



# Specialist leaders of practice (SLP's)

## Information for Private and Voluntary providers

**Specialist leaders of practice (SLPs) are outstanding middle and senior leaders who have the skills to support individuals or teams in similar positions in other settings. They understand what outstanding leadership practice in their area of expertise looks like, and are skilled in helping other leaders to achieve it in their own context.**

The Schools White Paper introduced the concept of the SLE role, which will help to improve the quality of school leadership through school-to-school support and peer-to-peer learning, ultimately raising standards and improving outcomes for children. This designation recognises the important role that many senior and middle leaders play in supporting their peers to develop. Bradford's Birth to 19 Teaching School is developing a group of experienced, senior leaders from the PVI sector that will undertake a similar role across the Bradford District, who will be known as Specialist Leaders of Practice (SLPs).

### Key points:

1. Whilst SLPs will be outstanding at what they do, they can come from any setting that is able to evidence outstanding practice. The owner/manager must agree that the setting has the capacity to release them.

SLPs need to meet strict designation criteria, which can be found in full on our website.

2. SLPs have expertise in a specific area, for example; child development, planning and observation, environment, language development, inclusion or setting business management. A list of areas of expertise can be found on our website.
3. There is no pre-defined time commitment for SLP work because models and types of deployment will vary.

# Information for settings

## How will a specialist leader of practice benefit my setting?

### The SLP's own setting

**Setting to setting support enables the sharing and development of outstanding, innovative practice, which can benefit both settings in a partnership.**

The SLP programme will:

- be an excellent form of continuing professional development for middle and senior leaders, enabling them to enhance their knowledge, skills and abilities in a variety of ways
- further develop SLPs' coaching, mentoring and facilitation skills, which can also be used to support colleagues in their own setting through internal training and development
- give individuals the opportunity to learn about different setting contexts and systems, which will in turn help them to develop their practice in their own setting
- support setting's internal succession-planning strategies, by enabling individuals to demonstrate they are ready to step up to the next leadership level
- support staff retention by motivating and re-energising leaders who are taking on this new role
- possibly result in some funding for the SLP's own setting, although this will be agreed by the settings involved and by the Bradford Birth to 19 Teaching School Alliance.

### Settings in receipt of SLP support

**Feedback from similar leadership programmes tells us that leaders value and benefit from the support of their peers.**

This type of peer support:

- is credible, because it is rooted in current leadership practice and draws on real, relevant experience
- takes place within the supported setting, with the SLP working alongside staff and taking into account demands on their time
- is flexible and bespoke, adapting to the particular needs of the supported setting
- brings a fresh perspective to specific challenges or issues, as well as specialist knowledge and expertise
- takes a coaching approach, meaning that development will be collaborative
- helps to assure long-term, sustainable improvement - the aim is to help supported leaders to develop their own leadership capacity
- can contribute to improving setting performance overall, by providing a specific focus for development and implementing tangible goals that staff can really engage with

### How can I request SLP support for my setting?

SLP support is brokered by the Bradford Birth to 19 teaching school. If you would like to commission SLP support you will need to contact the Workforce Development Leader, Andrea Layzell directly on 01274 543282 or [andrea.layzell@stedmundsnsc.com](mailto:andrea.layzell@stedmundsnsc.com)