

ALDCS SEND BULLETIN

JUNE 2025 ISSUE

The ALDCS SEND Bulletin highlights events and news for colleagues in local authorities who work with children and young people with SEND. Find out more about LIIA's work in SEND [here](#).

NEWS AND UPDATES

We're in an exciting period for the ALDCS SEND Programme, with strong collaboration continuing across London to tackle shared challenges and drive improvement. Since our last bulletin, there's been significant progress across all key workstreams – from commissioning and workforce to the London SEND Leadership Programme and LIIA's SEND Data Dashboard.

We're also pleased to highlight **the launch of the London Children's Services Practice Spotlight Digital Area**, which celebrates and shares innovative approaches from across our region – a valuable addition to our shared learning offer.

This edition provides a brief overview of the programme's recent activity, including updates on:

- Exciting Opportunities to join the LIIA Team!
- The continued development of the London SEND Leadership Programme
- Pan-London work on SEND Workforce Development
- The London SEND Commissioning Project
- Updates on the PINS Programme

You'll find more detail on each project in the sections below. We hope this update helps keep you informed and connected to the wider work happening across the ALDCS SEND Programme!



**WE ARE
RECRUITING**

JOIN THE LIIA TEAM!

We're excited to share that the LIIA SEND Team is expanding in preparation for upcoming national SEND reforms. These new roles will be central to shaping and delivering key priorities, working closely with London local authorities, partners, and stakeholders. This expansion also offers the chance to play a vital role in helping London prepare for and respond to national policy changes, building on strong practice to improve outcomes for children with SEND.

Now entering its fourth year, the ALDCS SEND Programme is embarking on an exciting new phase of development to drive forward an ambitious pan-London agenda. To support this expansion, we are recruiting for **three SEND Programme Lead roles and a SEND Intelligence Analyst - each a 12 month contract.** These positions are also open to **secondments and agency appointments.**

All roles are hosted by London Councils, and offer the opportunity to work closely with colleagues across London to drive improvement in SEND at a London-wide level.

Applications for each role close - 12pm noon, 14th of July; with interviews taking place on 17th & 18th July for Programme Leads, and week commencing 28th July for the Analyst Role.

WE ARE CURRENTLY RECRUITING TO:

SEND Programme Lead - Innovation and Targeted Support (Lead for South London)

This role will lead the pan-London innovation and targeted support workstream, working closely with local authorities to co-design and deliver deep dives and support packages that respond to local and regional needs. We're looking for someone with strong project design and delivery skills, and experience working with or within local authority SEND services.

[Find out more](#)

SEND Programme Lead - Inclusion and Universal Support (Lead for North London)

This post will lead the SEND inclusion and universal support workstream. The role will also act as the sub-regional lead for North London. We're seeking someone with a strong grasp of SEND and inclusion policy, and an ability to build relationships and deliver across complex systems.

[Find out more](#)

SEND Programme Lead - Resources and Commissioning

This role will lead our growing work on high-cost placements, sufficiency and strategic commissioning. It will support local authorities in exploring opportunities to strengthen and collaborate on SEND commissioning practice. We're looking for someone with experience in strategic planning, commissioning or finance within local authority or partnership settings.

[Find out more](#)

Intelligence Analyst

This new role will strengthen our use of data and evidence across the SEND programme. The postholder will work closely with colleagues across London to develop a shared understanding of system challenges and help shape priority setting, impact tracking and decision-making. We're looking for someone skilled in data analysis and interpretation, with a collaborative and inquisitive approach.

[Find out more](#)

Please do share these opportunities with colleagues across your networks to support us to identify strong candidates to join us in this exciting next chapter.

Further information about each of these roles, including job descriptions, salary details and the application process is [available via the LIIA website.](#) You can also learn more about [LIIA, our priorities,](#) and what it's like to [work as part of the team here.](#)

If you're interested in finding out more or would like an informal discussion about any of the posts, please feel free to contact [Frank Offer \(Lead for ALDCS SEND Programme\)](#)

PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT AT THE HEART OF SECTOR-LED IMPROVEMENT IN LONDON

In May we saw the official launch and celebration of Practice Spotlight at the Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS) London Children's Services Summit 2025.

