



Teacher Development: The CPD Landscape in 2025

About us and our work

When Teachers Thrive, Children Succeed.

The Teacher Development Trust (TDT), founded by teachers and school leaders in 2012, is a national charity dedicated to helping leaders to build stronger schools through effective professional development.

Through evidence-based approaches and key principles drawn from international research, TDT works at both practice and policy levels to empower educational leaders - providing tools, training, and networking opportunities that enable them to implement and sustain effective professional development cultures in their settings.

By developing and delivering programmes, influencing policy, and conducting research, TDT ensures that teachers receive the highest quality professional development, helping to create environments where both educators and children can experience the most effective learning.

Our values



We are SMART

All of our work is deeply rooted in evidence. We want to know what works and seek out the brightest and the best minds to help shape our programmes, research and advocacy.



We have HEART

Teaching and learning is about people and connection. Even the strongest evidence for improvement will be ineffective if not implemented by expert, empowered teachers at the front of the classroom.



We are HUMBLE

We are always curious, we are always learning. We are led by the evidence, but we also have the humility to keep testing our understanding and adapt.

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Finally, our deepest thanks go to the **teachers and school leaders** who participated in the survey. Their insights have ensured that this report remains both grounded and practical, supporting the ongoing improvement of professional learning in schools.

Foreword

The continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers and school leaders is a national priority. It is built into the fabric of our education system through dedicated time for in-service training (INSET), statutory induction, and the funding and promotion of initiatives and programmes by the government and other educational organisations.

This is no accident - investing in the training and development of those working with children is the surest way we know of strengthening classroom practice and ultimately improving educational outcomes. And yet, teachers and school leaders face a near impossible task to make sense of the confusing mass of competing structures, organisations, evidence, and programmes in order to deliver training to their colleagues that improves the outcomes of the pupils in their community.

This reflects the piecemeal way in which CPD in schools has developed, almost always as an add-on to other policy work. Even the recently launched and much-lauded 'Golden Thread' of CPD - from ITT, through the ECF, and onto NPQs - was justified as part of the wider recruitment and retention strategy published by the DfE in 2019.

Nonetheless, as our report shows, there is much to be positive about. Teachers and school leaders try to find the time and resources to engage in their own development, despite the limited funding and support available to them. The intent behind CPD programmes is generally good, and we can see a clear belief that professional development is an essential part of being a teacher.

But we have also uncovered concerning findings. There is a significant gap in perception between teachers and school leaders, which can lead to a disconnect between what people are trying to achieve and what actually happens in the classroom. Barriers around time and funding remain challenging. Most concerning is the stark gap between the intent behind professional development and actual improvements in pupil outcomes.

This becomes all the more problematic when we consider the amount of money being spent on CPD. We estimate that around £1 billion is spent annually on the professional development of teachers - in terms of INSET costs, funding for the 'Golden Thread', funding for training hubs and networks, and direct investment by schools. The current government has a manifesto commitment to fund a new teacher development entitlement. Our evidence suggests that a de facto entitlement is already in place, given the amount of money being spent; however, the lack of meaningful coordination and strategy means it is far less effective than it needs to be. Even if more money were spent, we cannot be confident it will be effective against this backdrop.

It is time that the continuing professional development of teachers and school leaders is prioritised in its own right, supported by a clear and coherent national approach that is collaborative, iterative, and long-term. Not taking action means accepting that many hundreds of millions of pounds are being wasted every year, something that is simply insupportable in times of such financial constraint. The good news is that - unlike many of the pressing issues

in the education system - this need not entail significant additional spend, but it does need dedicated thought and leadership.

This has to be a collective effort - from schools, education organisations, and the government - if it is to be successful. We are committed to playing our part, starting with this report as an attempt to create and track a shared understanding of the current state of CPD in England which is essential for future policy development. Our recent Didagogy report also helps make the case for a clear focus on the importance of the teaching of teachers.

As this report shows, the sector already has the intent and the investment needed to build stronger schools through effective professional development, but without urgent action we risk squandering these foundations. To do so would be an insupportable waste of public funding, an affront to committed teachers and school leaders, and an unjustifiable failure to improve outcomes for children. We have a collective duty to work together to ensure that those leading schools, teaching in our classrooms, and training teachers are supported by an effective system of professional growth.

The Teacher Development Trust stands ready to work with anybody committed to this cause.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'G. R. Conyard'. The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Gareth Conyard
Chief Executive Officer



Key Findings

A summary of the findings in the main report.

Section 1: Access to CPD

Participation and Access



Over

1/2

of respondents reported spending 3 or more days on formal CPD last year (**53%**), while nearly one in five (**18%**) spent less than a single day or no time at all.

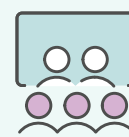


Senior leaders

participated in CPD more frequently than classroom teachers. (**93% vs. 86%**).



Of those respondents who took part in formal CPD, **seven in ten** (70%) report doing so **internally** within their school.



Primary respondents are more likely to have engaged in structured CPD courses or conferences compared to secondary respondents.

Preferred and Least Used Format

Most Common



Face-to-face courses or workshops (**66%**), online webinars or live virtual sessions (**53%**) and self-paced modules (**43%**).

Least Used



Coaching (**22%**), mentoring (**29%**) and peer observation (**30%**).

Confidence and Decision-Making



One in ten (11%) of teachers and leaders lack confidence in selecting their own CPD.



Greater CPD participation is linked to higher confidence in choosing the right development opportunities in the future.



Time (**62%**) is the most important factor considered when choosing CPD, followed by cost (**55%**) and flexibility/accessibility (**48%**).



The **most common** place that respondents begin searching for CPD opportunities is search engines - with **a quarter** (24%) citing this. This was followed by colleagues and subject associations (**10%**). **Least cited** were AI tools (**1%**), Chartered College of Teaching (**3%**) and other professional networks (**4%**).

Section 2: Impact of CPD

Overall Impact



Senior leaders and primary respondents are more likely than teachers and secondary staff to report CPD improved their ability to perform their role. (**67% vs. 54%**).

Those who participated in the following types of CPD were more likely to say that the CPD they'd done overall had improved their ability to perform their role:



Where respondents felt that CPD had not improved their ability to do their role, open-ended responses indicated that some felt it was **lacking relevance, giving little professional agency, lacking follow-up, and increasing workload pressures**.

Formal

- ▶ Coaching (**74%**)
- ▶ Conferences (**72%**)
- ▶ Peer Observation (**70%**)



Where respondents felt it had the greatest impact, open-ended responses indicated that some felt it was **relevant, tailored to the context, collaborative, and reflective**.

Informal

- ▶ Education-related podcasts (**76%**)
- ▶ Blogs (**74%**)
- ▶ Reading professional publications or research (**69%**)

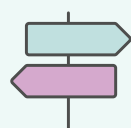
Perceptions of CPD



Teachers and leaders generally agree CPD supports whole-school improvement; however, senior leaders are consistently more positive than teachers about its impact on pedagogical skills (**71% vs. 57%**), classroom management (**56% vs. 45%**) and pupil learning outcomes (**71% vs. 62%**).



Around half (48%) of respondents feel that CPD aligns with school improvement plans; **just over 1 in 10** (12%) feel that it addresses the diverse needs of staff, and **around a quarter** (24%) say it adequately considers the needs of students.



Less than half (45%) of all participants feel that undertaking CPD is actively encouraged or promoted, and even fewer say that the rationale and intended impact of CPD is clearly communicated (**29%**) and that it is directly applicable to their role (**26%**).



Senior leaders are more likely than teachers to report that key features of effective CPD are in place, with the largest disparities in identifying teachers' needs (**33% vs. 16%**), giving adequate CPD time within working hours (**31% vs. 16%**), being applicable to role (**34% vs. 20%**), and enabling staff to express their needs (**50% vs. 35%**).

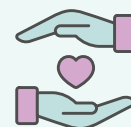
CPD and Retention



CPD support has greater influence on those already intending to stay, but it can still play a role in shaping the decisions of those considering leaving.



Respondents who intend to remain cite personalised CPD, protected time, collaborative learning, and research engagement as motivators.



Seven in ten respondents state that CPD addressing workload and wellbeing would increase their likelihood of staying.

Section 3: Enablers and Barriers

Mechanism for CPD



Around half (48%) of all respondents stated that their school or trust provides internally embedded CPD programmes / schedules.

Six in ten (62%) of all secondary school respondents report having an internally embedded CPD programmes/schedules compared to **four in ten** (40%) of all primary respondents.



Of the CPD support mechanisms that could be in place in schools/ trusts, dedicated funding was least cited (**23%**).



Compared to teachers, senior leaders are more likely to report that their school or trust has any mechanisms in place to support CPD.



Half (**50%**) of all primary respondents believe funding for CPD is not available – and cannot be made available.

Structures and Approaches for CPD



Collaborative CPD opportunities with colleagues is the most common structure schools use to support CPD (**35%**).



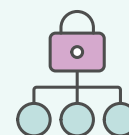
Respondents felt that structures concerned with time for reflection and workload and wellbeing were least likely to be in place to support CPD (**13%**).



Senior leaders are more likely than teachers to say any structures to support CPD exist in their current school (**78% vs 63%**).



Nearly **one in four** (23%) respondents said there were no CPD structures in place within their school.

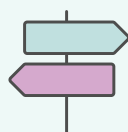


More primary than secondary respondents reported no CPD structures in place in their school (**27% vs 17%**).

CPD Requirements



Time is the most frequently cited key requirement needed to effectively engage in CPD, selected by two-thirds of respondents (**67%**), followed by CPD opportunities that align with their own needs (**58%**).



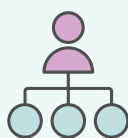
Internally embedded CPD programme/schedules (**19%**) and regular signposting (**18%**) are the least cited key requirements for effectively engaging in CPD.



Primary respondents are more likely than secondary respondents to report needing funding (**54% vs 42%**) and cover to engage in CPD (**53% vs 41%**).

Section 4: Leadership of CPD

CPD Leadership Role



More than **six in ten** (62%) respondents say CPD responsibility lies with a member of SLT, though approaches vary, with **one in ten** (9%) reporting no clear leader or person(s) with responsibility for CPD in their setting.



Senior leaders are more likely than teachers to say CPD leadership sits with a specific team or role (**82% vs 68%**).

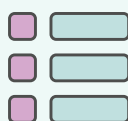


Secondary respondents are more likely to report the leadership of CPD being held by a dedicated role or team (**84% vs 67%** primary), while more primary respondents reported that there was no clear leader that they are aware of (**12% vs 5%** secondary).

Needs Analysis



Respondents most commonly reported that their CPD needs were identified through school development plan priorities (**52%**).



Senior leaders are more likely than teachers to cite all listed methods to determine professional development needs.



Six in ten (60%) of primary respondents say CPD needs are developed using school development plans, compared with **46%** of secondary respondents.

CPD Evaluation



Over half (54%) of the respondents reported that CPD is evaluated using teacher feedback, while only **a quarter** (25%) reported that it is evaluated through pupil feedback.



Less than **one in five** (18%) respondents say CPD is not evaluated in their setting. Senior leaders are more likely than teachers to identify one or more CPD evaluation method(s) being used (**77% vs 69%**).



A higher proportion of primary respondents say CPD is not evaluated in their setting compared to those in secondary schools (**21% vs 14%**).



Senior leaders are more likely than teachers to identify one or more CPD evaluation method(s) being used (**77% vs 69%**).

Future CPD Needs



The top three CPD areas that respondents most prioritise for development are SEND (**39%**), technology integration (**34%**), and leadership (**29%**).



Areas identified as lowest priority are child development (**10%**), pedagogical skills (**15%**), and assessment (**16%**).



Primary respondents are more likely than secondary respondents to feel they need further development in SEND (**45% vs 31%**).



Respondents early in their careers (with up to five years teaching experience) are generally more likely than those with a longer tenure to seek development across almost all areas except technology integration, where this group is the least likely to feel this is required.



One in ten respondents (**11%**) with over 16 years' experience report no further CPD development needs at all.



The Full Report

Our research in detail

Introduction

Why CPD Matters

In a profession with a central tenet that learning develops knowledge, skills and self-efficacy, leading to positive outcomes in pupils, it is no surprise that this holds true for teachers as well. This is why Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is essential. Effective CPD enhances teaching quality, builds expertise and efficacy, and supports teacher satisfaction and retention. Embedded in a culture of trust and high expectations, high-quality CPD sustains professional joy and curiosity, ensuring that teachers continue to grow throughout their careers rather than plateau.

High-quality CPD can transform classroom practice by strengthening subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, and confidence, therefore creating more effective learning experiences for pupils (Fletcher-Wood & Zuccollo, 2020; Coe, Kime & Singleton, 2022). Similarly, when CPD is structured, sustained, collaborative, and well-led, it is just as powerful in positively impacting teachers' internal beliefs, reinforcing professional identity and belief in their ability to impact pupil learning (Kraft & Papay, 2017; Fletcher-Wood & Zuccollo, 2020).

A Brief History and Current Context of CPD

Despite the growing body of research and evidence, the current landscape of CPD in schools can still feel like a Frankenstein's monster of ideas, methods, systems, and motivations, bringing together generally well-intentioned but often poorly coordinated interventions. Teachers are highly qualified, but many still feel undervalued and over-controlled, especially with recruitment and retention pressures. Schools increasingly know what works, yet not everyone has the same access to effective CPD.

Although there are many contributing factors beyond CPD at play, the current state of professional development highlights the tensions between trust and control, between accountability and autonomy, and between funding and expectations that pervade the education system today.

Teacher performance is the most important in-school factor determining outcomes for pupils. The consensus over the past half-century has been that centralised control is the most effective way to support improved performance across all areas of school policy. This has included controlling what is taught, through the introduction of the national curriculum in 1988, and more publicly shared metrics of assessment, such as SATs and league tables. Ramping up the accountability regime through the creation of Ofsted in 1994, as well as the expansion of its remit over various cycles of reform, has also attempted to increase centralised control. Other attempts to improve the quality of teaching include:

- ▶ Making teaching a graduate-only profession in the early 1980s
- ▶ Multiple reforms of initial teacher training
- ▶ Introducing mandatory INSET days for all schools
- ▶ National initiatives to create and disseminate teaching materials (such as National Strategies under New Labour)

- ▶ The introduction and reform of National Professional Qualifications;
- ▶ The creation of various subject-specific networks (such as Maths Hubs) and broader professional networks, such as teaching schools and the much-reduced number of teaching school hubs
- ▶ The creation of the Early Career Framework to strengthen the induction experience for new teachers

Reforms in the 1960s and 1970s reflected a Britain moving beyond post-war recovery towards a system aimed at generating a better economic return for the investments being made, one that would better prepare Britain for the future. Improving school standards became a national mission, with national solutions in place. But it did not start from a place where centralisation was an end in itself, but rather a means to an end - a way to create a higher level of consistency across schools and lessons. The intent was to support the creation and maintenance of a research-literate, curious, and effective teaching profession - one that would not be susceptible to fads or political whims, but would instead be relentlessly focused on serving the needs of children.

Over the last decade, teacher professional development in England has experienced substantial reform and systematisation. This has been driven by policy initiatives, a maturing research base, and professional demand for more rigorous, sustained, and equitable development opportunities.

Timeline of Recent Development

2014–2016	Foundational critiques expose widespread weaknesses in CPD; national standards and evidence reviews establish principles of effective practice.
2017–2020	Strategic reforms introduce the ECF and reformed NPQs, framing CPD as a 'golden thread' across a teacher's career span.
2020–2023	Research and economic modelling validate the impact and cost-effectiveness of high-quality CPD; new frameworks support school-level implementation.
2023–2024	Reports identify structural inequities in access and a lack of entitlement for experienced teachers; mid-career provision emerges as a key policy gap.
2025	Strategic consensus on the need for a universal CPD entitlement; system poised for national policy action to embed career-long development.

While significant progress has been made in defining and promoting effective practice, delivery remains uneven and gaps persist across career stages, geographies, and school types.

This Report

In an attempt to better understand the current landscape so that future changes can be informed and effective, to meet the system where it is and improve it, Teacher Development Trust commissioned YouGov to collect insights from over 1,000 current school teachers and leaders in England (See Appendix B for sample profile) between 22nd May and 5th June 2025. The purpose was to obtain a snapshot of CPD across the academic year 2024-25. The aim of the survey, and therefore this report, is to begin to answer the following questions with a

view to looking more broadly at how the sector can be better supported through improved policy and practice, enabling all teachers and leaders to access effective, high-quality CPD:

CPD Provision

- ▶ What does CPD in schools in England currently look like?
- ▶ What access do school leaders and teachers have to high-quality CPD?

Impact of CPD

- ▶ How do senior leaders and teachers perceive the CPD they have received across the last academic year?
- ▶ How applicable, effective, personalised and impactful has CPD been for school staff and pupils?
- ▶ How does/could CPD impact teacher retention?

Enablers and Barriers

- ▶ What currently supports the access and impact of effective high-quality CPD in schools?
- ▶ What is preventing school leaders and teachers from accessing high-quality CPD?

Leadership of CPD

- ▶ What does the leadership of CPD look like across the country?
- ▶ What are the structures currently associated with CPD leadership?
- ▶ How do leaders determine, approach and evaluate CPD?

What Existing Research Tells us

Access to CPD

Access to CPD for education staff is inconsistent across schools and career stages. Key findings reveal that structural barriers, such as time, workload, and funding, persist, particularly in small, rural, or high-need schools. The IES qualitative study (Pollard et al., 2024) identified these barriers as widespread and systemic. The Early Career Framework and revised NPQs, have sought to improve early-career CPD and leadership training; however, mid-career teachers often lack similar opportunities. There is a lack of equivalent, sustained provision for classroom teachers beyond ECF, and those experienced practitioners not on leadership trajectories. NPQ uptake data suggests that these programmes are often accessed by teachers in MATs, with other school types facing logistical and financial barriers.

‘The system knows what works. The challenge is ensuring everyone can access it.’ (Teacher Development Trust, 2024)

Impact of CPD

When done well, the impact of CPD is significant. High-quality, sustained professional development can be one of the most powerful levers for improving education. Research

consistently shows it strengthens teaching quality, supports teacher satisfaction and retention, and delivers measurable gains for pupils. Fletcher-Wood & Zuccollo (2020) estimated that these gains can be equivalent to an additional year of teacher experience. Meanwhile, Sims et al. (2021) and Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) emphasise the importance of active learning, sustained duration, and feedback loops in the design of CPD to enhance both teacher performance and pupil outcomes.

‘CPD is not peripheral to school improvement—it is one of its most powerful levers.’ (Education Policy Institute, 2020)

Effective teachers have a lasting, positive impact on pupils well beyond the classroom, influencing their education, earnings, life outcomes, and social mobility (Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2014). If CPD enhances teacher effectiveness and efficacy, it follows that pupil outcomes will also be positively impacted as a result. Studies confirm that high-quality, sustained CPD has a measurable, positive effect on pupil learning, with an average effect size equivalent to one month of additional progress per year. This exceeds the average impact of other far less cost-effective school-based interventions intended to raise pupil outcomes, such as performance-related pay, one-to-one tutoring, and lengthening the school day (Fletcher-Wood & Zuccollo, 2020 ; Van den Brande and Zuccollo, 2021; Coe et al., 2022).

Enablers and Barriers

School leadership and professional culture are consistently identified as critical enablers of effective CPD. Leaders who set clear expectations, protect time, and align professional learning with school priorities create the conditions for success. Research from the Teacher Development Trust (Weston et al., 2021) and Cordingley, Higgins, Greeny et al. (2020) indicate that strategic leadership promotes collaboration, coherence, and deeper learning. The opposite is also found to be true with Ofsted reviews (2023a; 2023b) highlighting that inconsistent leadership approaches lead to significant variation in CPD quality. Without this strategic focus, even well-designed programmes struggle to make a difference.

‘The duration and structure of CPD matter. Iterative, embedded learning has far greater impact than isolated sessions.’ (Sims et al., 2021)

Despite clear evidence on what constitutes effective CPD, a key finding is that access remains inconsistent. Small, rural, or high-need schools, as well as those not part of multi-academy trusts, particularly face barriers related to time, workload, and funding (Pollard et al., 2024; Teacher Development Trust, 2024). This challenge is especially pronounced for mid-career staff who lack structured frameworks, such as the ECF.

Collaboration emerges as a particularly powerful enabler. However, it does not always happen organically. Schools need to put structures in place that allow collaboration to be purposeful and focused on pupil learning. Approaches such as lesson study, coaching, or inquiry projects ensure collaboration has a focus on shared pupil goals rather than

unstructured collaboration through informal exchange (Timperley, Ell, Le Fevre et al., 2020; Darling-Hammond, 2017). Creating spaces for evidence-rich dialogue, joint problem-solving, and co-construction of practice through CPD fosters deeper learning and builds a culture of sustained professional growth.

