



## School Leadership

# Transforming teaching-learning process: leading teachers' professional development

### School leadership collection

This School Leadership OER (Open Educational Resource) is intended for school leaders, or any resource person in charge of pedagogical supervision within the structure (such as a director of study, director of schools, quality assurance officers, a head of department or a head of year/grade). Local pedagogical supervision can also use booklets from this collection with good effect. For the sake of convenience, we will group these people under the name "school leader".

By making the school the privileged locus for Professional Learning and Development (PLD), the collection aims to help school leaders to transform the school structure they are responsible for into an 'Extended Professional Learning Community' (ELPC) based on the continuous collaborative professional development of all actors.

The collection can be considered as a toolbox, consisting of several booklets in which school leaders can select the tools that are best suited to their reality and use them to meet the specific needs of their school community.

The different booklets are not to be exploited in a linear fashion: it would be more appropriate to select suitable elements to respond to a specific problem identified in and by the school. The booklets can also be used to set up training workshops, or to facilitate a thematic meeting with, for example, other local school leaders.

The booklets briefly present various concepts, focusing on practices, offering a wide range of case studies, activities, pauses for thought and resources, mainly African Open Educational Resources (OER).

In order to carry out the various activities on offer, school leaders are invited to keep a learning diary in order to help them to document, organize and capitalize in the long term their learning and their development. The collection thus contributes to the PLD of the school leaders themselves.

The broad objective of the collection is to facilitate the transformation of teaching-learning processes to enhance effective learning. It is about accompanying teachers so as to enable them to set up a

model of horizontal learning where the learners are fully engaged in the construction of their learning. The school leader has a crucial role to play in facilitating this educational paradigm shift

This collection is the result of the adaptation, contextualization and enrichment of OERs produced by TESS-India for the leaders of Indian institutions (<http://www.tess-india.edu.in>). The examples presented in this collection have been gathered from different countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

## Acknowledgement

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks, for their invaluable contribution to the realisation of this booklet, their infinite patience and their availability of every moment, to:

- Michèle Deane, teacher and teacher educator and teacher-educator educator, UK
- Dele Yaya, Former Director, Field Operations & Students Services/TESSA Coordinator, National Teachers' Institute, Kaduna, Nigeria
- We also thank all those who will tell us about their return and will contribute to the continuous improvement of our OER.

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Version F180115 [B1\_Leading-Prof-Dvt\_18.01.15]

# Contents

School leadership collection .....	1
Acknowledgement .....	2
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
What this booklet is about.....	4
What school leaders can learn in this booklet .....	4
Your learning diary.....	5
<b>1 Perspectives on teacher development .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2 Teachers' professional learning and development .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Case Study 1: Mr Olawale's teaching.....	8
Activity 1: Planning for a conversation about professional development .....	9
<b>3 Models of teachers' PLD .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Case Study 2: Interview with Ms. Lamago, a Primary School Head teacher in Cameroon .....	12
Activity 2: Identifying learning opportunities.....	14
Activity 3: Formulating an action plan .....	15
<b>4 Keeping a record of development activities.....</b>	<b>16</b>
Case Study 4: Miss Umar keeps a record of her school-based PLD .....	16
Activity 4: Organising your own records .....	17
<b>5 Systematising PLD in your school .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>6 Summary .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Resources.....</b>	<b>21</b>
Resource 1: Template for discussion with individual teachers .....	21
Resource 2: Storytelling, songs, role play and drama .....	21
<i>Storytelling</i> .....	22
<i>Songs</i> .....	22
<i>Role play</i> .....	23
<i>Drama</i> .....	23
Resource 3: An introduction to action research in the classroom .....	25
Resource 4: The Apréli@ educative e-twinning.....	27
Resource 5: Template for action planning .....	28
<b>Additional resources .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>References/bibliography .....</b>	<b>30</b>

# Introduction

This booklet *Leading Teacher's Professional Development* is a free educational resource (OER) developed by a group of teacher educators to support school leaders who accompany their staff's Professional Learning and Development (LPD) within their institution with a view of enhancing the conditions and quality of learning in the school.

It is an adaptation of the Apréli@ booklet *Conduire le développement professionnel continu des enseignants* which is available under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike licence: ([http://www.aprelia.org/cahiers/c1/fichiers/C1\\_Conduire\\_le\\_developpement\\_professionnel\\_des\\_enseignants.pdf](http://www.aprelia.org/cahiers/c1/fichiers/C1_Conduire_le_developpement_professionnel_des_enseignants.pdf))

It also draws on the work carried out by TESSA and Apréli@ in French-speaking Sub-Saharan Africa, separately or jointly, as well as the resources resulting from this work.

It belongs to a collection of booklets that relates to the key issue of improving learning through school-based professional co-development. You may find it useful to refer to other booklets in the collection to develop your knowledge and skills as well as to the TESSA resources that are particularly pertinent to this key question. The collection includes:

- Leading teachers' continuous professional development
- Supporting teachers to improve learning
- Supporting teachers: mentoring and coaching
- Leading the use of technology in your school
- Leading the school development plan
- School based teachers' continuous professional development (in preparation)
- Inclusive education toolkit
- Teaching practice supervisors' toolkit
- Working with Teachers: A Handbook for Teacher Educators

## What this booklet is about

As a school leader your leadership role implicitly includes providing support to teachers to enable them improve their practice (including leading teacher professional development). This is not straightforward because there are certain constraints (including budgets) that are not within your control. However, there are opportunities for you to maximise teachers' effectiveness through school-based support strategies, which is the focus of this booklet.

## What school leaders can learn in this booklet

The resources, activities, pauses for thought and case studies in this booklet will help you to:

- Know how teachers' professional development can impact on school improvement and student learning outcomes.
- Generate some ideas to help your teachers assess their professional development needs

- Plan, monitor and enable professional development of all teachers.

