Denmark Road High School

Responsive Professional Development (RPD) Policy, Plans and Menu

School Name: Denmark Road High School

Policy owner: Alex Wickson Assistant Headteacher, Learning and Teaching

Date: September 2020

Review date: September 2023

Agreed by governors:

Date shared with staff:

# Our vision: a culture of continual professional learning

"Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better"

Dylan Wiliam

Our students are leaders of the future; our vision is to provide a wide range of opportunities, both within and outside of classrooms, to enable all our students to achieve excellence in the path *they* choose. Our students are passionate, inspired and empowered with a love of learning they take with them throughout their life, whilst learning to be independent, inquisitive and resilient within the high challenge, yet supportive environment we provide.

Therefore, all colleagues in our school community are responsive leaders of their own learning, role modeling this to our students to be lifelong leaders of their own learning, and leaders of the future.

Our RPD vision is therefore student centered, and enables all our staff to have the time and opportunities to develop evidence-based practices that underpin our responsive learning and teaching vision and principles. At the core, staff will continually ask, *"Has my RPD made a difference yet?"*
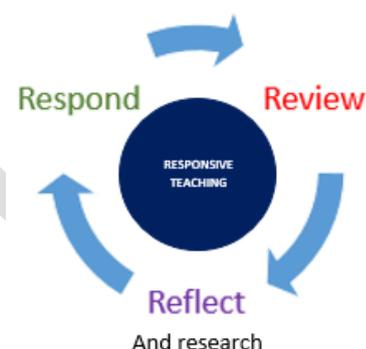
Leaders create 'programmes' of learning, rather than 'stand-alone' or 'take away' activities, to ensure that all colleagues have the opportunity to continually practice ideas in a low risk, high trust environment, so that they have the opportunity to reflect and respond and ultimately *change practice* in ways that suit student needs best. Programmes are carefully planned based on the needs of individuals, teams and the whole school, including consideration of teachers' existing pedagogical; as well evidence informed practices we feel would benefit our students and colleagues.

We are outward-looking not only in the expert content that we seek for training input, but also in that we seek opportunities to share our own expertise with others beyond DRHS in the wider community. Heads of Department drive the development of content and pedagogical content knowledge, facilitating rich and challenging discussions within their teams on curriculum, pedagogy and feedback. We encourage departments to facilitate subject specialist discussions through joining regional and national subject specialist organisations and allow our examiners time off, as we recognise the privileged knowledge and subject-specific expertise that these experiences provide. Leaders of all levels model and champion RPD as a priority; there is a recognition that through collaborative RPD we can empower all our students.

A further consequence of the value we place on RPD is enhanced teacher wellbeing and happiness; our retention of staff is high and when staff do leave, it is primarily for further promotion rather than for equivalent positions, or to leave the profession. Our comprehensive RPD offering supports us in attracting and recruiting exceptional staff to join our school. Above all, we have high aspirations for every individual and support each other to be the best we can be through our key principles:

Key principles

Our provision continues to nurture a developmental professional learning culture, with our key principles at the heart:

- Risk taking with high levels of trust.
- Transparency and openness.
- Respect and integrity.
- Inspiration and challenge.

What is our evidence base?

Harry Fletcher-Wood and James Zuccollo (February 2020) on behalf of the Education Policy Institute (EPI) published 'The effects of high-quality professional development on teachers and students'. They identified 53 randomised controlled trials of professional development interventions and adopting a quantitative approach to analyse data from these studies and identify the average impact of professional development on student learning. The key findings indicated that:

- High-quality continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers is as effective for improving pupil outcomes as having a teacher with a decade's experience in the classroom.
- Quality CPD programmes have a greater impact on pupil outcomes than performance-related teacher pay or lengthening the school day.
- Increasing the availability of high-quality CPD is likely to improve acute teacher retention problems, particularly for early-career teachers.
- CPD programmes are more effective if they receive sustained support from school leaders and are able to adapt to high staff turnover and teacher workloads.

Additionally, we incorporate guidance from the Department of Education (2016a) Standards for Professional Development, which sets out six elements of effective professional development:

1. Professional development should have a focus on improving and evaluating pupil outcomes.
2. Professional development should be underpinned by robust evidence and expertise.
3. Professional development should include collaboration and expert challenge.
4. Professional development programmes should be sustained over time.
   And all this is underpinned by, and requires that:
5. Professional development must be prioritised by school leadership.

Therefore, our RPD Menu supports this evidence, and continues to develop our culture where professional learning is a priority and at the heart of all we do.

What resources are available?

We recognise the significant and substantial resource of our own staff expertise that can be utilised in delivering programmes of learning. Other notable resources include:

- INSET days.
- Teachmeets.
- Teacher learning communities (TLC's).
- Directed meeting time after-school.
- Professional development budget.
- Apprenticeship levies.
- A growing RPD Library.
- Bespoke, comprehensive database of wide-ranging free training that all colleagues can access online.

Generic approaches offered to develop a professional development culture

In addition to directed programmes of learning, in order to develop a professional development culture we encourage discretionary engagement in learning and teaching by:

- Promoting the value of reading educational research and subject material (e.g. leaders modelling best practice by frequently referencing research and discussing what they are reading).
- Increasing staff exposure to educational research by expanding our RPD library, an interactive learning and teaching board in the staffroom links to relevant evidence informed practice shared by leaders.
- Research learning and teaching group held termly to discuss and relevant evidence informed practice, which are then disseminated as appropriate.
- Opportunities to take part in learning and teaching working parties, focused around our key priorities.

- Celebrating best practice through sharing inspiring teaching on our 'love list' board in the staffroom.
- Promoting external opportunities, networks including online RPD, in particular the use of Twitter.

Performance Management

Our performance management is developmentally focused and an integral part of our QA process. Needs analysis is not only undertaken for teaching staff, but also robustly audited for support staff and governors. Provision is then delivered accordingly. Particular consideration is taken for groups of colleagues who may be more vulnerable and have additional professional development needs, including early career teachers, new staff, cover teachers and part-time staff.

Quality Assurance

Is conducted by utilising 'soft', as well as 'hard' information. This is used to create robust baselines and milestones, so that our RPD can truly be responsive and meet the needs of all our students and colleagues.

- Skills audits: (through staff voice and subject specific training database).
- Whole school evaluation: (SIP).
- Feedback from developmental learning walks (SLT and curriculum).
- Additional staff voice (Staff Voice Forum, and targeted conversations, particularly with groups of staff deemed more vulnerable).
- Meetings: SLT, Directors and subjects.
- Student voice (through School Leaders and surveys).
- Data analysis of student outcomes (not restricted to attainment).
- Evaluations of RPD programmes both internal and external.

Links to relevant documents

Our RPD Plans and Menu are exactly that: responsive. They are flexible and change to our needs as required, as well as focusing on our core L&T vision. Please use the links below to access our up to date information:

- Current RPD needs and RPD menu for teaching staff, support staff and governors
- Online, interactive RPD database