

The Current State of Professional Development for Teachers

January 2024

Becky Allen
Loic Menzies
Iain Ford



Executive summary

“Teachers have an important influence on pupils’ academic progress, yet the quality of teaching varies widely (Lee, 2018). Policymakers, school leaders, and teacher educators therefore face the challenge of designing and commissioning professional development (PD) to help all their teachers become as effective as the best teachers.”

Sims et al. 2021 p.5

Teachers are committed to improving their practice but do not always have clear improvement goals. They are also highly sceptical regarding the impact of the diet of professional development that is currently available to them.

In-service training (INSET) is a cornerstone of schools’ CPD offer and is often delivered in the form of ‘Baker Days’ at the start of the school year. However these sessions rarely prioritise classroom practice. Instead, such provision tends to focus on policies and procedures. As such, it is far more effective in meeting heads and senior leaders’ needs, than the needs of teachers in relation to instructional practice. In contrast, out of school (online and in-person) CPD is much more likely to be subject specific or to focus on curriculum, and SEND and inclusion.

Even though teachers do not perceive the professional development they have participated in over the last 12 months to have been particularly effective, they remain optimistic about CPD’s potential future impact. They want the autonomy to choose CPD for themselves, or, at the very least, for their Heads to be able to sign-off on their choices. They are particularly eager for more subject specific training and they want to be confident that CPD will be applicable to their classroom practice.

Teachers’ preferences regarding CPD content are not just shaped by what areas they want to make improvements in. Beliefs about what is likely to be effective play a considerable role. For example, teachers are eager to make improvements to their behaviour management, but do not generally believe that CPD will deliver the improvements they desire.

The format of CPD matters to teachers too. They want to be able to fit professional development around their lives and therefore have a preference for online CPD, particularly when this can be completed at a time of their choosing. This would give them a degree of flexibility that is lacking from much of the rest of their working life.

Despite their preference for online CPD, teachers are social beings. They have a significant appetite for attending after school sessions with colleagues from other schools, particularly if these focus on topics of interest to them. Secondary school teachers working in small specialist subjects who might be somewhat isolated have a particular desire to meet colleagues who share their specialism.

Key Statistics

Teacher
tapp[®]

Nine-out-of-ten



teachers believe that they have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their instructional practice

TOP TWO



Teachers' **top two** priorities for professional development are expanding their subject knowledge and improving their classroom instruction

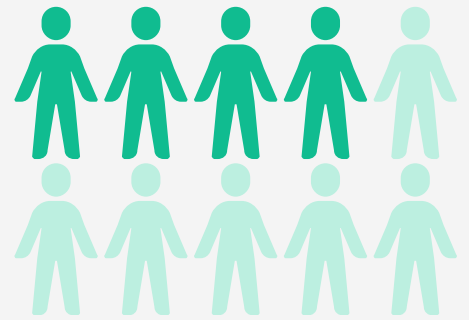
Around
4-in-10

teachers would **'probably'** attend a meet up in a cafe organised by a local teacher from another school

Only 4%



of teachers believe that training on behaviour management would result in significant improvements to their expertise in the area



Four-in-ten teachers believe they have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their instructional practice

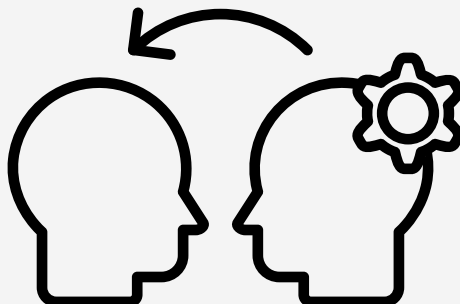
Only 1-in-10

teachers **favour** an external approval system for funded-CPD



5x

Teachers who would opt to attend a two-day course on curriculum planning or on whole-class instructional pedagogy are **five times more likely** to already perceive this as a strength, than to consider it a weakness



6-in-10

classroom teachers say they have taken part in **peer-to-peer learning** such as coaching, observation or a teacher professional development network at some point in the **last 12 months**

1. Overview of the research

This research is intended to provide an evidence-base for policy discussions about the future of continual professional development (CPD) for teachers.

As the largest survey of teachers in England, Teacher Tapp has access to a wealth of data on teachers' experiences of, and appetite for, CPD. This report provides a synthesis of this sizeable knowledge-base, alongside a set of brand-new questions and insights.

We begin by setting out the state of CPD, including teachers' professional engagement and desire for improvement. We present new evidence on the nature of existing CPD provision - particularly in service training (INSET), as well as teachers' views on its effectiveness.

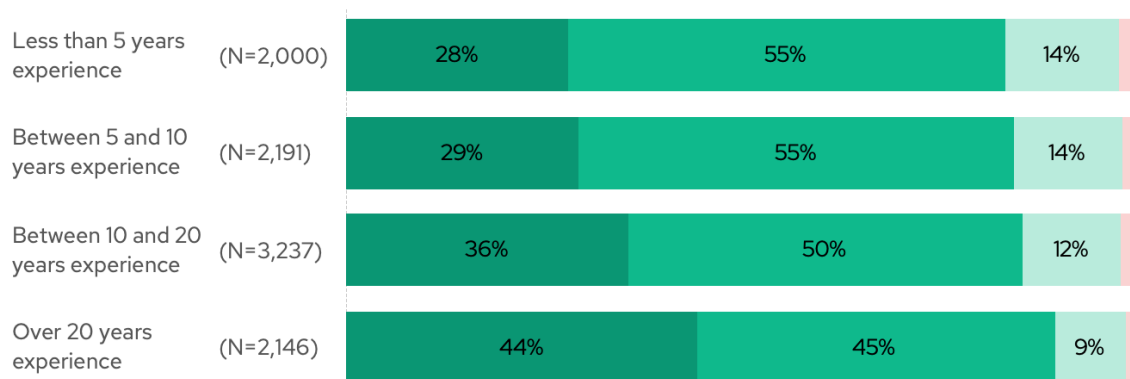
Next, we turn to teachers' preferences, comparing and contrasting the actual state to their desired state. Finally we conclude by reflecting on the Labour Party's recent proposals in relation to CPD, gauging the extent to which teachers' views align with Labour's stated priorities.

2. The nature of existing CPD provision

i. Teachers' engagement with professional development

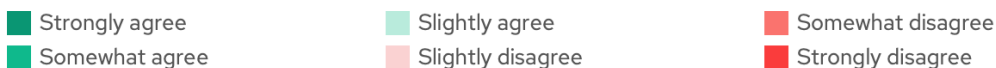
Most teachers are reflective practitioners. Nearly nine-out-of-ten teachers believe they have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their instructional practice and this self awareness appears to grow with years of experience. Most teachers reflect on their practice at least weekly and nearly eight-out-of-ten do so on at least a monthly basis.

Teachers have a sense of the strengths and weaknesses in their classroom practice

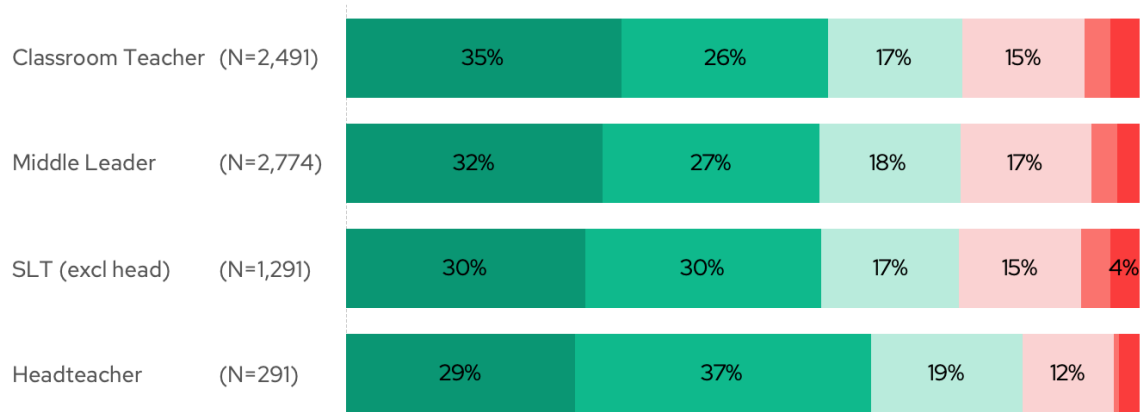


Question asked: "I have a clear understanding of my strengths and weaknesses in my own classroom instructional practice"

Answered by 9,574 teachers on 16/07/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

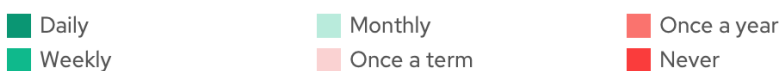


Most teachers reflect on their practice on at least a weekly basis



Question asked: "How often do you reflect on your instructional practice?"

Answered by 6,847 teachers on 31/07/2021 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)



Teachers are already working hard to get better at their job, particularly new teachers, three-quarters of whom say that improving their practice is an important focus, and something they do on at least a weekly basis. Given these levels of professional engagement, those seeking to promote CPD should be pushing at an open door.