Alongside leadership and collaboration, organisational systems and structures are essential to sustaining effective CPD. Research highlights that the lasting impact of CPD comes from structured, long-term approaches rather than short, one-off activities. This means that CPD should be integrated within school routines and involve sustained, iterative programmes, spanning terms or academic years, with repeated cycles of learning, application, and reflection, while being mindful of workload and demands on teachers' time (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Cordingley et al., 2015; Perry, Davies, Halliday et al., 2023).

Leadership of CPD

'Without strategic leadership, even well-designed CPD cannot achieve its full impact.' (Cordingley et al., 2020)

High-quality CPD depends on effective leadership and a supportive school culture. When leaders are strategic in their approach toward, and engaged in, professional development, CPD becomes a driver for school improvement (Robinson, Hohepa & Lloyd, 2009). Similarly, when leaders set and communicate learning goals that connect CPD to school priorities such as curriculum development and pupil outcomes, they help staff link new learning directly to strategic goals (Robinson et al., 2009; Cordingley et al., 2020).

Leaders play a vital role in fostering high-quality professional environments that enhance teaching, strengthen retention, and promote collaboration (Papay & Kraft, 2017; Coe, Kime, & Singleton, 2022). Evaluating CPD remains a complex task, especially when connecting teacher learning to pupil outcomes, yet sustained impact is more likely when leaders track engagement and support staff to monitor their own growth (Guskey, 1986). Utilising formative assessment tools or teaching and learning frameworks makes learning visible and manageable, helping teachers to monitor their own growth and link CPD activities to pupil progress (Robinson et al., 2009).

Leadership shapes the culture that determines whether CPD leads to surface-level compliance or deep professional growth. Trust and psychological safety are essential if teachers are to reflect on their practice, experiment, and take risks without fear of blame (Cordingley et al., 2020; Timperley et al., 2020; Robinson et al., 2009). Schools that nurture these conditions see not only greater engagement with CPD but also deeper cultural shifts that sustain improvement over time (Perry et al., 2023).

This context forms the foundation of this report, outlining the purpose, potential, and gaps in CPD across England. To understand how these dynamics are playing out in schools today, this report draws on new survey data from over 1,000 teachers and leaders in England.

Funding and delivery of CPD

The CPD Market

The way that professional development is funded and delivered is more confusing than it needs to be, making it harder for schools to navigate and focus on achieving the best outcomes. Although almost all funding comes from the government, the way funding and programmes are accessed is inconsistent and even contradictory.

The Government supports CPD in three broad ways:

- ▶ **Direct programme support** — for example paying the costs for engaging with the ECF for all early career teachers, of accessing NPQs for some teachers and school leaders in specific circumstances.
- ▶ **Supporting structures** — including the range of subject specific and pedagogical practice hubs that are funded, including Maths Hubs, English Hubs, Attendance Hubs, and Behaviour Hubs. The DfE also supports Music Hubs with a broader remit than CPD. In addition, the DfE has created and funded the Teaching School Hub programme, designed to promote effective CPD in a designated geographical area.
- ▶ **Indirect funding** — first and foremost through school budgets, which are then used to cover the costs of teacher time for INSET, buying in any additional CPD from the market (including at times NPQs if not eligible for government funding), and CPD roles and plans across schools and MATs. The creation and funding of the new RISE teams may also lead to CPD investments, as may investments from other areas of government (such as Combined Authorities, DCMS, etc.).

As well as government investment, some CPD will be funded directly by individual teachers and school leaders, and some additional funding may come from philanthropic sources, either directly to schools or via charities and other organisations creating products to support CPD in schools.

The CPD market covers both government and non-government CPD. Both the ECF and NPQs are provided by independent organisations which have been successful in government procurement programmes. All of these organisations also provide additional CPD options for schools not funded or supported by the government. More widely, the market is made up of commercial providers, charitable and non-profit organisations (including the Teacher Development Trust, and organisations such as the Chartered College of Teaching), and sole-trader coaches and trainers, none of whom operate with any regulation in terms of the quality of their offers.

An exemplification:

Imagine you are a school leader and you know that you want to improve the outcomes for pupils in maths at KS2. You want to invest in better training for your KS2 team in maths and are considering the best way to do that. Some options could include:

- ▶ You could look for advice from your local Maths Hub. That might be the same as your local Teaching School Hub, or it might be a different organisation. Or perhaps you want to speak to the designated CPD Lead for your MAT.
- ▶ You might be able to secure a place for one of your teachers on the NPQ in Leading Primary Maths. Or you might be able to access some training in maths mastery from the local Maths Hub. Maybe you will speak to a commercial or charitable organisation that you found on LinkedIn, met at a conference, or which has been emailing you with its offers.
- ▶ You could decide to make it a focus of INSET provision, identifying your strongest maths expert to lead a session for the wider team. Or maybe you want to bring in an outside speaker, maybe somebody with a strong social media presence. Or you might be approached by the local DfE RISE team who have identified maths as an area of regional improvement and want to work with you.

The example above demonstrates the range of options that leaders have when designing and delivering CPD, all of which take time to consider and make their own (sometimes contradictory) claims about likely impact.

How Much is Spent on CPD Each Year?

This is a difficult question to answer, not least because the nature of government accounting makes it hard to be clear about how much is spent on each programme and initiative.

For example, we know that the DfE reported spending over £148m on the ECF in 2023-24 (Department for Education (DfE), 2024a). We know that £184m was put aside to fund up to 150,000 NPQ places between 2021-2024 (DfE, 2024a), but we do not have accurate figures on how much money was spent overall or in each year. We know that the number of NPQs being funded now is significantly lower, but we do not have published figures for how many NPQs will be paid for or at what cost.

When Teaching School Hubs were announced in 2021, £65m was set aside to cover the costs for three years (DfE, 2021), but more recent annual figures are not yet available.

English hubs received £26m in 2023-24 (DfE, 2024a), but the DfE accounts for that year do not specify how much was spent on behaviour hubs, attendance hubs, or maths hubs (although all three programmes reportedly expanded. New attendance and behaviour hubs, operating with the DfE's RISE structure, have been announced but without confirmation of funding (DfE, 2025a).

This means that we are forced to make assumptions about DfE investment in direct programmes and support structures. The amount available for the ECF is likely to remain similar as no major changes have happened in this space, so we can assume £150m

investment here. Based on the restricted funding now available for NPQs (DfE, 2025b), we estimate that roughly £15m is likely to be spent on these by the DfE. It is much harder to put a figure on the amount of funding spent via hub programmes, as these have varied so significantly, but based on the continued language of ambition from the Government, we estimate that at least £50m is likely to be invested in the various hub initiatives each year.

This provides a figure for direct government investment in CPD of around £215m a year.

In-Service Training - INSET - is the largest element of funding for CPD. Every school is obliged to provide five days of INSET for all staff as set out in section 51.2 part of the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (DfE, 2025c) which specifies 190 days for teaching and 5 days for non-teaching duties.

The latest DfE data (DfE, 2024b) show that median teacher pay in England in 2024-25 was £49,084 and that there were 468,258 FTE teachers. This suggests that the median cost per teacher for 5 days of INSET (as part of the 195 days teachers are paid to be in school) is £1,259 which, multiplied by the number of FTE teachers, gives us a total indicative cost for INSET - purely in terms of staff time on the day. The actual figure is likely to be higher when considering additional costs (pensions, etc.) and the time taken to prepare and follow-up on INSET provision, but as a rough calculation it demonstrates the significant investment already being made in CPD via this route.

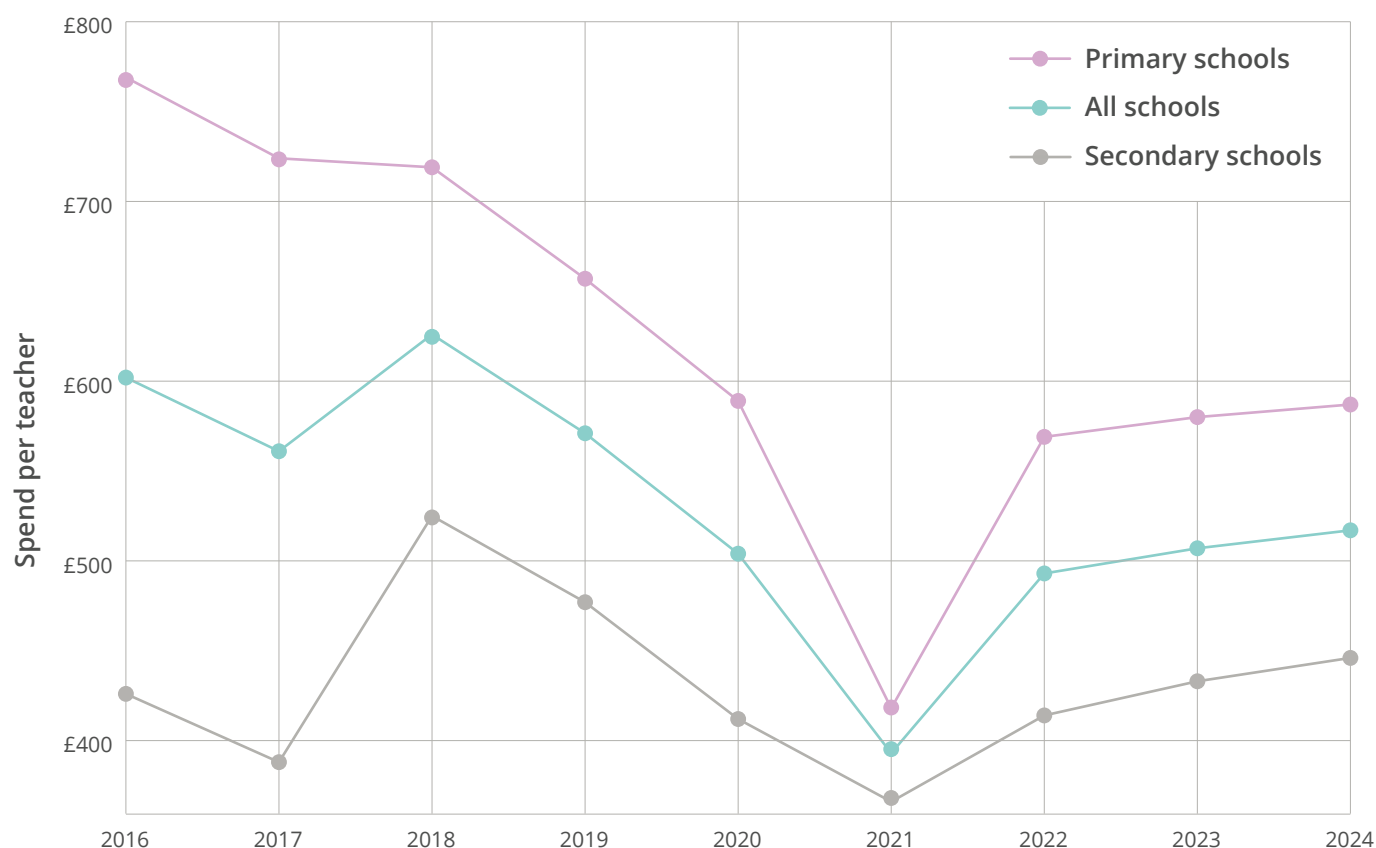
We estimate that the cost of staff time for INSET on the day across all schools in England is around £590m a year.

On top of this investment, schools spend money from their own budgets on CPD. This might be paying for an NPQ if ineligible for government funding, buying in coaching support, commissioning externally delivered training, or paying for consultants to support the development of staff. Working with SchoolsDash, we have been reviewing this spend over time and can see both an absolute and a real terms cut in the amount schools are spending directly over the last decade - on a per teacher basis from £602 in 2015-16 to around £517 in 2023-24 (TDT, 2025).

SchoolsDash analysis suggests that schools spent an additional £225m on CPD in 2023-24

*Taken together, we estimate that **around £1bn is already being spent every year on CPD for teachers and school leaders in England.***

Staff development and training spend per teacher at mainstream state schools



Main Report

Definitions for the purpose of this report:

Continuous Professional Development (CPD): Activities undertaken to develop your skills, knowledge, and expertise as a teacher or leader, ultimately improving your professional capability and effectiveness in your role. This specifically excludes training focused on school-wide systems, internal processes, or meeting requirements for government legislation compliance.

Formal CPD refers to professional learning activities that are designed, structured and organised for a specified outcome.

Informal CPD refers to self-directed professional learning activities that are less structured and often initiated by the individual.

Respondents refers to all those teachers and leaders that completed the survey.

Mechanisms: the practical tools, processes, and enablers that make CPD possible.

Structures: the frameworks and cultural conditions that support the depth, quality, and sustainability of CPD.



Section 1

Access to CPD

This section sets out how teachers and leaders currently access professional development opportunities.

Section 1: Access to CPD

1. Engagement in Formal CPD

Formal CPD refers to professional learning activities that are designed, structured and organised for a specified outcome.

Total Time Spent on Formal CPD

Respondents were asked to describe the total amount of time they had spent on formal CPD.

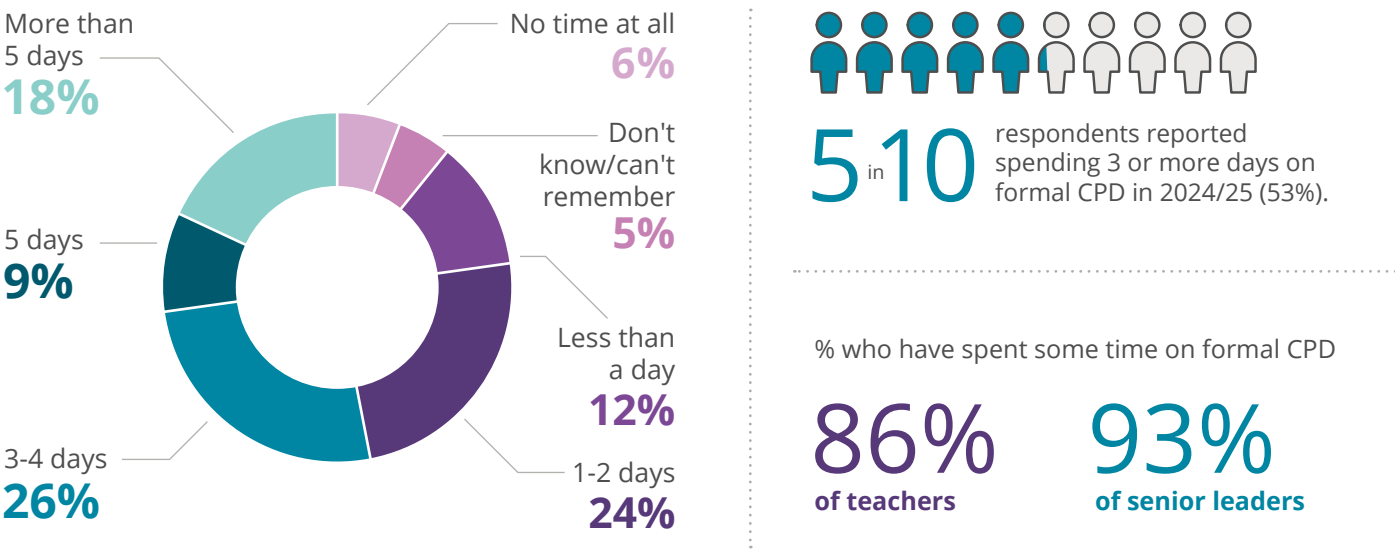


Fig. 1

Time Spent by Role

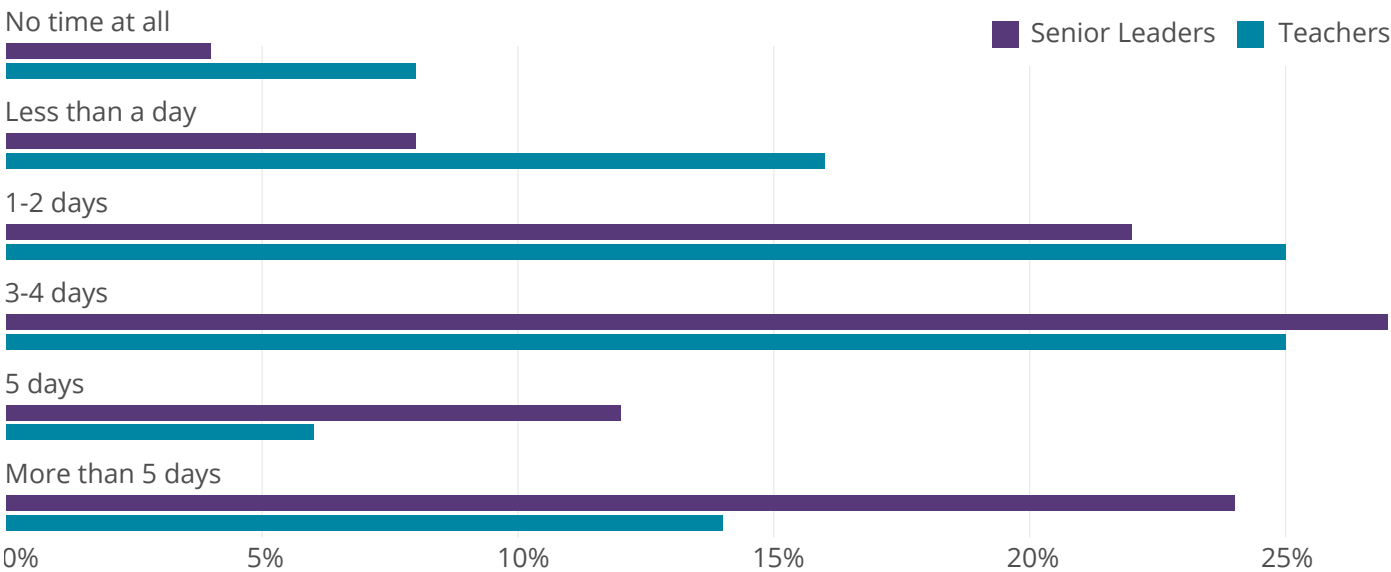


Fig. 2

When applied to the national teaching workforce, this indicates that **one quarter (24%) of teachers** - over 112,000 in total - **spent less than a single day or no time at all on formal CPD in 2024/25***.

Type of Formal CPD

Respondents were asked which formats of formal CPD they had participated in.

Online webinars or live virtual sessions



Self-paced online learning modules



Collaborative planning or action research with colleagues



Conferences or seminars



Peer observation



Mentoring (as a mentee or mentor)



Coaching



Other



Don't know



Fig. 3

*Based on an 24% extrapolation of the 468,258 full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers in state-funded schools in England as of November 2024/25. Source: Department for Education, School Workforce in England statistics. Although our survey data includes supply teachers, this has a negligible effect on the final figures due to the small sample size of supply teachers.

