

Does your Professional Development programme make a difference?



No one in school has time to waste!

No one in school has money to waste.

No one in school can afford to waste opportunities to learn.

Yet so many schools put great effort, time and resources into professional learning but do not really know the difference it makes.

How confident are you of the impact of your school's PD programme? I don't mean how much did the staff enjoy the session, or how funny and engaging the speaker was. That's a given!

Can we really point to evidence of the quality of the programme in terms of the difference it makes to participant's practice or how well the learning is being applied not just in one classroom or with one project but across many classrooms and in the whole of the leadership team's approach?

At [Karen Ardley Associates](https://www.karenardley.com) our programmes are designed to ensure learning is practiced and applied. We encourage approaches to make the learning stick, be that for leaders, teachers or support staff. We encourage participants to be evaluative not only of the programmes we design but of their own learning and how they influence others in their organisation.

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Our programmes are always underpinned by research, and in this case, we use Guskey's 5 level model to influence our thinking.

- ➔ Level 1 - Participants' reaction
- ➔ Level 2 - Participants' learning
- ➔ Level 3 - Organisational support and change
- ➔ Level 4 - Participants' use of new knowledge and skills
- ➔ Level 5 - Student's learning outcomes (and *learning processes*)

For each of Guskey's levels, our programme design and facilitation include specific reflections, tasks and approaches. We often use backward design principles from the processes of learning and outcomes you want for your students – starting with intent is always a great place for evaluation to begin!

The feedback we get is most often at levels 2, 3 and 4 – because we ask questions about each of these. We see level 1 as it's happening. Our participants see level 5 impact with their students over time.

We know of course there is rarely a direct cause and effect for professional learning but knowing that the difference it can make goes beyond the few days or hours we spend learning together, makes the effort worthwhile!