



NFER Teacher Voice Omnibus February 2009 Survey

**Continuing Professional Development
Training and Development Agency for Schools**

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Contents

Introduction	1
Context	1
Analysis of findings	2
The sample	2
Revised professional standards for teachers	2
Continuing professional development	4
Use of CPD in career planning	7
Conclusions and implications for the client	8
Supporting information	10
How was the survey conducted?	10
What was the composition of the panel?	10
How representative of schools nationally were the schools corresponding to the teachers panel?	10
How accurately do the findings represent the national position?	14

Introduction

Three questions were submitted by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) to NFER's Teacher Voice Omnibus Survey in February 2009 about continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers and the revised professional standards for teachers. The questions covered the following topics:

- Whether teachers use the professional standards for career planning, identifying CPD needs and performance management
- Whether schools link CPD to identified individual training needs and the school improvement plan, and the extent to which the impact of CPD is assessed
- How important teachers feel that CPD is when planning their future careers

This report provides an analysis of the responses to the questions, along with supporting information about the survey. Results are presented by school phase (primary and secondary) and by teacher seniority level (classroom teachers or senior leaders). This report forms one part of the output from the Omnibus survey. The analysis is also presented in more detail in a set of interactive web-based tables provided separately (in Pulsar Web).

Context

The TDA aims to promote high-quality training and CPD for the school workforce, with the aim of enhancing outcomes for learners¹. Part of this is to ensure, as the TDA outlines in its strategic plan for 2008-13², that teachers have training opportunities which meet their needs and result in well-defined outcomes. In 2007, the TDA introduced the new revised professional standards for teachers³, which provide a clear framework of the skills, knowledge and attributes that teachers need to perform their role effectively at all stages of their teaching career. The standards form a back-drop to the new performance management arrangements which were implemented in schools in Autumn 2007⁴ to enable the more effective review of teachers' performance and development needs. The standards are intended to be used as a reference point during the performance management process. Schools are also expected to link performance management to their

¹ <http://www.tda.gov.uk/about/role.aspx>

² Training and Development Agency for Schools (2008). *Strategic Plan 2008-13*. London: TDA [online]. Available: http://www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/pdf/s/strategic_plan_08.pdf [25 November 2008].

³ Training and Development Agency for Schools (2007). *Professional Standards for Teachers. Why Sit Still in Your Career?* London: TDA [online]. Available:

http://www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/pdf/s/standards_a4.pdf [25 November 2008].

⁴ <http://www.tda.gov.uk/teachers/professionalstandards/using.aspx>

school improvement plans, integrating staff development with the development of the school as a whole⁵.

The revised professional standards should form an integral part of career planning and the identification of CPD needs. The standards also have implications for teachers' career progression and pay, as teachers will need to be able to demonstrate how they meet the standards in order to progress. On this basis, it is very important that teachers are both aware of the standards and are using them to plan their future careers and CPD needs. Research conducted by NFER on behalf of the TDA in October 2008 suggested that while some teachers were using the professional standards as a reference point for career planning, identifying CPD needs and performance management, use was not yet universal. Further, one in ten classroom teachers appeared to be unaware of the standards.

In this context it was useful, in this round of the Teacher Voice survey, to seek information about whether teachers use or are planning to use the professional standards for performance management, career planning and identifying CPD needs. Teachers were also asked about the extent to which CPD in their school is linked to individual teachers' needs, the school's improvement plan and whether it is evaluated to assess its impact. Further, teachers were asked how important CPD is to them when considering their future careers.

Analysis of findings

The sample

The survey was completed by a sample of over 1,600 teachers and the sample was weighted to ensure representativeness. The sample included teachers from a wide range of school governance types and subject areas. The sample also included a mixture of senior leaders and classroom teachers. Sample numbers were sufficient to allow for comparisons between the primary and secondary sectors. Detailed information about the sample is given in the supplementary section of this report.

