SCHOOL-BASED CPD MODELS

"Training without support is like a paddy field without water. In a paddy field, water is the support. It helps the paddy to grow properly. If it grows properly, it will produce rice. If there is no support, then there will be no result." (Comment from a Bangladeshi teacher, quoted in Mahruf et al, 2012)

THIS GUIDE COVERS THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

1. What is school-based CPD?
2. What are the benefits of school-based CPD?
3. What can school-based CPD consist of?
4. How can a specific school-based CPD programme be developed?
   Case study and research 1 – India
   Case study and research 2 - Bangladesh
   Case study and research 3 – Zambia
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1. What is school-based CPD?

School-based CPD occurs when systems are established within an individual school to support the professional learning and development, most commonly of teachers, but in its most integrated form also of support and administration staff, and school leaders and managers. The concept is sometimes referred to as "workplace learning".

Lave's "Situated Learning Theory" (Lave & Wenger 1990) is useful in thinking about the concept – the theory postulates that learning is embedded within activity, context and culture. As a result, knowledge needs to be presented in authentic contexts — settings and situations that would normally involve that knowledge. Social interaction and collaboration are essential components of situated learning.

2. What are the benefits of school-based CPD?

- It shapes CPD to reflect the needs of the actual school context and culture
- It enables CPD to be focused on improving the learning outcomes of specific groups of learners and individuals within those groups
- It uses evidence of actual practice in the school to establish intended outcomes for CPD
- It allows for meaningful collaboration between teachers who are working in the same context and facing the same opportunities and challenges in their subjects
- It enables CPD to be sustained throughout the school calendar
- It brings CPD directly under the responsibility of the school leadership who can relate it to the priorities of the school

These benefits correlate with the evidence for effective teacher development, for example in Cordingley et al (2015).

3. What can school-based CPD consist of?

All effective CPD activities can be organised at the school level, including:
- Communities of practice, such as teacher activity groups
- Learning by observation and feedback on being observed
- Joint lesson planning and review
- Mentoring and coaching of teachers by experienced experts
- Teacher research
- Training workshops
- Teacher projects to develop teaching and learning within the school such as curriculum and policy development, creating learning resources or integrating technology
- Creating a reflective practice culture among teachers in the school
- Training and development of headteachers to support teachers' professional learning

Teaching for Success supports this whole school approach, for example through its CPD frameworks for teachers, teacher educators and school leaders.
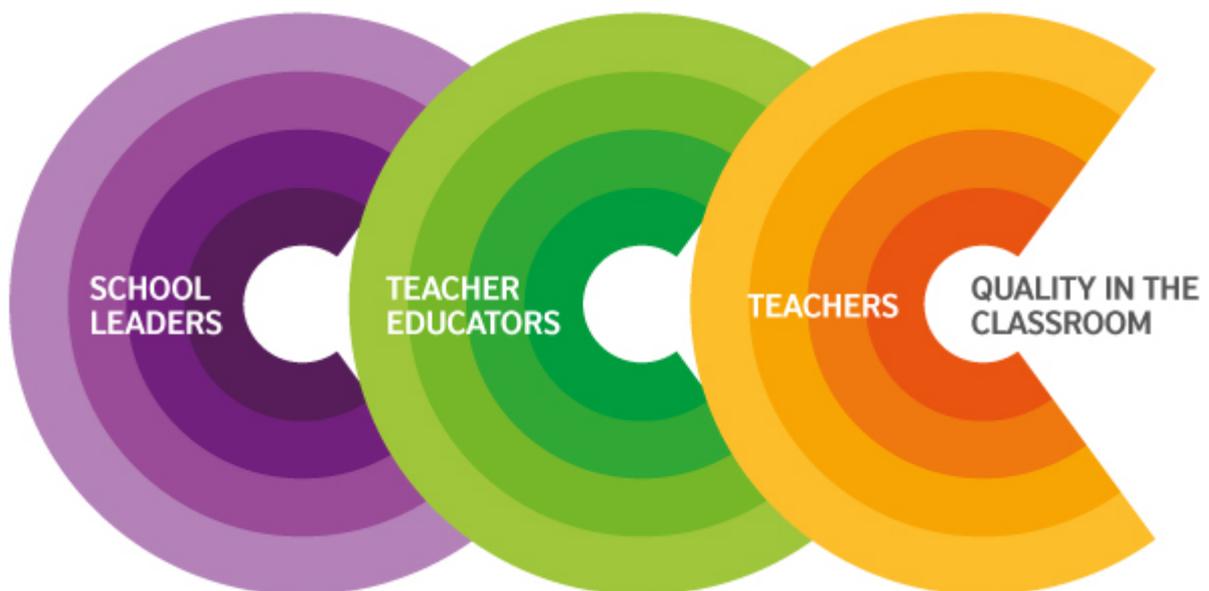
4. How can a specific school-based CPD programme be developed?

