their impact across the school.

### **Our Coaches at St Mark's**

We expect our coaches to understand the personal and professional aspects they are dealing with and build a genuine partnership with their coachees. The partnership will be based on honesty and trust and will cover areas of strength as well as frank conversations and reflections about areas for improvement.

#### **A good coach:**

- Listens
- Avoids 'telling'
- Encourages reflection and asks open questions and clarifies the points made
  - Takes the time to build relationships and develops trust and respect
    - Is non judgemental
    - Can challenge beliefs
  - Encourages commitment to action
    - Is solution focused
- Has a strong belief that colleagues have the capacity to learn and develop

#### **Training for coaches:**

Anyone who is identified as having the skills for coaching or request to be a coach will have training under the direction of the Director of teaching and learning.

#### **Coaching Approaches at St Mark's:**

When working with school staff with an extensive range of expertise and experience, it is important that coaches are flexible in the approaches used. Whether coaching 'live' in the classroom or office, or through reflective discussions and planning, coaches need to be aware of the style that is most appropriate for the individual teacher and the context of the coaching priority. As shown on the scale below, this can range from Facilitative Coaching to Directive Coaching.

## The Balance Scale of Coaching

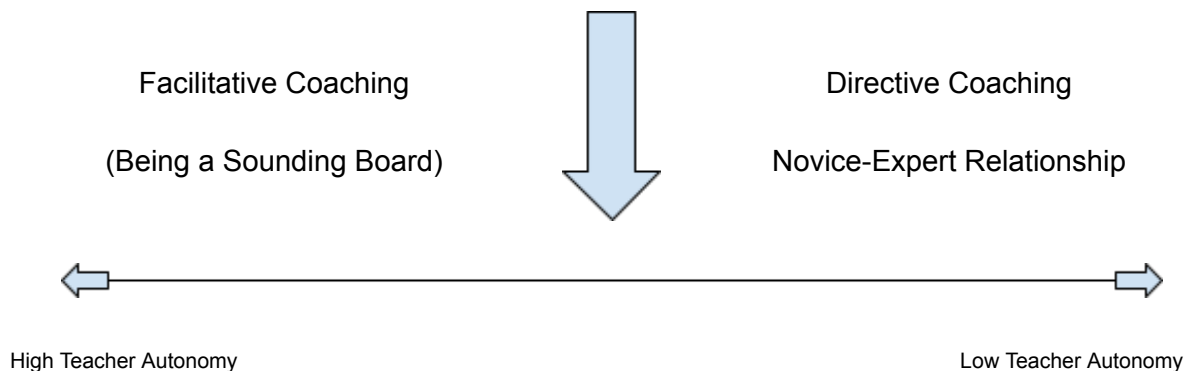


*Jim Knight, The Impact Cycle (2018)*

**Directive Coaching:** The coach drives the discussions and provides directive support by explicitly identifying aspects of practice to develop. It is not highly collaborative and the coach assumes the staff member does not yet have the answers.

**Facilitative Coaching:** The person being coached drives the discussion and direction. The member of staff is fully in charge and makes the decisions. The coach listens/questions/repeats back and helps the teacher to unpack their knowledge.

At St Mark's we need to be flexible with the approaches we use but aim to use **Dialogical Coaching (Instructional)** in order to empower our members of staff, specifying not just what to improve, but how to improve it.



**What does the coaching model at St Mark's look like?**

To be reviewed January 2025

Our dialogic Coaching Model is individualised to each staff member, is recurring and sustained over a minimum of a three week period and focuses on identified, specific skills.

### Identify

Initial conversations support staff to identify and define specific areas of their practice to be improved (Goals). General improvements are narrowed down into small, progressive and manageable steps at a time (to manage cognitive load). This should be through dialogic discussion with the coach and coachee, identifying what to improve and **how** to improve it.

