

# WORKFORCE NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2025 ISSUE

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to share the latest from updates across the continually developing ALDCS Workforce Programme.

**In these troubling political times the work that London continues to deliver through collaboration and generosity of spirit reflects the deep awareness and interconnectedness that we each carry.** It is this spirit that fills me with gratitude and recognition of the goodness in others and it is important that we look after each other, particularly our Black and Global Majority colleagues, families and children. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr *'hate begets hate; violence begets violence; toughness begets a greater toughness. We must meet the forces of hate with the power of love'*.



**In this edition of the newsletter you will find much of interest and I encourage engagement in the opportunities ahead.** In particular we have a London LA-led SEND Workforce Recruitment & Retention Workshop hosted by Liia on 30<sup>th</sup> September and some important milestones to celebrate including the launch of the ALDCS Racial Equity And Leadership R.E.A.Lising Potential programme. We have also had a remarkable response to the Big Conversation (CSC SW) with over 1,200 responses from across London and South East regions - the report is expected to be published next month.

**Thank you for your continued support and incredible efforts at both local and regional levels;** there is much to do but no shortage of ambition as we continue to move forward together.

If you would like to discuss the programme in more detail please reach out to our Head of Workforce, [Rula Tripolitaki](#)

**Julie Kelly, Corporate Director of Children's Services, LB Hillingdon and ALDCS Workforce Policy Lead**

## THIS MONTH'S NEWS:

- **SEND Workforce Workshop:** Book your place at the upcoming LA-led SEND Workforce Recruitment & Retention Workshop on 30<sup>th</sup> September
- **SEND Workforce Programme:** See a summary of the progress of the SEND Workforce activities so far and what's planned as part of next steps
- **London Pledge for Educational Psychologists:** Get the latest on the co-production of the LPEP with the National Association of Principal Educational Psychologists (NAPEP) and timeframes for launch
- **Launch of the Racial Equity And Leadership programme:** Celebrating the official launch of the programme at an in-person event with nominees and leaders in London later this month
- **Reminder of the International Recruitment Framework:** Now live and available to support LAs across the UK with their overseas recruitment of both adults and children's social workers
- **CSC SW Agency Statutory Guidance:** The latest updates in anticipation of the 1<sup>st</sup> October deadline
- **Research in Practice London offer:** A bespoke offer for all to access a range of training workshops

# BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE SEND WORKFORCE: RECRUITMENT, RETENTION & READINESS FOR THE BIG CONVERSATION!

This month, LIA is proud to host the **SEND Workforce Recruitment and Retention online workshop** – part of our shared mission to secure a sustainable, high-quality SEND workforce. The workshop will be led collaboratively by 4 London LAs who will share their insights and practical solutions that have helped address the pressing challenges of attracting, retaining, and developing the SEND Workforce. This event is not just about today's challenges but shaping the future of the SEND workforce together!

*This workshop is intended for London Local Authority staff only.*

**TUESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2025 FROM 12PM TO 2PM**

**SIGN UP  
HERE!**

## Aim's of the workshop:

- **PAN-LONDON ACTIVITIES:** Hear the latest ALDCS SEND Workforce programme updates and contribute your thinking to the regional priorities and future planning, with clarity on how to get involved.
- **SHARING PRACTICE:** Hear from four London Local Authorities who transparently share their learnings and case studies for effective recruitment and retention across the SEND Workforce. From significant reductions in agency reliance and stabilising the workforce, to grow your own models and partnerships with education that are seeing impressive conversion rates, to inclusive training and development programmes that are impacting long-term retention.
- **BUILDING CONNECTIONS:** An opportunity to share your successes and challenges with peers, discussing

## SEND WORKFORCE PROGRAMME: JOURNEY SO FAR

**Regional SEND Workforce Research (Q1 2024/25):** LIA undertook exploratory research to help understand the shared challenges and pan-London priorities, with 21 London LAs contributing to the research.

**Fieldwork Research (Q3 2024/25):** Building on the earlier research LIA undertook fieldwork and engaged with London LAs directly to enable a deeper understanding of the challenges and identify practice that is working. The cohort of LAs who participated in the research represented a cross section of London's LAs including representation of inner and outer London, Ofsted inspection outcomes and gathered insights directly from London local authorities and SEND professionals, mapping the key challenges and pressures shaping the workforce.

**Fieldwork Report (Q1 2025/26):** The report was published in March 2025 outlining findings from the fieldwork research and highlighting urgent issues and opportunities for collaboration in recruitment, retention and workforce development in London with a strong evidence base for action and greater clarity of priorities.