We take a solutions-based approach to school improvement:

Evaluate needs and priorities accurately → Design quality projects and programmes → Deliver quality projects and programmes → Measure impact accurately → **QUALITY IN THE CLASSROOM**

Key to successful school-based programmes is the initial identification of needs and priorities, in particular:

- What school-based approach will work best within the schools in the particular context:
    - Are there systems already in place which can be exploited?
    - If not, what kind of approach would be most comprehensible within the context?
- What capacity to support the chosen approach is there in the schools and in the school system more widely? What training does this need? What other capacity needs to be developed?
- What are the intended outcomes of the CPD programme?
    - What specific changes in teachers' behaviour and performance?
    - What specific improvements in the learners' behavior and performance?

When accurate information to answer these questions has been gathered, then decisions can be made about the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of the programme can be made.

Case study and research 1 - India

Tyagi (2010) School-based instructional supervision and the effective professional development of teachers

> ***Key ideas:***
> Head teachers play a central role in the CPD of teachers. Evidence shows that training them to support their teachers' development in school is the most effective use of heads' time in improving the quality of teaching and learning (Robinson 2009)

The paper explores school-based instructional supervision in India at the senior secondary level. It defines school-based instructional supervision as "the continuous assessment, guidance and support given to teachers for their professional development and improvement in the teaching–learning process."

It finds that many schools in both the government and private-aided schools rely on external inspection by district education officers to monitor the quality of teaching. Where officers actually visit schools, however, these inspections do not contribute to improving teaching-learning processes.

The study focused on the role of the head teacher in supporting school-based instructional supervision and found three key activities which heads carried out in successfully supporting it:

1. continuing teachers' classroom observation, guidance, support and help, meetings, and dialogue
2. supporting self-appraisal by teachers
3. organising school-based professional support activities

It argues for more external support to give heads "greater confidence and leverage for motivating and encouraging teachers to develop subject competence and professional growth. …Unlike top-down models of supervision, decentralized support encourages teachers to participate in planning and decision-making for their professional development. In the Indian context, heads of government and private-aided schools could equip themselves to use school-based instructional supervisory practices, thus becoming more responsible for developing teachers professionally." (p 123)

Teaching for Success

Case study and research 2 - Bangladesh

Mahruf et al (2012) School-based teachers' professional development through technology-enhanced learning in Bangladesh

> **Key ideas:**
> "Instructional change must be incremental and specific. Teachers need concrete, practical suggestions to understand how to make changes" (p 39)
> Teacher collaboration in schools can support this effectively, especially when self-study materials and a wider programme of support are provided