Type of Formal CPD by Role

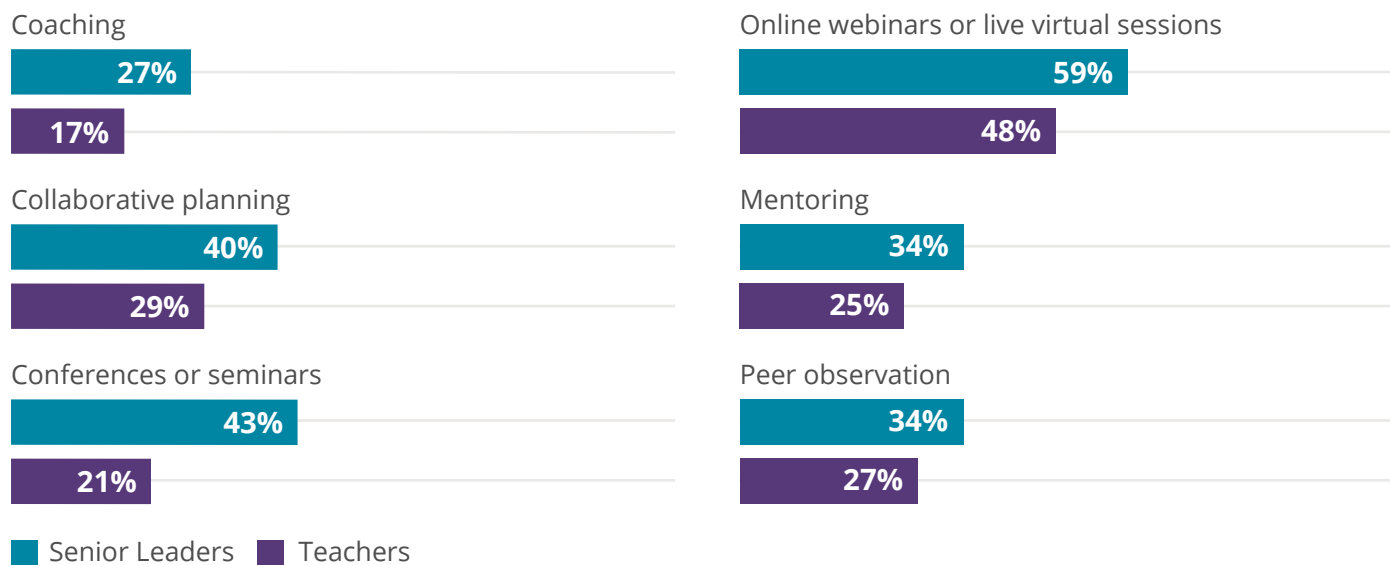


Fig. 4

Type of Formal CPD by Phase

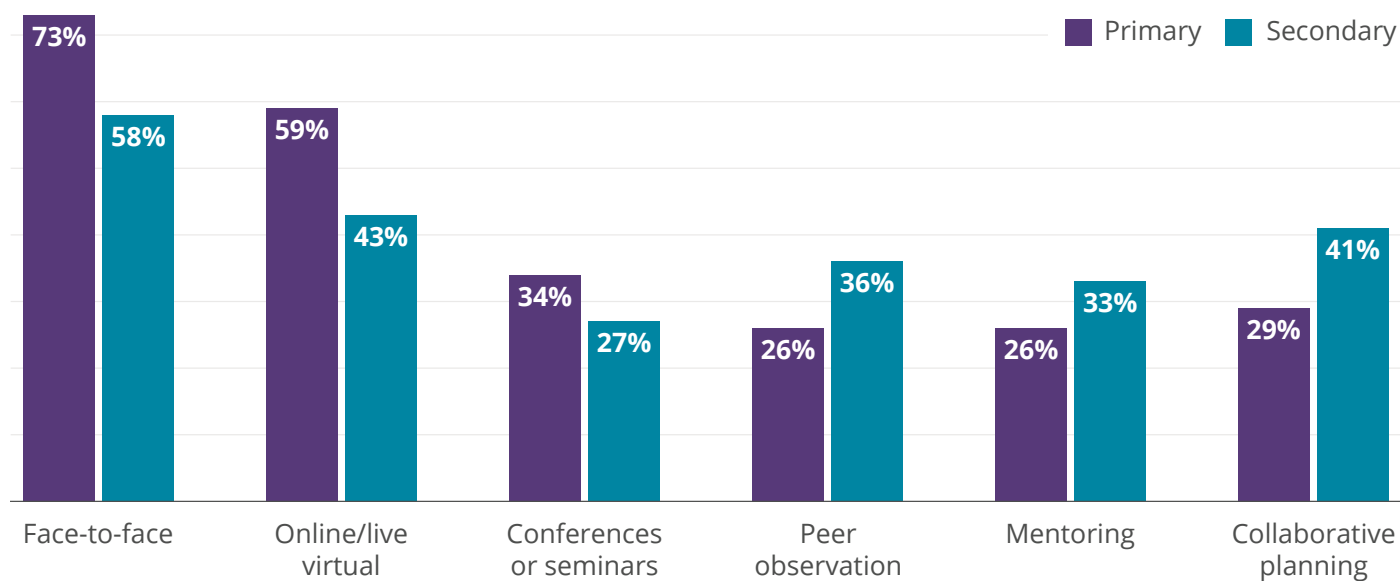
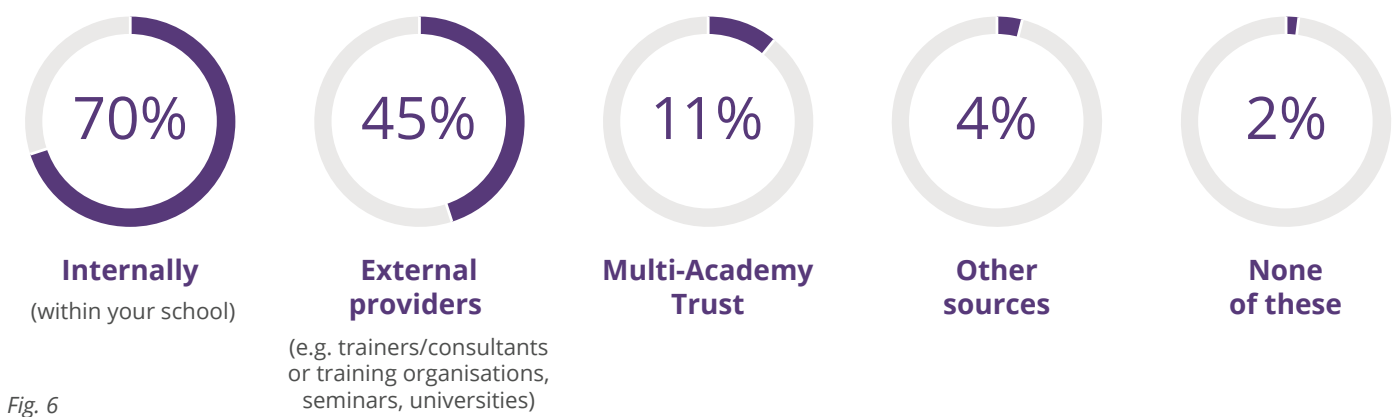


Fig. 5

Sources of Formal CPD Accessed During the Last Academic Year

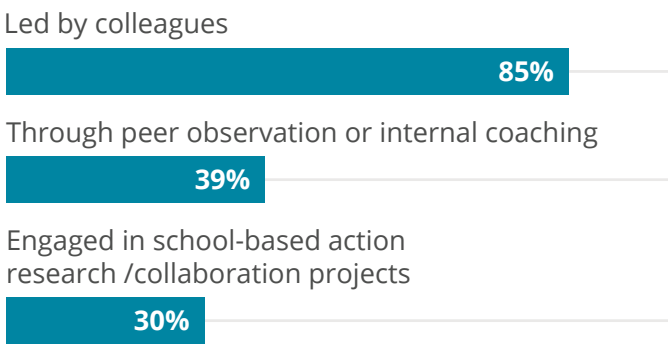
Respondents were asked through which sources they had accessed formal CPD opportunities most often.



Senior leaders are more likely to access formal CPD externally (49% external vs 41% internal) - though **classroom teachers are more likely to access formal CPD internally** (59% internal vs 51% external).

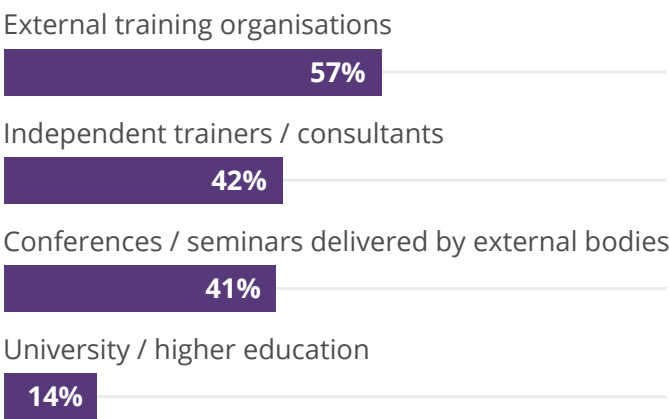
Internal CPD

Respondents were asked which sources of internal CPD they had accessed



External CPD

Respondents were asked which formats of formal CPD they had participated in



2. Engagement in Informal CPD

Informal CPD refers to self-directed professional learning activities that are less structured and often initiated by the individual.

Types of informal CPD

Respondents were asked which formats of informal CPD they had engaged in.



Fig. 9

Respondents who Engaged in at Least One Type of Informal CPD by Role.



Fig. 10

3. Selecting CPD

Confidence Levels

Respondents were asked the extent to which they feel confident in their own ability to choose CPD opportunities that are right for them.



Fig. 11

Confidence in Ability to Choose by Tenure

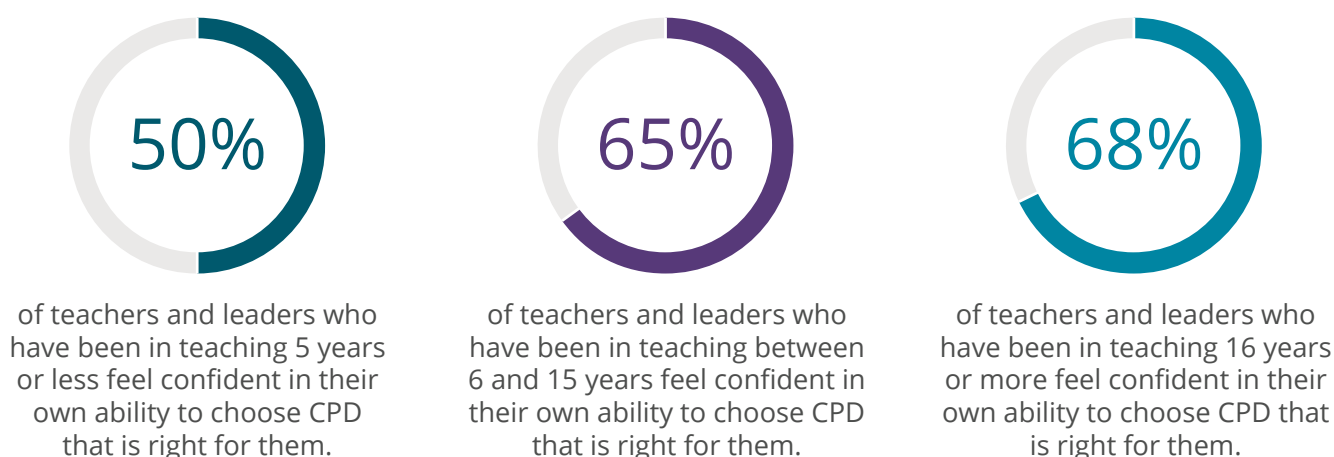


Fig. 12

*Respondents who have taken part in any formal CPD previously are far more confident in choosing their own development - **66% vs. 49%** for those without formal CPD experience.*

Confidence in Ability to Choose by Role



74% of **senior leaders** feel confident in their ability to choose CPD that is right for them.



56% of **teachers** feel confident in their ability to choose CPD that is right for them.

Fig. 13

*Classroom teachers are twice as likely to report not feeling confident in choosing the right CPD for themselves compared to senior leaders **(14% vs 7%)**.*

“

CPD enhances my teaching skills by updating knowledge, improving strategies, and building my confidence.’

Searching for Relevant CPD Opportunities

Respondents were asked to identify where they might begin searching for CPD opportunities to develop their teaching or leadership practice.

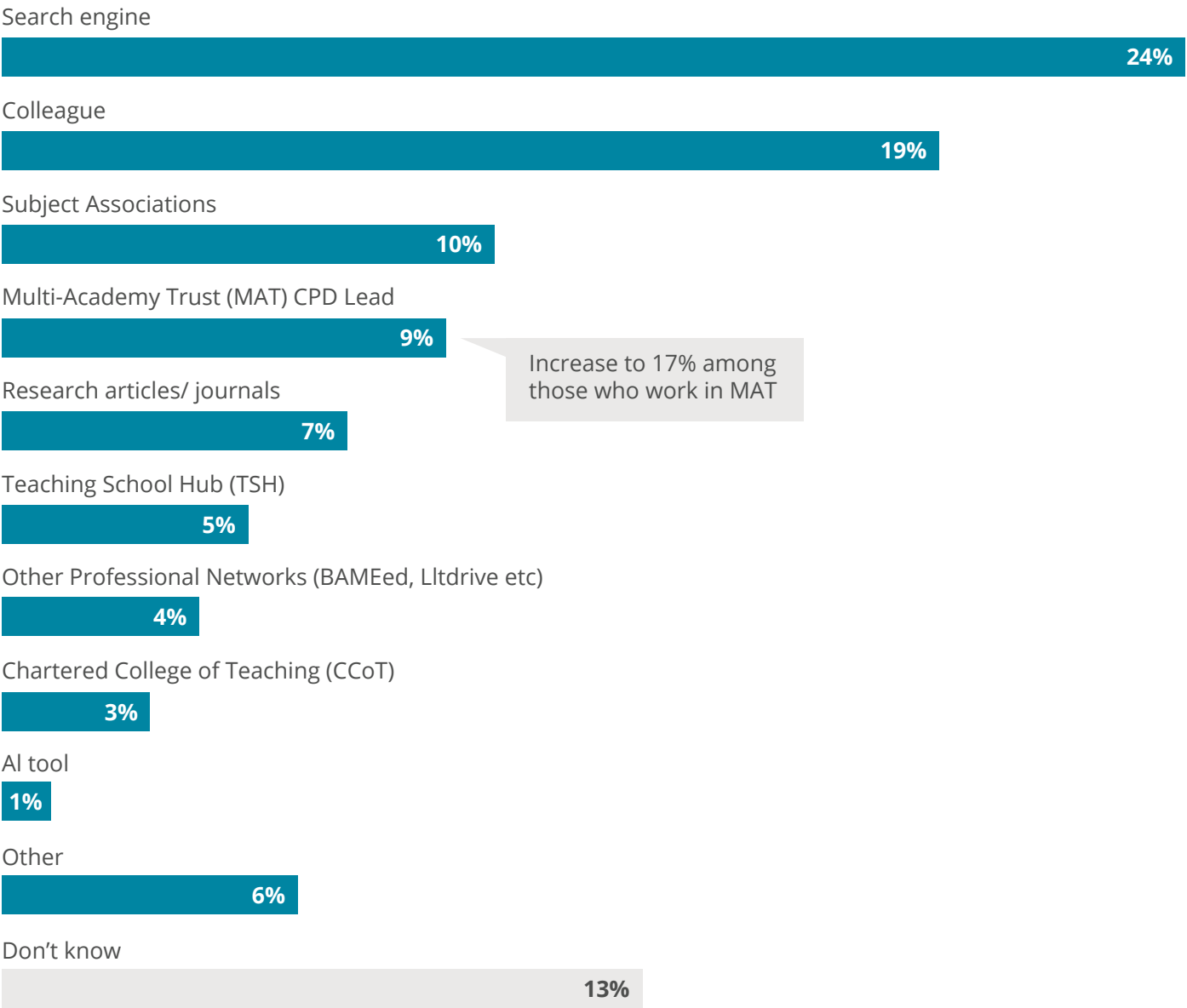


Fig. 14

Important Factors When Selecting in CPD Opportunities

Respondents were asked to identify any factors that are important when they are selecting their own CPD opportunities

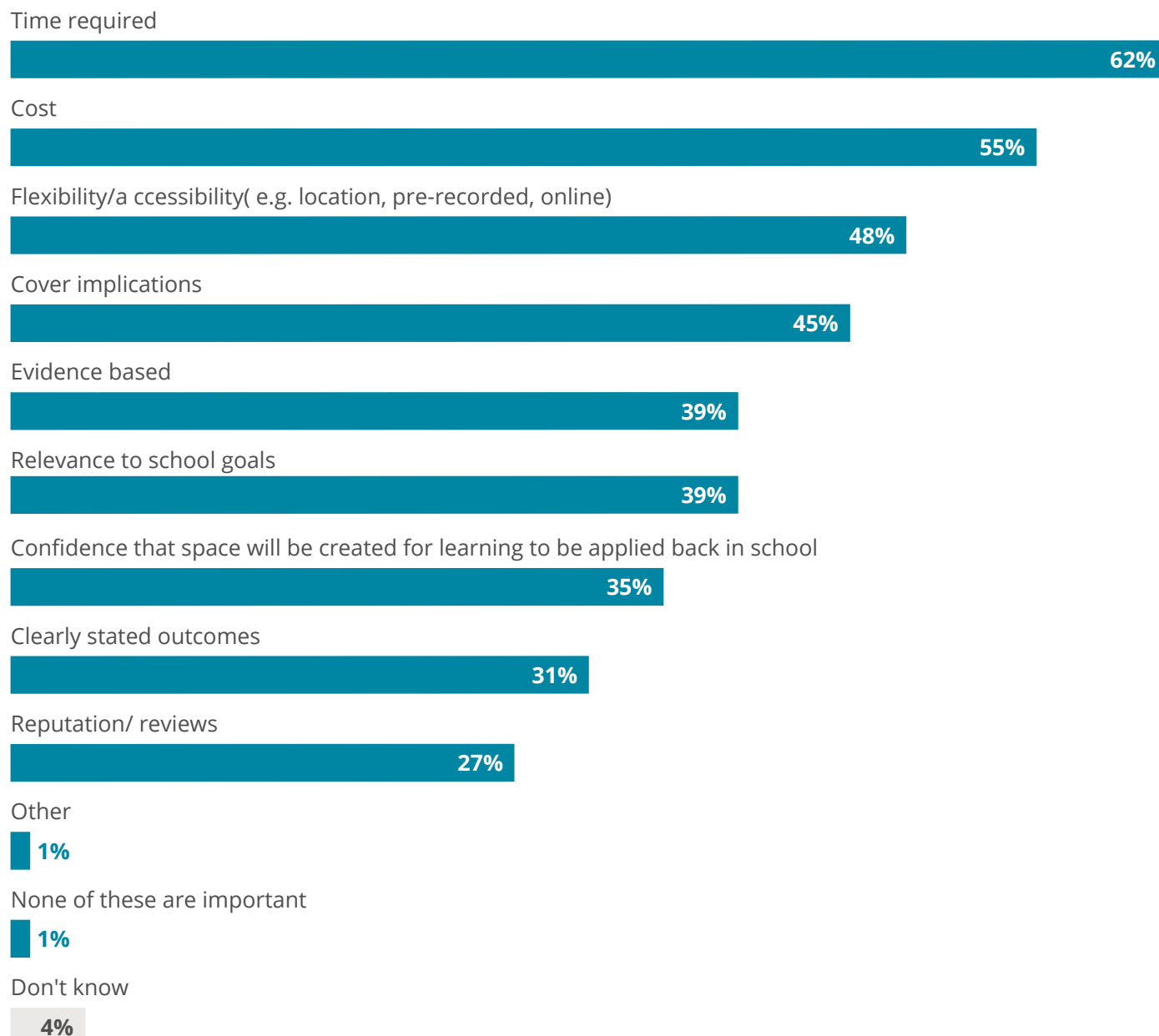


Fig. 15

Headteachers are most likely of all senior leaders (deputy/assistant/other) to consider cost as a key factor when choosing CPD (79%).



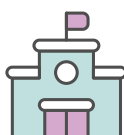
We do not have opportunities to share CPD with other staff members. New initiatives are started and no time is allocated to see them through.'

Access to CPD - The Headlines

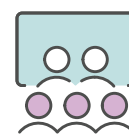
Participation and Access



Senior leaders participated in CPD more frequently than classroom teachers. (**93% vs. 86%**).



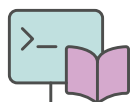
Of those respondents who took part in formal CPD, **seven in ten** (70%) report doing so **internally** within their school.



Primary respondents are more likely to have engaged in structured CPD courses or conferences compared to secondary respondents.

Preferred and Least Used Format

Most Common



Face-to-face courses or workshops (**66%**), online webinars or live virtual sessions (**53%**) and self-paced modules (**43%**).

Least Used



Coaching (**22%**), mentoring (**29%**) and peer observation (**30%**).

Confidence and Decision-Making



One in ten (11%) of teachers and leaders lack confidence in selecting their own CPD.



Greater CPD participation is linked to higher confidence in choosing the right development opportunities in the future.



Time (**62%**) is the most important factor considered when choosing CPD, followed by cost (**55%**) and flexibility/accessibility (**48%**).



The **most common** place that respondents begin searching for CPD opportunities is search engines - with **a quarter** (24%) citing this. This was followed by colleagues and subject associations (**10%**). **Least cited** were AI tools (**1%**), Chartered College of Teaching (**3%**) and other professional networks (**4%**).

