



Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.”
Proverbs 22:6

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Adopted	September 2026
Committee	Full Governors
Review Date	October 2026
The scope of this policy is for school and Forsbrook Nursery	

We are a Christian school where quality and opportunities make a difference. We value all children as unique ‘Children of God’ and nurture each other to show **LOVE** in our relationships and a **RESPECT** for all. We foster **HOPE** within our community and encourage children to find **PEACE** by creating times and places for stillness and reflection. We strive for excellence, inspiring dreams both now and in the future. We promote **POSITIVITY**, celebrate **COURAGE**, demonstrate **RESPONSIBILITY** and share **JOY** through...

‘Learning, loving, laughing in the light of Jesus’.

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1. Purpose and Rationale

At Forsbrook CE Primary School and Forsbrook Nursery, we recognise that consistently high-quality teaching and early years practice plays a central role in improving outcomes and experiences for all pupils. Professional development is therefore a core component of the school's improvement priorities and is intentionally designed to improve instructional practice; strengthen curriculum planning and implementation; and support equity and inclusion across the school, including within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

This policy sets out a coherent and evidence-informed approach to teacher and staff development, ensuring that professional learning is purposeful, carefully sequenced, and focused on sustained improvement in classroom practice, rather than isolated or one-off events.

Our approach is grounded in nationally recognised guidance, including:

- The Teachers' Professional Development Standards (Department for Education)
- The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) guidance on Effective Professional Development
- The EEF Implementation Guidance
- The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework

Professional development at Forsbrook CE Primary School is explicitly aligned with:

- The School Development Plan (SDP)
- The Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)
- Curriculum priorities and identified pupil needs
- Staff appraisal and professional growth discussions

Effective professional development at Forsbrook CE Primary School is understood to:

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching
- Strengthen curriculum implementation over time
- Be rooted in a clear diagnosis of need
- Develop professional knowledge, skills, and judgement
- Be sustained, supported, and prioritised by leadership

Through structured, evidence-informed professional learning, staff develop the expertise needed to implement the curriculum effectively and consistently. This approach supports a shared understanding of effective practice across the school, promotes professional collaboration and reflection, and enables staff to refine their practice over time. In prioritising professional learning, the school also supports staff wellbeing, retention, and career development, recognising that sustained improvement depends on a motivated, skilled, and supported workforce.

Professional development is strengthened through a combination of internal expertise and carefully selected external partnerships. We work in partnership with external Initial Teacher Training (ITT) providers, including Keele and North Staffordshire Teacher Education (KNSTE) and Staffordshire University, supporting the development of trainee teachers and contributing to a culture of professional learning.

In addition, professional learning is enhanced through purposeful engagement with external networks, including the local Maths Hub to support high-quality mathematics teaching and leadership, and the local SEND Support Hub to strengthen inclusive practice for pupils with additional needs. These partnerships provide access to specialist expertise, high-quality training, and collaborative networks, ensuring that professional development is coherent, relevant, and closely aligned with classroom practice.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff involved in teaching and learning including:

- Teachers, including Early Career Teachers (ECTs)
- Early years practitioners and nursery staff
- Teaching assistants and Higher-Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs)
- One-to-one and specialist support staff
- Leaders at all levels

We recognise that improving outcomes for pupils and young children depends on the development of the whole school workforce, including those working with babies and young children, working collaboratively towards shared goals.

3. Definition of Professional Development

Professional development at Forsbrook CE Primary School is understood as a sustained and structured process of improving professional knowledge, skills, and classroom practice, with the explicit aim of improving pupils' learning experiences and outcomes. Professional development at Forsbrook CE Primary School includes improving practice across both classroom teaching and early years provision.

In the Early Years context, this includes:

- Developing expertise in **child development (0–5 years)**
- Strengthening **high-quality adult-child interactions**
- Supporting **play-based and experiential learning**
- Improving **observation, assessment, and responsive planning**
- Embedding effective **care routines that support emotional security and attachment**

Professional development includes:

- Whole-school and targeted training (including staff meetings and INSET Days)
- Instructional coaching and mentoring
- Collaborative professional activity such as co-planning and professional dialogue
- Observation of effective practice within and beyond the school
- Structured reflection and professional enquiry

In line with the EEF's guidance on effective professional development, high-quality professional development:

- Builds knowledge (subject knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogy)
- Motivates staff and builds a shared sense of purpose
- Develops specific teaching techniques
- Supports the embedding of practice over time

Professional development does **not** include:

- Administrative or organisational briefings
 - One-off training without follow-up, practice, or support
 - Activities not directly linked to improving teaching practice or pupil learning
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4. Principles of Effective Professional Development

All professional development is designed in line with national guidance and research evidence.

