

## Leading Change in SEND/AP

**A new national multi-agency leadership development programme for strategic SEND leads across health, PCFs, schools and LA's in England.**

*Real change in SEND requires a deep understanding of the fundamental nature of the complex, multi-faceted and richly interconnected challenge which requires as much attention to cultural and behavioural transformation as it does to technical innovation.*

*First and foremost, this is a challenge of leadership, shared values and collective moral purpose.*

Are you an experienced leader without experience in SEND/AP? Are you experienced in SEND/AP but less experienced in leadership? Join a Unique Leadership Development Programme for Strategic SEND/AP Leads.

NDTi and The Staff College are delighted to offer a third cohort on this comprehensive programme designed for ambitious leaders keen to improve life chances and outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families.

Both organisations have collaborated successfully in the South West region of England offering a multi-agency SEND/AP leadership development programme. They have completed the delivery of a similar programme on a national level utilising their individual expertise and knowledge in national leadership development programmes:

[DCS Leadership Programme | Supported by the DfE](#)

[Leadership programmes - NDTi](#)

This programme is a leadership development programme for strategic leaders across Education (including MATS and school clusters), Health, Social Care (both children's and adults), other local authority services 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.

### **About the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi)**

We want a world where everyone matters. Our work helps create opportunities for independence and choice for everyone.

We are an independent, not-for-profit organisation that has worked alongside people, communities, policy makers, support organisations and services for over 30 years.

We work across all life stages, however our children and young people's work is best known for the successful Preparing for Adulthood programme and Internships Work. We also have a long track record in delivering a range of leadership programmes.

Find out more on [ndti.org.uk](https://ndti.org.uk)

For enquires please contact [hello@thestaffcollege.uk](mailto:hello@thestaffcollege.uk)

## About the Staff College

The Staff College was established 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 seeks to:

- Develop current and future leaders, providing 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 partners
- Support and lead on new developments to meet these challenges
- Be instrumental in developing the "collective intelligence" of the children's services community
- Respond to systemic and organisational changes in children's services

For further information about the Staff College please visit our [website](#)

## About the programme

The Leading Change programme focuses on building a cohort of well-equipped and confident SEND/AP leaders, strengthening a consistent approach and facilitating intentional leadership across the country.

Envisaged as the foundation for ongoing development for aspiring SEND leaders, the programme is designed to:

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

This will increase professional pride, credibility, and trust across the SEND/AP community and boost life outcomes for SEND/AP children and their families.

In the longer term we want to enhance children and young people with SEND and their families' experience of the support they receive and how it helps to improve their lives and life chances.

We particularly welcome applications from several colleagues in an area who would be keen to work on a leadership challenge together.

## How much does it cost?

The cost of a place on the programme is £2495 + VAT.

In addition to the learning of the programme, this includes:

- Day Delegate rates at each in-person event (refreshments, lunch etc)
- Overnight accommodation, breakfast and dinner at the orientation residential
- Access to 360-degree feedback tool
- Access to online learning platform

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## Testimonials from previous cohorts

- *“It has been a busy and fun packed couple of days, lots of questioning, challenge and new ideas. Having others from across the country to see how this is done in other areas.”*
- *“Good balance of theory and practical – valued the opportunity to network with others.”*
- *“It’s been a great programme! And some great learning across the sessions. I feel it’s really supported my growth in the current role but also as part of my leadership journey.”*
- *“Great session as always – a fantastic group to be involved with and course to have joined – thank you.”*
- *“Networking, approaches and SEND specific discussions.”*
- *“This has been one of the most valuable leadership courses I have attended – great facilitators and inspirational speakers!”*

## Eligibility Criteria

The programme is designed around the needs of those with strategic responsibility for SEND within their local area, e.g.:

- LA strategic leads for SEND
- Social care leads for SEND across children’s and adults services
- 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, Early years, MATs and Further Education

We are looking to pilot the inclusion of MAT or school cluster SEND leads to further support partnership working across the system and we would be happy to accept participants on the course where funding is available to support them.

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

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## Sponsors

Potential participants will be expected to have their application supported by a line manager (ideally at Assistant Director or Director-level). By “sponsoring” an application, managers will commit to supporting their colleague actively throughout the duration of the programme.

## Programme Structure

In addition to the below sessions, participants have access to a 360-degree evaluation tool to help identify their strengths and areas for development.

We also provide access to an online learning platform through which participants can access all materials used on the programme, as well as further resources shared by facilitators and participants.

- Two-day Orientation Residential (in-person): 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> October 2025
  - Gloriously Ordinary Lives
  - The importance of lived experience
  - Your personal leadership
  - Resourceful and resilient leadership
  - Action learning
  - Personal leadership challenges
- Mid-programme workshop (in-person): 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025
  - Working corporately and politically
  - SEND and why its history matters
  - Brave leadership
  - Strategic triangles and authorising environments
- Action Learning Set (online): 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2025
  - More info on what's covered
- Two-day End of Programme Residential (in-person): 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026
  - Working across systems
  - A focus on Health
  - Constellations
  - Leaders and research – What Works in SEND
  - Presenting leadership challenges
  - Inclusive leadership
  - Storytelling

All in-person sessions will take place at **Warwick Conferences, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7SH**

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/conferences>

For enquires please contact [hello@thestaffcollege.uk](mailto:hello@thestaffcollege.uk)

## How to apply

Please click this link to apply: <https://thestaffcollege.uk/leading-change-in-sendap-national-programme-application-form/>

We plan to recruit up to 30 participants to this cohort. Applicants will need to demonstrate how they meet the eligibility criteria by answering the questions in our online application form. They will also need to confirm that they have funding available along with the support of their sponsor.

The application and assessment process comprises:

- ✓ Completion and submission of the application form and sponsor nomination
- ✓ Sifting and benchmarking of application forms
- ✓ Feedback to candidates on request

## Key Applications Dates

Applications open	<b>Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July</b>
Applications close	<b>Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September</b>
Applications outcomes communicated	<b>Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September</b>
Cohort confirmed	<b>September 2025</b>
360-degree Assessment launch	<b>September 2025</b>
Programme launch- Orientation Residential	<b>8-9<sup>th</sup> October 2025</b>