Sample profile

- Fig. 1 Q.4 Which of the following best describes the total amount of time you have spent on formal CPD during the current academic year (2024-2025)? Base: All (n=1085)
- Fig. 2 Base: Senior Leaders (n=449), Teachers (n=636)
- Fig. 3 Q.5 During this last academic year (2024-2025), which, if any, of the following formats of formal CPD have you participated in? Please tick all that apply. Base: All (n=964)
- Fig. 4 Base: Senior Leaders (n=419), Teachers (n=545)
- Fig. 5 Base: Primary (n=504), Secondary (n=376)
- Fig. 6 Q.9a Which of the following sources, if any, have you accessed formal CPD opportunities through most this academic year (2024-2025)? Base: All (n=964)
- Fig. 7 Q.10a Through which of the following sources, if any, have you accessed formal CPD opportunities internally (within your school)? Please tick all that apply. Base: All (n=666)
- Fig. 8 Q.10b Through which of the following sources, if any, have you accessed formal CPD opportunities from external providers? Please tick all that apply. Base: All (n=437)
- Fig. 9 Q.6 Now thinking about informal CPD, in which of the following formats of informal CPD have you participated in the last academic year (2024-2025)? Please tick all that apply. Base: All (n=1,085)
- Fig. 10 Base: Senior Leaders (n=449), Teachers (n=636)
- Fig. 11 Q.22 To what extent, if at all, do you feel confident in your ability to choose CPD opportunities that are right for you and your professional goals? Base: All (n=1,085)
- Fig. 12 Base: 5 years or less (n=181), 6 - 15 years (n=465), 16 years or more (n=439)
- Fig. 13 Base: Senior Leaders (n=449), Teachers (n=636)
- Fig. 14 Q.11 For the following question, please imagine you're looking to develop your teaching or leadership practice... Where would you typically start your search for relevant CPD opportunities? Base: All (n=1,085)
- Fig. 15 Q.23 Which of the following factors, if any, are important when selecting your own CPD opportunities? Please tick all that apply. Base: All (n=1,085)



Section 2

Impact of CPD

This section explores how CPD is perceived to influence teachers, leaders, and schools.

Section 2: Impact of CPD

1. Impact on Ability to Perform Role

Respondents were asked to consider the extent to which the CPD they had engaged in impacted their ability to do their role.

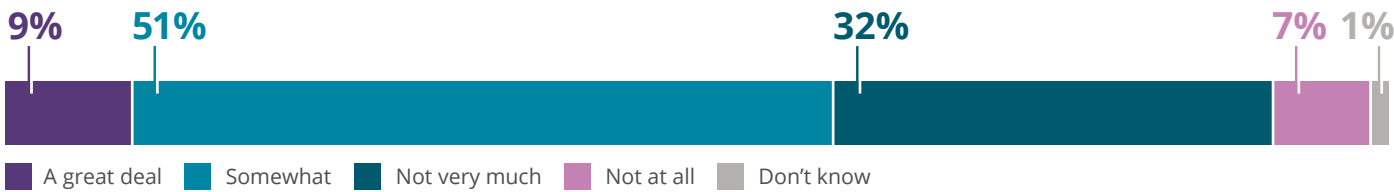


Fig. 1

Impact by Job Role

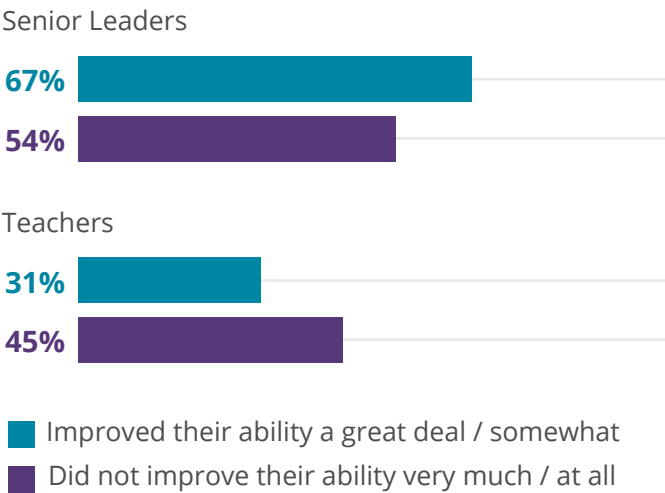


Fig. 2

Impact by Phase

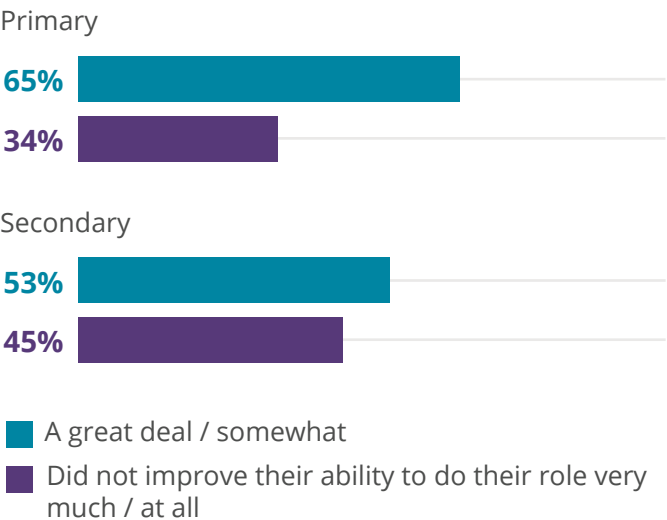


Fig. 3

Excluding those that responded 'Don't know'.

When respondents described why certain CPD has not improved their ability to perform their role in open-ended responses, several consistent themes emerged:

► Lack of Relevance

CPD often perceived as generic, 'one-size-fits-all', or disconnected from the respondent's role.

► Delivery issues

Sessions described as overly theoretical, lecture-style, or poorly facilitated were viewed as ineffective.

► No sustained follow-up

Single-event CPD without follow-up or practical implementation strategies was deemed forgettable or ineffective.



I am often asked to lead parts of the CPD, but there's rarely any focus on developing me.'



After 20 years in the classroom, I find a lot of CPD is pitched at ECTs or focuses on the basics.'

► No professional agency

Where CPD felt more like a tick-box exercise, respondents disengaged, particularly when they had no choice over its content.

► Time and workload pressures

CPD scheduled at inconvenient times, or clashing with other responsibilities, reduced its impact.

► Repetition without progress

Some felt repetitive or aimed at less experienced colleagues, with no relevance to their experience.



It was just something we had to do. There was no discussion afterwards or sense that it mattered.'



I feel like my professional development isn't taken seriously because I'm not full-time.'

► Exclusion of part-time staff

CPD scheduled on non-working days left some feeling out of the loop or missing out on critical whole-school initiatives. There's a sense that their development is deprioritised or not logistically considered.

When respondents described why certain CPD has improved their ability to perform their role in open-ended responses, several consistent themes emerged:

► Direct relevance to practice

CPD linked to day-to-day practice, specific roles and offering takeaways that could be applied immediately, was seen as most effective.

► Tailored to context

CPD designed for specific subjects, phases or contexts (e.g., KS2 literacy, SEND, science curriculum) was highly valued.



It was directly applicable to my classroom teaching and helped me change my approach the very next day.'



It was based on robust evidence, delivered by someone who really understood both the theory and classroom realities.'

► Collaborative and reflective

Sessions that encouraged discussion, reflection, and peer learning created a more sustained learning.

► Leadership development

For those in leadership roles, CPD was most impactful when it supported their strategic thinking and leadership of others.



Having time to collaborate and reflect with colleagues meant I could process the ideas and actually embed them.'



Coaching has allowed me to consider leadership style and make changes across the school in line with school improvement plans to impact on pupils.'

► Evidence-informed and well-delivered

Respondents valued CPD that drew on research and was facilitated with clarity and authority.

Impact by CPD Type

Those who participated in CPD were asked to what extent it had improved their ability to perform their role.

Looking at those who participated in **formal** CPD, the proportion who said it had improved their ability a great deal or somewhat was highest among those who cited coaching, conferences or seminars, and peer observation.

Formal - Top 3

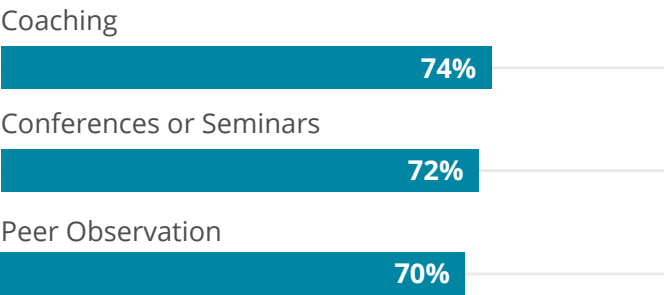


Fig. 4

Of those who participated in **informal** CPD, the proportion who said it had improved their ability a great deal or somewhat was highest among those who cited education-related podcasts, blogs, and professional publications or research.

Informal - Top 3

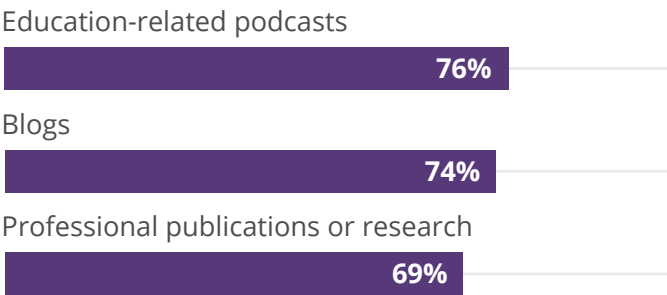


Fig. 5

2. Impact of Current CPD Opportunities

Respondents were asked to what extent (if any) they feel the current CPD opportunities in their school are having an impact across a number of areas.

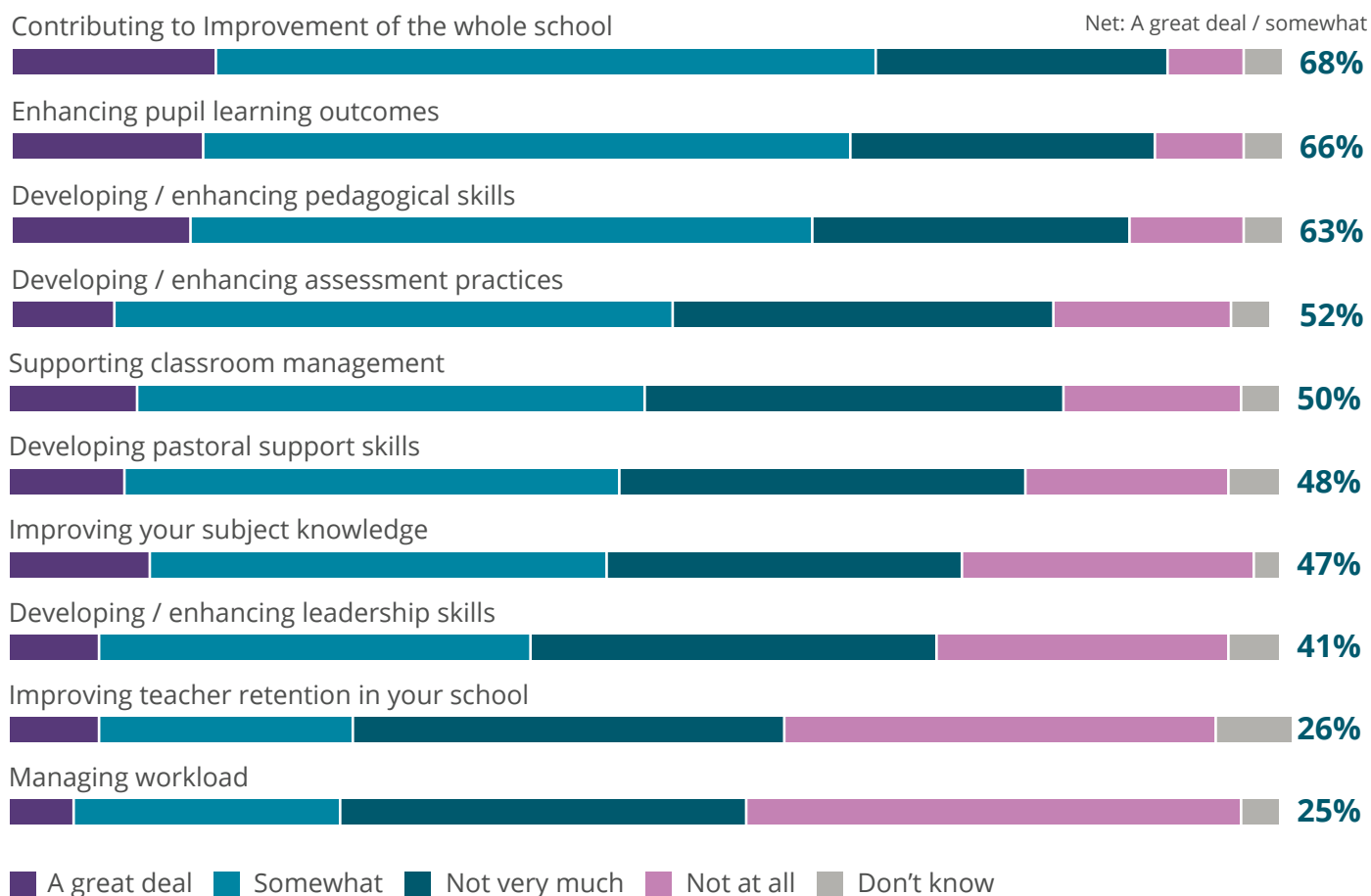


Fig. 6

Impacted Areas by Job Role

A great deal / somewhat:

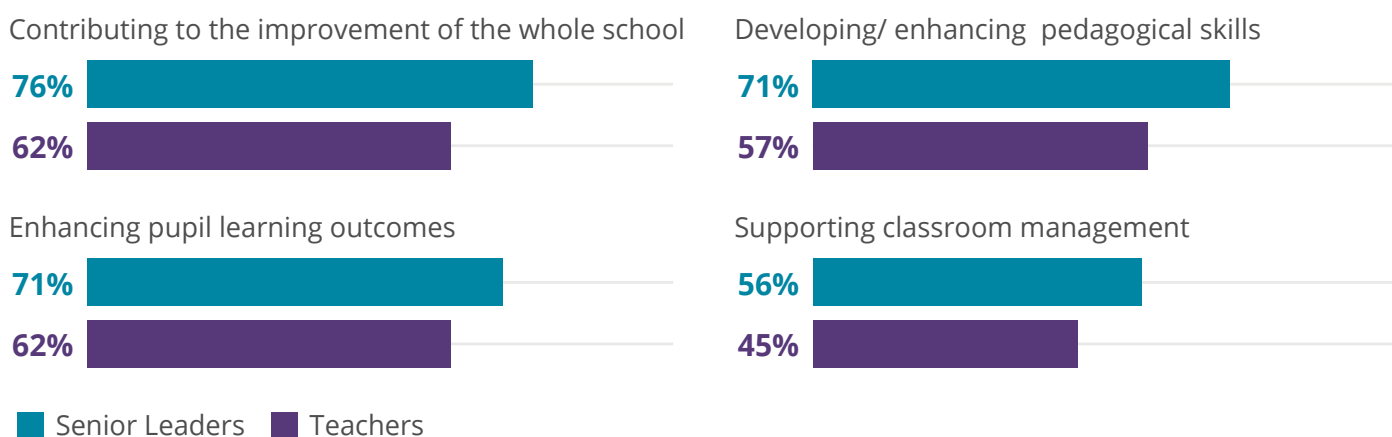


Fig. 7

3. Perceptions of CPD

Perception in Relation to Individuals and Their Settings

Respondents were asked which statements apply to them and their educational setting.

CPD is clearly aligned with school improvement goals

48%

Undertaking CPD is actively encouraged / promoted

45%

There are opportunities for teachers to express CPD needs

41%

Rationale and intended impact of CPD is clearly communicated

29%

CPD is directly applicable to my role

26%

CPD adequately considers the needs of students

24%

Teachers' CPD needs are effectively identified by leadership

23%

Adequate time is given to CPD within working hours

22%

There is effective ongoing support and follow-up after CPD activities

15%

CPD effectively addresses the diverse needs of staff

12%

Fig. 8

Perceptions by Role

Senior leaders are more likely than teachers to report that key features of effective CPD are in place. This pattern is consistent across all indicators, with the biggest differences as follows:

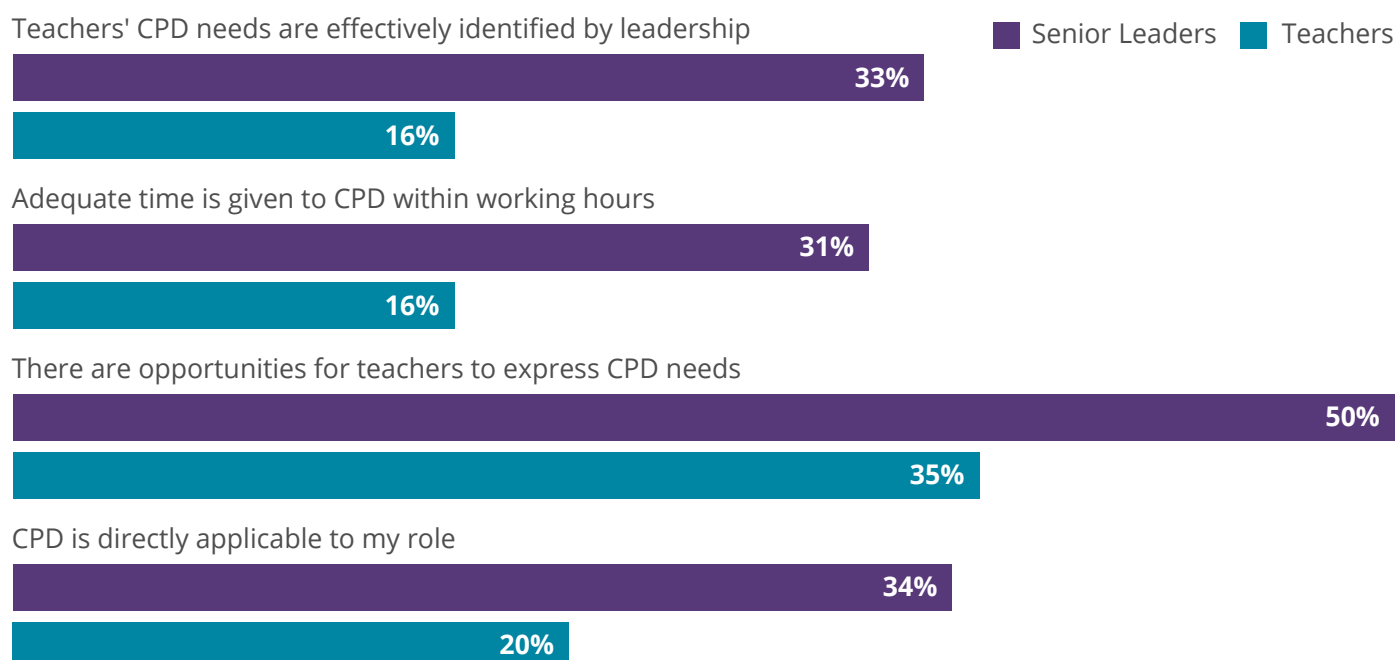


Fig. 9

Respondents who spent more than **5 days in total on CPD** are more likely to cite statements as being true in their setting.



Not enough time is spent finding out specific needs or staff to ensure that CPD is effective. There is a culture of blanket CPD for all when it is not relevant to all.'

4. Teacher Retention

Likelihood of Leaving in the Next Three Years

Respondents were asked how likely they were to leave the profession in the next three years.



Fig. 10

Half (51%) of those likely to leave in the next **3 years** felt that CPD had limited or no impact on their ability to perform their role.

Likelihood of Leaving in the Next Three Years by Role

Respondents were asked how likely they were to leave the profession in the next three years.



Fig. 11

Likelihood of Leaving in the Next Three Years by Tenure

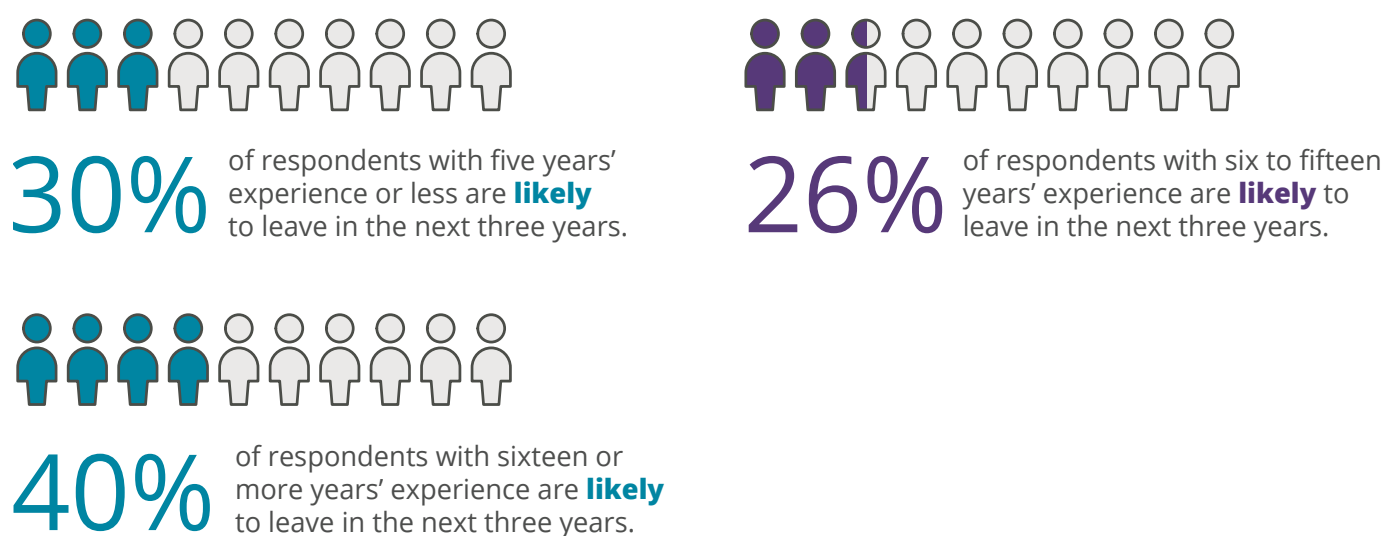


Fig. 12

Likelihood of Leaving in the Next Three Years by Contract and Age

Respondents were asked how likely they were to leave the profession in the next next three years.