## Your learning diary

During your work on this booklet you will find it useful to make notes in your Learning Diary. If you have not already started one, this is a book or folder (either paper or electronic) where you can document thoughts, ideas and plans together in one place.

You may be working through this booklet alone but you will learn much more if you are able to discuss your learning with another school leader. This could be a colleague with whom you already collaborate, or someone with whom you form a new relationship. It could be through an organised activity or on a more informal basis. Notes you make in your Learning Diary will be useful for this, as well as for helping you to map your learning and development.

# 1 Perspectives on teacher development

Teaching is not a static profession but one that changes with the influence of technology, the ever-changing body of knowledge, pressures of global economics and social pressures. This means that on-going updating and development of teaching approaches and skills is needed to address these changes. Having the ability to change is essential for teachers.

In order that the pedagogic vision (aims and objectives) in the National Curricula in most countries is realised by teachers in their classrooms, it is important that the professional development of teachers takes place with the onus of responsibility falling on the school leader. To facilitate the transformation of the teaching–learning process into child-centred creative engagement it is necessary to develop the capabilities of school leaders and their pedagogical leadership. The school leaders thus have a critical role in planning, monitoring and enabling the continuous professional development (CPD) of every teacher in their school.

Christopher Day (1999) argues that teachers' professional development should be seen as a lifelong activity that focuses on both their personal and professional lives, and on the policy and social context of the workplace. This is an important consideration for the school leader, as the teachers will always be learning just as the students will always be learning. There is no end point when all knowledge and skills have been acquired.

While professional development often exists in centralised courses (formal training workshops, seminars), school-based professional development offers many benefits and can help overcome barriers to teachers engaging with their professional development that centralised courses cannot offer; for example, by:

- addressing the professional development needs of the individual teacher
- addressing the specific needs and characteristics of the school
- fitting in with the specific focuses for development of the school (including the school development plan)
- making it easier to build capacity and skills by getting a group of teachers working together
- being less disruptive to teaching timetables, as teachers can work on their professional development while teaching
- providing the possibility of immediate feedback on student learning, as the professional development can take place in the classroom
- giving school leaders more control over the quality and focus of the professional development

This booklet focuses on in-service teacher development through school-based activities that promote effective learning and teaching as well as wider school improvement.

As a school leader, you are responsible for school improvement and thus for student learning outcomes and staff development. Ideally, you will be working with your teachers to develop their knowledge through their daily experience of teaching in a way that encourages your teachers to share their knowledge and skills with an openness that also allows them to observe each other and discuss issues together in a number of curriculum sites (farm, workplace, home, community and media).

To facilitate this, as a school leader, you will need to create the appropriate safe 'spaces', where teachers feel they can share their experiences, and where experimenting is encouraged and ideas are valued.



## 2 Teachers' professional learning and development

Professional learning and development (PLD) is about an individual's ability to acquire knowledge and skills related to their work or practice, or to look for information and keep themselves well informed in their professional field.

The broad aims for PLD of teachers could be to:

- explore, reflect and develop one's own attitudes, skills and knowledge
- deepen one's knowledge of and update oneself about one's academic discipline or other areas of school curriculum
- research and reflect on learners and their education
- understand and update oneself on educational and social issues
- prepare for other roles professionally linked to education/teaching, such as teacher education, curriculum development or counselling
- break out of intellectual isolation and share experiences and insights with others in the field, both teachers and academics working in the area of specific disciplines as well as intellectuals in the immediate wider society.

The skill levels and development needs of your teachers will vary. Their differing motivations and characteristics will also mean that you will need to use different approaches to encourage them to engage with PLD on an on-going basis.

The example of Mr Olawale (below) shows someone who obviously has some PLD needs but who may also be reluctant to engage. Mr Olawale may remind you of someone you know. This case study will be used in Activity 1.

### Case Study 1: Mr Olawale's teaching

Mr Olawale has been a teacher for 16 years at the same primary school. He takes great pride in his displays, bringing paper from home and having a special box with scissors, glue, stencils and drawing pins. He has the best displays in his classroom, organising them with two 'able' pupils. The parents and other visitors often comment on the displays when they visit. He takes great pride in receiving such praise.

Generally, Mr Olawale likes his work but there are some chapters in the history textbook that he does not like to teach because he is unsure of the theory and content. Sometimes he gets a bit bored with teaching but in general he likes the contact with the students, especially the bright ones whom he asks to sit at the front of the class; he is not ashamed of having his 'favourites'. He does not pay as much attention to the less able students, at the back of the class, and is relieved when poor attendance at harvest time means that there are fewer students to deal with.

Mr Olawale has occasionally attended training workshops at the local Study Centre, but tends to avoid these if possible. He does not like travelling or going to places where there are people he does not know. He is supportive to other colleagues on a personal level but does not really engage in conversations about teaching practice or in wider discussions about school improvements. He simply comes to school to teach his class and then goes home to look after

his family. He used to be a keen dancer in his spare time; he now runs dancing lessons privately once a week at another school. One year he organised a dance display with the final year students, but feels now that this is just too much work to take on alone.

### Activity 1: Planning for a conversation about professional development

Consider how you, as the school leader, could have a conversation with Mr Olawale to introduce the idea of Continuous Professional Development. Obviously, you do not know Mr Olawale, but you may know other teachers like him. Imagine talking to him about his strengths and how he could develop as a teacher.

Make notes in your Learning Diary.

1. How could you start a discussion about his development needs?
2. What strengths could you focus on, as well as his weaknesses?
3. How do you think he could react?
4. What actions could you take to achieve a positive outcome?

