Leading Change in SEND/AP
Advance Notice

Applications for the next regional multi-agency leadership development programme for strategic SEND leads in the South West

We will be opening applications for the 5th cohort of the South West regional Leadership Development Programme for Strategic SEND/AP Leads on **25th November 2026,** with a closing date of **11th December 2026.**

This programme is a leadership development programme for strategic leaders across Education (including MATS and school clusters), Health and Social Care (both children's and adults) and parent carer organisations who are ambitious both for themselves and for improving life outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families. It's particularly aimed at:

- Aspiring SEND leaders
- LA strategic leads for SEND
- Social care leads for SEND across children's and adults services or DSCO
- Strategic health leads as appropriate depending on role/focus of responsibility - ICB leaders, commissioners, DMO/DCOs
- Parent Carer Forum leads with responsibility for strategic development
- Young People Forum leads with responsibility for strategic development
- Leaders in Schools, MATs and Further Education

About The Programme

The programme aims to strengthen leadership capabilities for SEND, develop professional pride and credibility and build trust and confidence across the region. In the longer term we aim to enhance the experiences of children and young people with SEND and their families and contribute to improve their lives and life chances.

The programme focuses on building a network of well-equipped and connected SEND/AP leaders that will:

- Provide a cohort of trained and supported SEND leaders across the region
- Strengthen consistency of approach
- Support succession planning
- Promote intentional leadership across the region, creating proactive leadership capacity for SEND in each organisation and partnership that takes part

Applicants will be expected to demonstrate their commitment to:

- Continued professional development and the ongoing review of their professional skills and competencies
- Deepening their understanding and practice of leadership and making behavioural changes that impact positively on those around them
- Actively share learning from the programme with colleagues

To get the most from the programme participants will need to be highly committed and able to dedicate the time to complete the programme in full. They will also need to have

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the support and endorsement of their director, line manager or other appropriate senior colleague.

How to Apply

The region is offering 25 funded places, to include 15 Local Area Partnership places, 5 ICB places and 3 parent carer forum places and 2 SENDIASS places. Places can be flexible depending on demands. Applicants will need to demonstrate how they meet the eligibility criteria by completing an online application form. They will also need the support of their sponsor and for them to complete the sponsor form.

The closing date is **11th December 2026** for all applications. For enquiries, please contact hello@thestaffcollege.uk

Programme Dates

Venue Details: Mercure Exeter Southgate Hotel Southernhay East, Exeter, EX1 1QF Phone: 01392 412812

Orientation Residential	In-person	Tuesday 26th – Wednesday 27th January 2027
Action Learning Set 1 (facilitated)	Virtual – MS Teams	Wednesday 10th February 2027
Action Learning Set 2 (self-facilitated)	Virtual – MS Teams	Wednesday 3rd March 2027
End of Programme Residential	In-person	Tuesday 23rd – Wednesday 24th March 2027
Action Learning Set 3 (facilitated)	Virtual – MS Teams	Wednesday 17th March 2027

About The Staff College

The Staff College was established in 1999 to support the development of leadership and management capacity in Local Authorities and their Children's Trust partner organisations and, through this, contribute to the improvement of locality services for children, young people and families. The Staff College constantly seeks to:

- Develop current and future leaders
- Provide timely and appropriate CPD opportunities for all leaders within children's services and partner organisations
- Horizon scan and anticipate emerging challenges for local authorities and their CT partners
- Support and lead on new developments to meet these challenges
- Be instrumental in developing the "collective intelligence" of the children's services community
- Continuing to develop a workforce that is diverse, resilient and equitable
- Respond to systemic and organisational changes in children's services

For further information about the Staff College please visit our website

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