



Acer Academy

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Policy

Principles

At Acer Academy, we believe that effective CPD is integral to school improvement. Investment in staff development enhances motivation, improves practice, and fosters a positive climate for learning that benefits both staff and pupils.

Our CPD programme is designed to:

- Be staff-owned: Staff are encouraged to reflect on their practice and identify areas for development, ensuring their professional growth aligns with personal and school priorities.
- Be relevant to context: CPD activities must have practical application, enabling staff to experiment with and embed successful strategies.
- Build on expertise: Recognising and expanding existing skills increases the likelihood of success and promotes confidence.
- Be collaborative: Opportunities for discussion, reflection, and shared learning strengthen professional relationships and improve outcomes.
- Be sustained: Ongoing CPD activities provide the greatest impact on embedding new approaches.
- Access external expertise: External courses, mentoring, coaching, and online resources are used to supplement in-house training.

Values and Entitlements

All staff at Acer Academy have an entitlement to high-quality CPD as part of their professional growth and contribution to the school's success. CPD planning is directly linked to the School Improvement Plan and informed by individual and organisational needs, such as:

- Outcomes from performance management reviews.
- School improvement priorities.
- OFSTED feedback and other external evaluations.
- Staff feedback and requests.
- Specific pupil needs, including those related to ASD and SEMH.

Our ultimate goal is to create a learning community where staff continually develop their capacity for improvement through collaborative and supportive cultures.

Leadership and Management of CPD

The Executive Headteacher and Head of School are responsible for overseeing CPD at Acer Academy. This includes organising opportunities, monitoring impact, and ensuring equality of access for all staff. CPD opportunities are regularly reviewed to ensure alignment with school priorities and staff needs.

Training can include:

- In-house training led by staff or external experts.
- External courses, conferences, and webinars.
- Peer coaching and professional networks.
- Collaborative planning, observations, and research projects.
- Distance learning and accredited qualifications.

The school evaluates the impact of CPD on teaching, learning, and pupil progress through monitoring, observations, and feedback.

ASC and SEMH CPD

Acer Academy recognises the unique needs of pupils with ASD and SEMH. Specialist CPD is embedded in our approach to ensure staff are equipped to support these pupils effectively. Our specialist autism teacher ensures that all staff receive regular training on understanding and managing the needs of pupils with ASD, while SEMH-focused CPD includes behaviour management, emotional regulation strategies, and trauma-informed practices.

Teacher Quality and CPD Priorities

At Acer Academy, we recognise that teacher quality is positively correlated with student outcomes. As such, teaching CPD is a high priority, with the aim of ensuring that at least 50% of meeting time is dedicated to high-quality teaching practices. All teachers at Acer Academy have access to a Step Lab account. Step Lab is an innovative tool that helps embed research-based pedagogy by breaking down strategies into manageable, actionable chunks. Teachers are directed to explore specific modules based on whole-school needs or personal feedback from performance management cycles. The platform includes video examples that demonstrate techniques in real-world contexts, with the aim of supporting teachers in refining their practice. Over time, these subscription videos will be replaced with our own examples of best practice within Acer Academy, further reinforcing effective teaching techniques tailored to our setting.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Staff are encouraged to reflect on and evaluate their CPD experiences to inform future training needs. Evaluation forms are completed following external courses, and the CPD lead conducts regular reviews to assess the impact of training on staff performance and pupil outcomes. Additionally, we maintain a comprehensive CPD log of all training completed across the academic year. This allows us to proactively set priorities for upcoming years. Findings are shared with the Senior Leadership Team and governors to shape the next cycle of CPD planning.

Supporting CPD Initiatives

o ensure CPD meets the diverse needs of staff and pupils, Acer Academy supports a broad range of initiatives, including:

- Participation in local and national networks.
- Opportunities to share best practices and observe effective teaching strategies.
- Developing in-house resources and delivering training within the school.
- Collaborating with other schools to enhance inclusive practices.
- Collaborating with other schools from within the trust and utilising the trust School Improvement Groups for CPD where appropriate.
- Creating an environment that prioritises excellence in learning and teaching.

At Acer Academy, we are committed to fostering a culture of continuous professional growth that directly contributes to improved outcomes for all pupils, particularly those with ASD and SEMH.