Teachers work towards improvements in their professional practice on a frequent basis

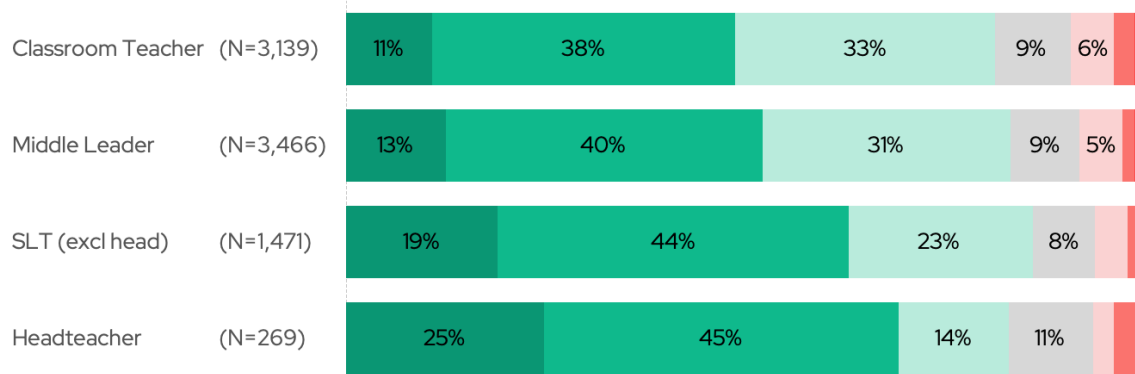


Question asked: "To what extent have you worked hard to become better at your job over the past 12 months?"
 Answered by 9,930 teachers on 08/11/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

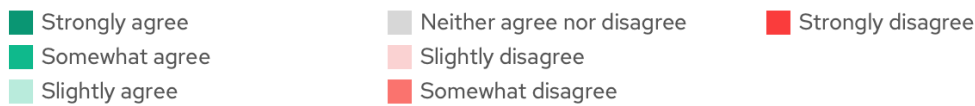
- A great extent - it is a daily focus for me
- A large extent - it is a weekly focus for me
- A moderate extent
- A small extent
- Not at all

On the other hand, despite saying they are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and that they are working to improve, only one-in-ten teachers strongly agree that they have clear goals for how they want to improve their classroom teaching. Notably, less than half of classroom teachers even 'somewhat' agree that they have clear goals for improvement whereas seven-out-of-ten Headteachers had this degree of clarity.

Many teachers lack a clear goal for how they would like to improve their classroom teaching



Question asked: "I have clear goals for how I would like to improve my classroom teaching"
 Answered by 8,345 teachers on 15/03/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)



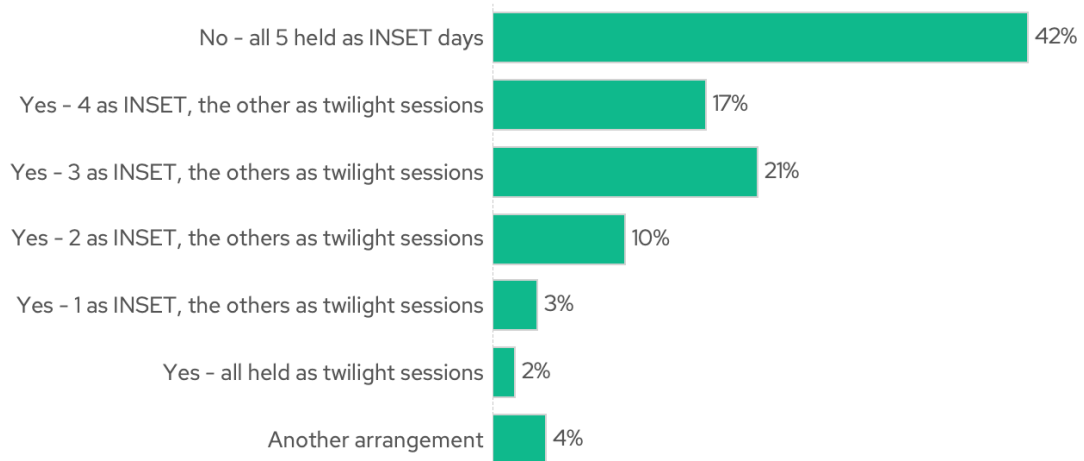
Given teachers' appetite for professional improvement but lack of clarity about how to pursue this, we now turn to the diet of CPD that is available to them.

ii. The state of INSET

Since their introduction in 1988 by Kenneth Baker, the then Secretary of State for Education, as part of the great Education Reform Act, INSET days have been a fundamental component of teachers' CPD entitlement. However over time, the way they have been implemented has changed considerably.

Fewer than half of teachers now report that all five 'Baker days' - as they soon became known, are held as discrete INSET days. A third report that at least two INSET days are held as 'twilight sessions'.

The death of the 'Baker Day'



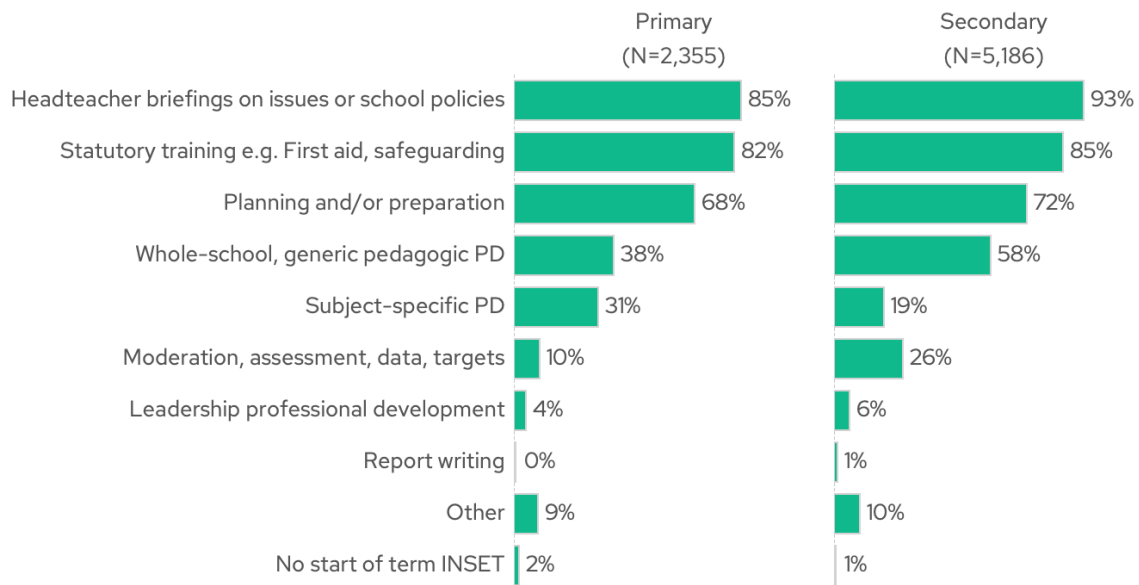
Question asked: "State schools normally hold 5 statutory INSET days for training each year. Has your school switched any of these into twilight training sessions after school?"

Answered by 9,086 teachers on 19/06/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

In 99% of schools, at least one INSET day takes place before pupils arrive at the start of the Autumn term. 6-in-10 schools have two (or more!) INSET days used in this way.

The timing of INSET days links to their purpose, which is often divorced from the improvement of teachers' classroom practice. There is a clear tendency for INSET days to focus on school policies, compliance and planning. In fact, fewer than a two-thirds of teachers said that INSET days at the start of the school year involved professional development in any form. In secondary schools there is a particularly marked absence of subject specific professional development and instead, there is a notable focus on moderation, assessment, data analysis and target setting.

Most INSET days are taken up by compliance and planning activities rather than professional development



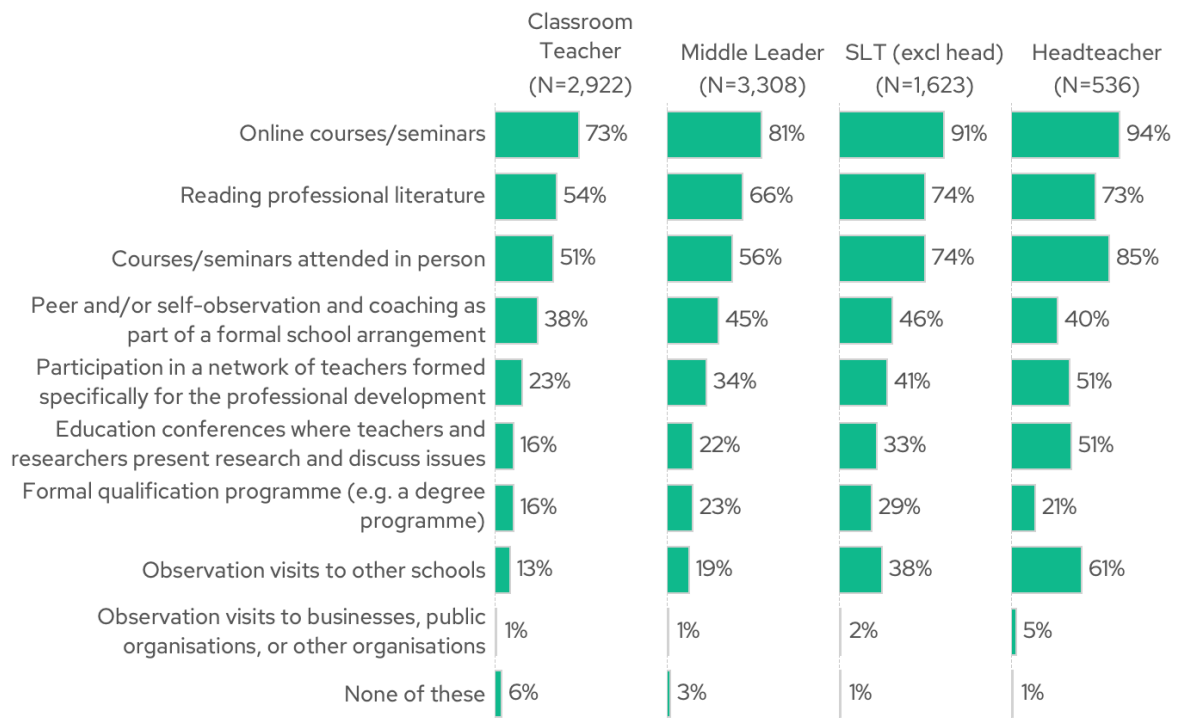
Question asked: "Which of these, if any, were included as part of an INSET day at the start of term?"
 Answered by 7,541 teachers on 07/09/2022 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

When asked to name the main topic of their most recent INSET day in an open-ended question, the most commonly referenced areas were safeguarding - which was mentioned by 1-in-4 teachers; and behaviour - which was mentioned by 1-in-5 respondents. Many of these teachers mentioned a specific training approach such as restorative justice or trauma-informed approaches.

