

2026/7

NASS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PARTNER TRAINING

Closing date for applications: 5pm, Monday 16th March 2026



National Association of Special Schools (NASS) is delighted to be taking over the management of the highly regarded School Improvement Partner (SIP) training programme, previously run by Mulberry Bush. Endorsed with a Crossfields Institute Quality Mark, the programme equips experienced leaders in special schools and alternative provision with the skills and knowledge to become effective SIPs.

This training benefits both your own school or organisation and the wider education community, enabling you to provide support and share best practice with other schools.

Led by three experienced school leaders and SIPs - Deirdre Fitzpatrick, Andy Lole and Dominic Salles - you will take part in six days of training at Charney Manor, Oxfordshire, and apply your learning in two practice SIP days. On completion, you will be invited to join the NASS SIP network for ongoing support and professional development.

Training

The training will prepare you to:

- Have a critical awareness of own school's strengths
- Understand the range of functions of the SIP role
- Understand how to structure a SIP visit
- Understand how to report on a visit
- See the value of collecting evidence from different sources
- Work with staff holding different roles and responsibilities, and with governors/trustees
- Explore common SIP challenges and barriers
- Understand and manage emotional aspects of the role
- Develop a style of work that empowers leaders to take ownership and delegate responsibilities
- Develop a coaching style of work
- Understand an effective performance management process
- Have an awareness of current key educational issues

DATES

Day 1	18th Sept 26 (9.30am to 3.30pm)
Day 2	13th Oct 26 (9.30am to 3.30pm)
Day 3	17th Nov 26 (9.30am to 3.30pm)
Day 4	Dec 26 or Jan 27 (placement one)
Day 5	9th Feb 27 (9.30am to 3.30pm)
Day 6	Mar 27 or Apr 27 (placement two)
Day 7	5th May 27 (9.30am to 6pm) residential
Day 8	6th May 27 (9am to 4pm)

Costs

NASS member	£3,000 (plus VAT)
Non NASS member	£3,500 (plus VAT)

How to apply

The course will be limited to 18 delegates.

For more information and to request an application form please contact
admin@nasschools.org.uk

Deadline for applications is
5pm, Monday 16th March 2026

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The time spent with positive, like-minded individuals has been fantastic and gives you a professional lift. The training days make you really think and reflect within a supportive environment and analyse what you're doing within your own school, as well as preparing you for the role of SIP. I can honestly say, it is possibly some of the best training I have received as a Headteacher over the last 16 years. I always look forward to the next training day and we have formed a group that will keep in touch after the 'training' has finished.