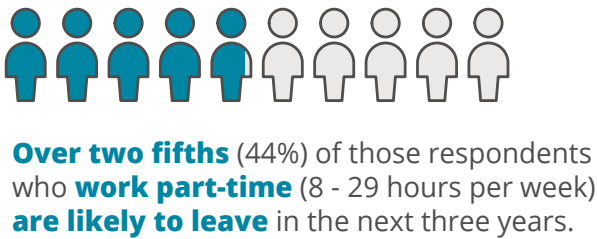


Fig. 13



Fig. 14

Influence to Remain in the Profession

All respondents were asked what CPD support would increase their likelihood to stay in the profession

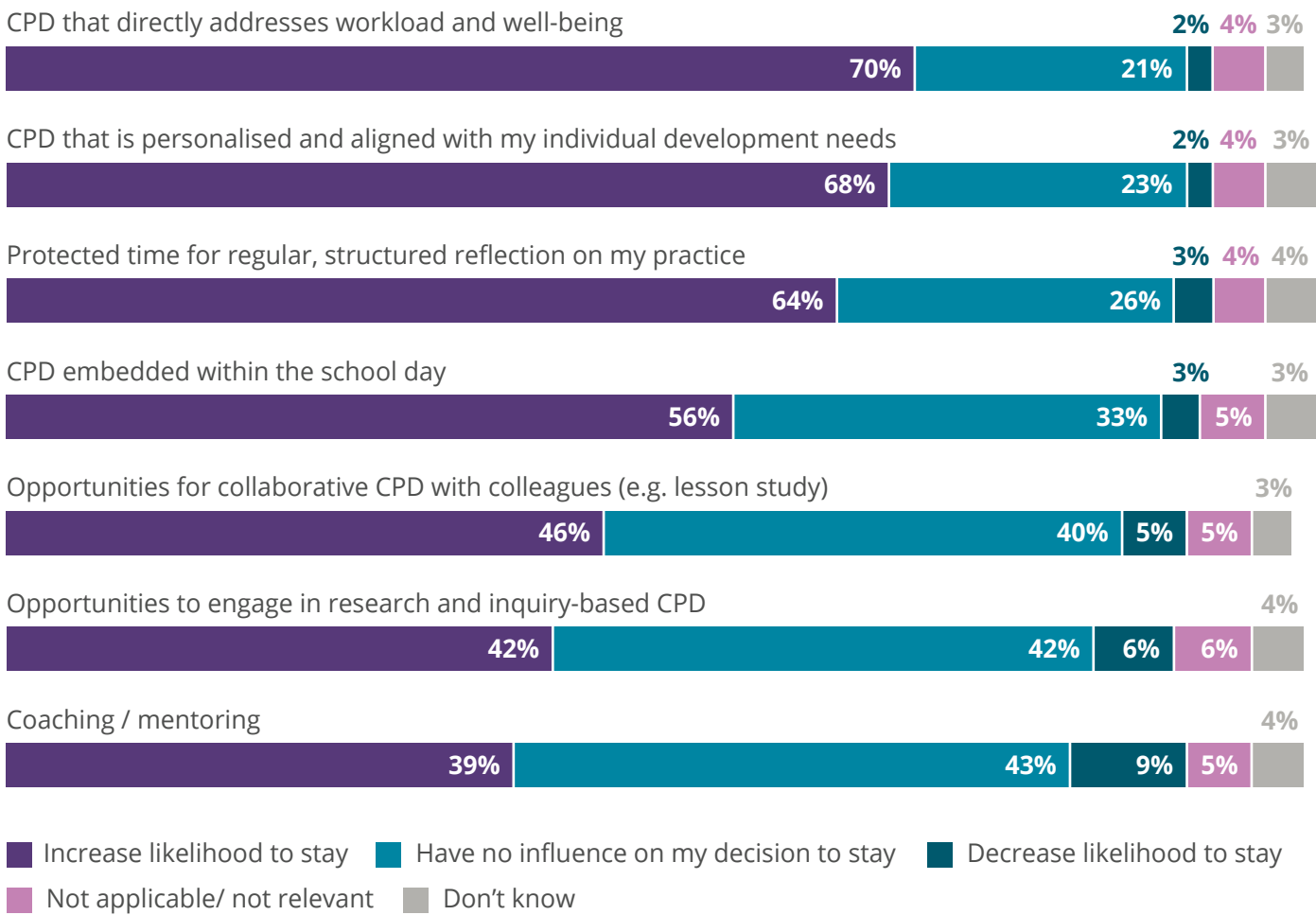


Fig. 15

Influence to Remain in the Profession by likelihood of Leaving

The top three factors for those who are unlikely to leave are:

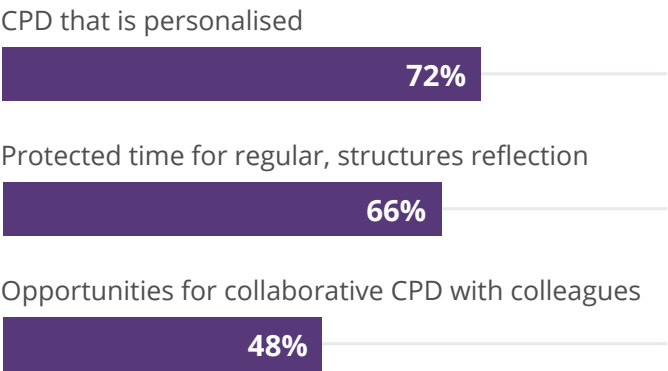


Fig. 16

The top three factors for those who are likely to leave are:

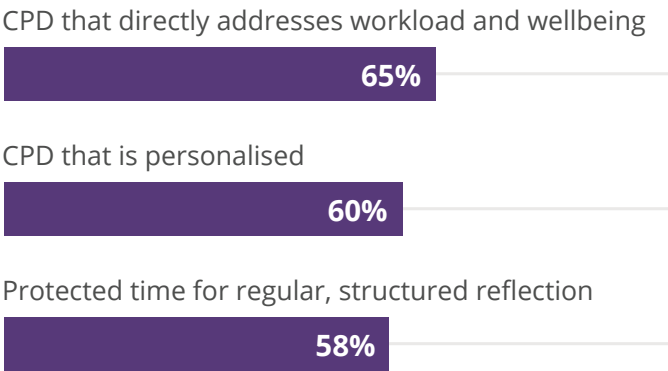


Fig. 17

*Teachers already planning to leave state that **most CPD offers would influence their decision.***

Impact of CPD - The Headlines

Overall Impact



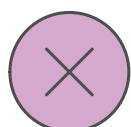
Over
1/3

(39%) respondents report that CPD has not clearly improved their ability to perform their job.



Senior leaders and primary respondents are more likely than teachers and secondary staff to report CPD improved their ability to perform their role. (**67% vs. 54%**).

Those who participated in the following types of CPD were more likely to say that the CPD they'd done overall had improved their ability to perform their role:



Where respondents felt that CPD had not improved their ability to do their role, open-ended responses indicated that some felt it was **lacking relevance, giving little professional agency, lacking follow-up, and increasing workload pressures.**

Formal

- ▶ Coaching (**74%**)
- ▶ Conferences (**72%**)
- ▶ Peer Observation (**70%**)



Where respondents felt it had the greatest impact, open-ended responses indicated that some felt it was **relevant, tailored to the context, collaborative, and reflective.**

Informal

- ▶ Education-related podcasts (**76%**)
- ▶ Blogs (**74%**)
- ▶ Reading professional publications or research (**69%**)

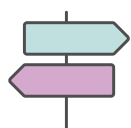
Perceptions of CPD



Teachers and leaders generally agree CPD supports whole-school improvement; however, senior leaders are consistently more positive than teachers about its impact on pedagogical skills (**71% vs. 57%**), classroom management (**56% vs. 45%**) and pupil learning outcomes (**71% vs. 62%**).



Around half (48%) of respondents feel that CPD aligns with school improvement plans; **just over 1 in 10** (12%) feel that it addresses the diverse needs of staff, and **around a quarter** (24%) say it adequately considers the needs of students.

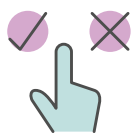


Less than half (45%) of all participants feel that undertaking CPD is actively encouraged or promoted, and even fewer say that the rationale and intended impact of CPD is clearly communicated (**29%**) and that it is directly applicable to their role (**26%**).



Senior leaders are more likely than teachers to report that key features of effective CPD are in place, with the largest disparities in identifying teachers' needs (**33% vs. 16%**), giving adequate CPD time within working hours (**31% vs. 16%**), being applicable to role (**34% vs. 20%**), and enabling staff to express their needs (**50% vs. 35%**).

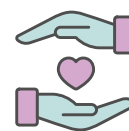
CPD and Retention



CPD support has greater influence on those already intending to stay, but it can still play a role in shaping the decisions of those considering leaving.



Respondents who intend to remain cite personalised CPD, protected time, collaborative learning, and research engagement as motivators.



Seven in ten respondents state that CPD addressing workload and wellbeing would increase their likelihood of staying.

Sample profile

Fig. 1 Q.7. Taking into account all of the CPD you've done in the last academic year (2024-2025), to what extent, if at all, did this improve your ability to perform your role? Base: All (n=1,039)

Fig. 2 Base: Senior Leaders (n=443), Teachers (n=596)

Fig. 3 Base: Primary (n=533), Secondary (n=411)

Fig. 4 Base: Coaching (n=213), Conferences or seminars (n=296), Peer observation (n= 297)

Fig. 5 Base: Education-related podcasts (n=220), Blogs (n=277), Professional publications or research (n= 514)

Fig. 6 Q.12 At an overall level, to what extent, if at all, do you feel the current CPD opportunities in your school are...? Base: All (n=1,085)

Fig. 7 Base: Senior Leaders (n=449), Teachers (n=636)

Fig. 8 Q.13 Which, if any, of the following statements about CPD apply to you and your educational setting? Base: All (n=1,085)

Fig. 9 Base: Senior Leaders (n=449), Teachers (n=636)

Fig. 10 Q.24 And in the next 3 years, how likely or unlikely are you to leave the teaching profession? Base: All (n=1085)

Fig. 11 Base: Senior Leaders (n=449), Teachers (n=636)

Fig.12 Base: 5 years or less (n=181), 6 - 15 years (n=465), 16 years or more (n=439)

Fig. 13 Base: Working part time (8 - 29 hours a week) (n=229)

Fig. 14 Base: Age 18 - 34 (n=322)

Fig. 15 Q.26 If your school were to increase its provision of the following CPD structures and approaches, to what extent, if at all, would this impact your likelihood to remain in the teaching profession? Base: All (n=1,085)

Fig. 16 Base: Unlikely to leave (n=601)

Fig. 17 Base: Likely to leave (n=345)



Section 3

Enablers and Barriers

This section examines the factors within schools that either support or hinder engagement with high-quality CPD.

Section 3: Enablers and Barriers

1. Mechanisms to Support CPD

Respondents were asked to reflect on a range of support mechanisms for CPD and indicate whether:

- ▶ **their school/trust school had provided them,**
- ▶ **their school/trust could not provide them, or**
- ▶ **their school trust could provide them but had not.**

“Staffing levels have meant that I don’t have the time or resources to implement some of the training I have had.”

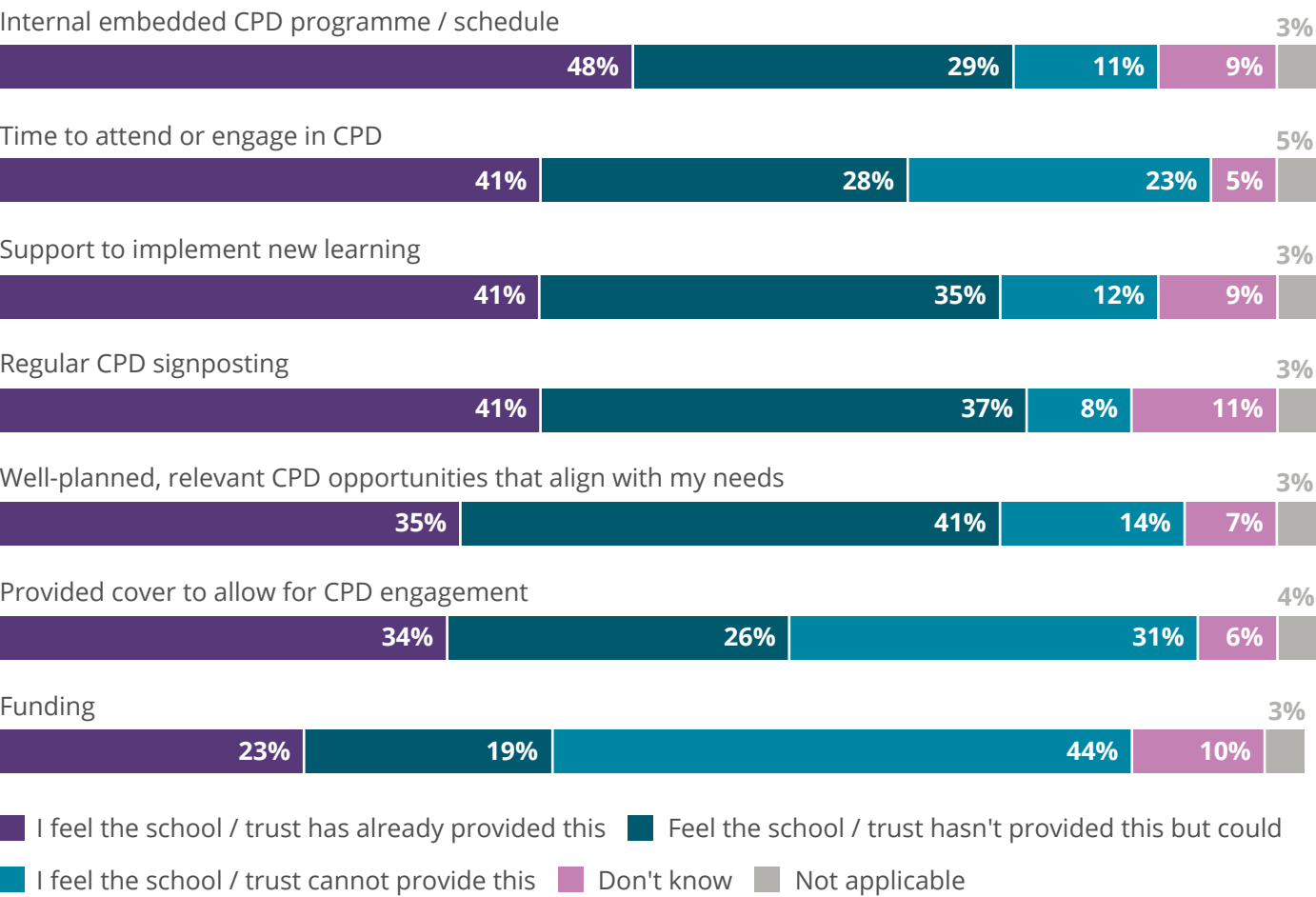


Fig. 1

Mechanisms Already Provided by Role

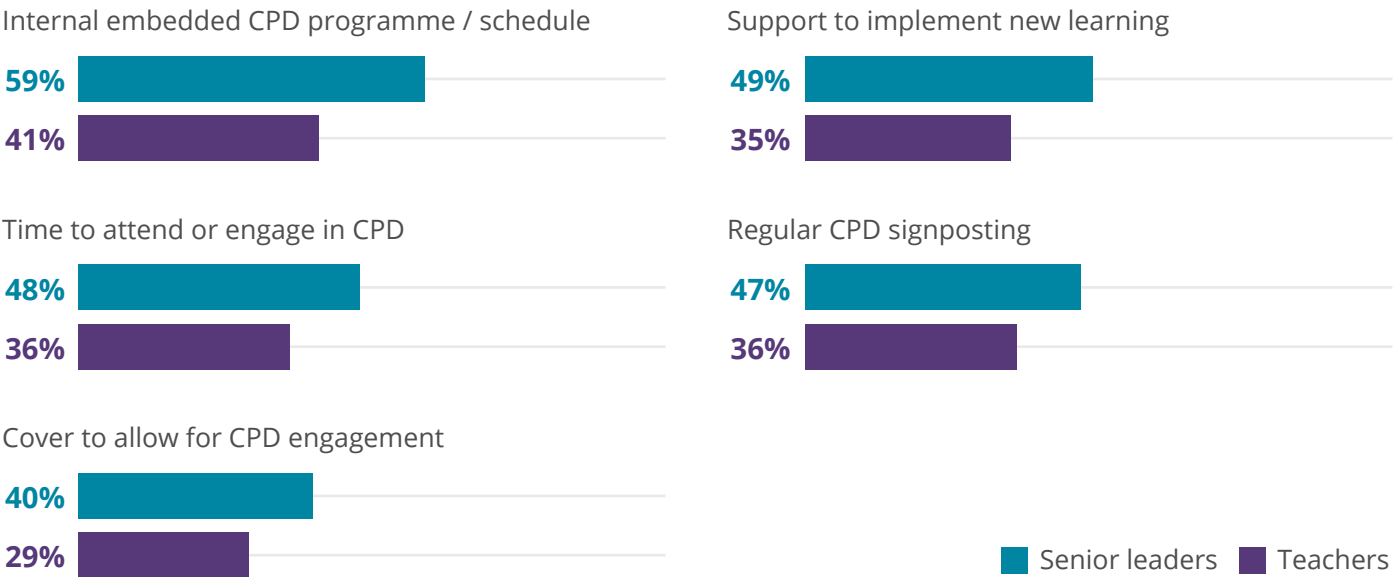


Fig. 2

Over three in five (62%) secondary school respondents say their school already **provides an internal embedded CPD programme/schedule** compared to just over two in five (40%) of all primary respondents.

Mechanisms not Provided but Respondents Felt Could be

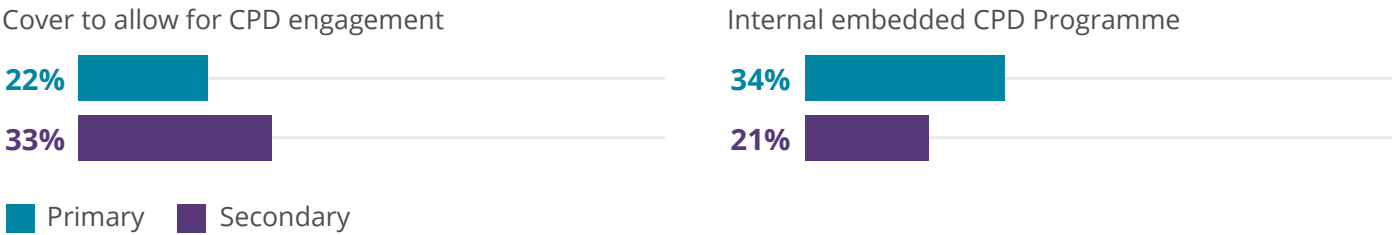


Fig. 3

Mechanisms not Provided and Respondents Felt Could not be by Phase

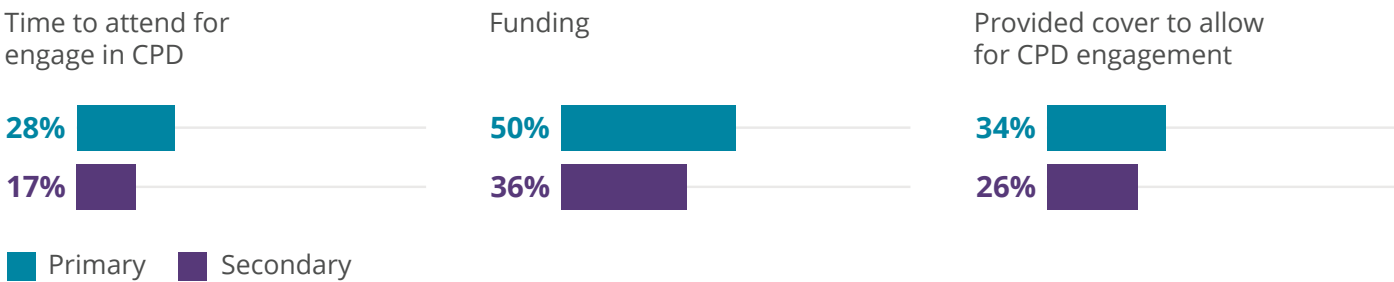


Fig. 4

2. Structure and Approaches

CPD Structures and Approaches Currently Provided

Respondents were asked which CPD structures and approaches were provided by their school.