### Coaching Cycle

|  |                          |        |
|--|--------------------------|--------|
| Name:  | Dates of coaching cycle: | Coach: |
| <b>Priorities identified prior to coaching including:</b><br><br>What am I seeing in the classroom?<br>What do I need to improve?<br>Where can I have the greatest impact on pupil learning? What do I need to change to improve this? |                          |        |

#### Agreed Goals:

- What will I do differently in the classroom?
- How can I improve in this area?
- What do I need to change to achieve this?

### Learn and Improve

Coaching sessions should provide opportunities for the coach and staff member to work together on planning and practising the specific areas that have been defined for improvement in small steps. Coaches should think carefully about how they present and make the case for a particular change in teacher practice, using credible/evidence based sources. The staff member should have opportunities to practise these with and without the coach, to enhance their skills and embed good habits, before reviewing the progress made together. Video coaching through IRIS connect can be used for this; the power of watching something back and reliving something will give a unique insight into an individual's practice and maximises the opportunities for teachers and coaches to reflect and discuss using shared experiences.

The use of praise and reinforcement after a staff member has made an effort to alter practice is essential to effective coaching practice and should be reflected in the coaching notes in order to improve and maintain staffs' motivation to act upon their professional development.

At the end of each session the coach should record notes, depicting the session outcomes and progress towards the desired goals. Ideally, this should be done after the verbal feedback session with the coachee so all points are agreed and all stages of the process are collaborative. The notes should then be shared with the coachee, the Director of Teaching and Learning and their line manager.

### Coaching Session Summary

Agreed Goal:

Small Step Focus:

Session Notes

Action Points towards the Goal (to become the next small step):

Other areas to Consider:



At the end of the coaching cycle, progress should be reviewed against the original goals collaboratively. This should be recorded on the initial coaching cycle form and shared with the coachee, their line manager and Director of Teaching and Learning. Opportunities for the coachee to provide feedback to the coach on the process should also be provided.

**Successes:**

**Areas for further development:**

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**Details of further support required:**

**Other Areas discussed/covered:**

### **Lesson Studies**

A Lesson Study is a professional development activity that involves teachers working **in small groups to observe and unpick lessons that address a shared learning goal for pupils**. The observation focuses on key elements of pedagogy, rather than generic organisational features. Lesson Studies may also involve collaborative planning of a lesson that is then delivered while peers observe; the group will then refine the lesson plans based on feedback and review.

### **Teaching Staff Learning Communities/Departments**

Across the year, a carefully designed sequence of professional development meetings will be planned for all teaching staff and departments on a weekly basis. These sessions will be focused on analysing and developing practice, curriculum and pedagogy, rather than the organisational elements of school life.

## **The Early Career Framework**

As a school we use the Educational Development Trust as our provider for The Early Career Framework. As well as a comprehensive training package, early career teachers will also benefit from working with an experienced mentor, both inside and outside the classroom, on a weekly basis. Details of this can be found on the ECT induction policy.

## **National Professional Qualifications**

The future success of any school is dependent on the calibre of the staff within it to be able to deliver and implement future improvements. The key to this is the ability to be able to identify and attract talent and skills within the school; it is vital that we create an environment in which people can flourish and have the opportunity to become the future leaders of education. The National Professional Qualifications on offer are designed to further expertise in school leadership or specialist areas of practice.

Leading Teacher Development  
Leading Teaching  
Leading Behaviour and Culture  
Senior Leadership  
Headship  
Executive Leadership

## **External CPD**

The need for external CPD may be identified by subject leaders, to address school improvement priorities or to give staff specific role based training. Where used, this will align with the needs of the school and the content of the professional development will be evidence based.

## **Apprenticeships**

As a Local Authority school, we pay a contribution to the apprenticeship levy of Southampton City Council. This means we have access to different courses from NVQ Level 2 to Masters level. The study undertaken is linked to the job role in which the staff member is doing or interested in doing to advance their career. Examples of apprenticeships include; Supporting teaching and learning in the classroom, Business management and site maintenance. Staff can discuss the opportunity to do an apprenticeship within their appraisal.