Look at the template in Resource 1. Consider how it could be used in relation to Mr Olawale. What types of issues and ideas could arise and in which sections would you record the comments?

You may also find it useful to look at Resource 2, 'Storytelling, songs, role play and drama', which concerns alternative methods that can be used in teaching – Mr Olawale is obviously a very creative person and the students could stand to benefit a great deal from his creativity if it was used more in their lessons. The key resources that accompany these Open Educational Resources (OERs) focus on different topics and can be useful tools in discussions about PLD. You will come back to these notes in the next activity, when the focus moves to planning PLD activities.

### Discussion

*It may be that the culture in your school means that you already have regular professional reviews or appraisals (conversation, discussions) where you discuss with your staff, individually, their professional practice and identify the focus for their future professional development. Your teachers may therefore be accustomed to these types of conversations. However, it is highly probable that they may be having such a conversation with you for the first time.*

*To understand your teachers' professional lives better it will be very useful to prepare a meeting schedule with every teacher to discuss their support needs, interests and expectations. This should be a professional conversation but conducted in a non-threatening way, allowing a useful discussion that helps you to learn about your teachers' professional lives. It may be that someone like Mr Olawale would need some coaxing and reassurance to engage in the conversation, but there are strengths that you could identify that may open the door for communication. These initial conversations and the records should serve as a basis for future support and planning of development activities: they are the start of on-going conversations that will, ideally, aim to make the teachers take responsibility for their own development.*

*The conversations can be linked with any observations of lessons you have done, or other monitoring processes you may have undertaken*

*With time, a school may introduce peer observation and lesson review as a regular part of the PLD cycle, with colleagues contributing to the evidence that is used in appraisal conversations. The spirit behind this process is one of sharing, mutual support, support and continuous professional development within the teaching team. It is particularly important to ensure mutual trust and respect among all stakeholders.*

### 3 Models of teachers' PLD

Although, PLD is often structured and managed, it can take place both formally and informally. It can happen individually, in small groups or on a larger scale, and can include approaches such as action research, reflection on practice, mentoring and peer coaching. It is important to value and recognise informal learning in your school as well as structured training programmes to ensure that the full range of development opportunities are used.

Information and communications technology (ICT) – including TV, radio and the Internet – is useful for providing access to knowledge, or for wider dissemination of important and new information. ICT will help your teachers to engage with relevant experts and also to access information. The internet provides an opportunity for you and your staff to harness free resources (many of which are delivered online as OERs, including TESSA, Apréli@), to feed into professional development in your school. Links to these online resources can be found at the end of this booklet.

PLD activities in classrooms should be the primary vehicle for improving teaching and learning. It is vital that teachers are given the time and space to reflect on and improve their classroom practice. However, all teachers, no matter how effective they are, will also learn much from observing good practice of others. This may often be available in the school but may be 'invisible' in that staff may not know whom to observe or which practice they may benefit from. In this way the leadership role can often involve being a conduit to help make 'invisible' good practice more visible to the staff community, and therefore valuable to others. This requires you to understand where good practice exists in the school and being able to use this for the benefit of the whole teaching community. The first step in this process is to help every individual teacher become an effective learner about their practice and feel empowered to take steps to improve it.

There are several ways that teachers can learn in the classroom, all of which are underpinned by situated learning – where the teacher tries out something new or adapts something that they already do. Teachers need to have enough confidence to try out new ideas for themselves, accepting that sometimes this will go wrong. They then need to have the opportunity to reflect upon what happened and why it went wrong, so that they can further modify their practice. Situated learning can take place and be supported in a number of ways listed below.

#### Examples of school-based PLD activities

1. **Action research**, where the teacher decides to explore a specific area of interest or concern, tries a new approach in the classroom to develop their practice, reflects on the impact on student learning, and then reviews what needs to happen next. Action research is cyclical, as the final phase of identifying next steps provides the impetus for exploring the next new idea (see Resource 3).
2. **Collaborative learning**, where the teacher will engage with other teachers to learn together by comparing and contrasting, sharing practice, and developing plans. This should be convened to address a particular aspect of practice (e.g. a working group to look at assessment across the school).
3. **Team teaching**, where two teachers work together to teach a lesson or sequence of lessons using their combined skills to enhance variety, pace, student focus, novelty and demonstration, and learn from each other or try out new approaches together.

4. **Reflecting on practice**, which can be a solitary activity but can equally be shared with others with reflections prompted and probed by questions from a colleague or in a group. An important opportunity for prompting reflection is the discussions that follow lesson observations by colleagues.
5. **Participation in teacher networks**, school-based networks and school-twinning partnerships are other ways of encouraging your teachers to share their experiences, discuss problems, be exposed to ideas by their peer group, and reflect and plan for the future. You could explore this with other school leaders who are responsible for schools close to yours or further afield as Internet opens new opportunities that did not exist a few years back. (see Resource 4).

Various LPD activities can profitably use the TESSA OERs that provide many opportunities for teachers to work together or individually on different aspects of their teaching and of student learning. The TESSA key resources also provide excellent reference points for development activities on the following topics:

- Assessing learning
- Using mind maps and brainstorming to explore ideas
- Being a resourceful teacher in challenging circumstances
- Using explaining and demonstrating to assist learning
- Using group work in your classroom
- Using investigations in the classroom
- Tools for planning and carrying out investigations in Science
- Working with large classes
- Using the local community/environment as a resource
- Planning and preparing your lessons
- Using questioning to promote thinking
- Researching in the classroom
- Using role play/dialogue/drama in the classroom
- Using storytelling in the classroom
- Using new technologies
- Working with multigrade classes

## Case Study 2: Interview with Ms. Lamago, a Primary School Head teacher in Cameroon

One of the main difficulties in my school is that teachers generally do not like to work hard. But I try to keep everyone's energy levels as high as possible. I never stay locked in my office. I walk around

the school and classrooms a lot and listen to teachers. If they have problems, we discuss them and solve them together.