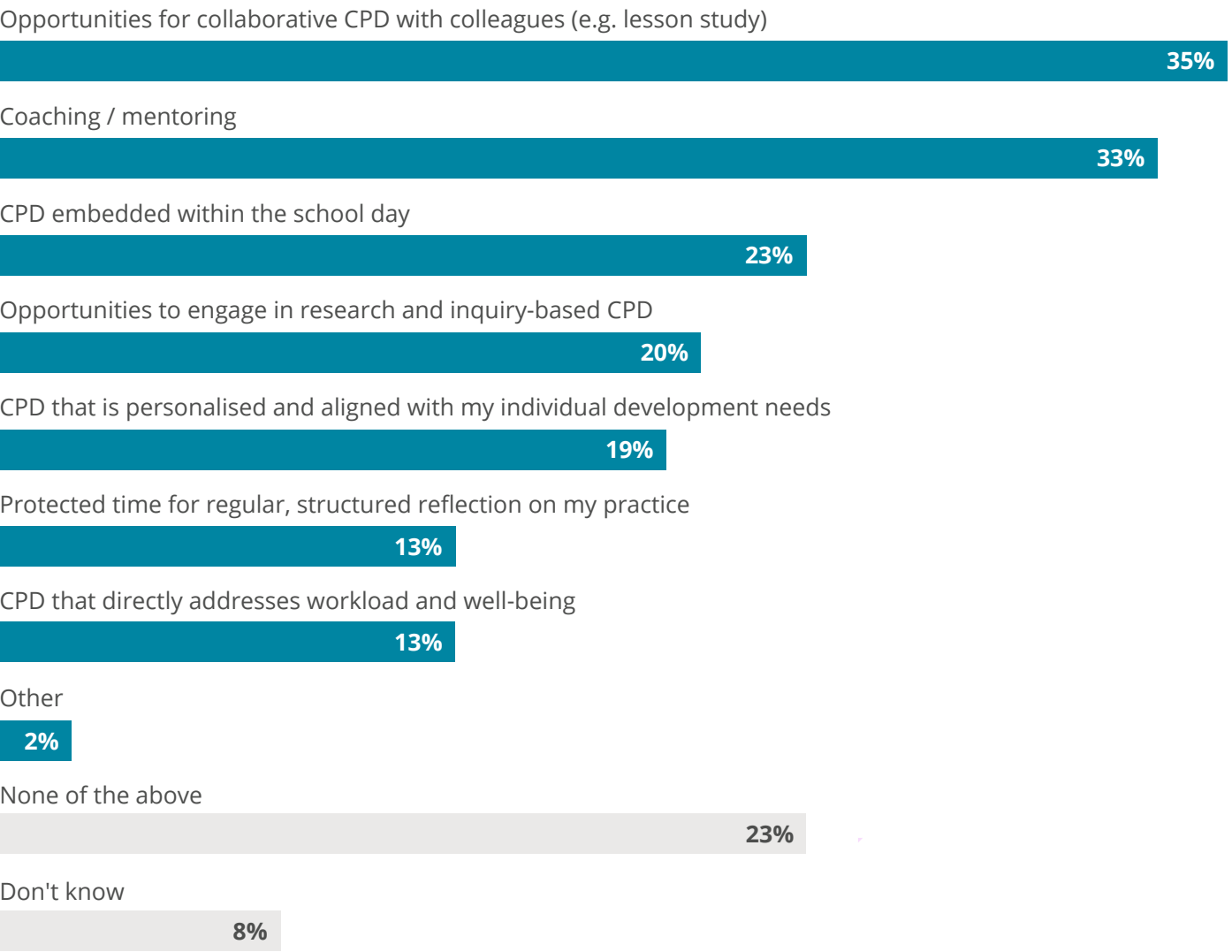


Fig. 5

Nearly a quarter (23%) of respondents were **unable to report any CPD structures** in place within their school with a further 8% saying they didn't know.

Structures and Approaches by Role

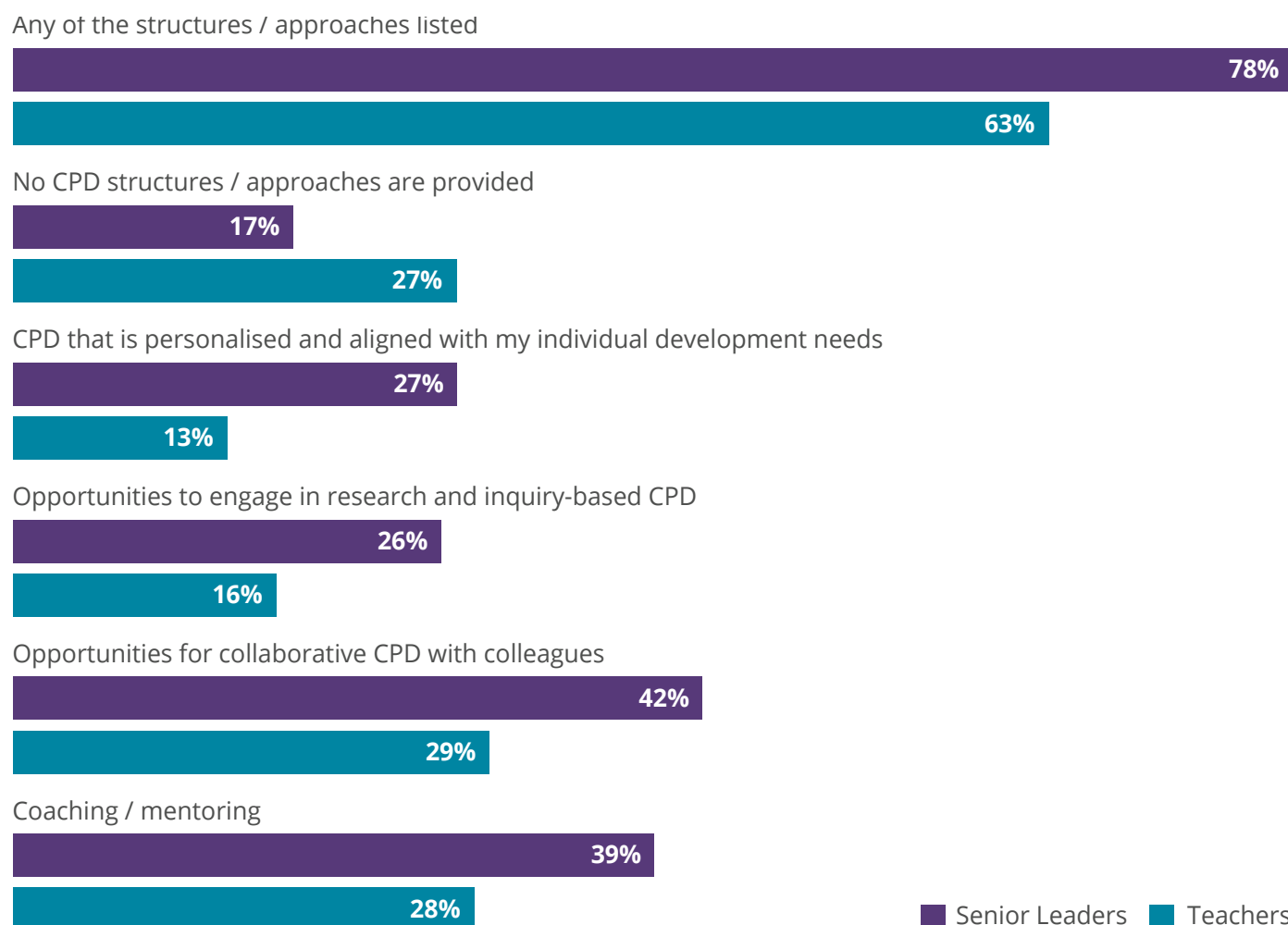


Fig. 6

Structures and Approaches by Phase

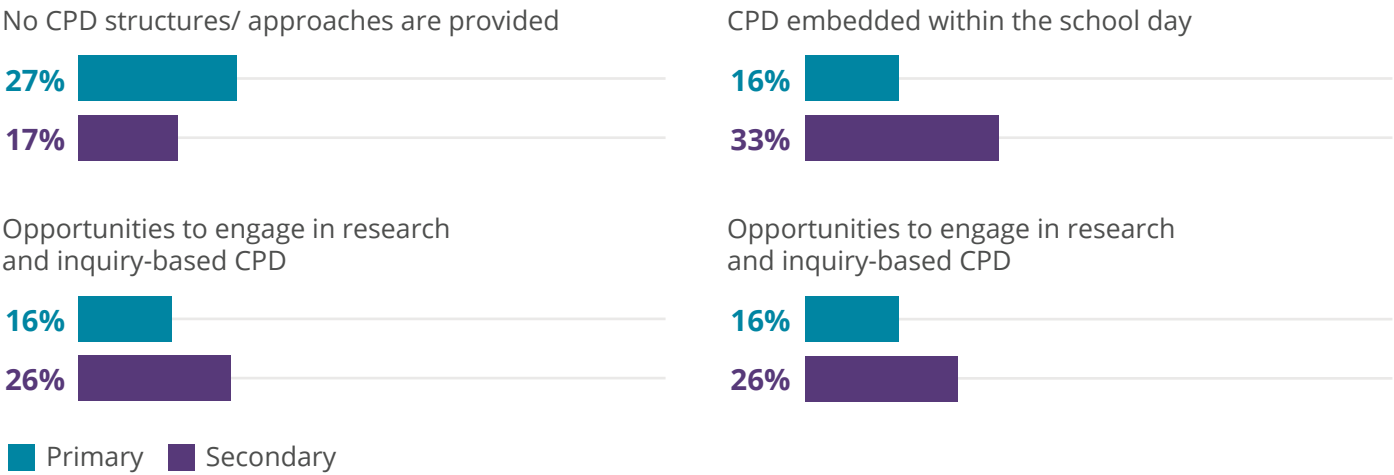


Fig. 7

3. Requirements for CPD

Support for Effective Engagement in CPD

Respondents identified the key factors needed to engage in CPD.

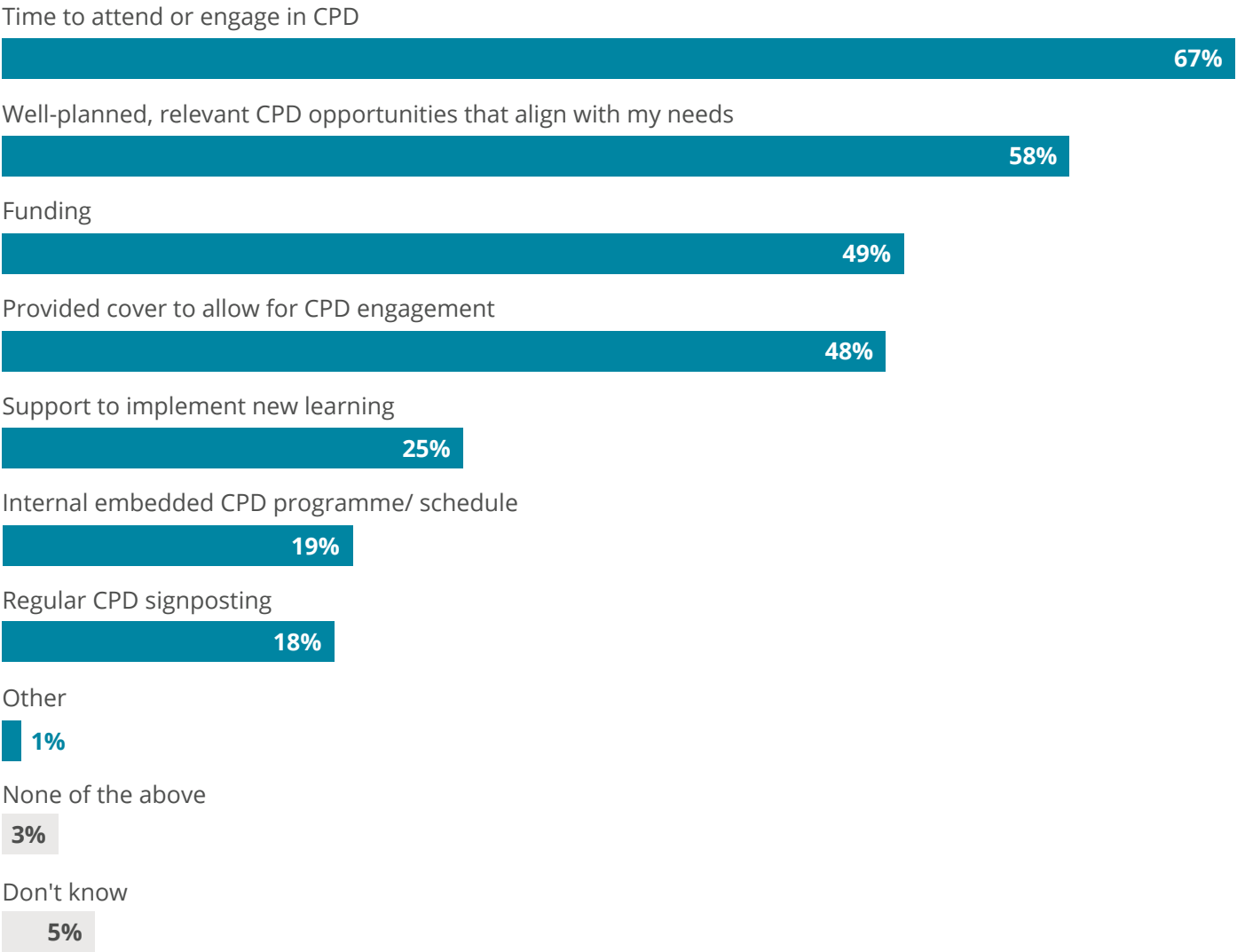


Fig. 8

CPD courses are very expensive so [there is] limited opportunity due to schools' shrinking budget.'

Key Factors by Role

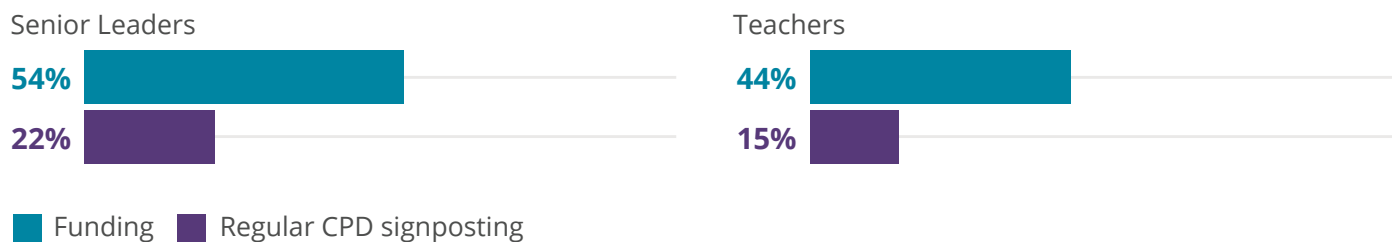


Fig. 9

*Primary respondents are more likely than secondary respondents to say they need **funding (54% vs. 42%), as well as cover to allow for CPD engagement (53% vs. 41%).***

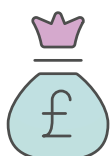
Enablers and Barriers - The Headlines

Mechanism for CPD



Around half (48%) of all respondents stated that their school or trust provides internally embedded CPD programmes / schedules.

Six in ten (62%) of all secondary school respondents report having an internally embedded CPD programmes/schedules compared to **four in ten** (40%) of all primary respondents.



Of the CPD support mechanisms that could be in place in schools/ trusts, dedicated funding was least cited (**23%**).



Compared to teachers, senior leaders are more likely to report that their school or trust has any mechanisms in place to support CPD.



Half (**50%**) of all primary respondents believe funding for CPD is not available – and cannot be made available.

Structures and Approaches for CPD



Collaborative CPD opportunities with colleagues is the most common structure schools use to support CPD (**35%**).



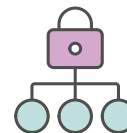
Respondents felt that structures concerned with time for reflection and workload and wellbeing were least likely to be in place to support CPD (**13%**).



Senior leaders are more likely than teachers to say any structures to support CPD exist in their current school (**78% vs 63%**).



Nearly **one in four** (23%) respondents said there were no CPD structures in place within their school.

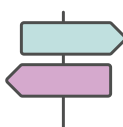


More primary than secondary respondents reported no CPD structures in place in their school (**27% vs 17%**).

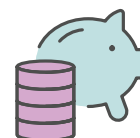
CPD Requirements



Time is the most frequently cited key requirement needed to effectively engage in CPD, selected by two-thirds of respondents (**67%**), followed by CPD opportunities that align with their own needs (**58%**).



Internally embedded CPD programme/schedules (**19%**) and regular signposting (**18%**) are the least cited key requirements for effectively engaging in CPD.



Primary respondents are more likely than secondary respondents to report needing funding (**54% vs 42%**) and cover to engage in CPD (**53% vs 41%**).

Sample profile

Fig. 1 Q.20b Now thinking about CPD available at your school/ trust, which statement is true for each of the following? Base: All (n=1,085)

Fig. 2 Base: Senior Leaders (n=449), Teachers (n=636)

Fig. 3 Base: All who feel the school/trust hasn't provided this mechanism but could (Primary: n=555; Secondary: n=427)

Fig. 4 Base: All who feel the school/trust cannot provide this mechanism (Primary: n=555; Secondary: n=427)

Fig. 5 Q.25 Which of the following, if any, CPD structures and approaches are currently provided in your school? Please tick all that apply. Base: All (n=1,085)

Fig. 6 Base: Senior Leaders (n=449), Teachers (n=636)

Fig. 7 Base: Primary (n=555), Secondary (n=427)

Fig. 8 Q.20a Which of the following, if any, would you need in order to effectively engage in CPD? Please tick all that apply. Base: All (n=1,085)

Fig. 9 Base: Senior Leaders (n=449), Teachers (n=636)



Section 4

Leadership of CPD

This section focuses on who leads CPD, how CPD is delivered, and what development needs exist at CPD leadership level.

Section 4: Leadership of CPD

1. CPD Leadership Role

Respondents were asked to identify where the primary leadership of CPD lies within their school.



Fig. 1

“Leadership does not support sharing or embedding CPD.”

CPD Leadership Response by Role

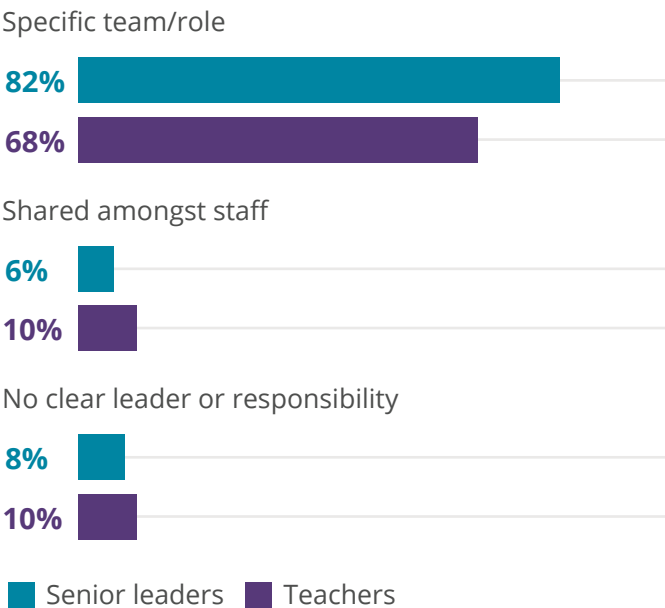


Fig. 2

CPD Leadership Response by Phase

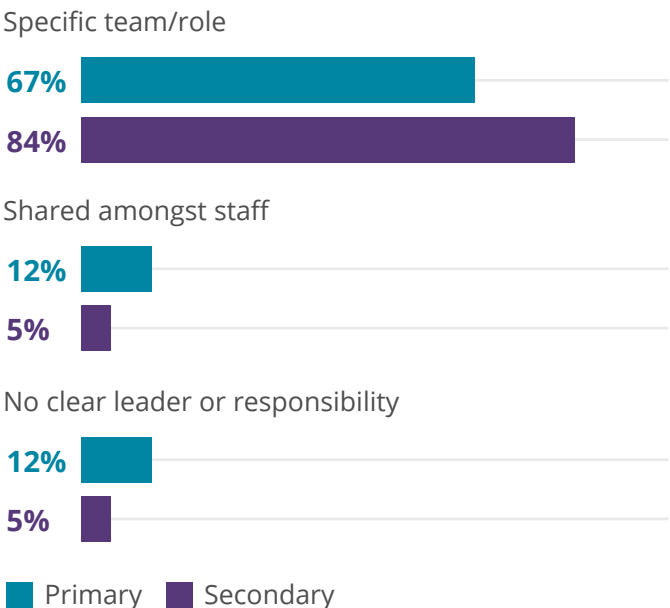


Fig. 3

Excluding those that responded 'Don't know'.

