



Professional Learning at Wilson's 2022-23

Professional Learning is coordinated by the **Lead Teacher team** and developed using evidence from lesson observations, feedback from workshops and mentor meetings, and regular conversations about teaching and marking; **SLT** and **Heads of Department** discuss the written records of the teaching they observe. The **Research Assistant to SLT** and other staff (for examples members of the **Learner Development Team**) also contribute to the planning of Professional Learning. A wealth of literature (including **research publications** and materials promoted by the **Chartered College of Teaching** or **ResearchEd**) is also used to plan Professional Learning.

During 2022-23, a new working group will be established to discuss future developments in professional learning. Any member of teaching staff may be part of the **Leading Teachers' Learning Team** and further details will follow later in the year.

The vision for effective teaching is spelled out in the [Teaching Excellence Criteria](#).

The goal is that teachers at Wilson's will not just be engaged in Professional Learning, but that they will discuss, debate and develop a vision for their own teaching, engage with relevant research, reading and training to bring about continual improvements in their practice.

Professional Learning theme 2022-23: The Attuned Classroom

The Attuned Classroom is one in which the teacher and every pupil are aware throughout a lesson of their collective responsibility to remain attentive (engaging cognitively by questioning and reasoning), unfailingly responding to others in a compassionate and non-judgemental way.

The scope of Professional Learning at Wilson's (2022-23)

Personalised and subject knowledge elements	Pedagogical Content Knowledge elements	Pedagogical Knowledge elements
<p>One-to-one and small group meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge and Skills Reviews. Feedback from lesson observations and actions that follow. Additional mentoring as required – particularly for ECT and unqualified teachers; additional training (e.g. programmes for middle-leaders, aspiring senior and pastoral leaders) <p>Self-selected reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual selections of literature for Reading Week 	<p>Professional learning in department meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heads of Department devise training sessions based on Knowledge and Skills Reviews completed by each member of their department each September. <p>Subject-leaders' professional development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer-review meetings with Heads of Department in similar schools. <p>Reading material directed by the Head of Department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Week items selected by Head of Department. 	<p>Whole-staff training sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction concepts such as <i>The Attuned Classroom</i>, cognitive load theory, principles of effective instruction, etc. in 'transmissive' sessions, with opportunities for critical review in discussions. <p>Reading material: Research-informed newsletter published termly</p>
<p>Collaborative Lesson Research is intended to complement each of these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personalised and subject knowledge: one-to-one meetings with another colleague and individual reflection within the teachers' specific context; the lesson will cover challenging subject content. Pedagogical content knowledge: choice of research information / reading, the planning and delivery of the lesson must focus on the pedagogical content knowledge required. Pedagogical knowledge: teachers are encouraged to draw on other literature, tools and resources that have been promoted during the year. 		

A recent history of Professional Learning themes:

2016-17: *The Learning Pit* – focus: building pupils' independence and resilience

2017-18: *Teaching Difficult Concepts* – focus: subject pedagogy

2018-19: *Overload* – focus: cognitive load theory and the teenage brain

2019-20: *Memory I* – focus: 'principles of effective instruction'

2020-21: *Memory II* – focus: learning and recall after lockdown

2021-22: *Introducing Knowledge and Skills Reviews*

Personalised feedback and mentoring	<p>Personalised feedback about teaching (after lesson observations) considers how to build on each teacher's own strengths (in the context of previous observations as well as the school's development plan) with reference to Teaching Excellence Criteria.</p> <p>New staff receive additional mentoring (as can any member of staff on request) which includes additional developmental lesson observations as part of a planned year-long mentoring cycle.</p>
Additional targeted training based on experience or role	<p>Enhanced programme available for new staff, middle leaders, aspiring senior leaders ('Whole School Mindset' and 'Pastoral Mindset'); additional learning is integrated into Head of Department, Head of Year, Pupils Support Team department, pastoral, and tutor team meetings.</p> <p>New members of staff also receive additional professional learning sessions tailored to the school context.</p>
Evidence-based areas for development selected and suitable training devised	<p>Teachers are introduced to concepts such as cognitive load theory, principles of effective instruction, etc. and are urged to review these critically. Themes are explored in a range of ways: e.g. teenage brain (mental health, implications for tutors, as well as considerations of teachers when planning teaching and learning). In 2022-23 all staff will have the opportunity to revisit previous areas of school development through department-based professional learning.</p>
Reading and research	<p>Reading Week allows each member of staff to select suitable literature to improve their teaching with guidance from Head of Department. Occasional mailshots are intended to provoke further discussion and debate. A regular 'Research Informed Newsletter' is published by the Research Lead to SLT.</p>
Opportunities for collaboration	<p>Collaborative Lesson Research was re-launched during 2021-22 alongside other opportunities for teachers to discuss and debate their practice within and beyond their subject discipline, during CPD sessions, departmental meetings and other sessions. Additional peer observations encouraged among new staff.</p>
Self-direction and self-review	<p>Teachers take responsibility for their own professional development via the performance management process. Knowledge and Skills Reviews, developed by Heads of Department, encourage teachers to identify areas for further professional development and enable, in 2021-22, the Head of Department to plan a year-long cycle of Professional Learning sessions based on specific departmental priorities.</p>
External expertise	<p>Professional Learning is informed by external expertise in a wide variety of ways. Teachers are always welcome to request training (usually remotely) from external providers and (in normal times) to visit other schools and share practice.</p> <p>Heads of Department were supported in forming links with HoDs in similar schools, e.g. Peer-review Meetings in spring 2022.</p>
Evaluation	<p>The Professional Learning programme is evaluated throughout the year, with specific review points (involving SLT) each January and June; the staff survey seeks views about professional learning.</p>
Responsiveness	<p>Professional Learning themes adapt to prevailing and emerging issues and research questions. Since September 2020, professional learning has responded to e.g. life after lockdown, remote teaching, etc.</p>

Pedagogical Content Knowledge

Subject (matter) knowledge (SK) What we know about what we teach	(General) pedagogical knowledge (PK) What we know about teaching
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“What we miss are questions about the content of the lessons taught, the questions asked, and the explanations offered. ... Where do teacher explanations come from? How do teachers decide what to teach, how to represent it? ... [How does a graduate] transform his or her expertise in the subject matter into a form that high school students can comprehend? ... How does he or she employ content expertise to generate new explanations, representations, or clarifications?” (Shulman, 1986: p.8)

What is Pedagogical Content Knowledge

- A type of knowledge that is unique to teachers.
- “The most useful forms of content representation...the most powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations...the ways of representing and formulating the subject that makes it comprehensible for others” (p.9)
- “Understanding of what makes the learning of specific topics easy or difficult; the conceptions and preconceptions that students of different ages and backgrounds bring with them to the learning of the most frequently taught topics and lessons” (p.9)

(Schulman, 1986)¹

A challenge for experienced teachers...

- “As one develops increased levels of pedagogical content knowledge, the ability or tendency to separate knowledge domains may be diminished.”

(Lederman et al., 1993, p.143)²

¹ Shulman, Lee S. (1986). Those Who Understand: Knowledge Growth in Teaching. *Educational Researcher*, 15(2), 4-14.

² Lederman, Norman G, Gess-Newsome, Julie, & Latz, Mark S. (1994). The nature and development of preservice science teachers' conceptions of subject matter and pedagogy. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 31(2), 129-146.