



BRADFORD
BIRTH TO 19

TEACHING SCHOOL ALLIANCE | SCITT | TRUST

Specialist Leaders of Practice (SLP) Application guidance



Summary

About this guidance. This has been produced to support potential applicants by explaining the application and reference requirements and the SLP assessment process.

Who is this guidance for? Setting leaders, staff and managing bodies and early years settings; who meet the eligibility criteria

Contact information If you have any questions about the application process, contact our Workforce Development Leader, Andrea Layzell at andrea.layzell@stedmundsnsc.com

Specialist leaders of practice (SLPs)

SLP application guidance

What is an SLP?

SLPs are outstanding middle and senior leaders in positions with at least two years' leadership experience. They have a particular area of expertise and a successful track record of setting improvement.

SLPs support leaders in other settings. They have excellent interpersonal skills, are able to work sensitively and collaboratively with others and have a commitment to outreach work. They understand what outstanding leadership practice in their area of specialism looks like and can help other leaders to achieve it in their own context.

The SLP role is about developing other middle and senior leaders so that they have the skills to lead their own teams and improve practice in their own settings. This may be done through one-to-one peer coaching or facilitated group support and could involve a variety of activities, such as data analysis, coaching or joint action planning.

SLPs can come from any setting, including day nursery, pre school playgroup or childminder provision. Their setting will be able to evidence outstanding practice. We hope to recruit ten SLPs across the district this year.

How it works

Models and types of deployments will vary. For example, one deployment might be a two-day diagnostic exercise, whilst another might require a support role over a longer period. Time may be taken as a block of consecutive days or spread over a longer period. There is no defined time commitment for deployments; this should be agreed between all parties. However, SLPs and settings will need to think carefully about the likely commitment and capacity.

SLPs will be expected to show evidence that their work has had a positive impact on outcomes for children and young people by developing leadership capacity in other settings. The Bradford Birth to 19 Teaching School is responsible for the recruitment, designation, brokerage, deployment and quality assurance of SLPs.

More information about the eligibility criteria, what's involved and who can become an SLP is available from the Bradford Birth to 19 Teaching School website.

Owner/Manager support

Applicants who apply for the programme **must** have the support and agreement of their owner/manager, who will confirm that the setting has the capacity to release them. The owner/manager will act as the applicant's referee and will complete a reference section in the application form. They will need to provide a supporting statement showing evidence of how the applicant meets the criteria and how she/he has supported a leader/practitioner in another setting.

Funding and support

The Bradford Birth to 19 teaching school will ensure that there is support available for you where required. Our team will also be on hand to answer any questions you may have. There may be payment for specific SLP deployments either from settings receiving support or from other sources or commissioning bodies. Any such payment will be agreed and managed at the local level by the teaching school and/or other settings involved.

Before you begin your application

Check that you are eligible to become an SLP. The current criteria and approved areas of expertise are available on the Bradford Birth to 19 website. You will need to give evidence that you meet all areas of the SLP eligibility criteria and are outstanding in at least one of the approved SLP areas of expertise.

Talk to your referee. Your application must be supported by your owner/manager. The reference is an essential part of your application and we **strongly recommend** that you discuss your application with your owner/manager, before applying, to ensure that you have her or his support. Share the application guidance with your owner/manager and be sure to allow sufficient time for her or him to complete your reference and return your application before [31st December 2016](#)

Set sufficient time aside. The SLP application process requires you to provide significant evidence about your eligibility for the role. You should set aside sufficient time to think about, discuss and complete the application form appropriately.

The application form

The SLP application form is a word document, and is to be obtained from the Bradford Birth - 19 teaching school.

All the questions are mandatory. It is not possible for your application form to be considered unless all the questions are completed.

Some parts of the application form have character limits (stated on the form) that will include spaces and bullet points.

Once you have completed your application form, you will need to send it to your owner/manager to complete the reference section. Once complete, your owner/manager will need to return the document using the contact details provided by the teaching school at the bottom of the application form. Your application will not be considered until this has been completed.

