



SEND Leadership Programme 2020/21: Programme Framework

This document gives an outline of the content¹ of the SEND Leadership Programme that the Department for Education (DfE) has commissioned from National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) as part of the Delivering Better Outcomes Together (DBOT) delivery support programme. This is the sixth year that the programme has run – having been re-commissioned by DfE because of the positive response from participants and their managers to the previous programmes.

The programme will start in November 2020, bringing together up to 40 people in a series of modules to develop their skills and apply them in their work to deliver the SEND reforms. The programme encompasses leadership and organisational theory and practice, best practice in service delivery, and understanding communities and co-production.

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¹ Whilst the core structure will remain as outlined, the detail of content may vary slightly during the programme – both to respond to participant wishes, and to reflect and changing policy and delivery context.



The Benefit of The Programme

Findings from the [evaluation of the 2019-20 Leadership Programme](#) were overwhelmingly positive. Participants were very satisfied with the course and feel their leadership skills have improved. Some participants said that while they have been on management courses before, none have been as different, creative, and inspiring as this one.

Feedback from participants and alumni suggests that the key ingredients are: the rich, topic-based sessions; the quality and diversity of the external presenters; the opportunity for building networks; and the safe and authentic space for personal growth and development engineered by the facilitation team. In particular, the opportunity for self-reflection and reinvigoration were highlighted as important features of the programme.

While limited time has passed since the course finished in March 2020, and the COVID-19 response has significantly affected the immediate context, there is evidence that the programme is having a positive impact on the leadership skills of participants, and their ability to deliver reforms. This is particularly seen around leaders having a renewed sense of confidence in their work and being equipped with the necessary skills and tools to elevate the reform and inclusion agenda within their workplaces.

Feedback confirmed that the programme has transformed participants' practice, boosted confidence, enhanced knowledge, and established a peer network.

*"I have taken a **more strategic** approach to the SEND agenda and have been able to apply leadership/management strategies adopted to enable change to meet demand."*

*"Having the opportunity to lift your head above the challenge of the day role and step out to have time to consider the aspects of your role in **greater depth** is of great value."*

*"[The course is] **self-reflective, empowering** and a chance to check-in."*

*"I continue to keep in touch with people from the course and we use each other as a source of support and ideas. It's a **safe space** because there is no one else to talk about these things with."*

*"I take something away from every session - from things I can take back for **immediate consideration** and inclusion, to others that are useful in 'the bank' of **resources for future use**."*

Who Can Apply?

Applications are invited from **senior local authority SEND managers/leaders of education or social care with significant strategic responsibilities for delivering the reforms**. We particularly welcome applications from leaders with a social care and health background given the cultural change and multidisciplinary approach that is required to implement these reforms.

Applications would ideally be submitted by a pair of people from a local area; for example, two local authority leaders with different responsibilities such as in relation to education or social care, or alternatively one LA leader and a partner from the NHS, and would also be accepted from Local Authority SEND leaders not applying as part of a pair though not from unpartnered NHS leaders. The programme is appropriate for people who wish to develop their knowledge and skills, both those experienced in SEND issues and those in senior positions who may be newer to the SEND field.

The programme is appropriate both for **experienced SEND managers** wishing to develop their personal leadership knowledge and skills and for **recently appointed SEND senior managers** who, as well as leadership development, also wish to build their knowledge of SEND.

Dates

The programme involves eight formal participant days in total. **Attendance at all modules is expected**, and a commitment to this effect from both the applicant and their manager is a pre-requisite of selection to the programme. Before applying, please make sure you are available to attend all four modules, each being a two-day residential* on:

- **Tuesday 17 & Wednesday 18 November 2020**
- **Tuesday 15 & Wednesday 16 December 2020**
- **Tuesday 12 & Wednesday 13 January 2021**
- **Tuesday 09 & Wednesday 10 February 2021**

*We aim to deliver the modules in person; however, if COVID-19 guidelines mean that we are unable to deliver this work in person we will deliver the sessions online (please note that since March 2020, NDTi has successfully delivered several online events and training).

Overview of Content

The following provides further detail of the intended content. There are two main content elements to the programme:

1. **Leadership, Change and Personal Skills**, that focus on issues of organisation change, leadership, team-working and personal leadership style. Whilst these modules will be the more 'theoretical' part of the programme, they will be firmly rooted in the realities of life as a leader delivering SEND across the education, health and social care sectors. There will also be specific sessions at the outset about the current policy framework and the history of special educational needs as a concept and policy from a human rights perspective. The aim and purpose will be to share ideas, evidence and strategies to help equip participants with the tools they need to understand how to (i) operate effectively within an organisation (ii) lead significant change (iii) develop their personal style and grow their potential to demonstrate real leadership, and (iv) specifically relate and apply this to the SEND agenda.

These modules will also be where the personal project is explored and developed. Each (pair of) participant(s) will be required as part of the application process to bring a significant aspect of local change arising from the reform agenda. They will use this in between sessions as a 'testing bed' for their learning on the programme.

2. **Leading Edge Practice**, that focus on the leadership actions and attributes that arise from some of the key policy and practice changes that are expected within SEND.

The modules have been designed to support participants to develop into the leaders they wish to be as well as having SEND specific content including best practice.

