



LORETO SECONDARY SCHOOL, ST MICHAEL'S
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Policy on Staff Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
Support and Funding

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Defined Terms

This section provides a description of the defined terms used in this Policy. These will be capitalised throughout the document.

CPD	Refers to Continuing Professional Development, including ongoing learning undertaken by staff to enhance professional knowledge, skills and practice.
the School	Refers to Loreto Secondary School, St Michael's.
Staff	Refers to teachers, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), school leadership and management, administrative staff, ancillary staff and other relevant personnel.

Abbreviated Terms

BOM	Board of Management of Loreto Secondary School, St Michael's
LAOS	Looking at Our School 2022: A Quality Framework

1. Preamble

The School is a community of learning inspired by the vision of Mary Ward and grounded in the values of the Loreto tradition. This ethos promotes the pursuit of excellence, respect for the dignity of each person and the holistic development of every student within a supportive, inclusive and reflective learning environment.

Professional learning is recognised as an integral part of the life and work of the School. The quality of teaching and learning is enhanced through ongoing reflection, collaboration and engagement with meaningful Continuing Professional Development (CPD). In line with Looking at Our School 2022: A Quality Framework (LAOS), Staff are supported to engage in both individual and collective professional learning that strengthens practice and improves outcomes for students.

The Board of Management (BOM) is committed to fostering a culture of CPD as a core element of school improvement and self-evaluation. It will support Staff engagement in CPD in a structured and purposeful way, ensuring alignment with the priorities of the School, student needs and the values of the Loreto tradition.

In accordance with Section 9 of the Education Act 1998 (as amended), the BOM affirms its responsibility to promote the professional development of Staff. This Policy provides a framework for CPD that is collaborative, relevant and focused on enhancing teaching, learning and the wellbeing of both students and Staff.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to promote and facilitate Staff engagement in professional development and to provide a clear and transparent framework for CPD provision and funding, in line with the priorities of the School.

3. Scope of the Policy

This Policy applies to:

- Teaching staff
- Special Needs Assistants
- School leadership and management
- Other staff members, where appropriate

It includes a range of professional development activities, including but not limited to:

- Department of Education in-service and national programmes
- Subject-specific CPD and professional networks
- Accredited courses and programmes (e.g. postgraduate or certification courses)
- Whole-school, collaborative and school-based professional learning

CPD supported under this Policy should be provided by recognised and reputable bodies. These may include the Department of Education, education centres, recognised third-level institutions, professional bodies and other established organisations with relevant expertise.

3.1 Related Policies and Frameworks

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies and national frameworks:

- School Self-Evaluation (SSE) Policy / School Improvement Plan
- Wellbeing Policy
- Inclusion / Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy
- Digital Learning / ICT Policy (where applicable)
- Child Safeguarding Statement

This Policy is also informed by the following national frameworks and guidance:

- Guidance from the Teaching Council in relation to CPD
- LAOS

4. Policy Statement and Objectives

The School is committed to a professional learning culture in which all Staff are supported to engage in relevant and high-quality CPD. In keeping with the Loreto tradition, the School promotes reflective practice, collaboration and continuous improvement. The School also seeks to support Staff participation in CPD through a structured and transparent approach to funding and support.

CPD is recognised as central to enhancing teaching and learning, supporting both student and Staff wellbeing and responding to evolving educational needs.

The School will:

- Encourage and facilitate participation in relevant CPD
- Promote reflective practice and professional collaboration
- Support the sharing of expertise across the School community
- Ensure CPD aligns with:
 - o School Self-Evaluation (SSE) and improvement planning
 - o Student wellbeing and educational outcomes
 - o National educational priorities

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The implementation of this Policy relies on the shared commitment of all members of the School community.

5.1 All Staff

Staff are expected to take responsibility for their professional development by engaging in appropriate CPD. They should apply their learning to their role and share relevant knowledge and skills with colleagues where appropriate.

5.2 Deputy Principals

The Deputy Principals support a positive culture of professional learning within the School. They may provide advice on CPD opportunities and support Staff, where practicable, to participate in CPD, including through timetabling arrangements where required.

5.3 Principal

The Principal promotes Staff engagement in CPD and provides guidance where appropriate. The Principal considers applications for CPD funding and/ or support and makes recommendations to the BOM, taking account of the priorities of the School.

5.4 Board of Management

The BOM approves this Policy and allocates resources for CPD on an annual basis. It considers recommendations from the Principal in relation to applications for CPD funding and/ or support and makes decisions in a fair, transparent and equitable manner, taking account of the needs and priorities of the School and the available budget.

6. CPD Provision and Priorities

The School supports CPD, including through the provision of funding where appropriate, that is relevant to its priorities and contributes to improved professional practice and student outcomes. Funding will only be provided when the CPD demonstrates a clear benefit to the Staff member's role and to the School.

When considering applications for funding the BOM will give priority to CPD that:

- Supports teaching and learning
- Promotes inclusion and student wellbeing
- Develops leadership capacity
- Aligns with School Self-Evaluation (SSE) and identified needs

7. CPD Support, Funding and Eligibility

The BOM will determine the annual budget available to support CPD, having regard to available resources and the priorities of the School. Funding for CPD is not guaranteed and will be allocated on a case-by-case basis.

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Be employed by the School
- Demonstrate that the CPD is relevant to priorities of the School and improvement planning
- Outline the anticipated benefit to their role and to the School
- Provide details of accreditation, where applicable
- Indicate any alternative funding sought
- Submit a completed application form (see Appendix 1)
- Provide evidence of course completion prior to payment

8. Application and Administration

Applications for CPD funding and/ or support will be processed in a fair and transparent manner.

- The BOM will set and communicate an annual closing date for applications. Applications submitted after this date may be considered at the discretion of the BOM, subject to available resources
- Applications must be submitted in writing to the Principal using the form provided in Appendix 1
- The Principal will review applications and make recommendations to the BOM
- Decisions will be communicated to applicants by the Principal on behalf of the BOM
- Funding will normally be provided by way of reimbursement upon successful completion of the approved course and submission of receipts and required documentation. In exceptional circumstances, advance payment may be considered at the discretion of the BOM

9. Sharing and Dissemination of Learning

Staff are encouraged, where appropriate, to share relevant learning with colleagues, for example through informal discussion, contributions at staff or department meetings, or by sharing resources via agreed platforms. They may also contribute to subject or whole-school initiatives and support the development of a collaborative professional learning culture within the School.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

The impact of CPD will be reviewed periodically, taking account of Staff feedback, its impact on professional practice and its contribution to the priorities of the School.

11. Review

The Policy will be reviewed every three years following its implementation and may be reviewed more frequently if deemed necessary.

Signed: _____

Chairperson of BOM

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Principal/ Secretary to BOM

Date: _____

Appendix 1: Application Form for Professional Development Support

To: The Principal

Personal Details

Staff Member's Name: _____

Role in the School (e.g. teacher, SNA, administrative staff, caretaker) _____

Area of work / responsibilities:

(e.g. subjects taught, office duties, student support, facilities, etc.)

Course Details

Course Title: _____

Provider: _____

Duration / Dates: _____

Funding

Course Fee: _____

Amount Requested: _____

Other funding (if any): _____

Rationale

1. How will this CPD benefit your role/ practice?

2. How will this CPD benefit students and/ or the School?

Additional Information

Previous CPD funding received (if any):

I confirm that the information provided is accurate and that I will comply with the School's CPD Policy.

Signed: _____

Date: _____