

Teaching and Learning Monthly Newsletter

SHARPLES
SCHOOL



September 2026



New Term; New Goals; New Students

Welcome to the first edition of our Teaching and Learning Newsletter for the academic year of 2026-27!

Whether you are returning after a well-deserved summer break or joining our staff community for the first time, a huge welcome back.

A new school year always brings a fresh wave of energy, anticipation, and ambition for what we can achieve with our pupils, and this year is no exception.

As we dive into the term, our central focus as a school revolves around inclusive teaching and ensuring every classroom creates a sense of belonging.

This regular newsletter will serve as our shared space to explore inclusive practices throughout the year, share resources and encourage collaborative classrooms.

It is my aim that in each issue, we will unpack practical, evidence-based classroom strategies, spotlight the fantastic work happening across our departments, and share quick, actionable tips to refine our practice without adding to your workload.

To begin, this month's article dives into why CPD is one of the most powerful tools we have in our armour.

Enjoy the newsletter and don't forget to share nominations for the next one!

In this newsletter you can expect:

Article on the Importance of CPD

Sharples Shoutouts and Celebrations!

Sharples Staff Section

Resource Share

X / Twitter Links



The Importance of CPD

CPD is a core part of teacher development and I believe Sharples is excellent at ensuring high quality CPD is something all staff have access to.

This year, our CPD options have fallen under the umbrella of inclusive practice. Inclusion is our driving force and ensuring a sense of belonging and high expectations is something all our teachers are striving for. It should be no surprise to you, if you have glanced at the school calendar lately or checked the cover sheet, that CPD is in full swing across our school in this first term.



The Sharples offer does not just start and end with CPD in MR2, subject teams deliver departmental workshops, Base and Champions meetings highlight important issues, National College is a source of CPD and this newsletter always offers insight into CPD books and resources.

It is well known that CPD is one of the greatest tools that a school has and it has a direct impact on student outcomes.

If we can all proactively commit to improving our teaching and learning through informative CPD, then maintaining our excellent outcomes shouldn't be an issue and narrowing the disadvantaged gap is something we can all strive to achieve.

However, as the term becomes busier, it can be tempting to view CPD as "one more thing" on an already busy to-do list. However, engaging meaningfully in our ongoing professional growth is the single most powerful tool we have to refine our craft, support our colleagues, and ensure every student in our classrooms thrives.

I implore you to ensure you attend the CPD with an open mind and reflect on the practice that is being discussed, take the opportunity to learn from colleagues and develop your pedagogy further.

Here is why our current push on CPD matters and how it directly benefits both you and our pupils.

High-Quality Teaching Has the Biggest Impact on Pupil Outcomes

Research consistently demonstrates that the quality of teaching inside the classroom is the single greatest in-school leverage point for pupil achievement. Large-scale syntheses of educational research such as those published by the Sutton Trust and the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) show that high-quality instruction significantly closes attainment gaps, particularly for disadvantaged learners.

The Importance of CPD

High-quality CPD isn't about telling experienced educators how to do their jobs; it is about providing the space, evidence, and tools to fine-tune our approach so those learning gains happen every single day. Whether it's embedding a new questioning technique or refining how we scaffold complex tasks, small refinements in our daily practice lead to substantial, long-term gains for our learners.

Alignment with Our Core Priorities for the Year

Our priorities this year for teaching and learning are inclusive teaching, establishing robust routines, and sharing best practices through collaborative observations. These cannot be isolated initiatives, they must form the backbone of our CPD programme. By engaging meaningfully in the sessions you have elected into, we are building a shared approach to CPD and ensuring inclusion is a priority within all classrooms. In order to improve and continuously develop our practice in the classroom, every member of staff should understand our core priorities for the year ahead.

Fostering a Culture of Collaborative Expertise

CPD is not a one-way street. The vast majority of expertise already exists right here within our own staff room. Our current sessions provide dedicated time to step outside classroom silos, swap concrete examples of what works, and learn from one another's successes and challenges.

Professional development gives us the platform to collaborate rather than innovate in isolation.

CPD is not a one-way street. The vast majority of expertise already exists right here within our own staff room and this was evident within our Sharples CPD journal.

John Hattie identified a concept titled Collective Teacher Efficacy. This is the shared belief amongst educators that they can positively impact student learning through combined effort, he notes it as one of the single highest-yielding factors for student success.

Furthermore, research on professional learning communities demonstrates that when teachers step outside the classroom to analyse evidence, share concrete strategies, and engage in peer observations, both teaching quality and student achievement increase significantly compared to working in isolation.

This is why it's so important to take CPD opportunities, look for opportunities to visit other teachers, other departments and even other schools. When we work collaboratively, we can all support each other to become better teachers.