Rigorous discipline is a must. The routine of the timetable must be respected, everyone should be in her/his class on time, and in their classrooms, teachers should devote themselves to teaching and not engage in other work even if it is an activity associated with school life. In addition, if teachers do something other than teach, students may drop out of school. It is therefore essential that teachers engage students' attention.

I am committed to improving relationships between teachers and students and I keep telling teachers to smile when they enter their classrooms.

The relationships between teachers are excellent. When we are together, I do not make them feel like I'm the head teacher. I guide them. I suggest how to do things quickly, but correctly. I welcome their suggestions. It is often the case that teachers make excellent suggestions. We work together and make sure that stress does not develop among teachers.

The first rule I have introduced is that of punctuality; lessons must start and finish on time. I made very sure that this rule is respected.

Mrs. Lamago provided us with an example of how she works with teachers and students on specific areas of development to improve learning in her school. In the following case study, two school leaders tell us of their collaborative work and mutual support across borders to improve learning share their experience.

### Case study 3: Two school leaders pilot an educational e-twinning between their schools

Under the leadership of their respective school leaders, Mr. Ould Haidall and Ms. Machinda, a Mauritanian school and a Cameroonian school have established an educational e-twinning, which makes use of the Apréli@ educational e-twinning resources (see [Resource 4: The Apréli@ educational e-twinning resources](#)).

Mrs. Machinda tell us:

In my school, we really felt we wanted to participate in an educational e-twinning with the school headed by Mr Ould Haidall. But, we needed to solve a real problem. Our school has no computer equipment, let alone an Internet connection. On the other hand, Mr Ould Haidall's school is very well equipped and has an excellent Internet connection. His teachers and students are used to working in the computer room, and Mr Ould Haidall has even installed a Moodle platform which he uses for both administrative tasks and for teaching and learning. As far as I am concerned, I know very little, but I have my tablet computer which I use all the time. At home, I am lucky enough to have a fairly good connection. Also, Mr Ould Haidall and I have got to know each other thanks to Skype and we did agree on the e-twinning activities our classes are going to carry out together. As he understood our school situation perfectly well, he did everything he could to make things easier for us so that we could manage with only my tablet. In the platform he has developed for his school, he has created very practical and fun tools that allowed our students to carry out the starting activity of e-twinning "Who is who" easily. In fact, he presented the recognition of partners' photos by inventing a quiz. Our students only had to click on the box they thought to be the correct answer. They did the activity very quickly and really enjoyed it. So, with my fellow teachers, we have plenty of ideas to liven up

learning, make it more motivating and effective with a single tablet and the smartphones we have. We will continue to benefit from Mr Ould Haidall's help and extend the activities we started together to other classes. I am so happy to have discovered these new perspectives and to be able to share them with my fellow teachers and our students! "

As underlined by the case studies 2 and 3, it is important to keep in mind that for the PLD to reach its full potential, individual teachers must be able to identify the area for development and be actively involved in planning activities and engaged in the course of learning.

In other words, they do not receive professional development, but are **fully involved and active in their self-development**. This does not mean that, as a school leader, you do not have the opportunity to point out or suggest areas for professional development, but simply that it must be done in a spirit of cooperation, collaboration and co-development. Your leadership position makes you a learning facilitator, whether for teachers or students.

### Activity 2: Identifying learning opportunities

Following on from your consideration of Mr Olawale in Activity 2, use the five types of PLD learning exemplified above to identify PLD activities that Mr Olawale could undertake. You may want to think about options for his active learning, reflection on practice, individual learning, learning as part of a group learning, and/or coaching by a peer or school leader. Do not feel constrained by the limited amount of information you have for the case study: you can add to it when you suggest ways he could develop, or he may remind you of a colleague, so you could do this activity with that person and your own school in mind.

Make some notes in your Learning Diary about a suitable activity.

### Discussion

*You have probably thought about a range of opportunities for Mr Olawale to develop his skills at the school. For example, you might have suggested that he observe a more confident teacher, teach those difficult history lessons, or that he be coached on the content by the history teacher to fill any knowledge gaps. You might also have suggested that the school should have a dance week next term when lessons are geared around this theme (anatomy, literature, geometry, music, etc.) and ask Mr Olawale to take a lead in this. In addition, you may decide to observe one of Mr Olawale's lessons and then report back to him on the different levels of engagement between pupils at the front and back of the class.*

*The conversation about the challenges and solutions of multilevel classes could be widened to cover all staff in the group, being a development opportunity for all. Mr Olawale could refresh and strengthen his teaching practice and enhance his students' learning as part of his school day, using colleagues around him, whether learning by doing or finding his own solutions. You might also have noted that Mr Olawale is very good at making displays and that there may be roles for him in helping other teachers to develop these skills. The key is his motivation and this is why it is important to work together with Mr Olawale on identifying needs and making a plan to meet them –he will engage more enthusiastically if he is involved in the discussions about his strengths and needs and agrees on priorities and opportunities.*

*Mr Olawale may be a particularly challenging teacher to work with as he is well established at the school and so not necessarily interested in his PLD. But he has genuine strengths that are an asset for the school and need to be valued. The conversation about his PLD should be balanced between building on strengths and addressing needs – and not all needs have to be addressed at once.*

You will have many teachers who embrace the chance to learn and improve and who will welcome your interest in their PLD.

