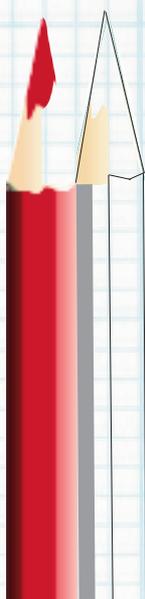
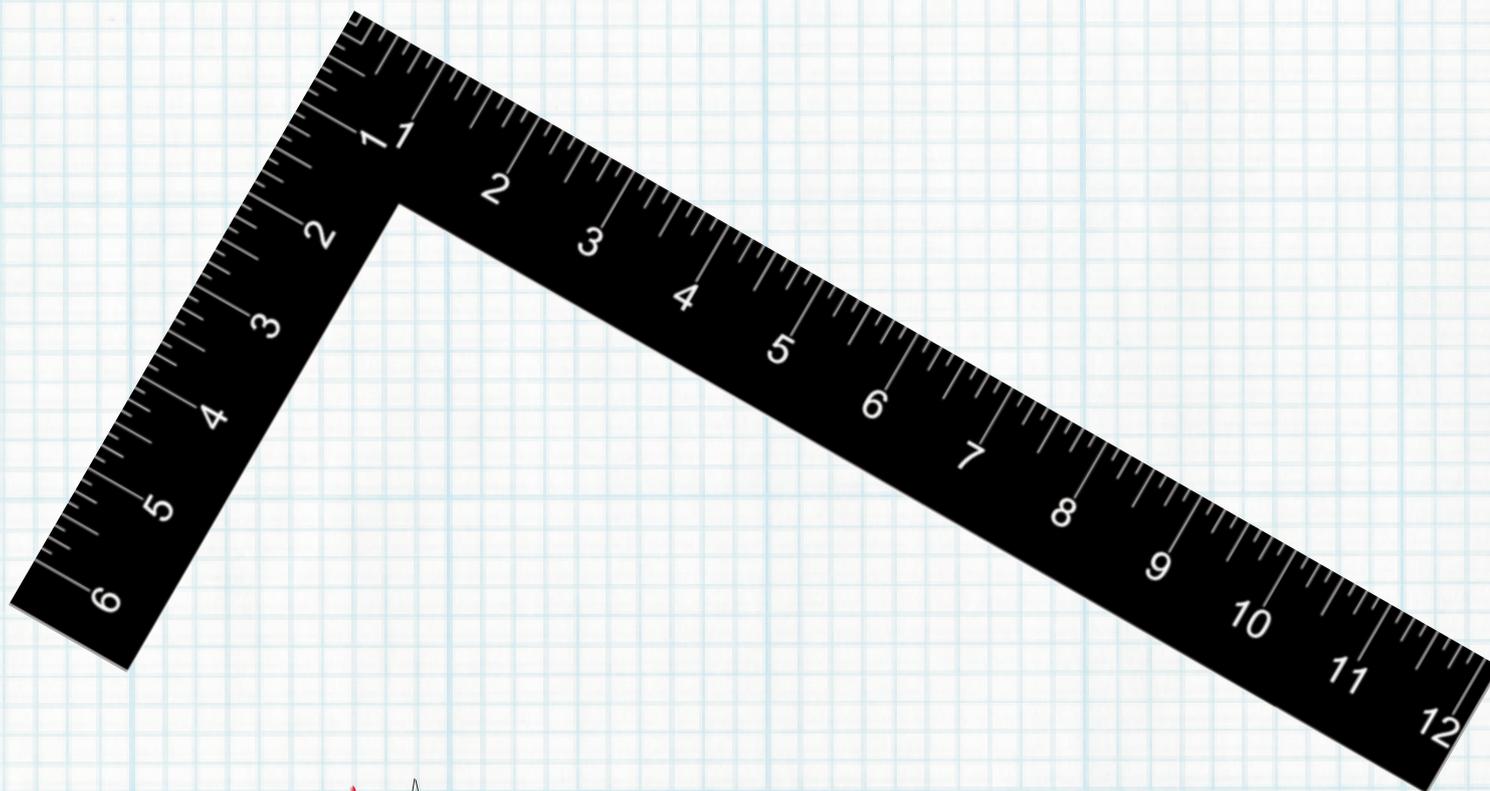


Standards
for **Educational Development**
and Improvement Professionals
in England



the Aspect Group of Prospect May 2014

The Aspect Group of Prospect is the only professional association and trade union exclusively representing professionals working in school improvement.