Revised professional standards for teachers

The first question submitted to the Teacher Voice survey asked teachers to indicate whether or not they had used the new professional standards for career planning, identifying CPD needs and performance management. The findings suggest that teachers may view the standards as more of a means of supporting performance management than as a means of forward planning – i.e. identifying CPD needs or career planning. As can be seen from Tables 1, 2 and 3, nearly three quarters (71 per cent) of respondents had

⁵ http://www.tda.gov.uk/upload/resources/pdf/p/pm_modelpolicy_mar07.pdf

used the standards for performance management, while 58 per cent had used them for identifying CPD needs, and only around one third (32 per cent) had used them for career planning.

While some teachers indicated that they had not used the standards for identifying CPD needs or performance management, many stated that they intended to use them in the future (28 per cent and 18 per cent, respectively). Around one in ten (14 per cent and 11 per cent respectively), however, stated that they did not intend to use them for these purposes at all. In terms of career planning, among those who had not used the standards, there was a roughly equal split between those who intended to use them (36 per cent) and did not intend to use them for this in the future (31 per cent). It appears that the standards may continue to be less used by teachers for career planning than for identifying CPD needs or performance management. This general finding did not differ between teachers from the secondary and primary sectors.

Table 1. Have you used the revised professional standards that were introduced in June 2007 for teachers for performance management?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Yes	71%	72%	68%
No - but do plan to use	18%	17%	20%
No - and do not plan to use	11%	11%	12%
Local base (N)	1618	876	728

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Due to the primary, secondary and 'all' teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total

Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2009

Table 2. Have you used the revised professional standards that were introduced in June 2007 for teachers for identifying Continuing Professional Development / CPD needs?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Yes	58%	58%	58%
No - but do plan to use	28%	29%	27%
No - and do not plan to use	14%	14%	15%
Local base (N)	1603	864	725

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Due to the primary, secondary and 'all' teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total

Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2009

Table 3. Have you used the revised professional standards that were introduced in June 2007 for teachers for career planning?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Yes	32%	35%	28%
No - but do plan to use	36%	36%	38%
No - and do not plan to use	31%	30%	34%
Local base (N)	1590	852	724

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Due to the primary, secondary and 'all' teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total

Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2009

The use of the professional standards, however, appeared to differ according to level of seniority. There was a greater use of the standards for all purposes by senior leaders than by classroom teachers. For instance, 81 per cent of senior leaders had used the standards for performance management, compared to 68 per cent of classroom teachers. There was a greater use of the standards for career planning among senior leaders (55 per cent) than classroom teachers (27 per cent), but this still featured as the lowest use even among senior leaders. Proportionally fewer senior leaders than classroom teachers stated that they did not plan to use the standards in the future, but seven per cent of senior leaders and eight per cent of senior leaders stated, that they did not intend to use them for performance management or for identifying CPD needs. Seventeen per cent of senior leaders said they did not intend to use them for career planning.

Continuing professional development

The next question in the survey asked teachers about the extent to which CPD in their school is evaluated to assess its impact, and the extent to which it is linked to identified individual needs and to the school's improvement plan. The responses suggest that, in most schools, CPD is linked to the school's improvement planning and to individual needs. As Tables 5 and 6 show, around eight out of ten teachers said that this was the case in their school:

- 81 per cent of teachers said that CPD was linked either 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount' to identified individual needs
- 88 per cent of teachers said that CPD was linked to their school's improvement plan either 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount'.

While the findings were generally positive, however, this still means that nearly one in five teachers think that CPD is not clearly linked to their needs. The overall pattern of findings was similar in both primary and secondary schools.

There were some slight differences in the responses from senior leaders and classroom teachers; more senior leaders than classroom teachers stated that CPD is linked to both the school improvement plan (97 per cent of senior leaders versus 86 per cent of classroom teachers) and identified individual needs (96 per cent versus 77 per cent). This may be due to either (a) senior leaders having a better overview of their school’s CPD strategy, or (b) senior leaders providing the ‘desirable’ response to this question. Further, in terms of linking CPD to identified needs, while senior leaders may report what tends to be the case in their school, they will not necessarily know if this is happening for every individual member of staff. Classroom teachers’ responses may therefore reflect their own personal experience rather than what generally happens in their school. If this is the case, then around one quarter of classroom teachers may not be experiencing (or feel that are not experiencing) adequate identification of their training needs.

Table 4. To what extent, if at all, is Continuing Professional Development in your school linked to the school's improvement plan?