**London Pledge for Educational Psychologists (Q2 2025/26):** Fieldwork research highlighted the growing challenges of recruitment and retention of Educational Psychologists, with concerning behaviours and unsustainable costs requiring urgent, collective attention. In collaboration with the National Association of Principle Educational Psychologists, ALDCS developed a London Pledge for Education Psychologists (LPEP) intended to stabilise the market through collaboration and transparency, whilst ensuring parallel work to strengthen the permanent offer for EPs. The agreement has benefitted from input from the Association of Education Psychologists (AEP) and has been agreed by all 33 LAs for implementation on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2025.

**SEND Workforce Recruitment and Retention Workshop (Q2 2025/26 - Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September!):** As above this will provide all LAs an opportunity to hear directly from those who have contributed to regional research. The session is an opportunity to discuss the the practical implementation of solutions that have worked, and learn from those that haven't. *Don't forget to book your place.*

**Big SEND Conversation (Q3 2025/26):** The Big SEND Conversation is an important project that seeks to hear directly from the workforce to ensure that their voice directly informs priorities and helps shape the future of the programme.

*If you'd like to discuss this work further please contact Rula Tripolitaki or Madeline Oakes.*

## INTRODUCING A LONDON PLEDGE FOR THE USE OF AGENCY EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Together with the National Association of Principal Educational Psychologists (NAPEP), the Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS) we have developed a London Pledge for Educational Psychologists (LPEP).



The agreement outlines three shared principles - pay rate, PQE and remote working - designed to address challenges in the recruitment and retention of EPs, with a focus on embedding consistent recruitment practices in the supply and quality of agency workers using evidenced protocols adapted from the Child & Family Social Worker London Pledge and subsequent DfE Statutory Guidance for Child & Family Social Workers.

The LPEP recognises the need for Local Authorities to respond collectively and in cooperation and seeks to provide clear protocols and mechanisms of control, whilst also ensuring Local Authorities can respond to their own needs in times of significant pressure locally.

We have been grateful for direct input and support from the Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP) alongside a wide range of regional and national networks, and we continue to work collaboratively with other regions who are moving forward on parallel activities on the same three principles. The final agreement will be circulated in coming weeks.

This work forms part of a wider SEND Workforce Programme that in parallel involved better understanding and benchmarking the permanent offer for EPs across London alongside hearing from the workforce directly.

If you'd like to discuss this work further please contact [Rula Tripolitaki](#) or [Madeline Oakes](#).

## ALDCS LAUNCH PAN-LONDON R.E.A.LISING POTENTIAL PROGRAMME

We are delighted to confirm the launch of the Racial Equity And Leadership programme - R.E.A.Lising Potential - commissioned by the Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS) and the London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIiA) and delivered by DWC Consulting.

This programme aims to support Black and Global Majority (BGM) professionals aspiring to senior leadership. Tackling under-representation will in turn assist the fairness, quality and relevance of services for London's diverse communities. This programme helps to enact that change.



Each London Local Authority has nominated two colleagues who will take part in dynamic and demanding journey blending leadership challenge, self-discovery and career development. This will be complemented by a 'Shadowing Plus' programme that commits leaders to actively provide opportunities at a local level for graduates to ensure organisational application of the leadership programme that directly contributes to the culture of collaboration now commonplace across London.

The official launch of the programme will be celebrated as part of an in-person event with nominated candidates along with leaders from across Children's Services in London at the end of this month.

If you'd like to discuss this work further please contact [Matthew Raleigh](#).

# NEW FRAMEWORK FOR OVERSEAS RECRUITMENT OF ADULTS & CHILDRENS SOCIAL WORKERS

A first-of-its-kind framework has been launched to provide local authorities across the UK with a compliant and ethical route to market when they undertake overseas recruitment of adults and children's social workers as part of their overall recruitment strategies.

**The new framework - HR and People | International Recruitment of Social Work - 1166** – was developed by public service buying organisation YPO in partnership with London Councils and the London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIIA) on behalf of the Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS).

*"International recruits are valuable members of our workforce and our local communities. This solution speaks directly to the needs of both client and candidate to ensure best recruitment practice, ethical processes and consistency of market engagement."*

Julie Kelly, Corporate Director for Children and Young Peoples Services at London Borough of Hillingdon and ALDCS Workforce Lead

The framework is available to all local authorities across the UK who may be seeking to explore the international recruitment of adults and children's social workers as part of their workforce development strategies and require the support of specialist agencies. The design of this YPO framework guarantees uniformity in price structure, stable costs, a single point of contact for local recruitment activity and a consistently high standard of service through pre-agreed terms and conditions. Contact [Sabine Stolwijk](#), our YPO Framework SPOC to get started.

[Read about more about the launch and framework here](#)

**Please note** that this new framework is not affected by the recently proposed legislation to ban the overseas recruitment of unqualified care workers which increasing the skills threshold for Skilled Worker Visas to RQF 6. Social Workers use the Health & Social Care Visa for which the threshold remains unchanged.