These professionals play a vital role in shaping and influencing the lives of millions of children and young people.

National professional standards play an integral role in supporting improvements to service provision. They also assist with the development of individual roles and skills and enhance the professional reputation of highly-skilled workers.

The Aspect Group has developed professional standards for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

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Introduction

It is intended that the Standards for development and improvement professionals in education will underpin the definition and development of their roles; the services that they deliver; and the professional actions they undertake.

The Changing Context

Policy developments in services for children and young people over several years have led to a broadening of the roles and responsibilities of those engaged in educational development and quality improvement.

There is now a much greater emphasis on working in partnership with other organisations and agencies to improve outcomes for children and young people. Development and improvement professionals are required to provide more focused challenge and support for educational establishments and children's services.

In order to address the current challenges facing local authorities and their staff, the Aspect Group of Prospect commissioned a working group of its members to review and update the Standards in line with the changing children's services landscape.

The Standards are designed to reflect the multiplicity of roles and responsibilities of those working in educational development and improvement.

They reflect the need for quality improvement professionals to influence organisational change and development.

They emphasise the importance of offering professional leadership to establishments and their communities, as well as to other organisations and teams of professionals engaged in development and improvement of services for children and young people.

The Standards recognise that capacity building is central to the work of development and improvement professionals, and that individuals and organisations concerned with improving the quality of education and well-being for all children and young people need to learn how to adapt to rapidly-changing contexts in order to sustain system-wide improvement.

Aims of the Standards

To enhance the quality of work undertaken by individual development and improvement professionals in their key roles of professional leadership, ensuring accountability, advancing effective learning and teaching and the well-being of children and promoting effective partnership working

To support the development of skills needed to operate effectively in newly-defined working environments and serve as a basis for cross-service working

To complement other existing frameworks of competencies and accountabilities which apply to the work of development and improvement professionals

To provide a clear framework for performance management to enhance the professional competency and confidence of development and improvement professionals

To support the development of a framework for accredited continuing professional development for serving development and improvement professionals and those aspiring to undertake such a role

Using the Standards

The Standards have been written to recognise that all professionals working in children's services have a responsibility for the development of the whole child. They are therefore relevant to the work of a wide range of professionals involved in quality development and improvement including: local authority advisers, quality improvement officers, quality improvement managers, educational support officers, and other professional staff working in services for children.

The Standards can be deployed in a range of different ways in relation to professional development and improvement services. In particular, they can be applied and used within the context of the post holder's actual remit and responsibilities to

- Target continuing professional development for staff involved in securing and/or delivering Quality Improvement Services
- Refine performance management systems for development and improvement professionals
- Support career development planning, succession and recruitment processes
- Support the induction of staff
- Provide a consistent basis for the formal accreditation of the work of professionals engaged in child development and school improvement

The Standards

Six dimensions are identified which reflect the working practices of development and improvement professionals.

These are

- 1** Developing self and others
- 2** Professional leadership to build capacity
- 3** Accountability – evaluating practice
- 4** Promoting learning and teaching
- 5** Working with and developing organisations
- 6** Developing and sustaining partnerships.

Each dimension consists of three elements

- 1** **Professional knowledge and understanding** which underpin effective performance
- 2** **Professional skills and attitudes** which relate to the capacity of development and improvement professionals to fulfil roles and responsibilities and their commitment to underpinning values
- 3** **Professional actions** which represent the core functions of the development and improvement role

1 Developing self and others

Development and improvement professionals interact with others in diverse contexts and for multiple purposes. They have a clear and shared understanding of what is involved in providing high-quality services to children and young people and are motivated and meaningfully involved in improving the quality of provision.

To be successful they must appreciate the need to build trusting relationships and they should recognise the importance of taking full account of the feelings and needs of others, as well as their own and to manage this appropriately. They should be sensitive to context when weighing their responsibility to negotiate approaches that impinge professionally on others and set this against the need to act decisively.

All staff working in services for children and young people have a responsibility to undertake continuing professional development leading to self-improvement.

Organisations employing development and improvement professionals have a responsibility to ensure access to appropriate continuing professional development on a regular basis.