2. Development Needs

Identifying Need

Respondents were asked how their CPD needs were determined.

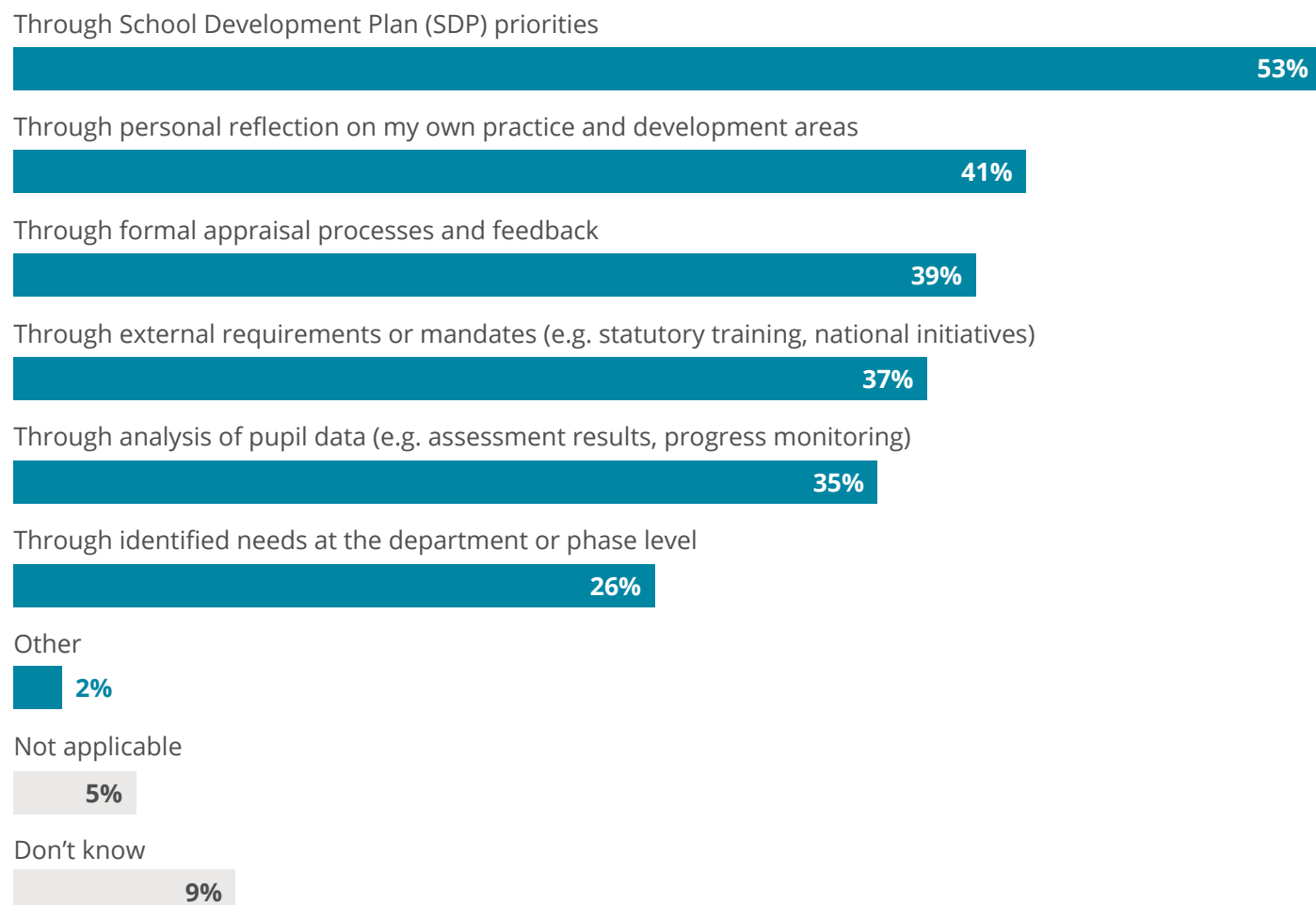


Fig. 4

Identification by Job Role

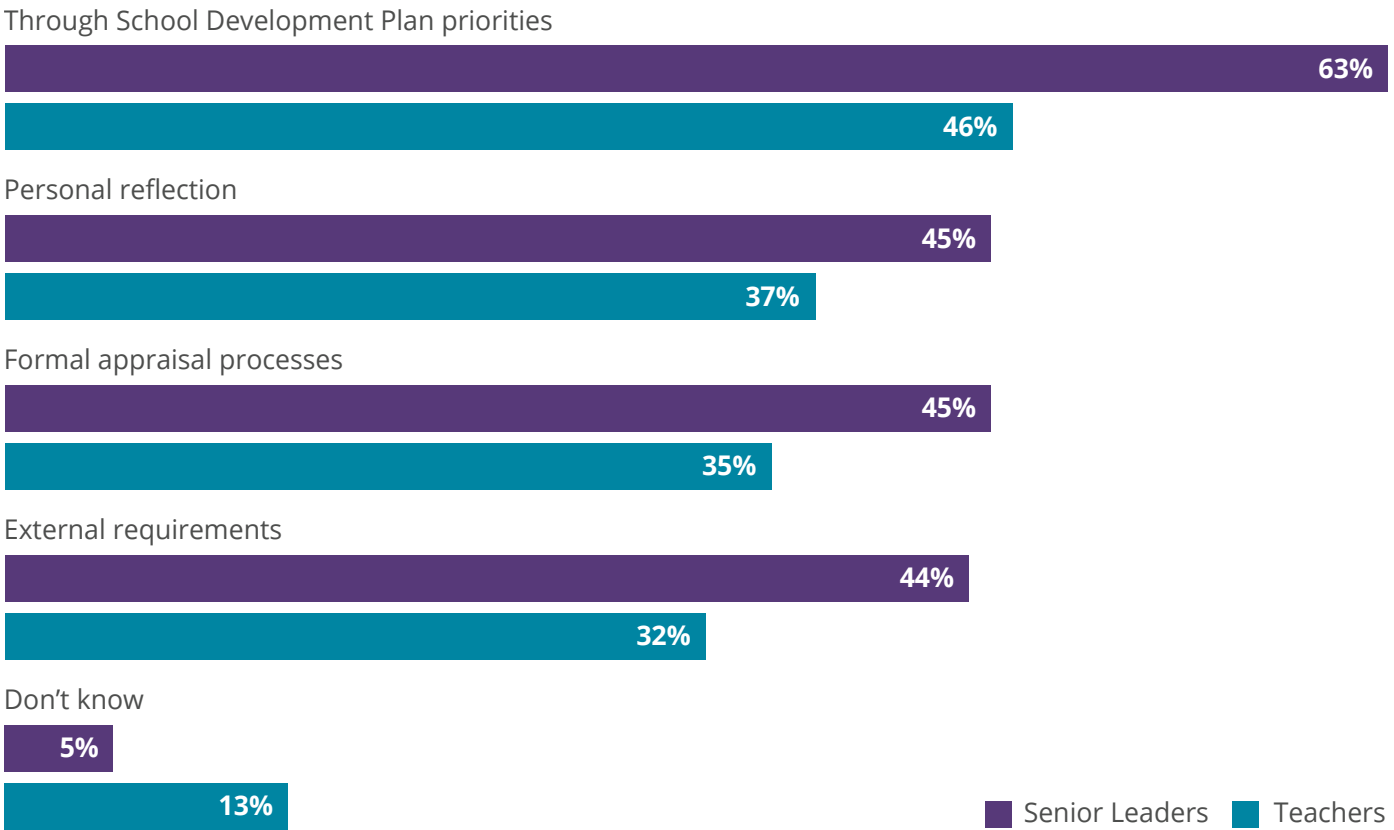


Fig. 5

Senior leaders are more likely to identify using all the ways mentioned above to determine development needs than teachers.

Identification by Phase

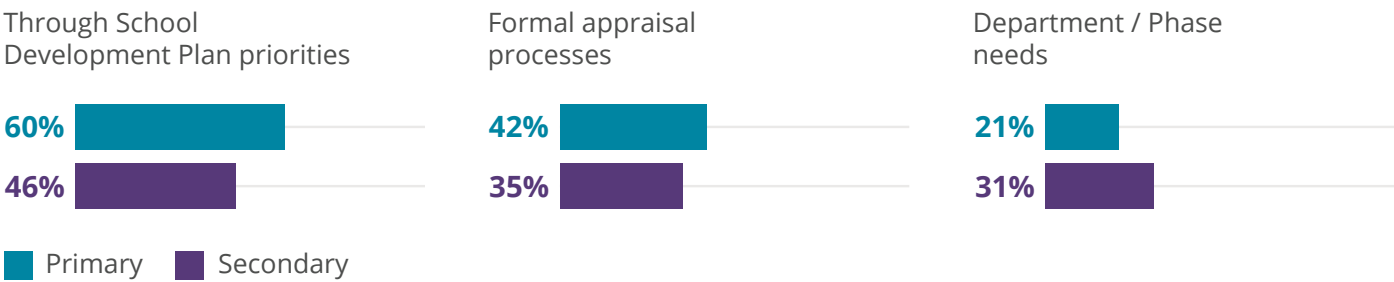


Fig. 6

3. Evaluation of CPD

Respondents were asked how CPD is evaluated in their setting.

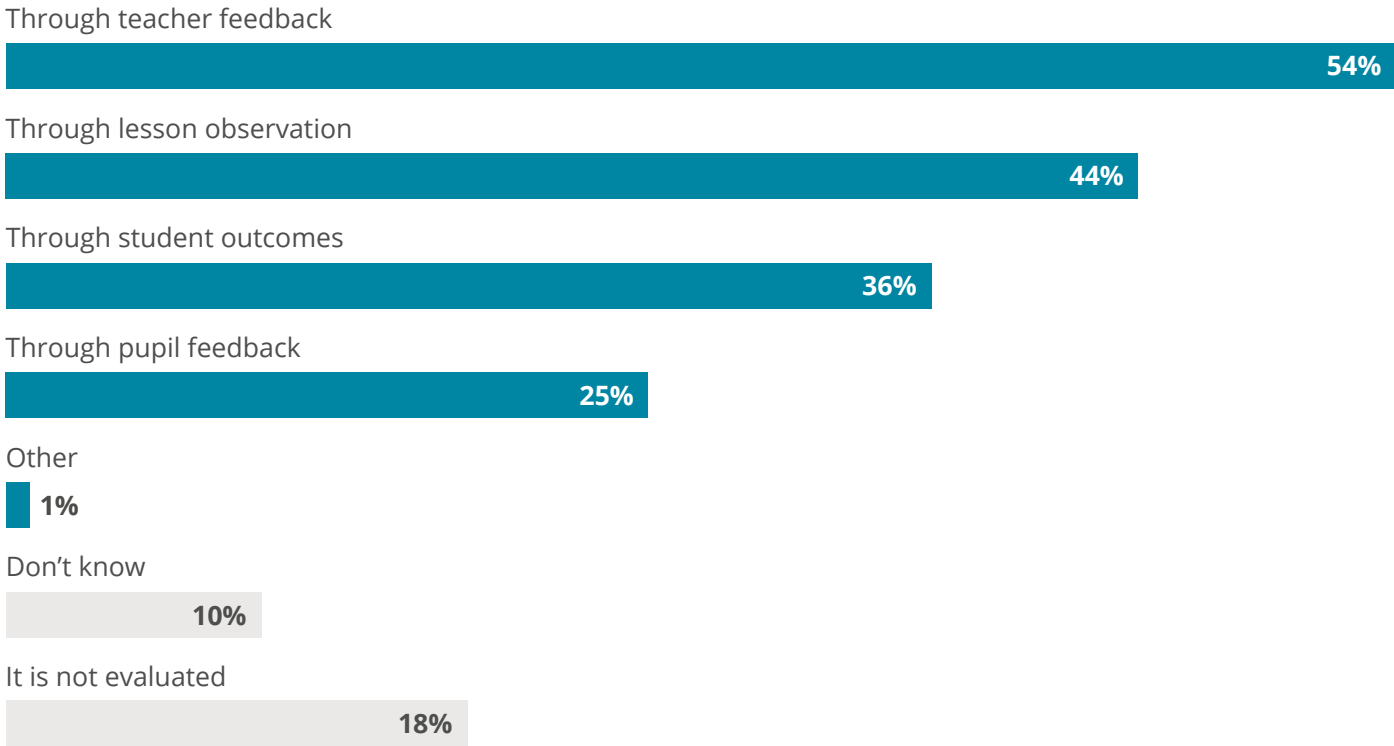


Fig. 7

Evaluation by Role

Teacher Feedback



Lesson observation



Student outcomes



Pupil Feedback



Not Evaluated



Don't know



■ Senior Leaders ■ Teachers

Fig. 8



There is no systematic review of CPD effectiveness.'

*A higher proportion of primary respondents said **CPD is not evaluated** compared to those in secondary (21% vs 14%).*

Future CPD Needs

Respondents were asked to identify their future CPD needs.

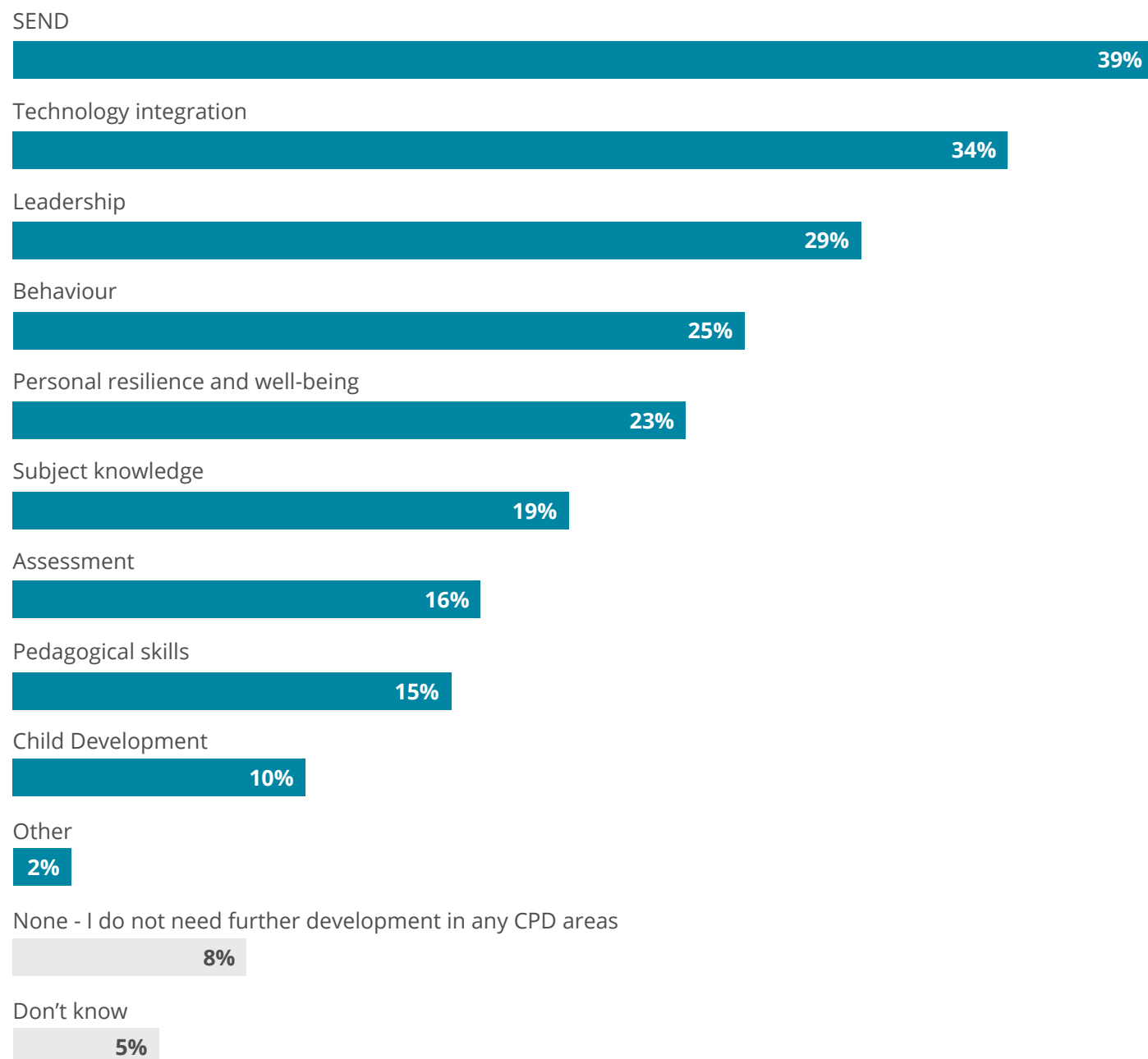


Fig. 9



I feel inadequately prepared to meet the needs of diverse learners within class settings when there are a number of students with SEND and no TA.'

Future CPD Needs by Role

Technology integration



Leadership



Behaviour



Personal resilience and well-being



Subject knowledge



■ Senior Leaders ■ Teachers

Fig. 10

Primary respondents are more likely than secondary respondents to feel they need further development in **SEND** (45% vs 31%).

Future CPD Needs by Tenure

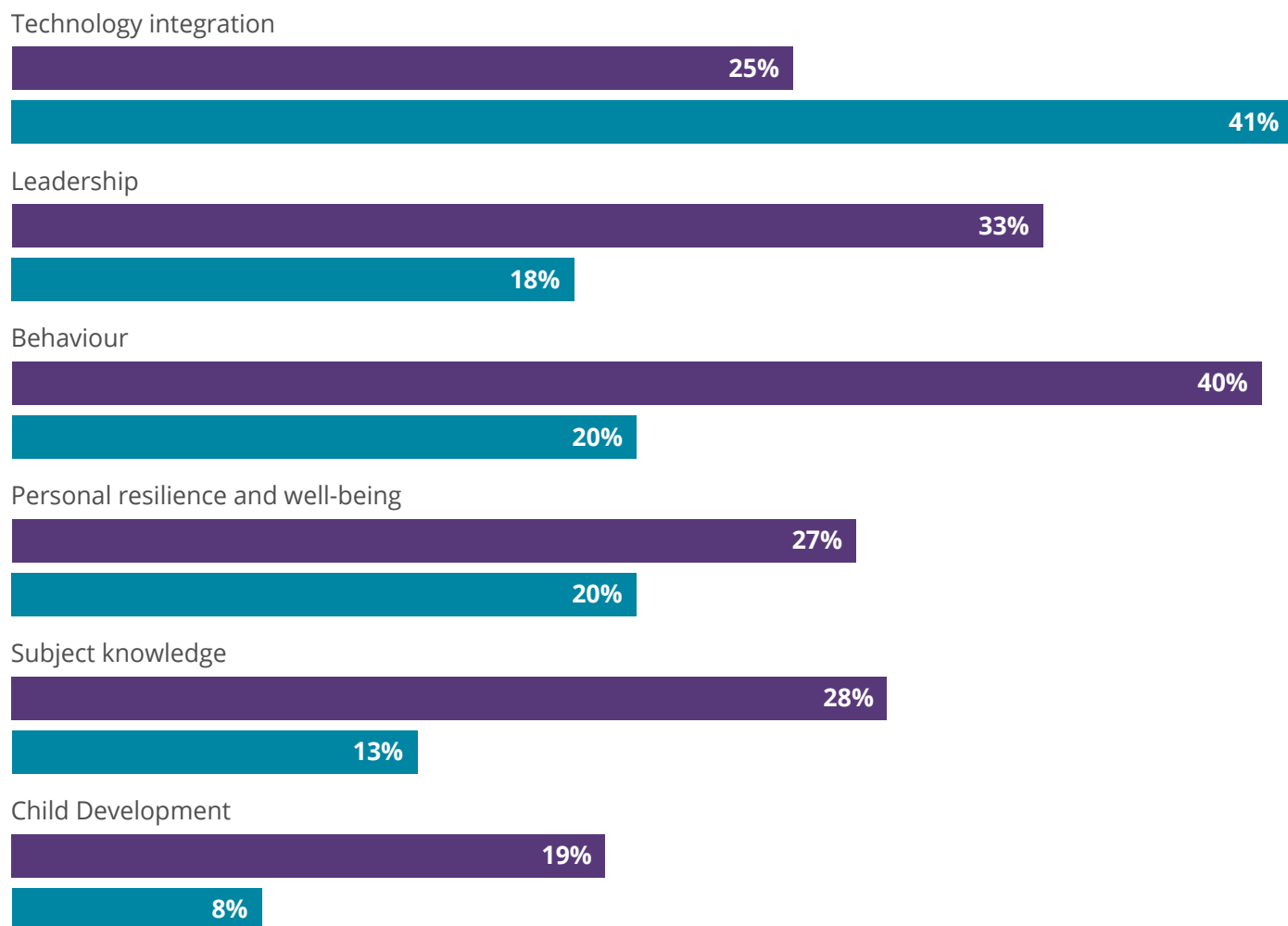


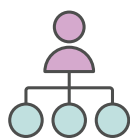
Fig. 11

■ Taught for 5 or fewer years ■ Taught for more than 16 years

The longer the teacher's tenure, the less likely** they are to feel they need for many listed **development opportunities.

