

Chapter 3: Learning and Development

- 3.1.1 Support staff are increasingly expected to take on wider and deeper roles in support of teaching and learning. To help such staff perform these roles, schools will wish to set clear annual priorities for the training and development of staff at all levels. These should be in line with the cycle of school and budgetary planning and the development of whole school objectives designed to promote continuous improvement. Costed training and development plans should enable clear priorities to be set and decisions to be followed through; clear personal development plans should be created and training recorded systematically. Regular reviews of the impact of training and development, delivered through a range of media including mentoring, job shadowing, individual learning, courses, conferences and so on will help to determine the effect upon individual performance and how effective the investment has been.
- 3.1.2 The Central Bedfordshire Teaching School Partnership will assist schools by working with Headteachers to address the continuing professional development needs of school support staff, providing regular advice and guidance to schools on the development programme, skill assessments and training opportunities available. The Council circulates a weekly term time newsletter to Schools called Central Essentials, which is instrumental in keeping the School up to date on the learning and development opportunities available. For more information in relation to the Central Bedfordshire Teaching School Partnership please click [here](#).
- 3.1.3 Support staff should be included in relevant team meetings and staff briefings as a matter of course. Where these meetings take place outside of normal working hours, appropriate pay arrangements should be made. Schools may wish to explore standards for good people management and development such as Investors in People and / or Investment in Excellence. This will help to develop a cycle of continuous learning and development.
- 3.1.4 When seeking to recruit support staff with the right skills and knowledge, schools can obtain specialist advice and expertise from the [Central Bedfordshire Academy of Social Work and Early Intervention team](#), trade unions and the School Improvement Team. The National College of Teaching and Leadership have developed guidance on staff development which can be found at:
<https://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/transfer/open/csbm-managing-hr-in-schools/csbm-6hr-s3/csbm-6hr-s3-t3.html>.
Staff can also view the most up-to-date range of courses available to them by clicking [here](#).
- 3.1.5 Central Bedfordshire Academy of Social Work and Early Intervention's (The Academy) aim is to support schools to achieve the highest possible standards by ensuring that staff are developed as skilled practitioners in their respective roles. Their programme of learning includes a range of role-specific and multi-agency opportunities for development.
- Central Bedfordshire's CPD Online is a new solution to support the continuing professional development and training of all who work with children, young people and their families. It is an online searchable directory and booking system for learning opportunities provided by a range of approved training providers.

Central Bedfordshire's CPD Online helps staff and organisations to identify appropriate development opportunities available to them and keep individual and

organisation records of CPD. The site has been developed to include a dedicated link to training opportunities for different workforce sectors including Schools, Social Care, Early Years and Multi Agency. However staff need only register once to see opportunities across all of these areas.

For further information on all the qualifications they offer and how to apply for these, please go to the Workforce Development section on the [Central Bedfordshire Children's Trust website](https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/childrens-trust/). Alternatively, they can be contacted for advice at academy@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or 0300 300 8131.

3.2 Job Profiles and Performance Appraisal

- 3.2.1 All members of staff should have a comprehensive job description and personnel specification for the post which they occupy. This will set out clear line management structures and each person needs to be sure of how their role contributes to the raising of standards. The Council has published comprehensive generic job descriptions, personnel specifications and job profiles to assist schools with this exercise and they can be accessed on the Schools Portal by clicking [here](#).
- 3.2.2 If training and development policies are to be effective, the development of staff should be discussed as part of the annual performance management process in accordance with the School's performance management policy.
- 3.2.3 Where possible, school support staff appraisals should take place during normal working hours. Whilst all school based employees should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, ultimately, headteachers, governors and line managers will all have a role to play in helping individuals to achieve their full potential. Headteachers and line managers are also in a position to look for joint learning opportunities by sharing and coordinating information not only within the school but among groups of schools with similar identified training needs.

3.3 Career Progression and the Four Levels for School Support Staff

- 3.3.1 Many school support staff hold no formal qualifications but have become "qualified" by virtue of long experience. A key factor in identifying training needs has, therefore, been the ability to accurately identify current skill levels and assess existing qualifications. Some issues have also been identified by schools as a barrier to utilising available training including funding, release time, cover and most crucially, managing candidates expectations once qualifications have been obtained.
- 3.3.2 A whole school approach to training and development is likely to be the most effective first step and the use of in-service training days should be used as an important tool by headteachers to help staff maintain and develop their professional skills and knowledge for whole school development planning. When planning Inset provision for the next academic year, headteachers and governors will wish to take account of the training needs of school support staff, particularly those involved in the delivery of learning in the classroom and link subsequent decisions to the school development plan. The changes proposed for school support staff with regard to training and performance appraisal should not lead to an increase in responsibility or workload for teaching staff.
- 3.3.3 The four levels of school support staff posts are broadly linked to National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and these are based on national occupational standards. These work base qualifications provide an important stepping stone for those who wish to accredit their current competence, work towards increased competence or to progress their careers further.