Professional knowledge and understanding

Development and improvement professionals know and understand how to

- Demonstrate a clear commitment to collegiality
- Maintain partnerships across professional boundaries
- Influence, coach and mentor others effectively
- Influence and work within the structure of national and local agreements and developments
- Support, maintain and promote existing effective practice
- Build supportive learning networks by engaging effectively with educational establishments and their communities
- Develop strategies to counter the impact of discrimination and deprivation in learning environments and interact positively with people from diverse backgrounds
- Manage emotions so they enhance rather than hinder performance
- Evaluate and respond positively to wide-ranging social situations and interact appropriately in building relationships and managing conflicts
- Balance the need for challenge and support

Professional skills and attitudes

Development and improvement professionals should

- Model learning for life by being 'leading learners' themselves
- Apply knowledge and critical understanding of contemporary developments in key policy areas relating to services for children and young people
- Enhance the life chances of all children and young people
- Work collaboratively to raise educational standards
- Demonstrate self-awareness and ability to inspire and motivate others
- Build and sustain personal credibility
- Work to create a positive atmosphere within the educational community
- Know how and when to make decisions and use evidence and information to support and inform their judgements
- Listen well and give clear expression to ideas and feelings in person and providing high quality feedback

Professional actions

Development and improvement professionals demonstrate a commitment to

- Equality, social justice and inclusion
- Operate effectively as a member of a team and in leadership roles
- Hold, articulate and argue for professionally sound and consistent values
- Set expectations of high levels of respect for self and others
- Respond well to challenge
- Provide well-planned, continuing professional development, matched to individual and team needs drawing on local and national expertise

2 Professional leadership to build capacity

Development and improvement professionals work with a range of agencies, partners and establishments to influence the creation and implementation of a long-term vision for the education and well-being of children and young people that is shared by all stakeholders.

This vision is underpinned by a strong belief in the ethical purpose of advancing effective learning and teaching.

Development and improvement professionals have the capacity to adapt to changing circumstances and new ideas. They encourage others to do likewise, and support organisations and individuals to build capacity to sustain improvement as circumstances change and new challenges emerge.

Development and improvement professionals help to identify trends and assess progress, they moderate and validate self-evaluation and self-improvement and help to establish priorities as a basis for effective strategic planning.

Professional knowledge and understanding

Development and improvement professionals know and understand

- The nature of high quality educational provision at all levels and in different contexts
- Ways of maintaining a working awareness of local, national and global trends and initiatives in education and their relationships to each other
- The theory and practice of approaches to development that build capacity
- Ways to build, communicate and implement shared vision
- Strategic planning processes
- Effective change processes and their impact on creativity and innovation
- New technologies, their use and impact on learning and teaching, and on the quality of service provision
- The need to develop systems for shared leadership
- The political and social context and how this may impact on service provision

Professional skills and attitudes

Development and improvement professionals should

- Seek to improve service provision for all partners in education and all services for children
- Promote equality and impartiality in all aspects of service provision
- Provide leadership in implementing strategies to improve the quality of practice in delivering services to children and young people
- Work collaboratively with individual partners, agencies and other stakeholders and ensuring high standards for all
- Set and achieve ambitious and challenging targets for improvement
- Adopt problem-solving approaches
- Use appropriate new technologies to advance learning and improve the overall quality of services

Professional actions

Development and improvement professionals demonstrate a commitment to

- Promote a coherent long-term vision for high-quality education and development of life skills for all learners
- Support establishments, local authorities and other service providers in implementing change and adapting to new ideas
- Work with establishments and their communities to provide support and challenge in a coherent and consistent way
- Use and interpret quantitative and qualitative data to improve learning and raise achievement
- Motivate and work with others to create professional learning communities characterised by clear ethical purpose, shared values and beliefs
- Work with establishments and other organisations to explore creative approaches to learning and development
- Prepare oral and written briefings for those responsible for Leadership and Governance.

3 Accountability – evaluation practice

Development and improvement professionals view evaluation as both an individual and a corporate activity.

They work with individuals and organisations to evaluate the quality of experience provided to children and young people in their care and to ensure there is capacity to allow for continuous improvement.

Development and improvement professionals need to possess a thorough understanding of the learning and teaching process and how that process can be enhanced through the skills of observation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback.

Development and improvement professionals must ensure that they use self-evaluation to analyse their own contribution to the work of the educational community they serve.