NEW Practice Spotlight Digital Resources Area!

We are also delighted to confirm the launch of the **Practice Spotlight Digital Area**; a very special resource that houses all of the examples of practice shared across London, allowing stakeholders and partners to directly engage with our many innovative and impactful examples of practice, and those leading the work locally.

[CLICK HERE TO START EXPLORING THE PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT DIGITAL RESOURCES AREA](#)

LONDON CHILDREN'S SERVICES PRACTICE SPOTLIGHT

Practice Spotlight

WELCOME – Practice Spotlight shines a light on London Children's Services most innovative and impactful practice that is transforming the lives of children and families. It is this motivation that binds us together and cements our connection to one another and the children, young people and families we serve.

EXPLORE – More than 100 examples of practice were submitted across 9 categories by London's Local Authorities who shared their work that is making the biggest difference to children and families.

► Background to Practice Spotlight

1. Racial equity

2. Impact for children with special educational needs and disabilities

3. Building safety for young Londoners

4. Supporting and strengthening the workforce

5. Delivering excellence for care leavers

6. Improving outcomes for children with complex needs who are in care or on the edge of care

7. Delivering together with health services

8. Making data speak for London's children

9. Delivering positive impact through early intervention

Did you know?

- **Each section within the digital resource includes an introduction** that summarises the examples of practice and themes identified by the regional review panels to support your exploration!
- **More than 200 colleagues** from across London's LAs and partners now form part of the new Practice Spotlight community!

What's next for Practice Spotlight?

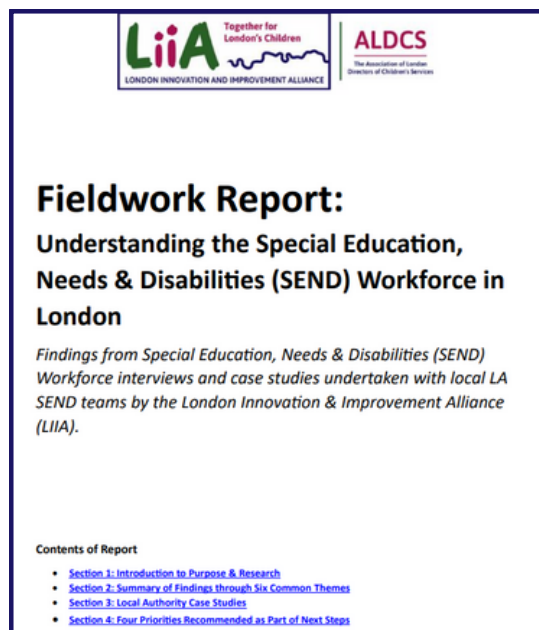
- **Regional workshops** – we will be developing a series of events and workshops centred around the examples of practice received over coming weeks and months. Whilst we may reach out to you and your team directly, *if you are interested in leading and/or co-leading a regional workshop/event on your area of practice, please contact [Rula Tripolitaki](#) and [Matthew Raleigh](#).*
- **Campaign development for promotion and recruitment** – our London Social Work for Children team have already begun interviewing Practice Spotlight colleagues to develop content that celebrates and promotes the examples of practice shared. *If you are interested in working with us to develop content or case studies about your work, service and/or your team please contact [Eliana Neyhus](#) and [Rula Tripolitaki](#).*
- **Continuous development** – we will continue to develop Practice Spotlight as a centrepiece of sector led improvement in London, maximising opportunities to share and learn and evaluating the impact of the initiative. *We welcome your views, suggestions and if you would to get more involved in this work please drop [Rula Tripolitaki](#) and [Matthew Raleigh](#) a line*

If you would like to discuss any areas of this work in more detail please reach out to [Rula Tripolitaki](#) or [Matthew Raleigh](#).