The Importance of CPD

Sustaining Professional Mastery and Wellbeing

Teaching is a dynamic profession, and remaining static can lead to frustration or burnout. Research into teacher motivation and retention demonstrates that supportive, professional-learning environments significantly boost teacher job satisfaction and reduces the feeling of being overwhelmed.

When teachers participate in structured, ongoing professional development, they experience heightened feelings of self-efficacy which directly correlates with resilience, workplace engagement, and long-term professional fulfillment.

Investing in your growth is a proven investment in your career trajectory, overall wellbeing, and daily classroom job satisfaction. Why wouldn't you want to invest in your own future?

Making the Most of CPD This Term

To ensure our collective investment in CPD translates into meaningful, stress-free action, consider these quick strategies:

- **Focus on Micro-Steps:** Don't try to overhaul everything at once. Select one practical technique or routine from a session to test in your classroom over the coming fortnight.
- **Reflect with a Peer:** Spend five minutes after a training session talking to a colleague about how you might adapt the ideas for your specific subject or key stage. Actively invite colleagues into your classroom from your PDC and actively seek out opportunities to go and see others.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to your practice and to our pupils. Let's keep the momentum going as we learn, adapt, and grow together!



SHARPLES CELEBRATES!



Each month we want to shout out teachers who want to share excellent practice! The first 3 teachers to email n.ayub@sharplesschool.co.uk with an example of brilliant practice will receive a box of celebrations delivered to their classroom!



Iqrah Hassan

Iqrah works hard with her pupils and ensures there is a strong sense of belonging and high expectation in the classroom. Her use of choral response is excellent and she uses Sharples Speak Up to encourage all students to have a voice.



Alice Keegan

Alice's explicit instruction is exceptional. She chunks the task and demonstrates exactly what she wants from them, to make goals clear to pupils before they do any sort of assessment.



Nicola McCawley

Nicola has excellent relationships within the classroom. Her warm and inviting persona means every student believes they can achieve in her care. She teaches some of the weakest mathematicians, but adapts and scaffolds so everyone can succeed.

Sharples Staff Section

In this part of the newsletter, we want to discover more about the staff at Sharples and the incredible work they do on a daily basis.

Each month, one member of staff will feature and we will discover more about their background and how they ended up at Sharples.

This month, Nicole Topham has kindly detailed more about her experience into teaching.



1. How long have you been working at Sharples?

12 months ago, having worked in primary school for 13 years.

2. Why did you want to go into teaching?

I knew friends and family who were teachers and I saw first-hand how challenging the role could be, but also how potentially rewarding too. I've always enjoyed being in the company of younger people and I wanted to see if I could make a positive difference.

3. Where did you study and was there a module / topic that you were really passionate about during your time at university?

I initially completed a postgraduate degree in journalism and spent about 13 years working in press and public relations. I completed my PGCE at Edge Hill, as a mature student, specialising in primary education. I loved learning again and putting it into practice. One highlight was learning outside the classroom, with one mini placement at Manchester Hospital where youngsters were taught at the bedside or in a hospital classroom. It was a humbling experience but amazing too.

4. What is the best part about moving to Sharples?

I used to joke with my Year 5 and 6 classes that I would like to continue the journey with them and it's remarkable that I've done that. I still relish going into primary schools on a weekly basis so I feel I have the best of both worlds.

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5. What is the most interesting part of your job?

English was always my preferred subject as a primary teacher and I'm now lucky to specialise in it. I've had to learn a lot and I'm still learning!

6. What is the biggest difference from Primary - Secondary?

It's a big step up for pupils! But I'm proud of how they take everything in their stride and they thrive. They become more independent and mature in so many ways. But Sharples helps them navigate this brilliantly.

7. Something that people don't always know about primary schools?

Pupils have an energy and curiosity that is hard to match! The younger ones are also wonderfully honest and natural, whether that's guessing your age, telling you your hair is messy or singing their hearts out in assembly.



Resource Share

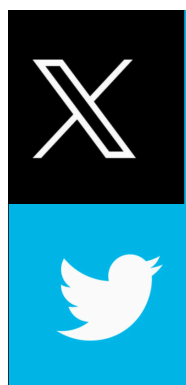
Each month, a different member of staff will provide a link to a resource that can be adapted for other lessons.

[illegible]

A Christmas Carol Revision Sheet

Although this revision worksheet is based on A Christmas Carol, it can be adapted for a number of subjects. I personally like to have everything on one page and this allows for appropriate scaffolding.

The quick questions at the start allow for a quiet start to the lesson, the key vocabulary is taught at the start of the lesson, key context is revisited and shared under the visualiser and this all culminates in the writing at the end. Students use the whole top of the worksheet, to complete a piece of writing. Everything is scaffolded and ready for them to succeed.



<https://x.com/teacherhead/status/2104463875550986731?s=46&t=FKJE4qMjKGpckKbVUgG1Pg>

This link is a useful blog that talks about small changes that make big, inclusive impacts.

[Click here to access the resource!](#)