A similar proportion to those mentioning behaviour did reference a topic related to classroom pedagogy. Among these teachers, specific references to retrieval practice; responsive teaching; questioning; and training to use classroom technology such as iPads, were particularly common.

Curriculum was mentioned by just over 1-in-6 teachers whilst 1-in-20 referenced assessment. There were notable differences between phases, with primary school teachers frequently mentioning topics related to maths or reading, whereas secondary teachers were more likely to mention reviews of last year's exam papers and results.

A varied CPD-diet

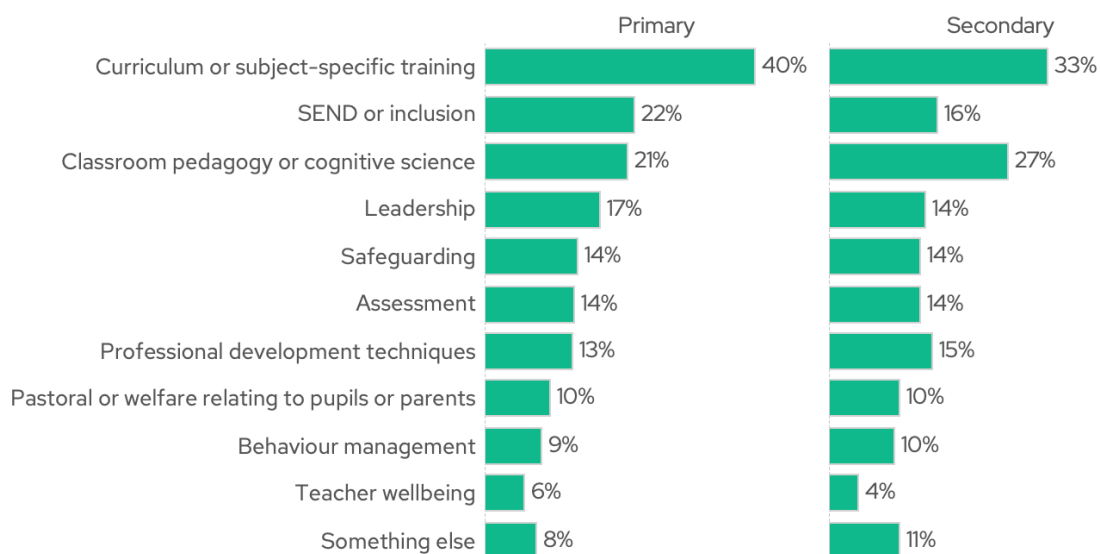


Question asked: "During the last 12 months, did you participate in any of the following professional development activities?"

Answered by 8,389 teachers on 07/01/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

Out-of-school CPD, whether conducted online or in person, distinctly differs in focus from INSET days. Predominantly, it centres around curriculum and subject-based training, with a significant emphasis on SEND and inclusion, especially at the primary school level. The fact that teachers typically choose their out-of-school CPD activities provides insight into the types of professional development they prefer and prioritise.

Curriculum and subject-specific training dominate out-of-school CPD



Question asked: "Please think of the most recent workshop, course or educational meeting you attended either ONLINE or IN-PERSON. Which of the following topics were covered during the event?"

Answered by 7,592 teachers on 02/12/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

iv. Do teachers find CPD effective?

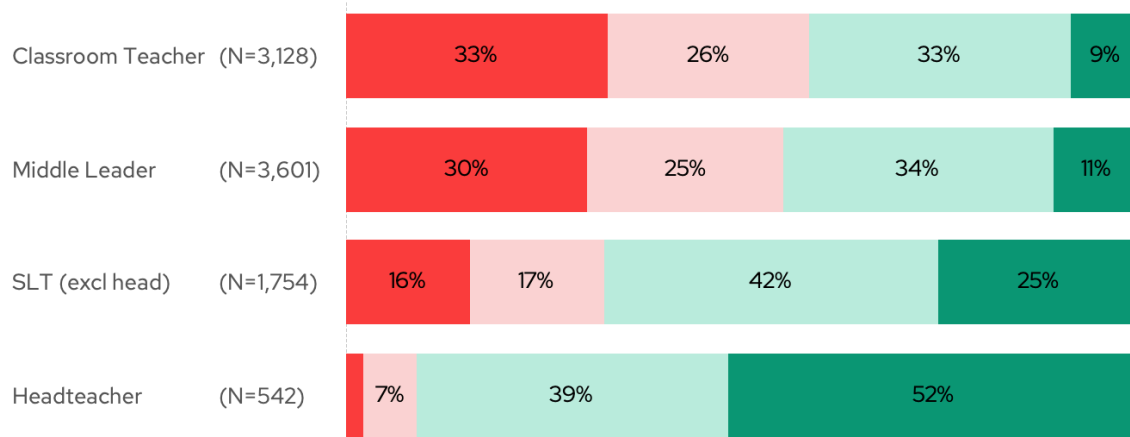
Previous studies have concluded that CPD is a valuable way of improving teaching and learning but that professional development activities and programmes vary widely in terms of their effectiveness (Sims et al. 2021).

Whilst the effectiveness and quality of current CPD provision is not this report's main focus, a number of conclusions can be drawn regarding whether teachers perceive CPD to be good quality and whether they believe it to improve their practice.

INSET days

INSET days are much better at meeting Head Teachers' and Senior Leaders' needs than those of classroom teachers and middle leaders. 6-in-10 classroom teachers did not find the last INSET day they attended particularly useful (i.e. it was less than 'somewhat' useful) and this was even worse for experienced classroom teachers. In contrast, over 90% of Head Teachers considered their last INSET day to have been at least 'somewhat' useful.

INSET days are useful for heads, but less so for others

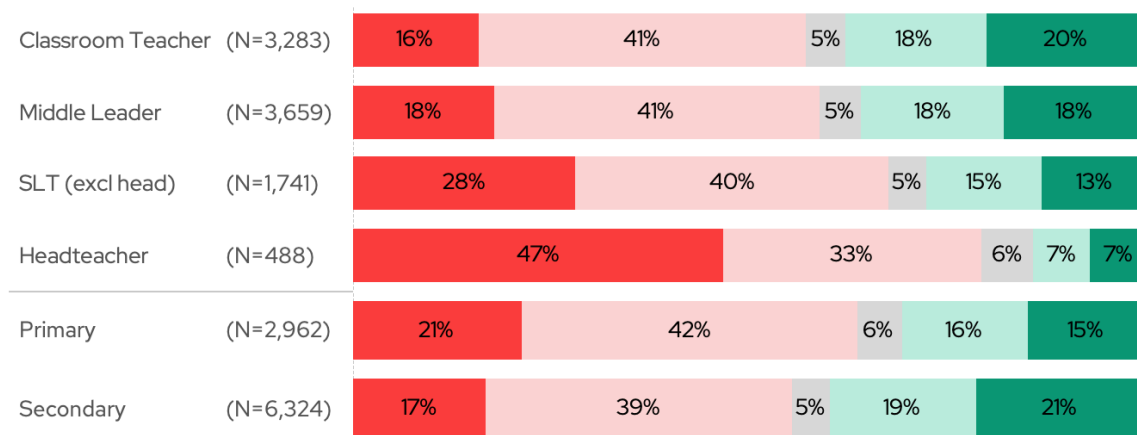


Question asked: "How useful was the last INSET day you attended?"
 Answered by 9,025 teachers on 13/05/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

■ Not particularly useful
 ■ Slightly useful
 ■ Somewhat useful
 ■ Very useful

These findings are reflected in teachers' responses to the counterfactual question of what would happen if INSET days were no longer held and teachers could no longer go on external CPD courses. Around one in three teachers believe they would still become better teachers regardless, and only one-in-five believe a lack of access to training would have a significantly negative impact on them. However, Heads and Senior Leaders were far more concerned about the negative impact of such a move, and primary teachers were a little more concerned than secondary teachers.

Most teachers believe an end to INSETs and other external CPD would be a little damaging



Question asked: "Imagine your school will no longer hold INSET days and there will be no funds available for you to go on a professional development course. How would this impact you?"