	All	Primary	Secondary
A great deal	49%	51%	47%
A fair amount	39%	39%	39%
Not very much	11%	10%	12%
Not at all	1%	1%	2%
Local base (N)	1625	879	733

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100
Due to the primary, secondary and ‘all’ teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total
Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2009

Table 5. To what extent, if at all, is Continuing Professional Development in your school linked to identified individual needs?

	All	Primary	Secondary
A great deal	38%	40%	35%
A fair amount	43%	42%	43%
Not very much	17%	16%	19%
Not at all	2%	2%	3%
Local base (N)	1626	881	732

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Due to the primary, secondary and 'all' teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total

Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2009

The survey produced evidence to suggest that some schools may need to do more to evaluate the impact of CPD. As Table 6 shows, while around two-thirds (64 per cent) of teachers indicated that their school assesses the impact of CPD either 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount', over one third (36 per cent) of teachers stated that their school did not do this very much or not at all. Again, the pattern of findings was similar in primary and secondary schools, although slightly more teachers in secondary schools (39 per cent) than primary schools (33 per cent) stated that the impact of CPD was not assessed very much or not at all in their school. Similar to the findings above, more senior leaders (78 per cent) stated that the impact of CPD is assessed 'a great deal' or 'fair amount', compared to classroom teachers (61 per cent). Again, this may reflect the fact that senior leaders may have a better overview of the procedures of evaluation in their school than classroom teachers.

Table 6. To what extent, if at all, is Continuing Professional Development in your school evaluated to assess its impact?

	All	Primary	Secondary
A great deal	22%	23%	22%
A fair amount	42%	44%	39%
Not very much	30%	27%	34%
Not at all	6%	6%	5%
Local base (N)	1616	874	728

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Due to the primary, secondary and 'all' teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total

Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2009

Use of CPD in career planning

The final question in the survey sought to gauge the extent to which teachers felt that CPD was important to them when they considered their futures. The findings suggest that most teachers place a high value on CPD when considering their future careers. As Tables 7 and 8 show, around three quarters stated that CPD was either ‘very important’ or ‘fairly important’ when considering their future in their current school (72 per cent) and in the teaching profession (75 per cent). Teachers in primary and secondary schools appeared to place equal value on CPD, but slightly more secondary school teachers (16 per cent) stated that it was not so important (e.g. ‘fairly’ or ‘very’ unimportant) when considering their future in their current school or in the teaching profession, compared to primary school teachers (nine per cent).

Table 7. How important is CPD to you when considering your future at your current school?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Very important	34%	37%	31%
Fairly important	38%	40%	35%
Neither important nor unimportant	16%	14%	18%
Fairly unimportant	8%	6%	10%
Very unimportant	5%	3%	6%
Local base (N)	1633	885	735

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Due to the primary, secondary and ‘all’ teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total

Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2009

Table 8. How important is CPD to you when considering your future in the teaching profession?

	All	Primary	Secondary
Very important	41%	41%	40%
Fairly important	34%	38%	30%
Neither important nor unimportant	13%	12%	14%
Fairly unimportant	7%	5%	9%
Very unimportant	5%	4%	7%
Local base (N)	1630	883	733

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Due to the primary, secondary and ‘all’ teacher categories being weighted separately, the number of primary and secondary respondents may not sum to the number of teachers in total

Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2009

Slightly more senior leaders tended to view CPD as more important to their future careers than classroom teachers:

- 85 per cent of senior leaders stated that CPD was either ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ important to them when they considered their future in their current school, compared with 69 per cent of classroom teachers
- 85 per cent of senior leaders stated that CPD was either ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ important to them when they considered their future in the teaching profession compared to 73 per cent of classroom teachers

Slightly less emphasis was placed on the importance of CPD by classroom teachers in the secondary than in the primary sector: more primary classroom teachers said that CPD was either ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ important to them when considering their future in their school (77 per cent versus 66 per cent of secondary classroom teachers) or the teaching profession (79 per cent versus 70 per cent of secondary classroom teachers). Senior leaders in both sectors placed roughly the same level of personal importance on CPD.