This will include:

- Understanding the importance of working in partnership with families, children and young people. The aim will be to bring best practice and practical strategies into play that will help ensure participants can get beyond the usual rhetoric of what should happen, to ensure that these relationships are successful and provide real added value to their work and the outcomes achieved. We will explore the different behavioural requirements of leading through co-production.
- Understanding the importance of joint commissioning and integration. This essential building block of SEND policy requires leaders to work in new, collaborative ways, which take them beyond traditional organisational silos. The current evidence from the SEND local area inspections show that local areas are still struggling with joint commissioning and integration. The evidence base on how this can be achieved will be explored, with participants being able to consider the leadership actions they need to take to make partnership working a reality.

Each session will have clear learning outcomes that will inform the detailed content. The programme has a core team of leaders/facilitators who will support the running of the programme. External speakers from a range of perspectives will be invited – based upon their particular knowledge and expertise.

Additional Support

In addition to formal sessions, the programme will also create the opportunity for:

- **Coaching/Personal advice/mentoring with the programme leaders.** Time has been allowed in the costings for telephone contact and support between facilitators and participants (everyone will be allocated a link facilitator), and the opportunity to access coaching from one of our trained and experienced coaching team.
- **Access to best practice materials and innovative ideas** in relevant areas.
- **Mutual learning** through the development of networks with participants in similar roles across the country.
- **Access to an online resource** to share ideas and ask questions of fellow participants and the facilitators.

Additionally, at the end of the programme, there is the chance to join participants from previous years in a growing 'alumni' network that continues to meet both in person and virtually to engage in shared problem solving.

Key Themes

- SEND policy and legal framework
- The nature of Leadership
- How organisations work
- Achieving change.
- SEND history and SEND and the early years
- Co-production and participation
- Personal projects
- Joint commissioning and integrated working
- Leading without formal authority.
- Leading edge practice
- Complex needs
- Preparing for Adulthood
- Community Inclusion
- Health
- Education and Inclusion
- Quality systems that lead to good outcomes in the face of increasing financial pressures
- Commissioning
- How values and beliefs affect your leadership style
- Leadership in difficult times
- Personal resilience
- Large group interventions
- Personalisation, and personal budgets.
- Culture and change
- Managing conflict
- The future of SEND policy and practice

Outline Framework

Module 1 (two-day residential module)

Overall theme – introduction to the programme, background to SEND from a human rights perspective, leadership values and inspiration

- The history of special educational needs and disability to contextualise the society and services within which we operate.
- The policy context – the Children and Families Act 2014 and related policies. The challenges this brings for SEND Managers and colleagues.
- On the nature of leadership – what is a leader, what are the key characteristics of effective leadership, how to build those into a personal operating style.
- How to be a brilliant leader!
- Development of the personal, work-based ‘project’
- An introduction to coaching
- A senior member of the DfE team to present (to be confirmed)

Module 2 (two-day residential module)

Overall theme – you as a leader – personal resilience and leadership in difficult times / Personalisation – beyond personal budgets.

- Understanding yourself as a leader, thinking about resilience and brave leadership
- How can we support children and young people with the most complex needs in a person-centred way that leads to them achieving a good life – facilitated by an expert by experience

Module 3 (two-day residential module)

Overall theme – leadership within teams and systems, coproduction and expert sessions.

- Coproduction – presentations from young people and parent carers
- Large group interventions: How to work with multiple stakeholders and large groups of people to develop plans, strategies and action
- Team coaching techniques
- Leading without management authority to influence change
- **Expert sessions – pathways to employment and community inclusion**

Module 4 (two-day residential module)

Joint commissioning and integration, reflection, key learning, personal projects, next steps.

- Joint commissioning and integration. Understanding the different leadership styles and behavioural traits that are important to working across organisational boundaries, including though a focus on:
- Understanding the breadth of commissioning, at both strategic and individual levels
- Definitions of joint commissioning and integration and what it might look like
- The evidence base for joint working – what needs to be in place
- Understanding the role of health within SEND
- Leading with time to think
- Presentation of personal projects
- **Expert sessions – social and education inclusion, quality in systems**

Cost

This programme is supported by the Department for Education, so we ask for a nominal fee of **£875 plus VAT** per applicant.

Application Process

Applications close on Tuesday 08 September 2020, 12 noon. Subject to the appropriateness of applications, a degree of priority will be given to local authorities/areas who have not had people previously accepted onto the programme, as well as those areas who have a written statement of action following a SEND LA inspection. We also aim to ensure that every region is represented.

To complete your application for the SEND Leadership Programme 2020/21, you will need to submit the **Online Application Form** and on the same day email your **Application Document** to: leadership@ndti.org.uk. To apply, we recommended that you:

1. Read through this Programme Framework document and ensure you are available to attend on the dates listed
2. Refer to the **Questions for Online Form** and make sure you have the answers ready to input into the online application form
3. Work on and complete your **Application Document**
4. Complete and submit the **Online Application Form**
5. Email your **Application Document** to: leadership@ndti.org.uk

All of the related documents and links are available on our [website](#).

This will be a competitive application process. Decisions on who has been selected for the Programme will be taken within about two weeks of the deadline.

Contact Details

If you have any questions about the SEND Leadership Programme 2020/21 or the application process, please contact: leadership@ndti.org.uk / 01225 789 135.