Answered by 9,286 teachers on 10/09/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

■ Significantly negative impact
 ■ No impact - Will be a similar teacher in future
■ Slightly negative impact
 ■ No impact - Will still improve in future
■ Don't know

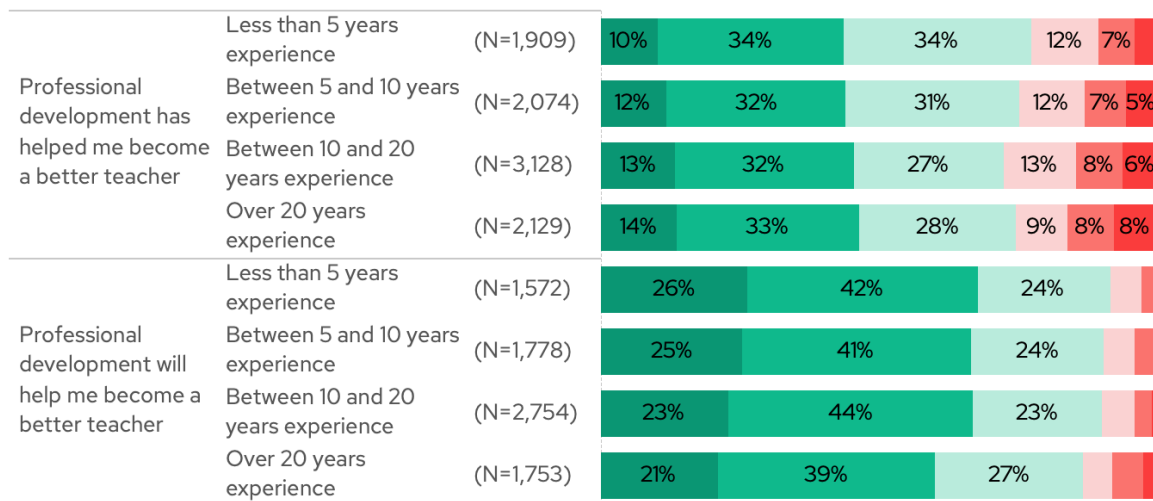
Professional Development as a whole

Teachers' views on the impact of professional development activities as a whole are considerably more positive than their views on INSET days. Around three-quarters acknowledge that professional development activities, both formal and informal, have helped them become at least slightly better teachers, and around half report that professional development sessions have had a 'strong' to 'very strong' influence on their practice over the last five years.

However as previous research has concluded (Sims et al. 2021), professional development's impact is indeed perceived to be highly variable. Only just over one-in-ten teachers 'strongly' agree that they have taken part in professional development activities that have helped them become better teachers over the last 12 months.

Despite their mixed past experiences, teachers remain optimistic about the potential impact of CPD, with the vast majority anticipating that professional development sessions will help them become better teachers in the future. Optimism is particularly high among less experienced teachers.

Teachers are optimistic about how future professional development will support them

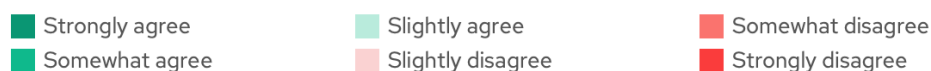


Questions asked:

- "Learning and development activities I have completed in the past 12 months have helped to improve my performance"

- "I believe that professional development sessions will help me become a better teacher"

Answered by 7,857 and 9,240 teachers on 25/07/2022 and 23/07/2023, respectively



In Section Three, we turn to how these hopes might be made to bear fruit, by exploring what teachers' ideal CPD would look like.

3. Ideal CPD provision

i. The content of ideal CPD

Previous studies have suggested that all teachers should have an entitlement to 35 hours a year of high-quality professional development (Perry et al 2022, Leonardi et al 2022). Others have called for a more ambitious goal, but a less rigid target, to be achieved through increased access to a range of funded provision (Menzies, 2023). However, these proposals all raise important questions regarding what such provision should focus on and how it should be delivered.

Specificity

We asked teachers and leaders about the balance between four broad types of CPD

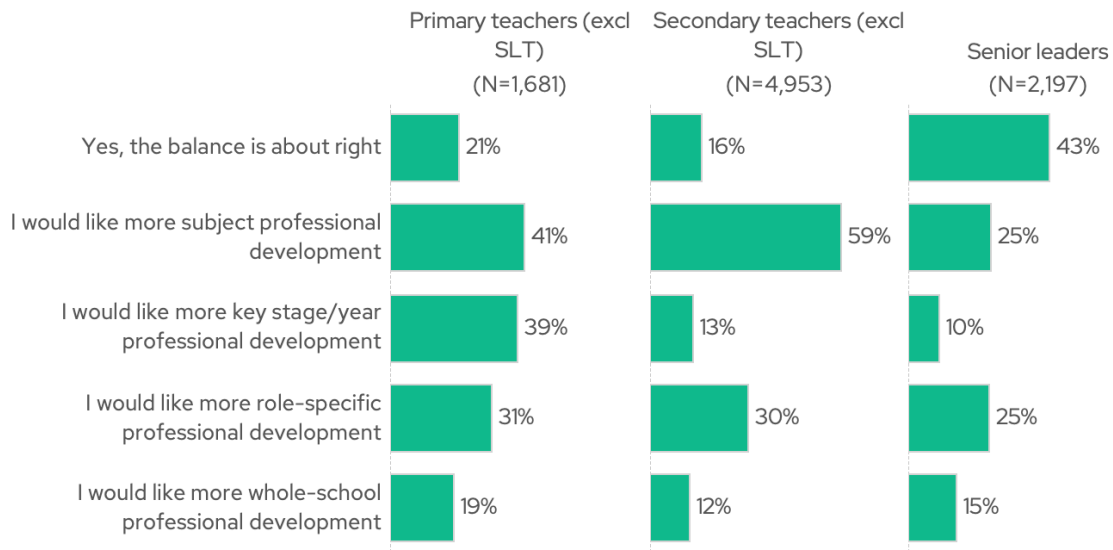
- Whole-school
- Subject specific
- Key stage/year group specific
- Role specific

Once again, Head Teachers and Senior Leaders had very different preferences around CPD compared to classroom teachers and middle leaders.

Around half of Heads said that the current balance between the four categories of CPD was roughly right, whereas 8-out-of-10 classroom teachers said that the balance needs adjusting. These teachers' unmet demand is focused on subject and age-group specific CPD.

Exploring the results by phase reveals further granularity, with secondary school teachers, classroom teachers and middle leaders expressing a particular desire for subject specific CPD and less interest in age-group-specific provision. Secondary teachers are least likely to be happy with the current balance.

Secondary classroom teachers are least satisfied with their professional development



Question asked: "For you, is the balance of your professional development between whole-school, subject, key stage/year and role-specific activities right?"

Answered by 8,831 teachers on 13/04/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

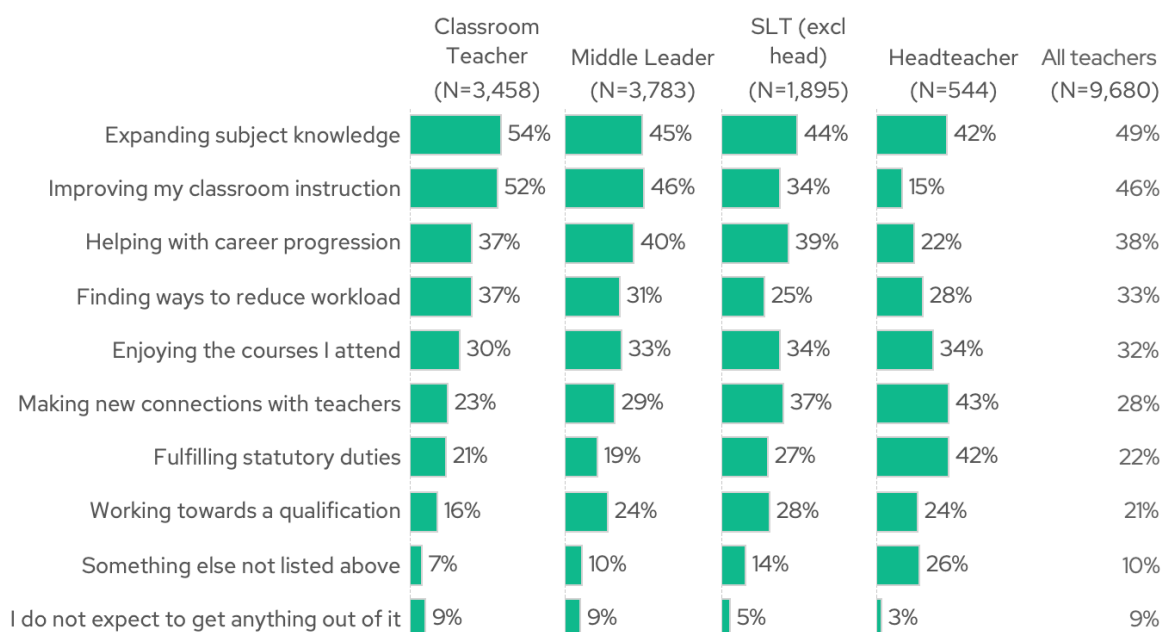
Content

If teachers were given free choice over 30 funded hours of CPD, many would have a preference for subject-specific or curriculum training. A sub-sample of 500 open-responses to the question "If you were provided with funding to complete 30 hours of CPD during the school day this year, what activities would you choose to undertake" were coded and a third of responses requested subject-specific or curriculum training. One-in-ten responses mentioned a specific aspect of classroom pedagogy and a similar proportion wanted training on how to deliver and receive professional development (such as mentoring or coaching).

The focus on subject specific development and classroom pedagogy was echoed in closed responses with around half of teachers saying that the main thing they wanted to get out of CPD was improved subject knowledge and classroom instruction. These aspects of CPD were more important to teachers than enjoyment and reductions in workload.

Given the recent focus on National Professional Qualifications as a delivery-mechanism for funded CPD, it is important to note that only one-in-five teachers prioritised working towards a qualification. For the most part, teachers and leaders in different roles shared similar priorities in terms of CPD content, however Head Teachers were much more likely to prioritise making new connections and fulfilling statutory duties (and less likely to prioritise career progression). Meanwhile the focus on classroom pedagogy and subject knowledge was even more marked among classroom teachers.