Conclusions and implications for the client

The findings suggest that the professional standards are being used by some teachers, but use is not yet universal. The findings also suggest that CPD is linked, in some cases, to the school improvement plan and to individual needs, but again, this is not universal. Overall, there is still potential for further progress in all of these areas.

The findings indicate that the professional standards tended to be used mainly for performance management purposes, and less so for identifying CPD needs or career planning. The high use for performance management is encouraging in the light of the introduction of the performance management arrangements in 2007. However, as the standards are intended to form a clear framework for the skills and competencies needed for career progression, the low use for career planning is seemingly a contradiction to the relatively high level of value that most teachers placed on CPD when considering their future careers. Teachers may need to be made more aware of the benefit of consulting the standards when thinking about how they would like to develop professionally in the future and how the standards may help them clearly identify the steps that they may need to take.

While many teachers stated that they planned to use the standards for performance management or identifying CPD needs in the future, one in ten stated that they did intend to use them. Of particular concern may be the finding that around one in ten senior leaders also stated that they did not intend to use them for these purposes. It is not possible to say from this research why this may be the case, but some senior leaders may

need to be made more aware of the importance of linking development activities to the standards.

Research suggests that a whole school approach to CPD in which individuals' development is linked to the school development plan, can contribute to better quality teaching and learning⁶. It is encouraging that the majority of teachers in the Teacher Voice survey stated that CPD in their school is linked to their school improvement plan and identified individual needs. However, around one fifth of classroom teachers stated that CPD was 'not very much' linked or 'not at all' linked to individual needs in their school. As discussed above, there was a slight discrepancy between the classroom teachers' and senior leaders' responses regarding this, which suggests that even if CPD is meant to be linked to identified individual teachers needs within schools, experiences of whether this actually happens might vary from teacher to teacher. This suggests that line managers or senior leaders may need to be given further training on the importance of systematically identifying the CPD needs of their staff. It also suggests that in some schools, improvement could be made to how they plan and manage CPD. Many schools may also need to do more to assess the impact of their CPD provision. The senior leader responses suggest that in around one in five schools the impact of CPD is not often be evaluated.

The findings as a whole suggest some areas for improvement, including promoting wider use of the professional standards as a reference point for CPD, particularly the role that the standards can play in future career planning. Some schools may need to improve their systems for identifying individual training needs and linking them to CPD planning. Further, some schools may also need to make greater efforts to evaluate the impact of CPD in their school. However, it is encouraging that the majority of teachers view CPD to be either 'very or fairly important to their future careers. This suggests that, although some improvements may need to be made in the use of the standards and management of CPD in some schools, most teachers value CPD opportunities and experiences.

⁶ Office for Standards in Education (2006). *The Logical Chain: Continuing Professional Development in Effective Schools*. [online]. Available: [http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Education/Leadership/Management/The-logical-chain-continuing-professional-development-in-effective-schools/\(language/eng-GB](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Education/Leadership/Management/The-logical-chain-continuing-professional-development-in-effective-schools/(language/eng-GB) [25 November 2008].

Supporting information

How was the survey conducted?

This is data from the February 2009 survey. The survey was completed in February 2009 by a panel of 1,661 practising teachers from 1027 (weighted) schools in the maintained sector in England. The survey was conducted online and teachers were asked to complete the questionnaire between 20th February and 4th March 2009. At the end of the survey period all ‘open’ questions (those without a pre-identified set of responses) were coded by a team of experienced coders within the Foundation.

What was the composition of the panel?

The panel included teachers from the full range of roles in primary and secondary schools, from headteachers to newly qualified class teachers. Fifty-four per cent (891) of the respondents were teaching in primary schools and 46 per cent (770) were teaching in secondary schools⁷.

How representative of schools nationally were the schools corresponding to the teachers panel?

The achieved sample of teachers represented a good spread of school types and regional areas. There was, however, an under-representation of schools in the highest quintile in terms of eligibility for free school meals in both the sample of primary schools and the sample of secondary schools. The sample of secondary schools also had an over-representation of schools with low eligibility for free school meals. To address this, weights were calculated using free schools meals factors to create a more balanced sample. Due to the differences between the populations of primary schools and secondary schools, different weights were created for primary schools, secondary schools and then for the whole sample overall. The weightings have been applied to all of the analyses referred to in this commentary and contained within the tables supplied in electronic format (via Pulsar Web)⁸.