### Activity 3: Formulating an action plan

As a school leader you have worked on identifying the needs and opportunities for Mr Olawale. Now you need to turn your attention to your own staff and school. Work with one or two teachers who are likely to be enthusiastic about their PLD and motivated by your interest in helping them. For each teacher, go through the process identified in [Activity 1](#) (using the template in [Resource 1](#)) and [Activity 2](#) (identifying the opportunities). Then work with each of them to formulate a plan. [Resource 5](#) offers a template that you can use for the planning.

Do not set too many actions; a maximum of three or four would be ideal. Do not make them too complex as you will need to be able to organise this alongside all your other responsibilities. Remember that PLD is a continual process and therefore your teachers can develop year-on-year.

You may like to have a session at a staff meeting where you introduce the idea and ask for volunteers for the first PLD discussions, or you may do this informally.

But either way, you need to have a plan as to how you will roll out a system of PLD to all staff in your school. You may find your two volunteers helpful in taking this forward.

There must be an element of challenge in the plan you devise, so that it stretches the ability of the teachers and therefore carries them on to new ground. But the plan must also be attainable and viable within a realistic time frame. It is essential that each target is underpinned with the goal of improving learning outcomes for all students.

### Discussion

*Once such a procedure has been incorporated into the school's usual practice, the whole notion of PLD will embed itself, and everyone in the school will then see themselves as co-learners. With a general understanding of PLD in your school, you may be able to delegate the discussions to pairs or groups to find the opportunities, so developing a culture of sharing of expertise and co-development. If every member of staff, not just the teachers, can be involved in their own development, the students will also see how important it is to learn throughout their lives. It changes the ethos of the school.*

## 4 Keeping a record of development activities

As a school leader, it is important to keep records of the development activities of your staff. This is evidence of your commitment to improving learning for students through supporting and enhancing the performance of staff. By using recording sheets like those suggested in the resources section, as well as records of attendance on training days, you will not only keep track of each teacher's progression, but also of actions you have taken in relation to school improvement.

It is also the responsibility of each teacher to keep their own records of their development. This has often been just a list of courses attended with dates, but it does not necessarily include records of in-school PLD activities that they have engaged in. Keeping a Learning Diary or portfolio is one way of doing this. Doing so means not only that a teacher can track their own progress, but they can draw on their records to evidence their improving practice and demonstrate their commitment to professional development.

Read the case study below about how one teacher keeps records of her professional development and how she not only uses these records as part of her reflective process, but also as a way of remembering and reviewing. She makes notes of her ideas most days and can draw on her records when she needs to present evidence of her PLD to others.

### Case Study 4: Miss Umar keeps a record of her school-based PLD

Miss Umar loves teaching. Her father and her aunt were teachers and she felt it was in her blood to teach. After qualifying she began teaching in a medium-sized school in a poor urban area. Two years in, she felt that she needed some new ideas, but although her students seemed to be enthusiastic and motivated in her lessons, she felt she had put into practice everything that she had learned on her teaching course.

Miss Umar talked to her school leader, who suggested three PLD activities that she could undertake at the school.

- First, to observe and learn from Mr Agu's science lessons, Mr Agu being widely recognised as an excellent teacher
- Second, to follow up on her idea of linking mathematics and sports lessons as a way of inspiring the boys to engage in mathematics;
- Third, to pass on her knowledge and skills by mentoring a new teacher who would be joining in the next term.

Miss Umar agreed that these were all useful. A brief plan was agreed, which was placed on Miss Umar's file, as well as in her Learning Diary.

When Miss Umar went to Mr Agu's lesson, she made notes of her observations and of the discussion she had afterwards with Mr Agu about how he had planned and taught the lesson. In her notes, Miss Umar added some suggestions about how she could apply some of what she had learned to her own lessons; two weeks later she repeated one of the activities she had seen in a science lesson, and made notes about how it went. She was careful to date each entry but did not bother if the notes were tidy or legible to others – if she needed to write this up at any time, she would work from her notes.

Miss Umar was pleased that the school leader had liked her idea about linking mathematics and sport, so she spent several evenings reading the curriculum and mathematics textbook. She also looked online for any research or practice in the area, and talked to a couple of colleagues at work about her ideas – their suggestions were very helpful. Miss Umar wrote some notes on her developing ideas. She tried out a few activities with her class and asked for some feedback from her students, which she kept for future reference. Eventually she wrote a paper for the staff group to explain how this approach may work, and received positive feedback, which she recorded and kept. Several months on, there are now two other teachers using Miss Umar's approach.

Before Miss Umar started mentoring the new teacher, she consulted books and the internet for best practice in mentoring, as she wanted to mentor correctly. She discovered the online booklet *Transforming teaching-learning process: mentoring and coaching* on the Apréli@ website; she found this resource totally adapted to what she needed and immediately downloaded it. She found it useful to be able to learn without travelling to attend a course in person. As she mentored she kept her own notes about what she did and what she could have done better. She found it helpful to reflect on her mentoring, which meant that she was better able to talk about the experience with the school leader when he asked.

The records that Miss Umar kept were for her eyes only and largely informal – she started them in her first year as a teacher and continued this practice. She found it helpful to look back to see how she had developed, but also to remind herself of what else she could do to be a better teacher. When she applied for another job and needed to refresh her CV and prepare for the interview, her notes proved invaluable.

#### Activity 4: Organising your own records

You may have started to think about how your own PLD runs in parallel with that of your teachers. Now think about how you keep records of your own PLD as a school leader. Are you as organised as Miss Umar? Using the case study, write down a list of the types of records she kept (e.g. a plan, some ideas, a list) and then a list of what she used them for. This may help you think about the kind of notes you may keep of your own PLD.

If you are keeping a Learning Diary, you are getting into this practice whilst studying this booklet. A good school leader models the practice that they wish to see in their staff. If you do not already have a notebook or file to record your development, you should create one.