Teachers are hungry to expand their subject knowledge and improve their classroom practice



Question asked: "What do you hope to get out of all the professional development you will do this academic year?"

Answered by 9,680 teachers on 22/10/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

Asking teachers what would make attendance at a one-day CPD course feel worthwhile revealed similar patterns. Applicability dominated teachers' priority lists, with seven-out-of-ten teachers selecting "Improved teaching skills I can use in the classroom". Responses to this question showed that reductions in workload were a particularly high priority for classroom teachers who selected this option twice as often as head teachers.

Applicability is key, but workload is also a priority for teachers

	All teachers (N=9,381)	Primary teachers (excl SLT) (N=2,019)	Secondary teachers (excl SLT) (N=5,039)	Senior leaders (N=2,323)
Improved teaching skills I can use in the classroom	70%	77%	70%	51%
Improved subject knowledge	50%	55%	46%	48%
Helping me find ways to reduce workload	42%	46%	43%	29%
Improving how I do another part of my job	38%	33%	36%	56%
Making new connections with teachers	28%	24%	27%	41%
Having an enjoyable day	26%	26%	28%	22%
Contributing to a qualification	16%	15%	17%	16%
Helping me prepare for promotion	11%	8%	14%	9%
Something else not listed here	5%	4%	4%	9%

Question asked: "Imagine you attend a one-day CPD course. Which 3 of the following are the most important for you to feel your attendance has been worthwhile?"

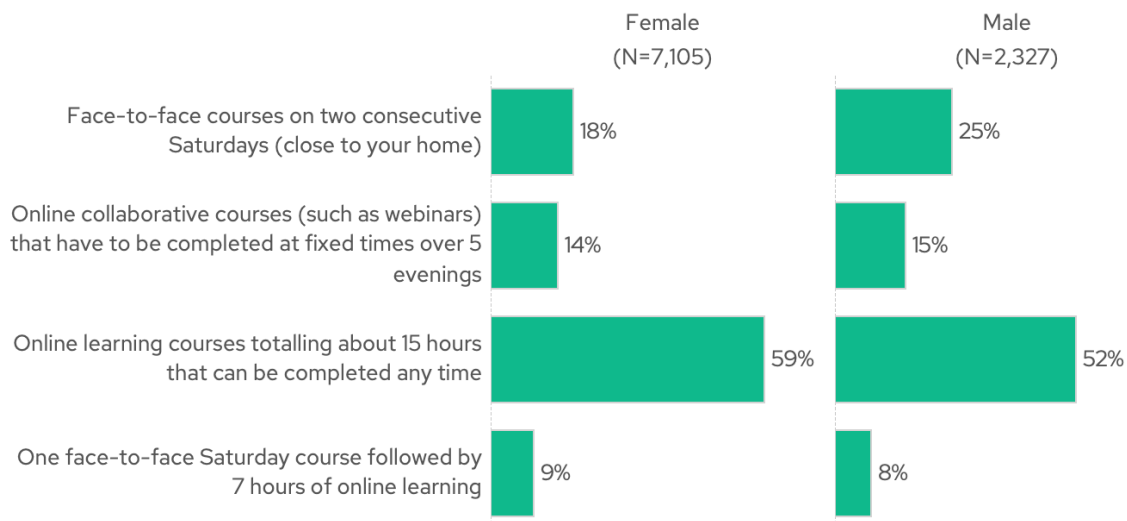
Answered by 9,381 teachers on 17/11/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

ii. The delivery mode of ideal CPD

Online CPD offers a rare opportunity for teachers to work in a more flexible way than they are able to during timetabled hours. It is therefore not surprising that teachers have a strong preference for online provision when contemplating participating in professional development outside of school hours.

Asynchronous courses that can be completed at a time of the teachers' choosing are also highly valued, particularly by female teachers, with more than half expressing a preference for such provision. However, there are no material differences between those with children at home and those without, perhaps because many who do have children at home are not the primary carer and because some older teachers have caring duties for someone other than children.

Teachers have a strong preference for online provision

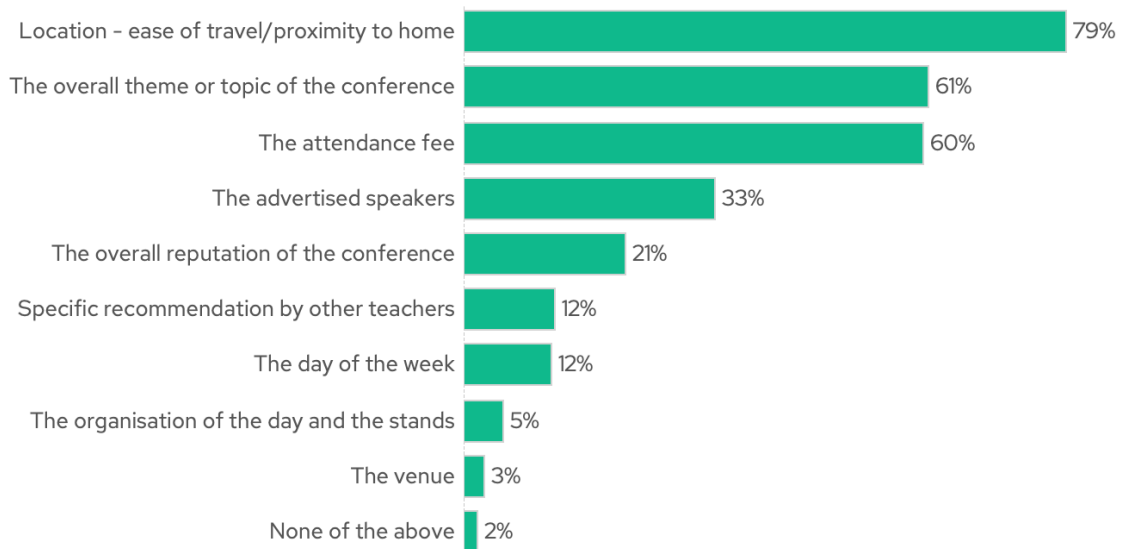


Question asked: "Your headteacher is paying for you to attend some professional development session on part of the curriculum you haven't taught before. The only downside is that it has to be completed outside school hours. If you have a choice, which type of course would you choose?"

Answered by 9,432 teachers on 17/11/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

Where courses are held in person at conferences, ease of access is of paramount importance, with travel and proximity exceeding the importance of content and cost.

Practical considerations dominate decisions about conference attendance



Question asked: "Which *THREE* of the following are the most important in deciding whether or not to attend a conference?"

Answered by 7,849 teachers on 19/07/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

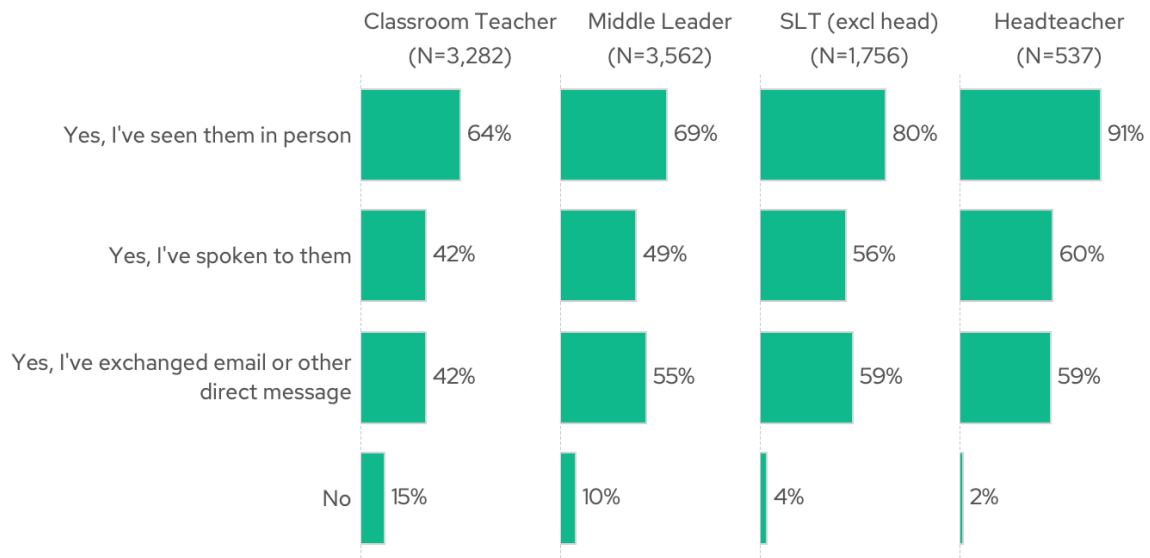
When presented with a free-response question asking them to imagine what they would do with a free CPD entitlement, it became clear that informal, and peer-to-peer forms of training were particularly attractive to teachers. Around one-in-ten mentioned that they would like to spend time observing other teachers, particularly in other schools. For time-starved teachers, simply being given the time to reflect and embed existing ideas into their practice was often what most appealed, with around one-in-ten stating that this is how they would use their 30 hours.

iii. Ideal forms of collaboration in professional development

Given teachers' interest in informal and peer to peer CPD it is important to understand who they want to learn with and from.

Over a half term period (i.e. around six weeks), almost all Head Teachers have contact with colleagues in other schools whilst around 85% of classroom teachers do, but, whereas around nine-out-of-ten Headteachers have met a colleague from another school in person, only around six-in-ten classroom teachers have done so.