Tables S.1, S.2 and S.3 show the representation of the weighted achieved sample against the population. Table S.4 shows the representation of the weighted teacher sample by role in school.

⁷ *These figures are before weighting was applied*

⁸ *The sample was not weighted for missing free school meal data*

Table S.1 Representation of (weighted) primary schools compared to primary schools nationally

		National Population	NFER Sample
		%	%
Achievement Band (Overall performance)	Lowest band	16	17
	2nd lowest band	17	18
	Middle band	18	21
	2nd highest band	20	21
	Highest band	21	24
	Missing	8	<1
% eligible FSM (5 pt scale)	Lowest 20%	21	21
	2nd lowest 20%	21	21
	Middle 20%	20	20
	2nd highest 20%	19	20
	Highest 20%	18	18
	Missing	1	0
Primary school type	Infant/First	15	8
	Primary/Combined	76	73
	Junior	8	17
	Middle/other type	<1	1
Region	North	31	24
	Midlands	32	28
	South	37	48
Local Authority type	London Borough	11	14
	Metropolitan Authorities	21	17
	English Unitary Authorities	15	19
	Counties	53	50
Number of schools		17041	691

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Some information is not available for all schools and some schools included more than one respondent

Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2009

Table S.2 Representation of (weighted) secondary schools compared to secondary schools nationally

		National Population	NFER Sample
		%	%
Achievement Band (Overall performance)	Lowest band	19	14
	2nd lowest band	19	23
	Middle band	19	24
	2nd highest band	19	23
	Highest band	17	16
	Missing	8	<1
% eligible FSM (5 pt scale)	Lowest 20%	13	13
	2nd lowest 20%	25	25
	Middle 20%	25	26
	2nd highest 20%	21	21
	Highest 20%	14	15
	Missing	2	0
Secondary school type	Middle	7	<1
	Comprehensive to 16	36	27
	Comprehensive to 18	45	65
	Other Secondary schools	8	3
	Grammar	5	4
Region	North	29	26
	Midlands	34	30
	South	37	44
Local Authority type	London Borough	13	13
	Metropolitan Authorities	21	22
	English Unitary Authorities	16	20
	Counties	50	45
Number of schools		3313	338

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Some information is not available for all schools and some schools included more than one respondent

Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2009

Table S.3 Representation of all schools (weighted) compared to all schools nationally

		National Population %	NFER Sample %
Achievement Band	Lowest band	17	16
	2nd lowest band	18	19
	Middle band	18	22
	2nd highest band	20	21
	Highest band	20	22
	Missing	7	<1
% eligible FSM (5 pt scale)	Lowest 20%	20	20
	2nd lowest 20%	21	22
	Middle 20%	21	21
	2nd highest 20%	20	20
	Highest 20%	17	18
	Missing	1	0
Region	North	30	24
	Midlands	32	29
	South	37	47
Local Authority type	London Borough	11	13
	Metropolitan Authorities	21	19
	English Unitary Authorities	15	19
	Counties	53	49
Number of schools		20354	1027

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Some information is not available for all schools and some schools included more than one respondent

Source: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2009

Table S.4 Comparison of the achieved (weighted) sample with the national population by grade of teacher

Role	Primary schools		Secondary schools	
	population	weighted sample	population	weighted sample
	%	%	%	%
Headteachers	10	8	2	1
Deputy Headteachers	7	9	3	4
Assistant Headteachers	4	6	6	11
Class teachers and others	79	77	89	84

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Sources: NFER Omnibus Survey February 2009, DCSF 618g survey January 2008 (Revised)

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000813/index.shtml> (March 2009)

How accurately do the findings represent the national position?

Precision is a measure of the extent to which the results of different samples agree with each other. If we drew a different sample of teachers would we get the same results? The more data that is available the more precise the findings. For all schools and a 50 per cent response, the precision of that response is between 46.9 per cent and 53.1 per cent. For secondary schools the same precision is + and – 5.3 percentage points and for primary schools it is + and – 3.7 percentage points.

With the weightings applied to the data, we are confident that the omnibus sample is broadly representative of teachers nationally and provides a robust analysis of teachers' views.