## CSC AGENCY SW STATUTORY GUIDANCE: UPDATES

In the latest data collection London LA's collectively reported their lowest ever agency reliance rate for the region since reporting began. The deadline for all LAs across England to be compliant with the national statutory guidance for the use of CSC Agency Social Workers is **1st October 2025**.



There is positive progress being made across all regions in relation to the statutory guidance with shared learning benefitting all parties. There is a real sense of commitment and momentum in London, which is testament to everyone's continued efforts at a local level. Key reminders include;

- **Compliance is expected across all agency workers by 1<sup>st</sup> October:** All existing agency child and family social workers must comply with the regional price caps and other rules, including the 3 years PQE in a permanent role, from 1<sup>st</sup> October. To confirm this applies to all agency candidates irrespective of tenure.
- **The Q2 2025/26 statutory data collection will open from 1<sup>st</sup> October:** This report will capture activity across the previous quarter and be visualised within the London Agency Dashboard. Price caps will not be part of this report.
- **Price Caps will be included in returns from Q3 2025/26:** The Q3 25/26 statutory data collection will be the first to include price caps as part of the collection, which will open in January 2026.

If you wish to discuss this guidance further or require support please contact [Rula Tripolitaki](#).

# RESEARCH IN PRACTICE: ONLINE WORKSHOPS FOR THE LONDON REGION

research  
in practice

We are pleased to share an enhanced offer from Research in Practice for the London region to support engagement in training opportunities.

Below is a summary of the available online workshops with booking links provided. This programme is specifically for local authorities in the London region and has been made available to all LAs, including non-RIP members for this limited enhanced offer.

## London Regional Programme: Workshops

**This programme is for Children's Services practitioners and management** across all local authorities in the London region, including local authorities who do not have a membership with Research in Practice.

Delivered by experienced facilitators, our online learning workshops use a range of methods to engage participants in active learning. This includes PowerPoint presentations, breakout room discussions, practice scenario examples, videos, individual exercises, and group discussion all aimed at addressing learning objectives.

**There are 30 places available on each workshop.** These are made available on a first come first served basis with the sessions running from 09:30 until 15:30. *Please right click the title of the workshop and open the link to book your place.*

**[Click here to explore the online workshops and book your place](#)**

## London Regional Programme: Enhanced Practice Pointers

**This programme is for Children's Services practitioners and management** across all local authorities in the London region, including local authorities who do not have a membership with Research in Practice. Practice Pointers are designed for anyone who wants to find out more about a core topic, attendees will:

- Learn key messages on the topic.
- Reflect on implementing these in practice.
- Consider how Research in Practice resources can be used to further engage with the topic.

**Places on these sessions are unlimited** with the sessions running from 12:00 – 13:30. *Please right click the title of the workshop and open the link to book your place.*

**[Click here to explore the online workshops and book your place](#)**

## NEW MAKING DATA SPEAK FOR LONDON'S CHILDREN RESOURCE



**Making Data Speak for London's Children is the regional data and intelligence programme** led by the London Innovation & Improvement Alliance (LIIA).

**Contained within this new and developing resource** are you can access all the publicly available data that LIIA visualise through a variety of dashboards which are categorised by the relevant regional priority.

**This data is used alongside restricted data** which can be accessed through the [members area](#) (2 step registration process), to inform regional priorities and targeted activities needed to improve outcomes for children.



# LIIA DATA AND INTELLIGENCE: WORKFORCE

LIIA continues to develop Workforce Data Dashboards as part of the workforce programme to support LAs, with two live dashboards available, including;

- [\*\*Children's Social Work Workforce Census Dashboard\*\*](#) (as at 30 Sept 2024)
- [\*\*Leadership in Colour Dashboard\*\*](#) (as at 30 Sept 2024, annual statutory collection)
- [\*\*Children's Social Work Agency Staff Dashboard\*\*](#) (London Pledge, *NEW Updates*)
- [\*\*London Social Work for Children Dashboard\*\*](#) (updated monthly - *NEW Updates*)

Together these dashboard provide London Authorities with valuable tools to support both local and regional workforce development and ensure that progress can be monitored.

**Not working for you?** To access the dashboards you will need to login to your account on the [LIIA Website Members Area](#). Or if you do not already have access you can register via the [LIIA website](#). Still experiencing problems, then please email our website administrators.

---

## GET IN TOUCH ABOUT WORKFORCE

If you would like to discuss any areas of the programme in more detail please reach out to our Workforce Programme Lead, [Rula Tripolitaki](#) or visit the [ALDCS Workforce Priority Area](#).

## MORE ABOUT LIIA & ALDCS WORK

Please visit our website: [liia.london](https://liia.london) for more detailed information on each of the ALDCS priorities, or contact the team directly to discuss anything in greater detail.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THE  
ALDCS WORKFORCE  
PROGRAMME!**

**FOLLOW LIIA**



**Linkedin**