Many classroom teachers have not had any in person contact with a teacher working in another school in the last half term

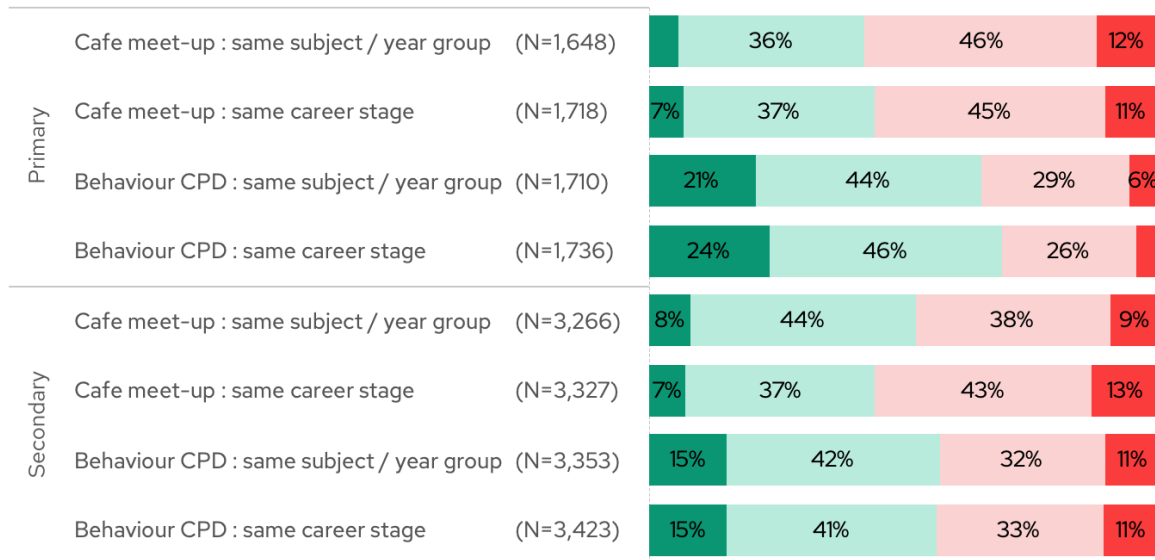


Question asked: "In the last half term, have you had contact with a teacher who works at another school to your own? Please think of all professional and social interactions."

Answered by 9,137 teachers on 29/10/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

Many teachers are keen to meet up with colleagues from other schools. Around four-in-ten would 'probably' attend a meet up in a cafe organised by a local teacher from another school. However, teachers' enthusiasm for in-person sessions involving other schools may depend on the session's focus. Whereas 18% would 'definitely' attend a session organised at another local school if it focused on behaviour management, only 7% said they would 'definitely' attend an after-school meet-up with teachers in a cafe when no topic was specified.

Many teachers would like local opportunities to meet teachers from other schools, particularly for formal CPD



Questions asked:

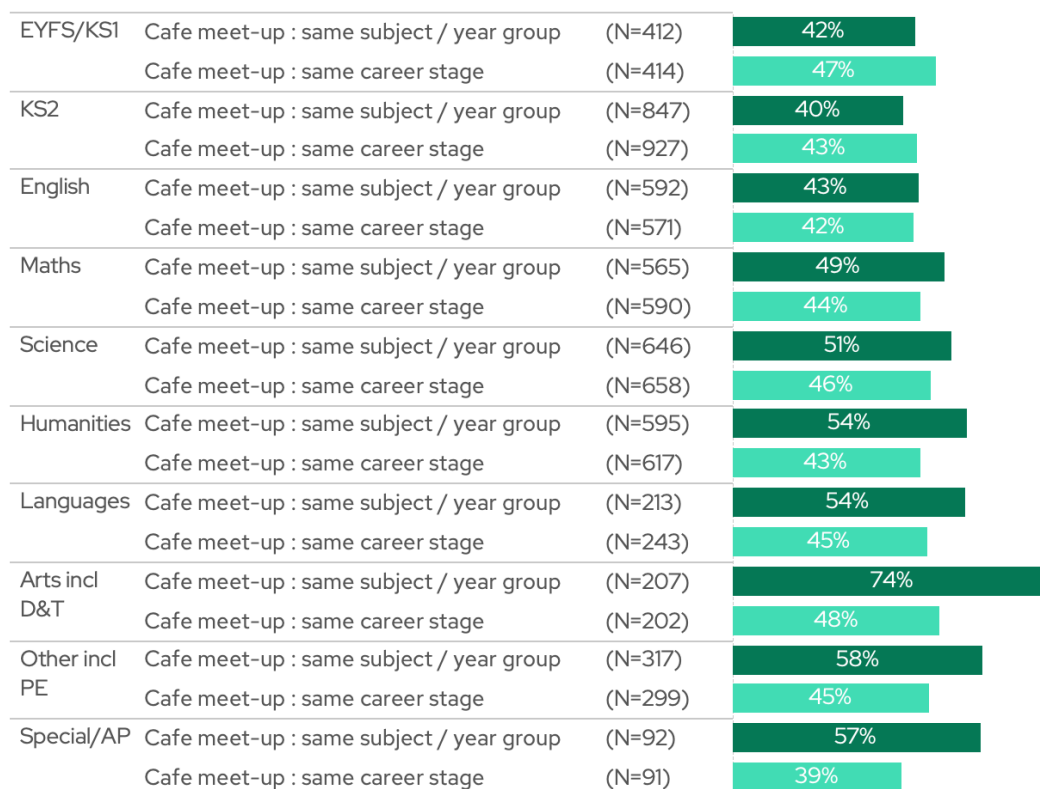
- "A local teacher/school is organising an (a) after-school meet-up at a cafe, (b) after-school session on behaviour management, that is convenient for you to get to. They are inviting local teachers who (i) teach the same subject / year group, (ii) are all at a similar stage of their career, as you. Do you choose to go?"

■ Yes, definitely
 ■ Yes, probably
 ■ No, probably not
 ■ No, definitely not

Secondary school teachers would, on the whole, be slightly more likely to attend an informal meet up if it involved teachers who taught the same subject as them. However, in this case averages hide important variation; teachers of smaller subjects like Art are particularly eager to meet up with colleagues who teach the same subject with almost two-thirds of Art and DT teachers saying they would 'probably' or 'definitely' turn up to such a meeting. This is perhaps unsurprising since teachers of smaller subjects are less likely to have colleagues within their own school with the same subject specialism.

A similar trend holds for teachers in special schools and AP with around six-in-ten teachers from these settings saying they would probably attend an informal meet up if fellow attendees taught the same year group or subject.

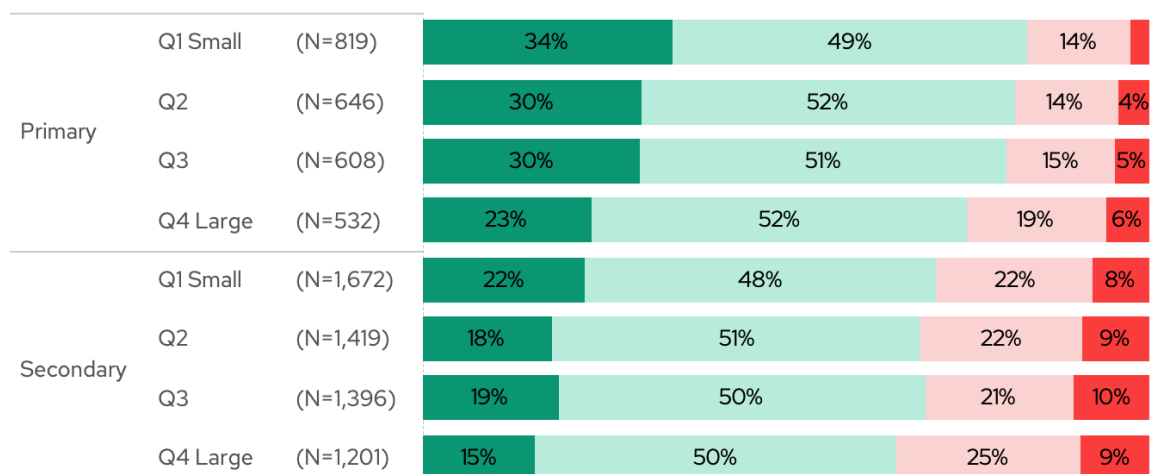
Teachers of small secondary subjects have the strongest desire to meet up with teachers who share their specialism



Proportion of teachers answering Yes, definitely or Yes, probably to the question

Teachers are also keen to spend more time socialising with colleagues from their own school. 1-in-4 would definitely attend and a further half would probably attend an after school social organised by their Headteacher if food and drink were provided. This enthusiasm - or the peer pressure to attend, is much more marked in small primary schools (where more than eight-out-of-ten teachers would attend), compared to in large secondary schools where fewer than two-out-of-three would be likely to turn up.

Feed them and they will come...



Question asked: "On a Friday, your headteacher invites everyone to the staffroom to socialise for an hour after work. Food and drink will be provided. How likely is it that you'd go?"