Leadership of CPD - The Headlines

CPD Leadership Role



More than **six in ten** (62%) respondents say CPD responsibility lies with a member of SLT, though approaches vary, with **one in ten** (9%) reporting no clear leader or person(s) with responsibility for CPD in their setting.



Senior leaders are more likely than teachers to say CPD leadership sits with a specific team or role (**82% vs 68%**).



Secondary respondents are more likely to report the leadership of CPD being held by a dedicated role or team (**84% vs 67%** primary), while more primary respondents reported that there was no clear leader that they are aware of (**12% vs 5%** secondary).

Needs Analysis



Respondents most commonly reported that their CPD needs were identified through school development plan priorities (**52%**).



Senior leaders are more likely than teachers to cite all listed methods to determine professional development needs.



Six in ten (60%) of primary respondents say CPD needs are developed using school development plans, compared with **46%** of secondary respondents.

CPD Evaluation



Over half (54%) of the respondents reported that CPD is evaluated using teacher feedback, while only **a quarter** (25%) reported that it is evaluated through pupil feedback.



Less than **one in five** (18%) respondents say CPD is not evaluated in their setting. Senior leaders are more likely than teachers to identify one or more CPD evaluation method(s) being used (**77% vs 69%**).

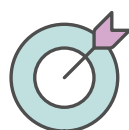


A higher proportion of primary respondents say CPD is not evaluated in their setting compared to those in secondary schools (**21% vs 14%**).

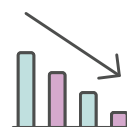


Senior leaders are more likely than teachers to identify one or more CPD evaluation method(s) being used (**77% vs 69%**).

Future CPD Needs



The top three CPD areas that respondents most prioritise for development are SEND (**39%**), technology integration (**34%**), and leadership (**29%**).



Areas identified as lowest priority are child development (**10%**), pedagogical skills (**15%**), and assessment (**16%**).



Primary respondents are more likely than secondary respondents to feel they need further development in SEND (**45% vs 31%**).



Respondents early in their careers (with up to five years teaching experience) are generally more likely than those with a longer tenure to seek development across almost all areas except technology integration, where this group is the least likely to feel this is required.



One in ten respondents (**11%**) with over 16 years' experience report no further CPD development needs at all.

Sample profile

Fig. 1 Q.29 Where does the primary responsibility for CPD lie within your school? Base: All (n=1,085)

Fig. 2 Base: Senior Leaders (n=449), Teachers (n=636)

Fig. 3 Base: Primary (n=555), Secondary (n=427)

Fig. 4 Q.14 Through which, if any, of the following ways are your development needs determined in your current school? Base: All (n=1,085)

Fig. 5 Base: Senior Leaders (n=449), Teachers (n=636)

Fig. 6 Base: Primary (n=555), Secondary (n=427)

Fig. 7 Q.18 Through which, if any, of the following ways is the impact of CPD evaluated in your school? Please tick all that apply. Base: All (n=1,085)

Fig. 8 Base: Senior Leaders (n=449), Teachers (n=636)

Fig. 9 Q.16 Which of the following CPD areas, if any, do you feel you need further development in? Please tick all that apply. Base: All (n=1,085)

Fig. 10 Base: Senior Leaders (n=449), Teachers (n=636)

Fig. 11 Base: 5 years or less (n=181), 16 years or more (n=439)



Conclusion & Recommendations

Reflections on our findings

Conclusion

This report attempts to provide a comprehensive analysis of the current state of teacher CPD in England. The findings present a mixed picture but do identify a profession that recognises the value of CPD and engages with it in various ways both formally and informally. However, too often this engagement takes place without the considered leadership required to ensure CPD is evidence-based, responsive to teacher and pupil needs, and capable of achieving positive impact on pupil outcomes.

Access to CPD

Time Spent

While the majority of teachers and leaders who engaged in formal CPD last year reported spending one to four days, almost a fifth (18%) invested less than a single day. This gap matters; **without time dedicated to learning, many teachers risk plateauing in their professional growth.** This raises questions about both the impact of INSET days and whether teachers have a shared understanding of what constitutes genuine professional development, as distinct from compliance activities. In addition, it highlights the need to consider the expertise of those delivering CPD itself, where and how they receive their own professional development

High workload and teacher shortages across the sector could help explain these patterns. Releasing staff for extended CPD is a challenge, and as a result, schools may default to shorter, more accessible, 'quick-fix' formats such as webinars and wholly online platforms. These can lack the nuance and understanding of need required for sustainable impact. Funding pressures further constrain opportunities, with schools prioritising low-cost or internally run CPD.

CPD Access and Confidence

Access to CPD is shaped largely by what is available within schools. Most formal CPD is internally delivered, largely led by colleagues. While it can be cost-effective, contextually relevant, and promote collaboration, it is important to consider those internal colleagues delivering it. Specifically, whether these colleagues have the necessary knowledge, skills, time, and support to do so effectively, as the quality of provision cannot exceed the capability and capacity of those responsible for designing and delivering it.

Coaching, mentoring, and peer observation were also the least common CPD formats teachers reported engaging in, which is surprising, given that these approaches are strongly supported by evidence as effective for improving practice and the recent investments made in increasing mentoring and coaching capacity in the system through the ECF Programme. Instead, schools favour formats that are easier to implement, timetable and scale, such as workshops and online sessions. This suggests that **systemic barriers, including time, funding, and accountability pressures, are influencing not just how much CPD teachers access, but also the kinds of CPD they are offered.**

Further patterns of access to CPD are shaped by role and responsibility. Senior leaders consistently report greater participation and confidence in selecting CPD, reflecting both their increased likelihood of having responsibility for leading CPD and their reduced exposure to practical barriers, such as cover. Their deeper understanding of whole-school needs and the greater visibility leaders have of CPD providers and networks, which build confidence, may also contribute to this disparity.

Beyond school, the prevalence of search engines as the primary tool for identifying CPD opportunities may expand access, but it also presents a significant challenge. In the absence of a centralised quality assurance system, teachers risk engaging with unvetted or low-impact training. This disconnect from quality-assured sources can weaken trust in CPD, leading to disillusionment and disengagement with ongoing professional learning.

Impact of CPD

Overall Impact

The report paints a complex picture of the impact of CPD across schools. While many teachers and leaders report benefits, a significant proportion see little or no improvement in their ability to perform their role. Over a third of respondents questioned the effectiveness of recent CPD, with teachers and secondary staff more likely to report this (39%). This lack of perceived impact may explain why time and cost are cited as barriers to engagement, as teachers are understandably hesitant to invest precious time in activities with unclear benefits. The findings suggest that this issue stems from CPD that is not personally applicable, delivered ineffectively, or not supported by school systems that would allow teachers to implement what they've learned.

Yet the evidence is clear that when CPD is high-quality, relevant, contextualised, and collaborative, it can significantly strengthen practice, boost professional confidence, and improve pupil outcomes. Coaching, in particular, emerges as the most impactful form of CPD for both teachers and leaders, although its relatively low uptake means the benefits it may offer are not being widely realised, and it could work to improve the personalisation of CPD.

Perceptions of CPD

Findings around perception of CPD reflect the wider sector pressures. Teachers continue to report high workload, recruitment and retention challenges remain acute, and school budgets are constrained. In this environment, schools may opt for CPD that is logistically manageable rather than educationally optimal. This reflects the central tension identified in the introduction: **high-quality CPD is one of the most powerful levers for school improvement, yet its potential is not being consistently realised.** Despite widespread agreement that CPD supports whole-school development, fewer than half of respondents feel it aligns with school improvement priorities or directly addresses their professional needs.

It is also important to note a discrepancy in perception between teachers and leaders. Senior leaders are more likely than teachers to believe that CPD opportunities contribute to whole-school improvement and enhance pupil outcomes. They are also more likely to believe that teachers' needs are effectively identified by leadership, whereas teachers themselves report that this is not always the case. This gap in perception may explain why many teachers do not feel their professional development is meeting their own needs or having a direct impact on their role.

CPD and Retention

While CPD is not the sole driver of a teacher's decision to stay in or leave the profession, it can be a powerful factor in retaining those who are still undecided. A majority said that increasing the provision of CPD that is personalised would increase their likelihood to remain in the profession, and many also cited CPD that is collaborative and enables engagement with research. **CPD that supports workload management and wellbeing had the biggest impact on increasing reported likelihood of sustaining a career in the classroom.**

The data reveals a critical gap between what teachers want and what they receive. 70% of teachers stated that CPD that directly addresses workload and wellbeing would increase their likelihood of staying in the profession, while a similar proportion (68%) said the same for personalised CPD. However, the current provision is limited, as only a minority of respondents report receiving these types of opportunities. This significant discrepancy shows that schools have a clear opportunity to invest in evidence-informed CPD leadership capacity. Acting early in this way could proactively address potential future retention issues.

Enablers and Barriers

Structure and Approaches

Embedded schedules or programmes were more commonly provided than other mechanisms to support CPD, but still only around half of respondents reported currently having access to this. They were more prevalent in secondary schools rather than primary settings, perhaps linked to the increased likelihood of CPD being led by a specific team or role (see leadership below). Despite being the most commonly reported mechanism, respondents did not see them as a top requirement for accessing CPD. Instead, they prioritised time and relevance suggesting that simply timetabling CPD does not guarantee meaningful engagement. Without protected time and alignment with staff needs, such structures can risk appearing tokenistic rather than meaningful.

Whilst collaborative opportunities were the most commonly cited structure provided to support CPD, the survey supports evidence referenced in the introduction that collaboration alone is not enough. Fewer respondents reported having protected time for reflection, or structures that account for workload and wellbeing were the least cited structures currently provided, and nearly one in four (23%) reported no mechanisms supporting CPD at all. This reinforces the need for purposeful, well-designed collaboration that does more than provide space for informal exchange. **To have real impact, collaborative structures must be complemented by the time, systems, and leadership** necessary to ensure they are focused on shared goals, grounded in evidence, and capable of fostering deeper professional learning.

Time and Resources

Time consistently emerges as the central constraint shaping CPD access, participation, and impact. Respondents report a lack of protected time for professional learning, with workload and wellbeing pressures further limiting engagement. This is reflected in the fact that time is also the top factor considered when selecting CPD, as they want to ensure that any investment of time leads to meaningful, lasting change. While budgets are undoubtedly stretched, the findings suggest that funding is not the primary obstacle and that too much money is being spent on ineffective programmes and interventions. Instead, the greater need lies in smarter use of existing resources, particularly in how time is allocated and CPD is personalised. Yet here, a misalignment is evident: leaders are more likely to believe that CPD structures such as cover or protected time are in place, whereas many teachers do not experience them in practice. This gap points to uneven implementation as well as weaknesses in communication and feedback, ultimately limiting the impact of CPD provision.

Leadership of CPD

CPD Leadership Role

More than six in ten respondents reported that responsibility for CPD lies with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), with a small minority, only 7%, reporting this is done by a specific leader role; one in ten said there was no any CPD leader at all. This inconsistency in approach to CPD leadership is an example of the pressures schools face in managing competing priorities with limited resources and decreased staffing. As a result, **CPD often lacks the specialist focus required for sustained impact.** Secondary respondents were more likely than those in primary settings to report that CPD was led by a specific role or team, whereas primary respondents more often stated that there was no specific leader. This difference is likely linked to the size and structure of schools, but raises concerns about the capacity of smaller settings to develop coherent CPD leadership approaches and ensure equitable access to high-quality CPD. Similarly, schools within MATs did not necessarily benefit from more central leadership: only 17% of those in a MAT reported using the MAT CPD lead when searching for CPD opportunities to develop their teaching or leadership practice.

Needs Analysis and Evaluation

Over half of respondents reported that CPD was evaluated through teacher feedback, and a quarter through pupil feedback, yet a significant minority (18%) could not identify any evaluation methods used at all. Only 15% of teachers said they received ongoing support after CPD, and 18% reported that impact was not evaluated at all. These gaps risk leaving CPD feeling generic, disconnected, or of limited value. For CPD to avoid this, evaluation must be embedded from the outset, assessing both staff expertise and the outcomes of previous initiatives so future planning builds on evidence rather than assumptions.

Yet, even where evaluation occurs, findings are often not shared, reinforcing the disconnect between teachers and leadership. Senior leaders were consistently more likely than classroom teachers to say that evaluation was happening, suggesting that existing mechanisms for CPD may not always be visible, meaningful, or trusted. At the same time, around a quarter of respondents felt their CPD was directly applicable to their role, and even less felt that it met the diverse needs of the staff; provision was more often tied to whole-school priorities. While alignment to school improvement plans is important, when this dominates at the expense of individual expertise, career stage, and aspirations, CPD risks becoming compliance-driven rather than growth-oriented.

Future CPD Needs

Looking ahead, respondents identified SEND, technology integration, and leadership as the top three development priorities, reflecting national challenges around inclusion, digital transformation, and succession planning. Teachers in primary settings were especially likely to highlight SEND as a priority, echoing concerns about insufficient external support and funding. At the other end of the scale, areas such as child development, pedagogical skills, and assessment were reported as the lowest priorities. However, these lower-priority areas still represent important foundations of teaching practice and could risk being overlooked if CPD planning focuses too narrowly on whole-school or system-level priorities.

Together, the survey findings on access, impact, barriers, and leadership highlight a profession committed to growth but constrained by fragmented provision, uneven access, and limited strategic prioritisation. **The issue is not a lack of motivation but the absence of coherent structures, clear communication, and sustained leadership focus.** While budgets are undoubtedly stretched, the findings suggest that money alone is not the decisive factor; rather, it is the strategic use of time, alignment of CPD with both school and individual needs, and robust evaluation that determine impact. Leadership, therefore, becomes pivotal: without a deliberate investment of attention and long-term planning, schools risk defaulting to short-term fixes that limit the sustained impact CPD can have on teacher expertise, confidence, and retention. For CPD to realise its full potential, and have a meaningful impact on pupil outcomes, leaders must foster a culture where professional learning is sustained, personalised, and meaningfully embedded in practice - transforming not only teachers' professional identity but also the wider capacity of schools to improve.



Recommendations

Government and other Policy Makers

- ▶ Recognise and resource CPD leadership as a strategic function within schools and MATs.
- ▶ An independent review of the Teachers' Standards for Professional Development should take place to take account of the increase in our understanding and expectations since the previous version was published in 2016.
- ▶ Government should undertake a comprehensive audit of current government and non-government spend across all CPD programmes to ensure there is an accurate picture of exactly what is being spent on teacher and school leader CPD. In particular, the Department of Education should be transparent about how much it is investing in different programmes.
- ▶ Commit to simplifying access to the current system, making it as easy as possible for school leaders and teachers to choose the right CPD for their contexts. This could be supported by a single portal available to all teachers and school leaders.
- ▶ Consider didagogy (the way teachers are taught) as well as content when designing and supporting CPD programmes.
- ▶ Extend and improve CPD provision beyond early-career frameworks (ECF) and leadership (NPQs) to better serve mid-career and classroom-focused teachers.
- ▶ Revisit assumptions about CPD and retention, placing more emphasis on helping teachers identify the right CPD for them, rather than assuming 'one-size-fits-all' national programmes will support retention.
- ▶ Focus on supporting CPD in areas where the current market is not providing the quality needed, including those areas highlighted by this report (SEND, wellbeing, workload, etc.). This could be supported by a small amount of seed-funding to support new initiatives.

School Leaders

- ▶ Make CPD leadership a defined, specialist role and invest in the skills and capacity of those with formal responsibility for CPD. Dedicated leaders need the time, authority, and professional expertise to plan strategically, align provision with both school priorities and individual needs, and evaluate impact.
- ▶ Ensure those internal staff delivering CPD are well equipped, supported, and confident to provide high-quality, evidence-informed learning opportunities. This should include making professional growth the central part of appraisal processes.
- ▶ Designate and protect time for staff to engage in various forms of CPD, as part of a supportive culture that encourages professional growth.
- ▶ Establish and embed robust processes for feedback and evaluation, ensuring CPD provision is clearly communicated and responsive to teachers' needs.

Teachers

- ▶ Take ownership of your own CPD needs. Consider what you need for your career and research the best options to reflect your experiences, subject, day-to-day practice, and pupil needs.
- ▶ Make CPD a priority and engage with organisations that are researching effective CPD and promoting its use throughout the system. Advocate for yourself and your colleagues.
- ▶ Ensure you reflect on the impact your CPD is having on your practice and outcomes for your pupils, to inform future opportunities for you and your colleagues. Evaluation and follow-up is needed to ensure CPD has the maximum impact.





References & Appendices

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Appendix A – Methodology

The Teacher Development Trust research study 'Teacher Development: The CPD Landscape in 2025' aimed to gather information around 4 key elements:

- ▶ Provision of CPD in England
- ▶ Impact of CPD
- ▶ Enablers and Barriers to Engaging in Effective CPD
- ▶ Leadership of CPD Across Schools

The research was conducted by You Gov using an online survey of 1,085 teachers and leaders drawn from YouGov's panel, with fieldwork taking place between the 22nd May and 5th June 2025 and experiences sought related to the academic year 2024/25. All respondents were contacted through the YouGov panel.

For the purposes of this survey, 'teachers' refers to all those working as a classroom teacher (including supply) and 'senior leader' refers to all those working in senior leadership roles (headteacher, principal, assistant headteacher etc.). Staff worked in a variety of settings including early years, primary, secondary, further, and all through. A detailed breakdown of the respondents by job role, phase, school type and region can be found in Appendix B.

Notes for interpretation

The findings throughout the report are presented in the form of percentages, and all differences highlighted between sub-groups are statistically significant at an alpha level of 0.05 unless otherwise indicated. In some instances, apparent differences between figures may not be considered 'statistically significant' due to sample sizes.

Where percentages do not sum up to 100, this is due to rounding, the exclusion of 'don't know' and 'prefer not to say' responses, or because respondents could give multiple answers.

Phase data excludes nursery/early years and all through settings but general data includes all.

All 'respondents' refers to both senior leaders and teachers.

In addition, information on overall levels of funding was gathered from publicly available sources, with analysis kindly provided by SchoolsDash. Sources are cited in the main report.

Appendix B – Sample Profile

A total of 1,085 responses were received from a YouGov panel of educators. The results outlined within this report were drawn from the weighted data to be representative of the wider education population. This table provides a summary of the sample profile by key demographics.

Sample group	Total number (unweighted)	Total number (weighted)
Total sample	1,085	1,085
Job role		
Headteacher / Principal	50	46
Deputy or assistant headteacher	104	104
Other senior level teacher	295	310
Classroom teacher	636	626
Phase		
Early years	55	48
Primary	555	559
Secondary	427	438
All through	48	40
School type		
Local authority / academy / free school / grammar school	989	1061
Independent school	74	17
Special school	19	4
Pupil Referral Unit	3	3

Region	Total number (unweighted)	Total number (weighted)
North East	50	52
North West	140	142
Yorkshire and the Humber	107	105
East Midlands	85	94
West Midlands	116	113
East of England	105	121
London	169	167
South East	196	178
South West	117	112



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The Teacher Development Trust is a UK charity which works to raise awareness of the importance of professional development for teachers and other education professionals. Founded by teachers in London in March 2012, the Trust promotes access to evidence-based, high quality training through its nationwide programmes.

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