

British Overseas School: Staff Development Policy



1. Purpose and Principles

At the British Overseas School, we are committed to the growth of every colleague. As a learning community, we expect our staff to model intellectual curiosity, professional courtesy, and a steady desire to refine their practice. Our aim is to create an environment in which all adults feel valued, supported, and challenged to meet the highest standards of education and care.

We invest in staff development because it strengthens our school. When colleagues grow in confidence and expertise, our pupils benefit, our culture deepens, and our collective standards rise. Our approach is purposeful, evidence-informed, and grounded in reflective practice.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff employed by the school: teaching, support, administrative, and operational. It also guides the development opportunities offered to visiting specialists, trainees, and volunteers as appropriate.

3. Our Approach to Professional Growth

We believe that effective development:

- Begins with clear expectations rooted in the school's values.
- Is continuous rather than occasional.
- Balances individual interests with whole-school priorities.
- Is grounded in reflective practice and honest self-evaluation.
- Encourages colleagues to share expertise and learn from one another.
- Strengthens the quality of teaching, leadership, and pastoral care.

The school fosters a culture in which feedback is constructive, professional dialogue is routine, and staff feel able to seek advice without hesitation.

4. Annual Professional Development Cycle

Staff development follows an annual cycle designed to ensure consistency, fairness, and purposeful improvement.

a. Induction

All new staff receive a structured induction that covers:

- School ethos, safeguarding, and expectations.
- Curriculum, assessment, pastoral systems, and behaviour.
- Key operational procedures.
- An introduction to the school's quality assurance processes.

Induction includes opportunities to observe colleagues, meet with mentors, and participate in early-term review meetings to ensure a smooth transition.

b. Appraisal and Target Setting

Each member of staff meets with their line manager at the start of the school year to agree on:

- Professional goals linked to whole-school priorities.
- Personal targets informed by self-reflection.
- Any training or support required.

Targets are reviewed mid-year and formally evaluated at the end of the cycle.

c. Training and Professional Learning

The school provides a range of development opportunities, including:

- Whole-school CPD sessions aligned with strategic priorities.
- Curriculum and pastoral workshops.
- Leadership development for aspiring and current leaders.
- External training, including accredited courses and conferences.
- Opportunities to work with partner schools, organisations, and networks.

Where possible, training is practical and rooted in current evidence, rather than trend or fashion.

d. Coaching and Mentoring

Coaching and mentoring are central to our culture. They provide:

- Professional encouragement.
- A structured space to reflect on classroom practice.
- Support in meeting agreed targets.
- Guidance for staff new to the profession or new to the school.

Experienced colleagues are expected to serve as role models, sharing craft knowledge generously and modelling best practice.

e. Observation and Feedback

A balanced programme of lesson visits and learning walks enables leaders to:

- Celebrate strengths.
- Identify areas for development.
- Ensure high standards across the school.

Observations are conducted with courtesy and clarity. Feedback is honest, constructive, and timely, with a focus on teaching, learning, and pupil outcomes.

5. Responsibilities

The School

The school will:

- Provide high-quality development opportunities.
- Allocate appropriate time, resources, and support.
- Ensure access to training that enhances teaching, leadership, and pupil well-being.
- Maintain accurate records of professional development.

Staff

All colleagues are expected to:

- Take responsibility for their own growth.
- Engage fully with training, appraisal, and coaching.
- Contribute to a positive learning culture by sharing expertise.
- Reflect honestly on their practice and act on feedback.

6. Career Development and Succession Planning

We encourage ambition. Opportunities exist for staff to:

- Develop leadership skills.
- Undertake additional responsibilities.
- Participate in projects, working groups, and curriculum development.

- Apply for internal promotions where appropriate.

The school aims to identify and nurture future leaders, ensuring continuity and stability across key roles.

7. Evaluation and Impact

We evaluate staff development by considering its impact on:

- The quality of teaching and learning.
- The well-being, progress, and outcomes of pupils.
- The consistency and effectiveness of our leadership and pastoral systems.
- The culture of professionalism within the school.

Evidence may include appraisal outcomes, lesson visits, pupil data, staff feedback, and external reviews.

8. Review of this Policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if required by changes in legislation or school priorities.