Answered by 8,293 teachers on 09/04/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

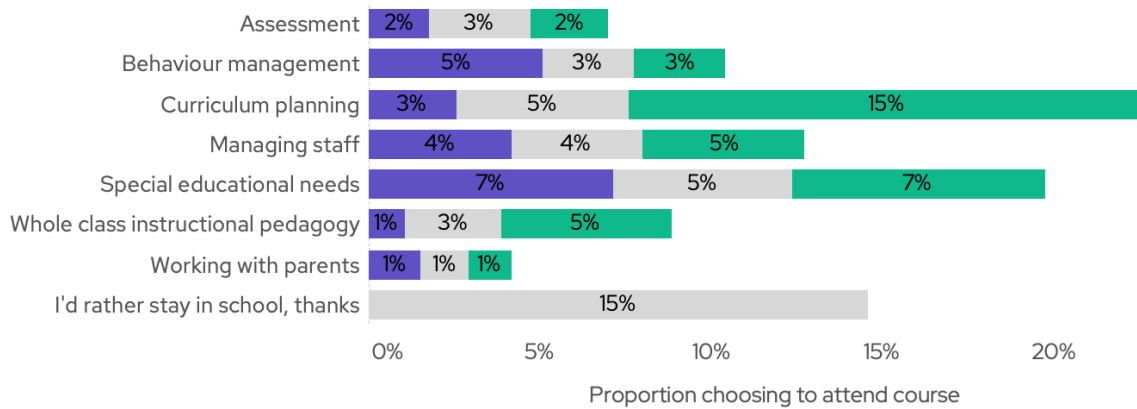


iv. Are teachers willing to work on their weaknesses?

Whilst there is something to be said for building on existing strengths, from a policy perspective it is also important to know whether teachers would freely choose courses that target their areas of weakness. It is therefore perhaps worrying that teachers who would opt to attend a two-day course on curriculum planning are five times more likely to already perceive this as a strength, than to consider it a weakness. The same is the case in relation to whole-class instructional pedagogy.

On the other hand, this trend is not reflected across all areas and is reversed in relation to behaviour management, with teachers who would opt for training in this area nearly twice as likely to see it as a personal weakness compared to a strength. Either way, it is clear that teachers do not systematically opt for CPD that targets their areas of weakness, and it is notable that the third most popular topic was "I'd rather stay in school".

Teachers often elect to take courses in areas they feel are their strengths



Questions asked:

- "You are able to go to a two-day professional development course this year. Which will you choose?"
- "Tick any of the following areas that you feel are your current strengths"
- "Tick any of the following areas that you feel are your current weaknesses"

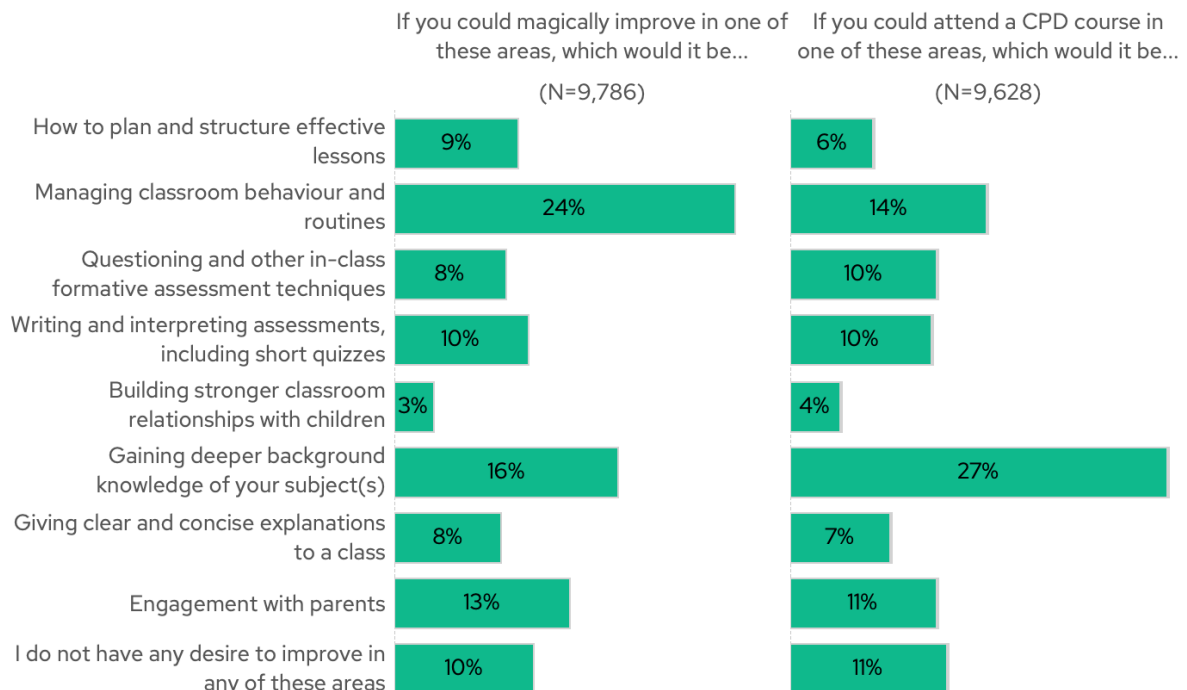
Answered by 8,764 teachers on 15/11/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

Teacher names this area as a strength or weakness:

■ Weakness ■ Neutral ■ Strength

Delving more deeply into the areas of classroom practice in which teachers want to make improvements shows a somewhat surprising pattern. Despite the fact that only 14% of teachers select training on behaviour as the topic for their hypothetically chosen course, this is the area in which the most teachers want to make improvements to their practice.

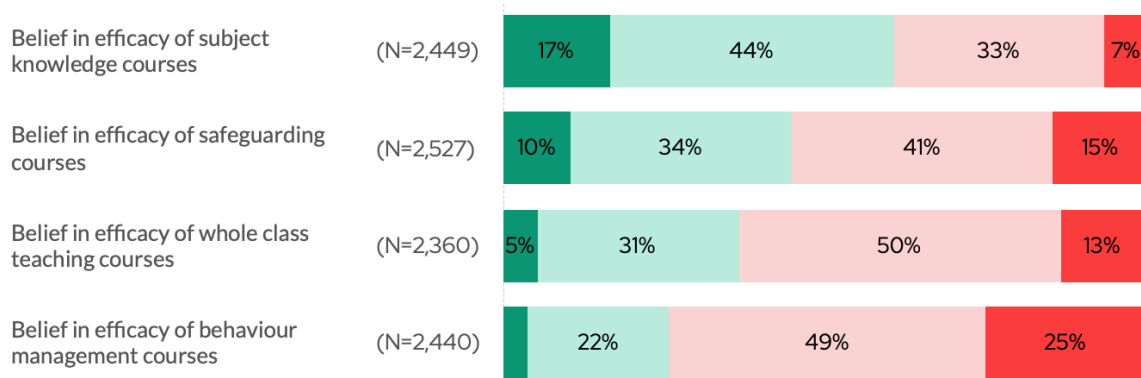
Areas for improvement do not always translate into training priorities



Answered on 13/11/2023 to 22/11/2023

The explanation for this somewhat surprising trend may lie in teachers' beliefs about the efficacy of different types of training. Only 4% of teachers believe that training on behaviour would result in significant improvements to their expertise in the area. This stands in marked contrast to beliefs about the potential efficacy of other training in other areas like subject knowledge which teachers were four-times more likely to believe would drive significant improvements. The reason for the popularity of certain types of training may therefore lie in its anticipated effectiveness and the key to increasing engagement in CPD may therefore lie in ensuring it delivers its intended impact.

Teachers believe that training is more likely to be effective in some areas than others



Question asked: To what extent do you believe that your {domain} expertise would improve following attendance at a two-day professional development course on {that domain}?

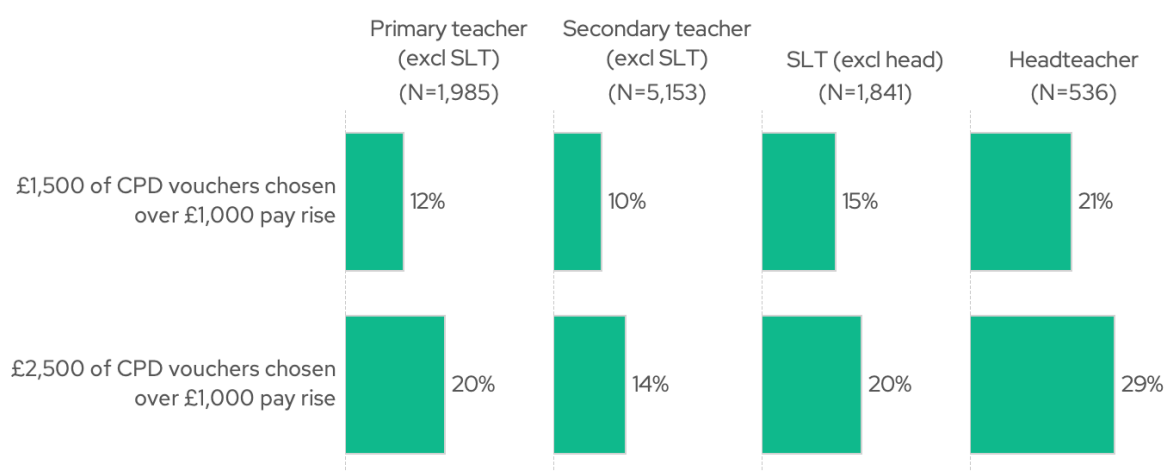
Answered by between 2,360 and 2527 teachers on 04/12/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)



4. Commentary on the Labour Party policy

In July 2023, Bridget Phillipson the Shadow Secretary of State of Education, and Keir Starmer the Labour leader launched their party's 'Opportunity Mission' which included a new 'teacher training entitlement'. Of fifteen different policies Teacher Tapp presented to teachers, this entitlement was the sixth most popular. Aside from mental health and Ofsted-focused policies this made the entitlement second only to Breakfast Clubs in popularity. Strikingly, more than one-in-ten teachers and two to three-out-of-ten Heads would choose CPD vouchers over a pay rise. Teachers are therefore clearly receptive to policies that increase their access to CPD.

