



Effective Continuing Professional Development and Learning (CPDL)

A review of reviews

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Review approach

- ‘Umbrella’ review:
 - Provides a rapid consolidated view of the field
 - May miss most recent evidence
 - Can identify evidence gaps
- Balance between speed and being systematic
- Search approach
 - Connoisseurial review plus standard search for rigorous CDP/TPD/teacher learning studies in English since 2000
- 947 ‘hits’ identified, 46 screened. Included and classified:
 - 1 consistent and rigorous – Timperley (2007)
 - 3 robust, but specific
 - 4 persuasive
 - 1 plausible

Classification of claims

1 Consistent and rigorous

Consistently positive impact on student outcomes from studies with research designs appropriate for causal inference¹ across studies.

2 Robust, but specific

Examples of positive impact on student outcomes from research designs appropriate for causal inference.

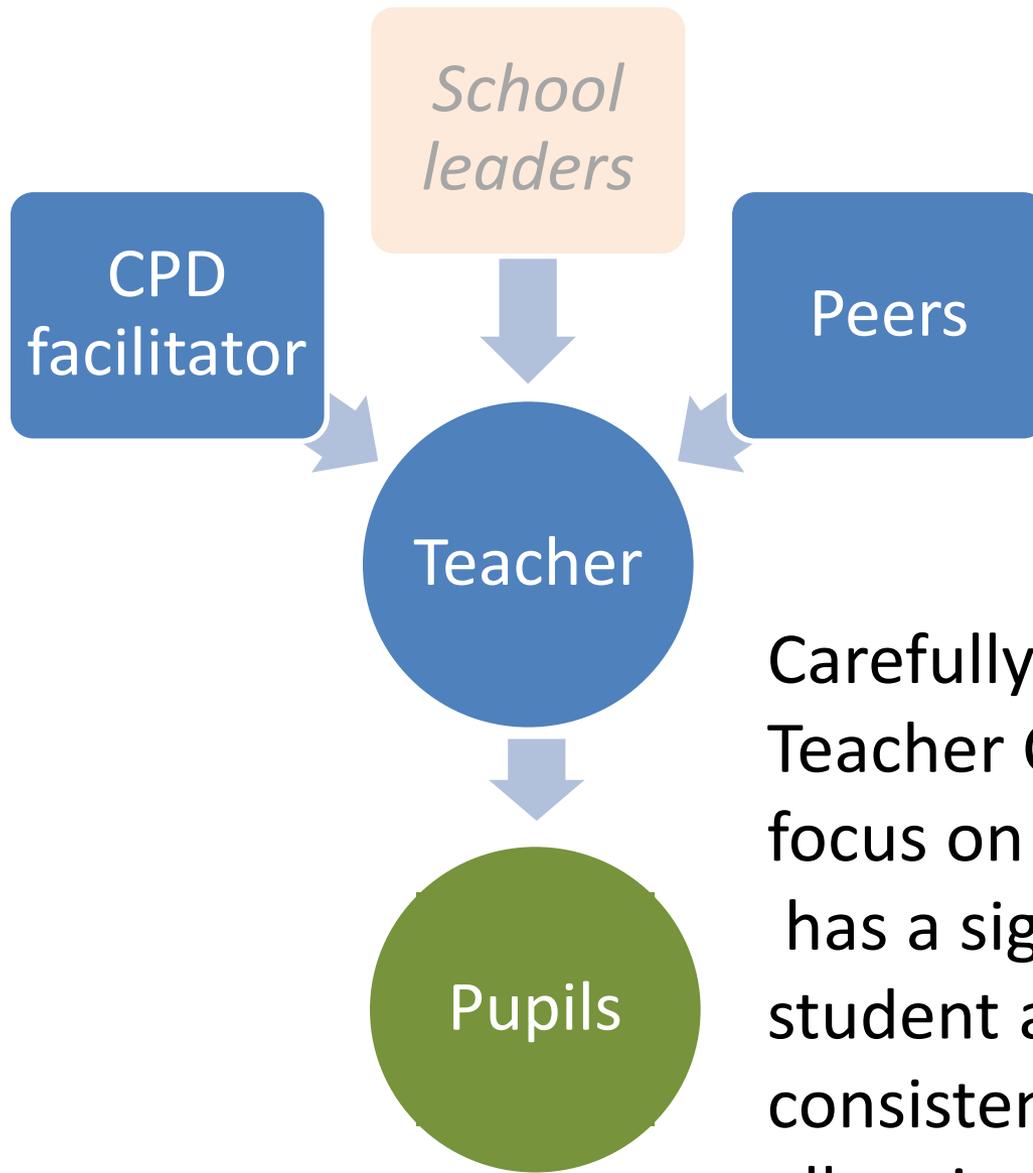
3 Persuasive

Supported by evidence of impact on student outcomes from research designs without causal evidence (e.g. correlational studies).

4 Plausible

Consistent with the available evidence, but not directly supported with data.

¹ Randomised trial, well matched experiment, regression discontinuity, etc



Carefully designed/aligned Teacher CPDL with a strong focus on pupil outcomes has a significant impact on student achievement - consistent finding across all reviews

Findings

Time

1. Substantive development has to be sustained over time- 2 terms plus (but one-offs can work for very specific practices)
2. Multiple, iterative activities and opportunities following initial instruction to refine/adapt practice in multiple contexts in light of pupils' responses
3. Time alone isn't enough - Banarama principle!

Participants

4 Need:

- individual starting points to be recognised and develop a collective sense of purpose
- to focus on aspirations for pupils and how they learn/ progress in response to teachers' learning
- to explore existing theories, beliefs and practices, but often challenge these

5 Relevance matters - but that and volunteers vs conscripts matter less than environment / time /peer learning/ focus on pupils

Findings

CPDL Approaches

- 6 Formative assessment is key – for modelling approaches, refining support, contextualising for subjects/ pupil groups and evaluating impact
- 7 Need for external input, to challenge orthodoxies *supportively* - sometimes complemented by internal specialists.
- 8 Facilitators as subject, evaluation *and* process experts
- 9 Peer support - learning together with peers; reciprocal vulnerability speeds up risk taking

- 11 Setting out deliberately to develop meta-cognitive control eg by:
 - Analysing and evaluating CPD content and evidence re pupils' responses and interpreting them; and
 - Iterative opportunities to encounter, understand, respond to and reflect on new approaches as part of the day job
- 12 School leaders must create the conditions for this
 - resources, modelling and challenge
- 13 No single element or process works – crucial to combine them, align them with goals – effectively!

What doesn't work?

- Generic pedagogic CPD – contextualisation for subjects and pupils is crucial
- Telling teachers what to do or providing materials without chance to develop skills and explore impacts
- Failing to provide a strong focus on aspirations for pupils or assessing links between teacher and pupil learning
- Providing time and or frequent support without structured opportunities to engage with, understand and reflect on the implications of new approaches/ practices

Practice implications?

- Be clear about what you want to achieve and the implications for designing and resourcing CPDL – time is the key
- Set explicit and high expectations of pupil learning oriented CPDL
- Expect facilitators to be able to define their practical theory - what will be different and why – and explore that with teachers
- Expect facilitators to model and use AFL for teachers throughout
- Define and implement a structured, formative, collaborative process with a regular rhythm which engages teachers and involves multiple opportunities to apply and test learning in practice and to gather evidence and reflect on impact
- Link this learning to wider school processes and journey – eg performance management
- If it's not challenging it's probably not learning!

Policy implications?

- Caveat: nature of evidence in relation to school-led system
- How can schools/alliances be incentivised to provide the resources and commitment required?
- How should appropriate external expertise be brought in?
- How to develop facilitators of effective CPDL at scale?
- How to ensure a focus on generic and subject specific knowledge and pedagogy?
- Peer support and learning necessary but not sufficient. Does focus on Joint Practice Development risk introverted models that recycle existing practice?
- Links to work on evidence-informed practice and knowledge mobilisation?

Further research

- Overlaps and some potentially significant differences between subjects
- Patterns were valid either to all subjects or for science and maths or science and literacy. There was no overlap between mathematics and literacy
- Facilitator contributions for Maths and Science were distinctive
- *We need to understand this better by analysing the individual studies behind key findings; and*
- *We need to explore specifically what is known about school based and school to school supported CPD*