The document returned must be in Word format (.doc or .docx), not a PDF or any other format.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your owner/manager receives, completes and submits your application form before the application window closes.

Application questions

The table below details the application questions and shows how they link to the eligibility criteria. This will help applicants ensure that they provide the appropriate evidence in each response.

Application question

Specialist area(s) of expertise

Please indicate your specialist area(s) and the length of time you have been a specialist within that field

How the question links to the eligibility criteria

You can list as many specialist areas as you feel are necessary. However, they must take into account the priorities of the teaching school and the areas of expertise.

General

Do you hold a leadership role or responsibility within your setting?

Experience: SLPs will have a minimum of two years' experience in a leadership role within an early years (nursery, pre school or childminder) setting.

Please indicate how long you have been in this role.

If fewer than two years, please detail your previous leadership role or responsibility and the name of the setting where you held this role.

Experience: SLPs will be outstanding middle or senior leaders with at least two years' experience and excellent knowledge in a particular field of expertise. SLPs will have a minimum of two years' experience in a leadership role within an early years setting.

Leadership experience and capacity

Question 1:

What motivates you to participate in system leadership?

Capacity and commitment: SLPs will have a commitment to outreach work, and the capacity to undertake such work.

Track record: SLPs will have a successful track record, supported by substantial evidence of impact of working effectively within their own setting and/or across a group of settings or working with a range of leaders within a single setting.

Question 2:

Please outline the significant impact of your contribution as a leader to supporting leaders in other settings or to your own setting's performance. Please detail the impact and demonstrate clear evidence of your outstanding practice within your area(s) of expertise or specialism.

Experience: SLPs will be outstanding middle or senior leaders with at least two years' experience and excellent knowledge in a particular field of expertise.

Track record: SLPs will have a successful track record, supported by substantial evidence of impact of working effectively within their own setting and/or across a group of settings, or working with a range of leaders within a single setting.

Skills: SLPs will have an understanding of what constitutes 'outstanding' in their field of expertise and the ability and confidence to articulate this.

SLPs will have an appreciation of how their specialism and skills can contribute to the wider setting improvement agenda

Question 3:

Please provide examples of where you have worked sensitively with peer colleagues using coaching or facilitation skills to grow leadership capacity in others leading to sustainable improvements.

Track record: SLPs will have evidence of successfully using coaching and/or facilitation skills to bring about sustainable improvements.

SLPs will have excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

SLPs will have the ability to utilise high levels of emotional intelligence to work sensitively and collaboratively with peer colleagues.

Skills: SLPs will have excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

SLPs will have an analytical approach in identifying needs and the ability to prioritise accordingly, including the ability to set and establish new and innovative working practices.

Question 4:

Please provide a clear example of a time when you have significantly challenged, collaborated, motivated and/or inspired your colleagues to establish new, innovative working practices. What was the impact?

Track record: SLPs will have a successful track record, supported by substantial evidence of impact of working effectively within their own setting and/or across a group of settings, or working with a range of leaders within a single setting.

Question 5:

Please give excerpts from Ofsted reports if your practice has been cited there and/or performance results/outcomes you have been accountable for in your area of work have been commented on. Please reference clearly the Ofsted report(s) where these comments are made as these may be verified

Additional information

Please provide any other information that demonstrates your expert knowledge in your field of expertise in support of your application.

Experience, qualification, skills, track record, capacity and commitment: SLPs will be outstanding middle or senior leaders with at least two years' experience and excellent knowledge in a particular field of expertise.

The assessment process

Assessment

Bradford Birth to 19 Teaching School will be responsible for assessing applicants. This includes carrying out the initial sift, selection, assessment activities and final designation. The Teaching School is committed to ensuring that we manage a fair and open process.

Face-to-face activities

Bradford Birth to 19 Teaching School will invite successful applicants to undertake some form of face-to-face assessment activities. Assessment activities may include an individual presentation and/or interview and/or an observed group discussion. The teaching school will provide details and requirements before your assessment.

A panel from the teaching school will assess applicants against the agreed SLP designation criteria. We will inform candidates in writing of the outcome of their interview.