Professional knowledge and understanding

Development and improvement professionals know and understand how to

- Use approaches to the theory and practice of evaluation in an educational context particularly with regard to school self-evaluation
- Utilise a relevant range of data management systems
- Analyse and interpret quantitative and qualitative data
- Make best strategic and operational use of available resources to create, maintain and monitor an appropriate environment for effective learning and teaching
- Support and maintain existing effective practice and encourage and promote constant improvement in the development of children and young people
- Ensure that a coherent approach to improvement is taken to all aspects of learning and teaching and the achievement of learners
- Draw on a wide range of advice and evidence in order to ensure that self-evaluation is rigorous, systematic and transparent

Professional skills and attitudes

Development and improvement professionals should

- Ensure that agreed vision, values and aims are used as the basis for reviewing their work and that of others
- Carry out direct observation of practice based on rigorous quality indicators
- Ensure a consistent focus on positive outcomes for children and young people
- Ensure that learning and achievement is at the centre of strategic planning and resource management
- Provide constructive feedback to individuals on the basis of sound evidence and identifying appropriate changes to provision
- Review and revise self-evaluation processes, as appropriate, to ensure improvement
- Use local and national data to judge performance and challenge underachievement of groups of learners; e.g. by gender, ethnicity, special educational needs and prior attainment
- Help to build capacity of organisations to carry out rigorous and effective self-evaluation
- Have effective systems to gather views of stakeholders about the quality of provision

Professional actions

Development and improvement professionals demonstrate a commitment to

- Raise educational standards in a wide range of contexts
- Evaluate service provision objectively, on the basis of sound evidence
- Self-evaluation of their own performance and taking appropriate consequent action
- Gather and analyse relevant evidence from a comprehensive range of internal and external sources
- Analyse performance data relating to individual learners, to groups of learners and to organisations and communities
- Formulate clear, secure judgements, and making recommendations based on evidence
- Provide constructive feedback that forms the basis for future improvements
- Build the capacity of others to carry out self-evaluation

4 Promoting learning and teaching

Development and improvement professionals are familiar with what is understood about the process of learning.

They see learning holistically and recognise that a wide range of partners contribute to the development of children and young people.

They use their understanding of learning to inform policy and practice, and to identify and disseminate effective practice.

Development and improvement professionals model effective practice in teaching and learning when they lead professional development activities.

Professional knowledge and understanding

Development and improvement professionals demonstrate that they know and understand how to

- Develop curriculum provision that enhances the capacities of children and young people to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors
- Promote strategies to encourage effective learning and teaching which impacts upon young people's attainment and achievement and addresses barriers to progress
- Recognise the importance of research and development in facilitating effective learning
- Recognise the influence of emotional intelligence in facilitating effective learning
- Utilise appropriate assessment and evaluation techniques as a positive aid to promoting improved learning and teaching processes
- Monitor and evaluate learning and teaching and attainment and achievement
- Develop the culture of a 'learning organisation' and promote CPD opportunities for staff
- Develop effective partnerships with learners, parents/carers and families
- Develop effective approaches to ensure inclusion and participation

Professional skills and attitudes

Development and improvement professionals should

- Engage critically with literature, research and policy
- Promote individual and organisational learning
- Promote the use of appropriate learning and teaching strategies to raise attainment and achievement
- Demonstrate how national and local initiatives can improve teaching and learning and raise standards
- Suggest appropriate changes in teaching approaches to engage learners more fully and support their achievement

Professional actions

Development and improvement professionals demonstrate a commitment to

- Promote aspirational outcomes for all learners
- Find ways to motivate and engage all learners
- Recognise lifelong learning as an activity for all
- See the learning process in a holistic way, involving parents, carers, other appropriate professionals and the wider community
- Recognise, reward and celebrate all forms of achievement
- Seek and disseminate examples of effective practice
- Recognise and analyse aspects of effective practice which will transfer to other learning contexts
- Initiate and support action research into effective learning and teaching
- Synthesise knowledge from a range of sources to improve learning and teaching
- Make appropriate use of technology in learning environments and evaluate its impact on achieving relevant outcomes

5 Working with and developing organisations

Development and improvement professionals work to build capacity within educational organisations, and support others in managing and sustaining improvement.

They understand the connection between personal and organisational development, and the complex web of forces that influence education. Capacity is built by creating learning organisations – development and improvement professionals facilitate this process by working with leaders at all levels in challenging and supportive partnerships.