4.1 Evidence-Informed Design

Professional development:

- Focuses on clearly defined aspects of teaching and learning
- Draws on robust educational research and credible sources of expertise
- Makes explicit what effective practice looks like
- Includes modelling, explanation, and opportunities for rehearsal
- Provides regular feedback and structured reflection
- Is sustained over time to support consistency and embedding

Professional development in the Early Years:

- Reflects the importance of developmentally appropriate practice
- Recognises the role of play, exploration, and sustained shared thinking
- Includes modelling of effective interactions and language development
- Supports staff in meeting the needs of babies and very young children

4.2 Teachers' Professional Development Standards

Our professional development provision reflects the Teachers' Professional Development Standards by ensuring that it:

- Is focused on improving pupil outcomes
- Is underpinned by evidence and professional expertise
- Encourages collaboration, collective responsibility, and professional dialogue
- Is sustained, iterative, and coherent
- Is prioritised, resourced, and supported by school leadership
- 4.3 Implementation-Focused Approach

In line with the EEF Implementation Guidance, professional development at our school:

- Begins with a clear diagnosis of need, informed by evidence
 - Is carefully sequenced and logically planned
 - Anticipates barriers to implementation
 - Supports staff through monitoring, feedback, and adaptation
 - Is reviewed and refined based on evidence of impact
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5. Professional Development Entitlement

All staff are entitled to a coherent, well-structured programme of professional development that supports both individual growth and whole-school improvement. New staff, including those in Nursery and Early Years, receive structured induction and ongoing support tailored to their role. Early years practitioners benefit from professional development that reflects the specific requirements of working with children aged 6 months to 5 years.

All staff will:

- Have access to high-quality, evidence-informed professional development
- Receive development appropriate to their role, experience, and career stage
- Benefit from both internal expertise and carefully selected external partnerships
- Professional development time is protected and prioritised within the school timetable and calendar.

New staff receive structured induction and ongoing support. Support staff receive professional development tailored to their roles and responsibilities. Professional development supports staff in meeting and extending the Teachers' Standards at all career stages.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher

The Headteacher:

- Ensures professional development aligns with the SDP and SEF
- Establishes a strong culture of professional learning
- Allocates time and resources for effective professional development
- Supports strategic partnerships with external providers

Senior Leaders:

- Design, implements, and oversees the professional development programme
- Ensures alignment with national guidance and evidence
- Monitors implementation and evaluates impact on classroom practice and pupil outcomes
- Reports to SLT and governors where appropriate
- Works with external partners, including ITT providers
- Ensure professional development meets the needs of both primary and early years provision

- **Subject Leaders**

Subject leaders:

- Lead subject-specific professional development
- Model effective classroom practice
- Support colleagues through coaching and professional dialogue
- Monitor curriculum implementation and teaching quality within their subject
- Contribute to the development of in-school expertise

Phase Leaders (including Early Years Leaders)

Phase leaders:

- Support implementation of professional development within phases
- Provide guidance to staff, particularly new and early career teachers
- Facilitate collaboration and shared professional learning
- Support implementation of professional development within phases, including Nursery and EYFS
- Provide guidance specific to early childhood development and pedagogy

Teachers

Teachers:

- Engage actively in professional development
- Implement, reflect on, and refine strategies in classroom practice
- Contribute to shared learning and professional dialogue
- Support trainee teachers where appropriate

Support Staff

- Engage in relevant professional development
- Apply training to support pupil learning, independence, and inclusion
- Work collaboratively with teachers and leaders

Mentors (ECTs and ITT)

Mentors:

- Provide structured and supportive mentoring
- Model effective professional practice
- Work closely with external training providers

7. Planning the Professional Development Programme

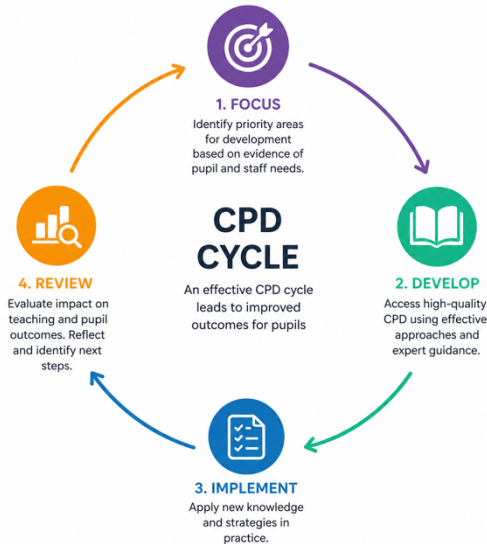
Professional development priorities are identified through:

- School self-evaluation
- Pupil outcomes and child development outcomes in EYFS
- Curriculum and EYFS provision review
- Staff appraisal and professional dialogue
- School development priorities
- The professional development programme:
 - Focuses on a small number of high-priority areas
 - Is sequenced and sustained over time, typically over a term or longer

- Balances whole-school, targeted, and individual development
- Provides appropriate support for early career and new staff

8. Professional Development Cycle

Professional development at Forsbrook CE Primary School follows a continuous improvement cycle:



Findings from the review stage directly inform subsequent professional development planning, ensuring ongoing refinement and improvement.

9. Coaching and Mentoring

Coaching and mentoring are a central component of professional development and support staff in improving classroom practice over time. Coaching focuses on specific aspects of teaching identified through careful diagnosis of need. The process includes clear explanation and modelling of effective practice, followed by opportunities for deliberate practice in classrooms. Regular, focused feedback and structured reflection enable staff to refine their approaches, while ongoing support over time ensures that improvements to practice are embedded and sustained.

Coaching in Early Years includes:

- Modelling of effective interactions and language use
- Supporting staff to develop responsive and nurturing approaches
- Improving practice in continuous provision and adult-led learning

10. Early Career Teachers (ECTs)

Early Career Teachers are supported through a structured induction programme designed to help them develop secure and effective classroom practice. Each Early Career Teacher is allocated a trained mentor who provides guidance, support, and professional challenge throughout the induction period. In line with statutory guidance, Early Career Teachers benefit from a reduced timetable, allowing time for professional learning, reflection, and development. Regular opportunities for focused feedback and professional dialogue are built into the programme to support ongoing improvement, confidence, and retention within the profession.

11. Support Staff Development

Professional development for teaching assistants and one-to-one support staff is carefully planned to ensure it aligns with whole-school improvement priorities and supports high-quality provision for pupils. Development opportunities include training related to SEND, behaviour, and targeted interventions, enabling support staff to understand their role in promoting learning and positive outcomes. Professional development draws on both internal expertise and carefully selected external training, ensuring coherence with classroom practice and school priorities. A strong emphasis is placed on supporting support staff to improve pupil learning, inclusion, and independence, working collaboratively alongside teachers and leaders to meet the needs of all pupils.

Professional development for support staff, including nursery practitioners, is carefully planned to ensure it aligns with whole school priorities and supports high-quality provision for pupils and young children.

Development opportunities include:

- Training in child development (0–5)
- Communication and language development
- Attachment, wellbeing, and behaviour in early years
- SEND and inclusive practice across all age groups

12. Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact

The impact of professional development is evaluated through:

- Sustained changes in classroom practice and early years provision
 - Quality of adult-child interactions and learning environments
 - Progress in pupil outcomes and early childhood development
 - Curriculum implementation and consistency across subjects and phases
 - Staff confidence, knowledge, and professional judgement
 - Trends in pupil outcomes over time
 - Monitoring includes observation, work scrutiny, professional dialogue, pupil outcomes, staff feedback, and appraisal. Evaluation focuses on whether professional development has resulted in embedded changes in practice, rather than isolated performance.
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13. Equality, Workload and Wellbeing

We are committed to ensuring that professional development is inclusive, purposeful, and supportive of staff wellbeing. All staff have equitable access to professional development opportunities appropriate to their role and career stage. Professional development is carefully planned so that it supports, rather than adds to, workload, and staff wellbeing is a key consideration in both the design and delivery of training. Where possible, professional development is designed to fit within existing expectations and ways of working, rather than increasing demands, ensuring that professional learning is manageable, sustainable, and impactful.

14. Governance and Review

Governors support and challenge the quality and impact of professional development and ensure it aligns with the school's strategic priorities.

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure continued alignment with school priorities, national guidance, and emerging evidence.

This policy reflects the school's commitment to providing high-quality education and care from infancy through to the end of primary education, ensuring continuity, progression, and excellence in professional practice across all phases.