Take a few minutes now to consider the realities of your busy and demanding working day and make notes in response to the following questions:

- What could conspire against you from keeping your own PLD records?
- What will you do to stop things getting in the way?
- How are you going to record your own PLD activities and reflections (daily, weekly, the format)?

You should also set yourself a review date (maybe one or two months away) to check on your records.

Having the discipline to keep PLD records will remind you of your progress and provide you with a way to reflect about your challenges and opportunities. The records will also give you a source of data to demonstrate your PLD and to share your expertise. You will need to lead by example if you are going to require your teachers and students to become active; they themselves are continual learners.

Data on the PLD of staff at the school provides evidence of the school's commitment to continuous improvement and the raising of standards. The school becomes thus a learning community.

## 5 Systematising PLD in your school

So far, this booklet has assumed that PLD may not be well established in your school and suggests some minor ways to get it started. But you should be aiming for a systematised process of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for all staff at all levels in your school. Every member of the school community is part of a learning institution and should therefore engage with their personal development, demonstrating to students that learning is a lifelong process.

If PLD occurs regularly and is seen as a normal activity in a school, it becomes a natural process for teachers to share their own best practice, access formalised development programmes, and, of course, to develop themselves – either formally, informally, as individuals or together in groups. Where staff are learning, they are motivated and creative. When their PLD is planned, monitored and reviewed with them, they can share their successes and challenges with the teaching community, who in turn gain an insight and a further opportunity to develop their own practice.

You should aim for:

- regular dialogue about PLD with and between teachers
- accessible information about PLD opportunities
- teachers working to action plans for their own PLD
- monitoring and support of progress and outcomes of PLD activities records of PLD plans, activities and outcomes.

## 6 Summary

In this booklet you have looked at what constitutes teacher development, what this can involve and what can be learned within the school. Courses and training are not the only route to learning. A teaching career involves continuous learning; school leaders have a role to play in raising expectations for a continually developing staff group, and for facilitating opportunities to develop.

You have tried out some templates that may help you to implement PLD in your school and looked at some case studies to help you think about how to engage staff and keep records. But the exciting part comes next when you lead your staff to improve their practice to benefit the learning experience of students.

Teachers who are committed to their own learning will naturally inspire students to feel the same way about theirs.

# Resources

## Resource 1: Template for discussion with individual teachers

<b>Name of teacher</b>	
<b>Date</b>	
<b>What are your strengths as a teacher? What are you good at?</b>	
<b>What can you offer that we are not using in the school? Do you have any special interests or skills?</b>	
<b>What gets in the way of you being a better teacher? What could be done about that?</b>	
<b>Any other notes</b>	
<b>Signature of school leader</b>	

## Resource 2: Storytelling, songs, role play and drama

Students learn best when they are actively engaged in the learning experience. Your students can deepen their understanding of a topic by interacting with others and sharing their ideas. Storytelling, songs, role play and drama are some of the methods that can be used across a range of curriculum areas, including maths and science.

## Storytelling

Stories help us make sense of our lives. Many traditional stories have been passed down from generation to generation. They were told to us when we were young and explain some of the rules and values of the society that we were born into.

Stories are a very powerful medium in the classroom: they can:

- be entertaining, exciting and stimulating
- take us from everyday life into fantasy worlds
- be challenging
- stimulate thinking about new ideas
- help explore feelings
- help to think through problems in a context that is detached from reality and therefore less threatening.

When you tell stories, be sure to make eye contact with students. They will enjoy it if you use different voices for different characters and vary the volume and tone of your voice by whispering or shouting at appropriate times, for example. Practise the key events of the story so that you can tell it orally, without a book, in your own words. You can bring in props such as objects or clothes to bring the story to life in the classroom. When you introduce a story, be sure to explain its purpose and alert students to what they might learn. You may need to introduce key vocabulary or alert them to the concepts that underpin the story. You may also consider bringing a traditional storyteller into school, but remember to ensure that what is to be learnt is clear to both the storyteller and the students.

Storytelling can prompt a number of student activities beyond listening. Students can be asked to note down all the colours mentioned in the story, draw pictures, recall key events, generate dialogue or change the ending. They can be divided into groups and given pictures or props to retell the story from another perspective. By analysing a story, students can be asked to identify fact from fiction, debate scientific explanations for phenomena or solve mathematical problems.

Asking the students to devise their own stories is a very powerful tool. If you give them structure, content and language to work within, the students can tell their own stories, even about quite difficult ideas in maths and science. In effect they are playing with ideas, exploring meaning and making the abstract understandable through the metaphor of their stories.

## Songs

The use of songs and music in the classroom may allow different students to contribute, succeed and excel. Singing together has a bonding effect and can help to make all students feel included because individual performance is not in focus. The rhyme and rhythm in songs makes them easy to remember and helps language and speech development.

You may not be a confident singer yourself, but you are sure to have good singers in the class that you can call on to help you. You can use movement and gestures to enliven the song and help to convey meaning. You can use songs you know and change the words to fit your purpose. Songs are also a useful way to memorise and retain information – even formulas and lists can be put into a song

or poem format. Your students might be quite inventive at generating songs or chants for revision purposes.

## *Role play*

Role play is when students have a role to play and, during a small scenario, they speak and act in that role, adopting the behaviours and motives of the character they are playing. No script is provided but it is important that students are given enough information by the teacher to be able to assume the role. The students enacting the roles should also be encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings spontaneously.

Role play has a number of advantages, because it:

- explores real-life situations to develop understandings of other people's feelings
- promotes development of decision making skills
- actively engages students in learning and enables all students to make a contribution
- promotes a higher level of thinking.