For some teachers, CPD could trump a salary rise



Question asked: "A genie appears and offers you a pay rise or vouchers to spend on CPD of your choice. However, the CPD vouchers are worth more than the pay rise. Which do you choose?"

Answered by 4,727 to 4,788 teachers on 13/11/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

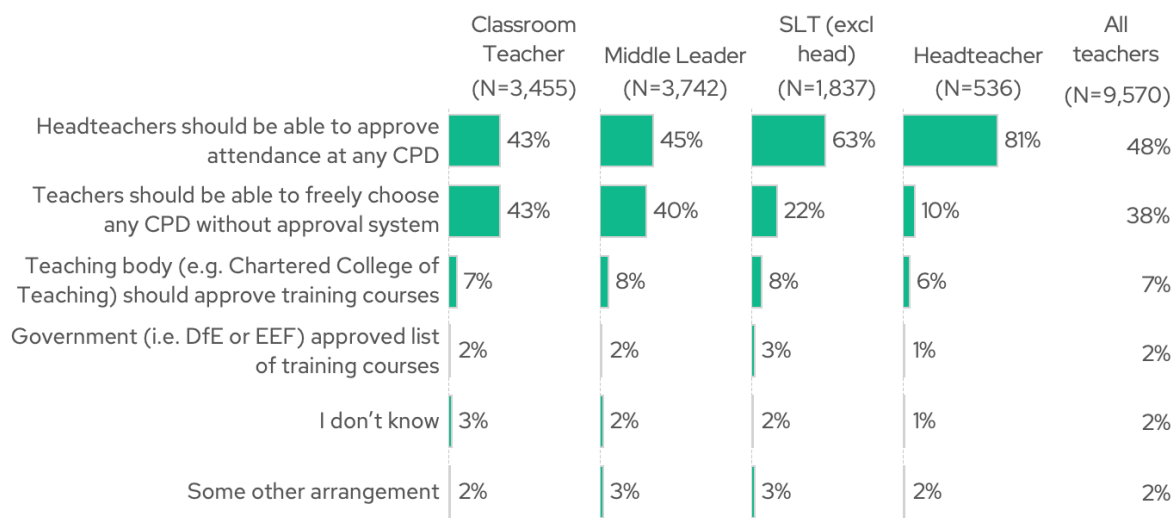
The findings in this report add to the evidence demonstrating teachers' appetite for CPD. It is clear that teachers' are professionally engaged and keen to improve, but unfortunately, their experiences of CPD are not always positive and INSET days have limited value in relation to professional development - even if they perform other functions for schools and their leadership teams.

Yet, despite teachers' somewhat negative experiences of professional development, they remain optimistic about its potential future impact. They are eager to spend more time with colleagues from other schools and are keen to make improvements to specific areas of their practice. Moreover, if teachers were more convinced that CPD would effectively address their areas of concern they might well be more enthusiastic about participating.

A key question for Labour in the coming months will therefore be what CPD should qualify towards teachers' entitlement. Teachers' response to this question is unambiguous. They want autonomy for them and their school, with more than nine-out-of-ten calling for teachers to be given free choice, or believing that Headteachers should be able to approve attendance at any CPD. Perhaps unsurprisingly, SLT, including Headteachers would prefer a

degree of contingency on the Head’s approval, with only one-in-ten Headteachers agreeing that teachers should be able to pick freely.

Teachers want autonomy over CPD



Question asked: "The Labour Party has proposed that teachers should be given a 'training entitlement' to a certain number of hours of CPD each year. If government funding covers the training fees and supply cover, who should decide that the course attended is appropriate CPD?"

Answered by 9,570 teachers on 15/11/2023 (results weighted to reflect national demographics)

The question for Labour is therefore how to ensure that CPD addresses weaknesses in practice and achieves its intended impact, whilst giving teachers the autonomy they crave. Perhaps one way forward is for the government to retain control over what CPD is funded, but for it to ensure the menu is broad enough to give teachers the freedom to choose from a range of funded options, alongside self- and school- funded alternatives.

References

- Leonardi, S., Lamb, H., Spong, S., Milner, C., & Merrett, D. (2022). *Meeting the challenge of providing high quality continuing professional development for teachers The Wellcome CPD Challenge: Evaluation Final Report*.
<https://cms.wellcome.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/final-cpd-challenge-evaluation-report.pdf>
- Menzies, L. (2023). *Improvement through Empowerment: Helping our teachers and schools be the best they can be*.
<https://www.ippr.org/files/2023-11/improvement-through-empowerment-nov23.pdf>
- Perry, E., Halliday, J., Higginson, J., & Patel, S. (2022). *Meeting the challenge of providing high-quality continuing professional development for teachers: The Wellcome CPD Challenge Pilot Delivery Report*.
- Sims, S., & Fletcher-Wood, H. (2021). Identifying the characteristics of effective teacher professional development: a critical review. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 32(1), 47–63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09243453.2020.1772841>

Appendix - About Teacher Tapp

The Teacher Tapp survey panel comprises teachers across the state and private sectors in England who download a mobile app, provide valid teacher credentials and allow it to notify them of new questions at 3:30pm. Teachers are recruited to panel via social and traditional media, promotion at CPD events, and via word of mouth in schools. Questions asked are multiple and single response questions, alongside some open-ended response questions.

Calculation of Teacher Tapp panel weights

We apply post-stratification weights to the Teacher Tapp panel responses to ensure they reflect the demographic characteristics of teachers in England, using the following procedure:

1. We drop the results of all users who've declared they're not a teacher and results for teachers who have not provided us with valid information for: teaching phase; school funding; seniority/job post; gender; age; and school type (requiring users to answer questions on at least 7 days). These are the characteristics that allow us to match the users against the population in the School Workforce Census and Independent Schools Census.
2. We calculate population shares in census data for 24 groupings of teachers who are allocated according to their phase, funding, gender, age and job post.
3. We calculate sample shares in the Teacher Tapp valid responses for each question, which yields sample weights as the ratio of population to sample share.

Survey questions asked

Question Text	Date	Number of responses
I have a clear understanding of my strengths and weaknesses in my own classroom instructional practice	16/07/2023	9368
How often do you reflect on your instructional practice?	31/07/2021	7696
Think about the last continuing professional development (CPD) session you attended before the summer holidays. Can you think of specific examples of how it has changed your teaching practice?	24/11/2023	9176

You are able to go to a two-day professional development course this year on one of the following topics. Which will you choose?	15/11/2023	9367
Your headteacher is paying for you to attend some professional development session on part of the curriculum you haven't taught before. The only downside is that it has to be completed outside school hours. If you have a choice, which type of course would you choose:	17/11/2023	9179
How many INSET days does your school have before pupils arrive at the start of the academic year?	27/08/2023	8920
Imagine your school will no longer hold INSET days and there will be no funds available for you to go on a professional development course. How would this impact you?	10/09/2023	9044
How useful was the last INSET day you attended?	13/05/2023	8978
I feel I have sufficient background knowledge to be able to deliver all lessons on my timetable	13/11/2023	9293
I have clear goals for how I would like to improve my classroom teaching	15/03/2023	8538
During the last 12 months, did you participate in any of the following professional development activities?	07/01/2023	8208
Your school agrees to pay for an online course to improve your professional knowledge in an area you want to study. It's a 10-week course. Which study approach suits you best?	04/09/2022	7582
Which of these, if any, were included as part of an INSET day at the start of term?	07/09/2022	7134
Learning and development activities I have completed in the past 12 months have helped to improve my performance	23/07/2023	9218
If you could wave a magic wand and drastically improve your proficiency in just one aspect of how to do your job, which ONE of the following areas would you choose?	13/11/2023	9317

What do you hope to get out of all the professional development you will do this academic year?	22/10/2023	9599
Which *THREE* of the following are the most important in deciding whether or not to attend a conference?	19/07/2023	7840
I believe that professional development sessions will help me become a better teacher	25/07/2022	7530
To what extent have you worked hard to become better at your job over the past 12 months?	08/11/2023	9415
How much of an influence have professional development sessions over the last 5 years had on your practice?	06/08/2021	5011
For you, is the balance of your professional development between whole-school, subject, key stage/year and role-specific activities right?	13/04/2023	8943
What professional development provision would help you to become a better teacher?	08/07/2023	2950
What was the main topic of professional development sessions during your most recent INSET day (or INSET part-day session)?	17/09/2023	5450
On a Friday, your headteacher invites everyone to the staffroom to socialise for an hour after work. Food and drink will be provided. How likely is it that you'd go?	09/04/2023	8688
State schools normally hold 5 statutory INSET days for training each year. Has your school switched any of these into twilight training sessions after school?	19/06/2023	8952
Please think of the most recent workshop, course or educational meeting you attended either ONLINE or IN-PERSON. Which of the following topics were covered during the event?	02/12/2023	8044
To what extent do you believe your subject knowledge expertise would improve following attendance at a two-day professional development course on subject knowledge (related to the curriculum you teach)	04/12/2023	2449

To what extent do you believe your safeguarding expertise would improve following attendance at a two-day professional development course on safeguarding?	04/12/2023	2527
To what extent do you believe your whole class teaching would improve following attendance at a two-day professional development course on whole class teaching strategies?	04/12/2023	2360
To what extent do you believe your classroom behaviour management would improve following attendance at a two-day professional development course on behaviour management?	04/12/2023	2440



www.teachertapp.co.uk
www.gatsby.org.uk

Teachertapp



GATSBY