SEND WORKFORCE PROGRAMME

FIELDWORK REPORT PUBLISHED: UNDERSTANDING THE SPECIAL EDUCATION, NEEDS & DISABILITIES (SEND) WORKFORCE IN LONDON

We are delighted to have published the SEND Workforce Fieldwork Report: [Understanding the Special Education, Needs & Disabilities \(SEND\) Workforce in London](#). The report summarises the findings from fieldwork undertaken with London Local Authorities over recent months and includes individual case studies to represent the context associated with the key themes identified. A special thanks to all those London Authorities that were part of the research.



Six common themes

1. The importance of **stable leadership**
2. Targeted and **innovative recruitment strategies**
3. The role of **training and development** in retention
4. Challenges associated with **agency reliance** and associated high costs
5. The impact of **backlog** related to annual plans and caseloads
6. The goal of **diverse and representative teams**

Four priorities have been proposed as part of next steps within the report, these will be reviewed by the ALDCS SEND Steering Group.

ONGOING WORK: LONDON PLEDGE FOR AGENCY USE OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Rising agency costs, increasing remote working expectations and more newly qualified EPs moving directly into agency roles are some of the challenges being faced in the recruitment and retention of the EP workforce. **To address these issues, the ALDCS SEND and Workforce Programmes, in collaboration with NAPEP (National Association of Principal Educational Psychologists) have undertaken significant research and are now taking steps to develop a pan-London Educational Psychologist 'London Pledge'** aimed to stabilise the EP workforce and better manage an agency market that currently mirrors the agency social worker landscape several years ago.

Following initial endorsement, the draft agreement is benefiting from input from a wide range of stakeholders both regionally and nationally with 3 priority elements identified including;

- **A capped agency pay rate for EPs**
- **A minimum 3 year post-qualified experience (PQE) expectation for EPs seeking agency work**
- **A clear set of remote working expectations**

A wide range of engagements with networks are planned in June and July, including with HR Leads, Practice Leaders, London NAPEP and Managed Service Providers (MSPs). Subject to ALDCS approval the **EP London Pledge is planned for implementation in autumn 2025 and will be launched alongside the Big SEND Conversation, a SEND focused workforce research project to hear directly from the workforce.**

We are also undertaking analysis to benchmark our regional permanent EP offer. **To support this we encourage all Local Authorities to respond to the London Councils HR Metrics Pay & Benefits survey which includes EPs - the 2025 survey is now open, with a return deadline of 8 August 2025.** Please contact [Rula Tripolitaki](#) if you need any further information on this work.

LONDON SEND LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME



The London SEND Leadership Programme has now successfully completed its third cohort, continuing to **support system leaders across London**. Commissioned by LiIA, NHSE and the Department for Education, and developed by Newton Europe and nasen, the programme was co-designed with SEND leads, team managers, and parent carers to ensure it meets the needs of the system and its workforce.

Across the programmes **3 cohorts, 93 participants have taken part**, representing all **33 London local authorities, all 5 Integrated Care Boards, and 8 parent carer representatives**, representing forums from across London.

What were the highlights of the programme for attendees?

*"The opportunity to learn from the people delivering the course as well as the other attendees. It was great to have access to **leaders and experts in SEND** from across London and I really liked that **parent carers were part of the group** as well as part of the **delivery team** at times."*

*"The models will be very helpful for me as an **aspiring leader** and will equip me to move forward **more confidently in my career as a systems leader**."*

*"**Meeting and networking** with others, benefiting from all the **experience in the room** and hearing the **various speakers**."*

Across all three cohorts, participant feedback has been exceptionally strong:

- **95%** found the content relevant to their learning needs
- **95%** reported developing stronger peer support networks
- **95%** would recommend the programme to a peer
- **95%** felt the guest speakers and panel discussions were relevant to their work

Not only has the programme seen fantastic engagement scores, but we've also seen a **huge confidence and capability improvement** based on scores from pre-post programme feedback.