Role play can help younger students develop confidence to speak in different social situations, for example, pretending to shop in a store, provide tourists with directions to a local monument or purchase a ticket. You can set up simple scenes with a few props and signs, such as 'Café', 'Doctor's Surgery' or 'Garage'. Ask your students, 'Who works here?', 'What do they say?' and 'What do we ask them?', and encourage them to interact in role these areas, observing their language use.

Role play can develop older students' life skills. For example, in class, you may be exploring how to resolve conflict. Rather than use an actual incident from your school or your community, you can describe a similar but detached scenario that exposes the same issues. Assign students to roles or ask them to choose one for themselves. You may give them planning time or just ask them to role play immediately. The role play can be performed to the class, or students could work in small groups so that no group is being watched. Note that the purpose of this activity is the experience of role playing and what it exposes; you are not looking for polished performances or Bollywood actor awards.

It is also possible to use role play in science and maths. Students can model the behaviours of atoms, taking on characteristics of particles in their interactions with each other or changing their behaviours to show the impact of heat or light. In maths, students can role play angles and shapes to discover their qualities and combinations.

## *Drama*

Using drama in the classroom is a good strategy to motivate most students. Drama develops skills and confidence, and can also be used to assess what your students understand about a topic. A drama about students' understanding of how the brain works could use pretend telephones to show how messages go from the brain to the ears, eyes, nose, hands and mouth, and back again. Or a short, fun drama on the terrible consequences of forgetting how to subtract numbers could fix the correct methods in young students' minds.

Drama often builds towards a performance to the rest of the class, the school or to the parents and the local community. This goal will give students something to work towards and motivate them. The whole class should be involved in the creative process of producing a drama. It is important that differences in confidence levels are considered. Not everyone has to be an actor; students can contribute in other ways (organising, costumes, props, stage hands) that may relate more closely to their talents and personality.

It is important to consider why you are using drama to help your students learn. Is it to develop language (e.g. asking and answering questions), subject knowledge (e.g. environmental impact of mining), or to build specific skills (e.g. team work)? Be careful not to let the learning purpose of drama be lost in the goal of the performance.

## Resource 3: An introduction to action research in the classroom

Ben Goldacre (2013) argues that teaching should be an evidence-based profession and that this would lead to better outcomes for children. In particular, he suggests that a change in culture is needed, in which teachers and politicians recognise that we don't necessarily 'know' what works best – we need evidence that something works.

The assumption is that the evidence-based practice is a good thing and that the changes advocated by Goldacre can be achieved through teachers researching their own practice. Indeed, where research practices are embedded in schools, there is a recognition that this can contribute to school improvement.

As a teacher undertaking a study in your own classroom, it is likely that it will be relatively small-scale and short-term and action research methodology works well in this context. Action research involves practitioners systematically investigating their own practice, with a view to improving it.

Action research involves the following steps:

- **Identify a problem that you want to solve in your classroom:** This might be something quite specific such as why certain pupils do not answer questions or find an aspect of your subject hard or de-motivating, or it might be something more general like how to organise group work effectively.
- **Define the purpose and clarify what form the intervention might take:** This will involve consulting the literature and finding out what is already known about this issue.
- **Plan an intervention designed to tackle the issue.**
- **Collect empirical data and analyse it.**
- **Plan another intervention:** This will be based on what you find and will be designed to further understand the issue that you have identified.

Action research is a cyclical process (Figure R3.1). Through repeated intervention and analysis, you will come to understand the issue or problem and hopefully to do something about it.

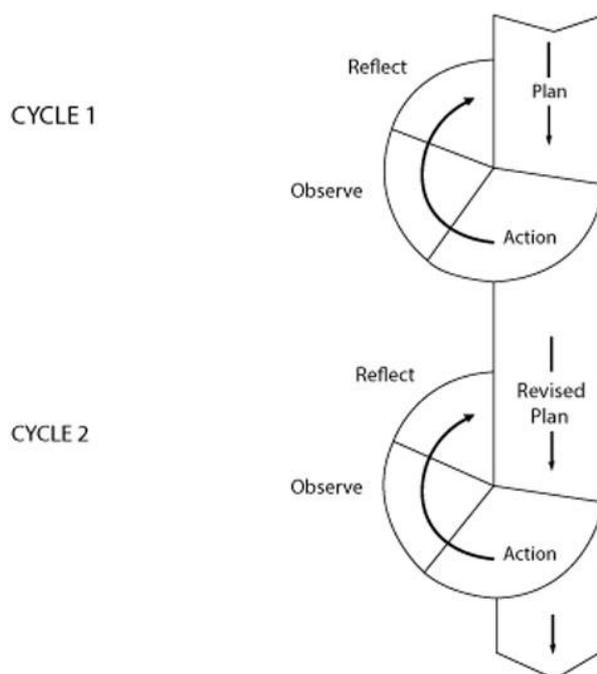
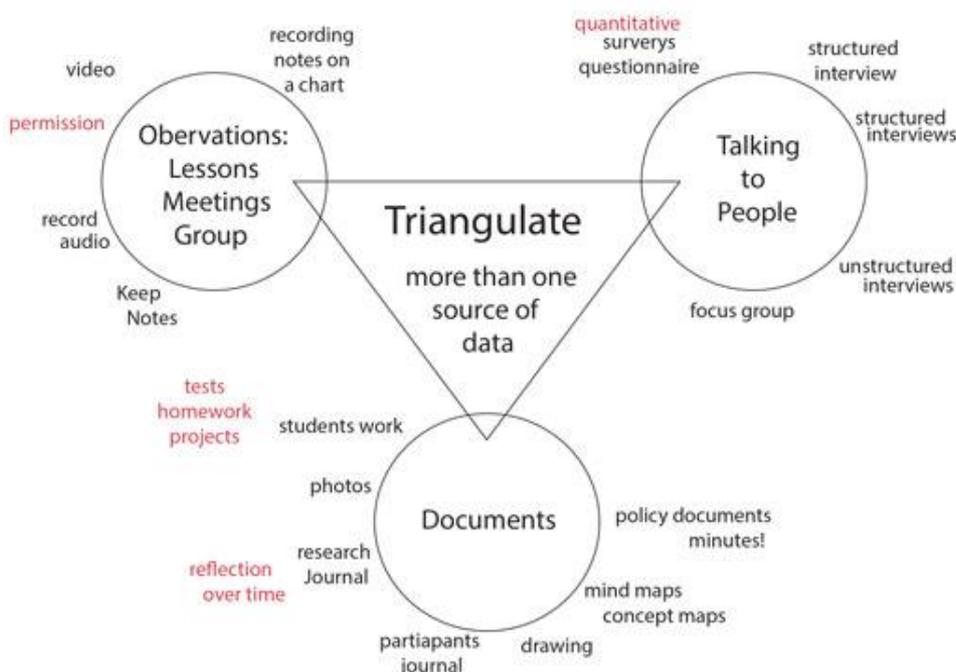