The paper evaluates the pilot of the English in Action project which used a school-based CPD approach to achieve impact on classroom practice, using technology to reach teachers across dispersed schools and at scale. This graphic illustrates the parts of the programme
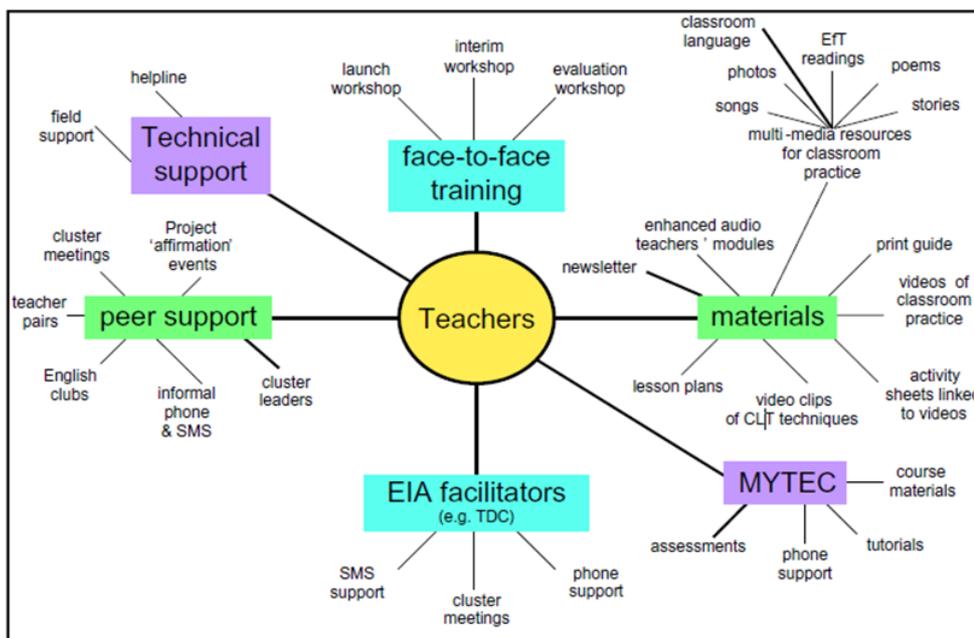
The process for setting up the school-based approach in this project included:

1. **an orientation workshop** to help participants understand the approach
2. **a teacher guide**, with 12 modules of different CLT teaching and learning methods, including audio and video materials, for self-study
3. **pair support system** with two teachers from each school following the self-study materials together and developing ways to improve their own teaching and learning in school
4. **cluster meetings** fortnightly for formal training on different modules from the teacher guide, for planning and demonstrating lessons in different groups and sharing experiences beyond their own school context
5. **school visits** by EIA project staff to observe and give feedback – this increased the teachers' critical thinking and put a level of expectation on them to strive to improve their practice

Case study and research 3 - Zambia

Haßler et al (2015) School-based professional development in a developing context: lessons learnt from a case study in Zambia

> ***Key ideas:***
> The school organisation influences the ease with which a continuing professional development (CPD) programme can be implemented, and the head teacher plays a crucial role.
>
> Collaborative lesson planning and review can be an effective focus for school-based CPD, provided it is facilitated by an external mentor.

This paper reports on the development and evaluation of a programme of school-based professional development in basic (primary) schools in Zambia. The programme supported more interactive forms of subject pedagogy, particularly focused on teaching and learning of mathematics and science, and also explored the feasibility of introducing digital technologies and high-quality Open Educational Resources (OER) where other resources are scarce.

The CPD programme:
- Schools were twinned and one day sessions held in each school, with participants from both schools present. The day consisted of observing lessons in the morning with one of the teachers, followed by joint lesson review and planning (the external facilitators were participant observers)
- Lesson reviews entailed extended conversations with the teachers outside lesson time, collectively reflecting on the relative successes and difficulties of teaching the lesson, including technology use. One objective was to extract effective strategies for interactive teaching and generalise them for use in future lessons
- Lesson planning sessions were collaborative. Participants jointly identified suitable forthcoming curriculum topics within primary mathematics and science and devised activities that exploited the technologies available in each school context. Lesson plans were immediately committed to templates, providing scaffolding to help teachers order their thoughts

The evaluation finds the following guiding principles for in-school professional development to support more interactive pedagogical thinking and practice in other, similar contexts:
- Reflective dialogue through post-lesson review and planning explicitly encourages a cycle of reflective practice and critical inquiry, and supports ongoing, deep change
- Teachers are construed as professionals, capable of critiquing and developing their practice
- The programme is practical and practice-focused through immediate development of concrete teaching plans
- Dialogue poses sensitive and structured challenges, focusing on students' learning needs and raising expectations of their capabilities
- Face-to-face opportunities support learning from and with mentors and colleagues
- Concerns and constraints of teachers and the school environment are taken into account, offering appropriate and sustained development opportunities

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