Development and improvement professionals understand organisational development. They work alongside educational establishments, other organisations, agencies and individuals to promote local partnerships so that resources are deployed effectively to improve all outcomes for all children and young people.

Professional knowledge and understanding

Development and improvement professionals demonstrate that they know and understand

- The principles and systems that promote and sustain a learning organisation
- Different models and structures of learning organisations and their values/belief systems and how they build capacity for sustainable development
- The impact of legislation and current government initiatives
- Strategic planning and systems for capacity building and securing continuous improvement
- External and internal factors which impede or enhance organisational effectiveness
- The importance of working collaboratively with multi-agency stakeholders in order to deliver outcomes for all children and young people
- How to put in place coherent and focused development through effective project management techniques
- Effective models of self-evaluation at all levels
- The construction, validation and use of indicators to guide and evaluate organisational development
- Leadership styles and approaches and their impact on development strategies
- Effective financial management and principles of 'best value'
- Performance management and the role of continuous professional development in capacity building

Professional skills and attitudes

Development and improvement professionals should

- Lead and help individual organisations and groups of organisations to develop and improve strategic planning and partnership working
- Support and moderate organisational self-evaluation
- Evaluate the capacity for improvement within organisations
- Develop appropriate leadership styles and management systems
- Promote and support effective multi-agency working
- Identify, analyse and share effective practice within organisations and between partner organisations

Professional actions

Development and improvement professionals demonstrate a commitment to

- Develop learning organisations with the objective of building capacity for sustained improvement
- Identify and realise potential in order to raise attainment and achievement and to promote well-being
- Develop approaches to leadership which build capacity and ensure sustained improvement
- Promote collaborative working and development
- Hold people accountable for the development of themselves and others
- Take a creative and systematic approach to strategic planning and making appropriate connections
- Apply knowledge of the broader context in which organisations function
- Manage complex projects to meet timescales and deadlines and secure improvement
- Analyse, interpret and apply qualitative and quantitative data
- Work effectively and equitably with colleagues from a wide range of organisations
- Make informed professional judgements that respect the viewpoints and perceptions of others
- Model effective leadership behaviours
- Provide evaluative and developmental reports both orally and in writing

6 Developing and sustaining partnerships

Networks and partnerships are an important means by which an individual organisation can harness additional ideas, resources and approaches. Such partnerships may benefit from external brokering and support.

Development and improvement professionals have an important role to play in identifying when such networks and partnerships will be beneficial, and in helping to create the conditions in which a partnership can better serve the community as a whole.

With the growth of a commitment to integrated children's services, there is a clear need to embrace partnership working across a diverse group of professionals to improve the quality of services to children, young people, families and communities.

As specialists in providing external advice and support, development and improvement professionals will be key members of such partnerships and often take on a leadership role within this context.

Professional knowledge and understanding

Development and improvement professionals demonstrate that they know and understand

- The conditions necessary to build and sustain effective partnerships
- Models of partnership working
- Potential barriers to effective partnership working and how to address these
- The roles and responsibilities of the range of agencies working within the community
- Strategies for communicating across a wide, and sometimes disparate, range of agencies
- The wider context in which stakeholders and partners are working

Professional skills and attitudes

Development and improvement professionals should

- Work in constructive ways with a wide range of professionals
- Use enquiry or research-based approaches to promoting change
- Establish and support existing and new networks across educational establishments and other organisations, and supporting the agencies that work with them.
- Be creative in solving problems
- Think systemically about change
- Be sensitive to the impact of change on different stakeholders and different parts of the system in which they are working
- Work effectively with a range of people in other agencies to support educational improvement
- Interpret social situations and networks accurately, interacting effectively, managing conflict and building bonds
- Promote innovation and researched-based approaches to evaluating outcomes

Professional actions

Development and improvement professionals demonstrate a commitment to

- Share evidence appropriately with key partners in order to gain a fully informed basis for proposing action and making decisions
- Articulate a clear vision for organisational improvement in specific contexts
- Work with partnerships and networks to advance effective learning and development of all children and young people
- Work with educational establishments, local authority, communities, partners and agency stakeholders in order to develop and implement integrated strategic plans
- Work with voluntary and community organisations in the development and evaluation of non-formal learning contexts
- Ensure that legal and regulatory responsibilities are being met