Figure R3.1 Action research cycle.

Having decided on the questions you would like to answer and the approach you wish to take, you will need to collect some data that will enable you to answer the questions. There are three broad ways in which you can collect data, you can:

- observe people at work
- ask questions (either through survey's or by talking to people)
- analyse documents.

Figure R3.2 provides an overview of different data collection methods.



**Figure R3.2** Overview of different data collection methods

You will need evidence from several sources of data in order to be confident in your findings. Each method will have advantages and limitations; you need to make sure that you act in such a way as to minimise the limitations.

You need to consider both the validity and reliability of the data that you collect. If something is valid then that suggests that it is true or trustworthy. It is useful to ask the following questions to test validity:

- **Can the results be generalised?** Someone who hears about or reads about your research might decide that, based on their experience then it is authentic and seems sensible.
- **Does the data support the conclusions?** This is more likely if there is more than one source of data collected over a period of time or if the findings have been checked with the participants.
- **Do the questionnaire or interview questions relate clearly to the research questions?**

Reliability is a difficult concept as it is to do with repeatability and replicability. Reliability includes fidelity to real life, authenticity and meaningfulness to the respondents. Cohen et al. (2003) suggest that the notion of reliability should be construed as 'dependability' and achieving dependability relies on factors such as collecting enough data, checking your findings with the participants, and looking for evidence of the same idea from more than one data source.

(Adapted from *Learning to teach: an introduction to classroom research*)

## Resource 4: The Apréli@ educative e-twinning

The Apréli@ e-twinning allows distant classes to exchange and collaborate by conducting common educational activities, each class producing a digital travel diary reflecting its twin-class's communications about its life, environment, traditions, etc.

The Apréli@ e-twinning is an African initiative that implements the use of ICT adapted to African educational needs. Building on other African OERs, including TESSA's and IFADEM's, they develop innovative uses of ICTs that promote active pedagogies targeted at learners, considered citizens in the construction of the global village.

To achieve its objectives, each class asks the twin-class to gather information about itself, its school, its district, its city, its region, its country, in order to be able to process, organize and present them for sharing.

To provide responses to these requests for information, the twin-class calls on various resource persons, including parents and local elected representatives. The final production, the digital travel diary, is the reflection of the collaborative work involving the school and its partners.

This way of working allows students to have a real audience that will appreciate the work normally carried out in the classroom, following the prescribed curriculum. The school curriculum remains firmly in place, but is reconfigured in a motivating context that allows the students to (re) discover their world to enable their twin-class to discover it and rediscover its own world through the eyes of their partners.

It also promotes the reinforcement of pedagogical and didactic skills of teachers and the acquisition of new skills (including digital literacy and the integration of ICT in their practices).

In addition to the reinforcement of knowledge and skills and the acquisition of digital skills, the scenarios presented allow students to acquire new skills, including the ability to communicate, to exchange, to open up to other contexts and cultures (acquisition of new know-how, interpersonal skills, knowing how to interact, knowing how to collaborate, knowing how to become.)

The initiative promotes attitudes of sharing, cooperation, mutual aid and solidarity, i.e. the individual and social transformation that promises sustainable human and social development.

Based on intercultural exchanges, it also allows a greater visibility of African digital resources, thus enhancing the cultural, linguistic and spiritual heritage of Africa.

Feedback from pioneering classes indicate that e-twinning activities have increased the interest and even enthusiasm of students and teachers alike. They have also led teachers to take on new roles, shifting from the holder and transmitter of knowledge at the front of the class to that facilitator accompanying the construction of knowledge by the students, at their side. The changes noted are not been limited to e-twinning sessions, but have extended to all school subjects and activities.

The Apréli@ e-twinning resources are African Open Educative Resources developed and implemented by the Apréli@ international team of researchers and teacher educators in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, France, Great Britain, Mauritania, Senegal and Togo. They are available in French and in English.

They can be used at all levels of primary or secondary school

## Resource 5: Template for action planning

<b>Name of Teacher</b>		<b>Date</b>		
<b>Identified need or underused skill</b>	<b>Action(s) / activity(ies) to improve</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Support needed (resources, incl. Human resources)</b>	<b>Success indicators</b>
<b>Any other notes</b>				
<b>Signature of school leader</b>				

## Additional resources

- *Learning to teach: an introduction to classroom research*, an Open University OpenLearn unit:  
<http://www.open.edu/openlearn/education/learning-teach-introduction-classroom-research/content-section-0>

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