



# CUREE



# Case Study



## Understanding how schools engage with research and evidence

Case Study Newsletter  
March 2019

West Midlands CPD  
Partnership

Website: [www.curee.co.uk](http://www.curee.co.uk)

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### Starting Point

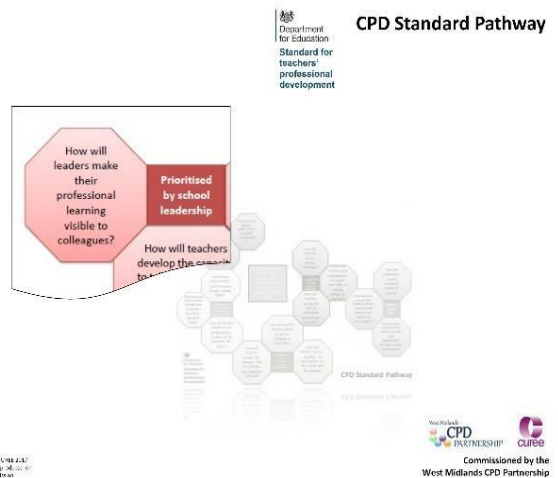
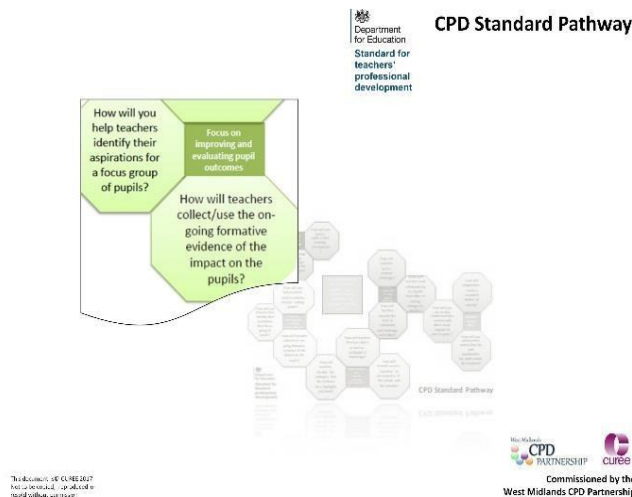
CUREE and the West Midlands CPD Partnership are champions of the key role that continuing professional development and learning (CPDL) plays in school improvement. The DFE Teacher Standard for Professional Development is an important step in highlighting the importance of CPDL and setting expectations for the profession.

But of course, simply making the Standard available is not enough to secure changes in practice. So CUREE have been delighted to collaborate with the West Midlands CPD Partnership to develop a planning guide tool to help leaders in school make the most of the Standard. The 'CPD Pathway' is a practical school-friendly guide that helps schools plan professional development that will make the most difference to teacher and student learning. It recognises that leaders have many demands on their time and so value a resource that helps them to quickly access and make use of the key ideas in the Standard and builds on the [research about the role of tools](#) in supporting changes in practice.

### The CPD tool

The planning guide is available online as a downloadable pdf. It can either be used online or as a paper-based version. It has several layers to enable school leaders to quickly gain an overview of effective CPDL and explore aspects in more detail, such as:

- An overview layer is a one-page pathway of key questions that prompt leaders to consider how they can plan how CPDL is going to have the most impact on teachers and their students.
- The second layer goes into more detail and includes examples of how schools can plan aspects of their CPDL alongside information about the underpinning rationale. There are also links to relevant resources, websites and case studies.



## Developing and sharing the tool

Ongoing consultation was at the heart of the development process. CUREE developed an initial draft that was refined to take account of several rounds of feedback from the West Midlands CPD Partnership. Focus groups with primary and secondary leaders along with an on-line questionnaire were used to gain valuable feedback from practitioners. Joint seminars with the International Professional Development Association (IPDA) and a workshop at a local Women Leading in Education conference have been used to 'launch' the Pathway and consult about

*"Easy to navigate and useful links"*

*"A structured and usable approach to CPD which can be used for schools' development targets."*

its potential. Feedback so far highlights that colleagues value having a 'one-stop shop' for planning the CPD support they offer to help their colleagues sustain what they gain from it, their CPDL.

## The impact so far

It is early days in the development of the Pathway, but colleagues who have used it noted that it had prompted them to reflect on professional development in their school. So, for some colleagues the Pathway has helped them to reconsider:

- Their whole approach to CPD and CPDL.
- How to plan how they will refine an aspect of their existing provision.

*"(We will) redesign how we approach self-assessment and CPD planning and provision."*

Some leaders highlighted that the tool had great potential for supporting a coherent approach to professional development within and across schools. For example, it could be used by heads of departments within a school or by subject leads across a network when planning professional development for their subject area.

## Some challenges

Whilst the initial development has been successful, key challenges are spreading the word about the Pathway's existence and helping leaders in a range of roles to recognise that CPDL is part of their remit. The Partnership is considering whether further events could help more colleagues develop an awareness of the tool. In these times, when budgets and time are pressed, some leaders are finding it tricky to prioritise CPD, and so feel that the tool doesn't have relevance for their context. A key challenge is communicating that the model of professional development included in the Pathway is not an additional luxury but a way of effectively helping teachers to improve outcomes for their pupils. For example, one maths lead noted that she would be using the Pathway to help her plan how she would use an inset day slot and staff meeting time to drive forwards her maths development priorities to improve pupil learning in her subject.

## Next steps

The [government response to the consultation on career progression](#) identified that there is much to be done to strengthen use of the standard for Teacher Professional Development. CUREE and the West Midlands CPD Partnership see the Pathway as a valuable tool in helping "to better embed the standards within practice" and so are keen to encourage other schools to try the tool and to hear from those that have used it. The West Midlands CPD Partnership have funded the Pathway for local schools and there is a nominal charge for schools in other regions. The tool can be accessed [here](#). If you would like to be involved in further piloting through giving brief feedback on your use of the tool, including an introduction to the Pathway at an event that you are running or helping to develop a case study, please contact [Rebecca.Raybould@curee.co.uk](mailto:Rebecca.Raybould@curee.co.uk)

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