Capability Area	Pre-Programme	Post-Programme
Understanding ambitions of system partners	62%	88%
Understanding system partner challenges	85%	90%
Identifying high-impact areas for SEND improvement	54%	83%
Building a vision for change and evidencing impact	49%	87%
Delivering a local SEND change programme	40%	83%
Sustaining SEND improvements over time	37%	87%

These results reflect the programme's growing reputation as a valuable development opportunity for London SEND Leaders in their roles across Local Authorities, Health and Parent Carer Forums.

What's Next?

- A full formal evaluation of the programme is currently being conducted - and will be shared within a future SEND Bulletin.
- Due to continued high demand, we are actively exploring the possibility of delivering a fourth cohort of the programme. Further communications on timings and how to register interest will follow after the summer break.

SEND COMMISSIONING



LIIA has commissioned **Mime Consulting** to build on the findings of [Treow's report on SEND Commissioning across London](#) and support the development of a stronger, more collaborative approach to SEND commissioning across London.

The work is designed to tackle key challenges facing the sector, including rising placement costs, inconsistent provision, and the need for better commissioning data and practice. Mime's research has drawn on extensive stakeholder engagement and data analysis, exploring the current landscape across London, identifying key gaps, and setting out options for a pan-London commissioning framework, data tools, and collaborative models.

Emerging themes from the report include a growing call for a **London-wide commissioning hub**, more consistent and robust **data-sharing**, and increased **collaboration on placements and provision planning**—particularly in light of forecast growth in secondary and post-16 demand. Interim findings have been shared with the ALDCS SEND Steering Group, and the final report will be published shortly following further feedback.

LOCAL AREA SEND INSPECTIONS

The Ofsted SEND inspection framework has provided valuable insights into the performance of Local Authorities. Since the framework's introduction in January 2023, 58 inspection reports have been published nationally, including 12 from London Local Authorities.

LIIA continues to monitor outcomes, analysis shows that **London is performing above the national average**, with 33% of boroughs achieving Outcome 1 compared to 25% nationally. LIIA also host a bank of Local Authority SEFs on our SEND Members area, if you have recently completed a SEF for your Local Area and would like to add this to our bank – [please get in touch!](#)

SEND STRATEGIC MANAGER PARENT CARER NETWORK

The **SEND Strategic Manager Parent Carer Network** held its May meeting with thematic focus on AI and tech innovation across SEND Services:

During the session, attendees heard various examples of practice across London – including:

- Exploring the Use of AI in Brent's Statutory 0-25 Team
- Enfield's use of emerging technology to support CYP with SEND
- Bi-Borough's Journey so far with AI

OUR NEXT MEETING...

Our next SEND Strategic Manager Parent Carer Network Meeting will be taking place on Thursday, 3rd July from 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM.

This session will focus on regional SEND developments, with presentations on the ALDCS SEND Programme and the London Change Programme Partnership, followed by a discussion on how we can best prepare for the upcoming SEND reforms. Please [get in touch](#) if you'd like to attend.

PINS PROGRAMME EXTENDED

The **Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS)** programme will be extended **for another year** with £9.5 million in new funding, reaching an additional 1,200 schools on top of the 1,600 already involved. PINS supports inclusion for neurodivergent pupils, such as those with autism, ADHD and dyslexia, through staff training, family engagement, and input from health professionals like speech and language therapists.

Early evidence shows positive impact on attendance, behaviour and pupil wellbeing. Further details on regional implementation, including in London, are expected soon.

ACCESS THE LIIA SEND DASHBOARD



LIIA is continuing to develop the London SEND Data Dashboard as part of the SEND programme to support Local Authorities. The dashboard offers valuable tools for London Authorities to facilitate both local and regional monitoring of SEND Services.

[You can access the Dashboard here.](#)

GET IN TOUCH

Please visit our website: **liia.london** for more detailed information on each of the ALDCS priorities, or **[contact the team directly](#)** to discuss anything in greater detail. As always, **[you can click here to register for access to our dedicated](#)** SEND Members' Area.

EXPLORE THE ALDCS SEND PRIORITY AREA

If you would like to discuss any areas of the programme in more detail or support a particular area of work, please reach out to our LIIA SEND Programme Lead, **[Frank Offer](#)**.

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