

The Inclusive Mainstream Fund

A TISCUK Guide

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The Inclusive Mainstream Fund has been introduced by the Department for Education to help mainstream schools strengthen inclusive practice and become inclusive by design. The fund is intended to support schools to identify commonly occurring and predictable barriers to learning, improve their universal offer, and take meaningful steps to ensure more children can access, participate in and benefit from mainstream education.

Schools are expected to use the fund strategically, in line with the government's 7 Principles of Inclusion and available evidence of effective practice. These principles include ambitious leadership and governance, early intervention, high-quality adaptive teaching, enriching provision beyond the classroom, safe and respectful cultures, strong partnerships with families and wider services, and inclusive environments with continuous improvements to accessibility. Schools are also required to develop and publish an inclusion strategy from December 2026 setting out how they will use the funding to embed inclusive practice.

The fund may be used to invest in leadership development, professional learning, consultancy and whole-school development where this supports a school's strategic approach to inclusion. This includes strengthening staff knowledge, improving adaptive and relational practice, supporting early identification and intervention, creating safe and calm learning environments, developing family partnerships, and removing barriers to learning, participation and wellbeing. The DfE's high needs funding guidance also links the fund to investment in adaptive teaching, inclusive pedagogy and psychologically safe learning environments.

Our Approach

Our training and consultancy support schools to place inclusion, belonging and trauma-informed practice at the heart of everyday culture.

We work with schools, early years settings and education leaders to create environments where children and young people feel safe, understood, valued and ready to learn. Our work is rooted in a simple belief:

Every child should know 'I belong here, I matter, and my voice is heard'

Understanding Behaviour Through a Trauma-Informed Lens

Our training explores how trauma, adverse childhood experiences, attachment, emotional regulation and mental health needs influence children's behaviour, learning and relationships. We help staff understand behaviour as communication and respond with practical, compassionate strategies that enable children to feel safe, build trusting relationships, regulate their emotions and engage successfully in school life.



Alignment with Inclusion Priorities

Our approach aligns closely with the government's principles of inclusion and the aims of the Inclusive Mainstream Fund. The DfE encourages schools to strengthen their universal offer, remove predictable barriers to learning, prioritise early intervention and create safe, respectful cultures where children achieve, belong and thrive.



Our training supports these priorities by building leadership capacity, developing staff confidence, improving relational practice and embedding consistent, evidence-informed approaches across the whole school.

Our Professional Development Pathway

We offer a progressive programme of professional development that supports leaders, whole staff teams and specialist practitioners to build and sustain inclusive, trauma-informed schools.

2-Day Senior Leadership Training

Designed for headteachers, senior leaders and SEND leaders, this programme supports leaders to create inclusive environments where both children and staff feel safe, valued and able to thrive. It focuses on compassionate leadership, leading sustainable whole-school change, embedding inclusive cultures, and developing strategic approaches that align with the Department for Education's expectations for inclusive practice and school improvement.

Whole Staff Training

Our whole staff training enables every member of the school community to understand their role in creating inclusive, relationally rich and psychologically safe environments. Staff develop a shared understanding of trauma-informed practice, behaviour as communication, emotional regulation and relational approaches, helping schools build consistency across classrooms and everyday interactions. This whole-school approach strengthens belonging, improves relationships and creates the conditions for learning.

Level 5 Diploma in Trauma-Informed Practice

Our Level 5 Diploma provides advanced professional development for practitioners working directly with children and young people. The programme equips practitioners with the knowledge and practical skills to identify and address the barriers preventing children from engaging in learning. Through an understanding of trauma, attachment, neurodevelopment, emotional regulation and therapeutic relational practice, practitioners learn how to support children to overcome barriers to learning, participation and achievement while promoting resilience, wellbeing and positive educational outcomes.

How We Support Schools

Our consultancy and professional development programmes support schools to:

- develop ambitious leadership and governance that place inclusion at the centre of school improvement;
- create compassionate leaders who can lead and sustain whole-school cultural change;
- strengthen early identification and intervention for children with SEMH, SEND, trauma-related needs and mental health difficulties;
- improve adaptive teaching by helping staff understand how emotional wellbeing, regulation and relationships affect learning;
- equip practitioners with advanced skills to remove barriers to learning and improve outcomes for vulnerable children;
- create safe, calm and respectful environments that promote belonging, attendance and participation;
- support children to develop confidence, emotional literacy, resilience and a strong sense of personal agency;
- ensure children and young people have a voice and feel that they matter;
- build stronger partnerships with parents and carers through compassionate, non-judgemental communication;
- develop whole-school consistency so that inclusion becomes embedded in everyday culture rather than existing as a standalone intervention.

Using the Inclusive Mainstream Fund

Schools may choose to use their Inclusive Mainstream Fund allocation to invest in our leadership programmes, whole staff training, Level 5 Diploma or consultancy where these form part of a strategic plan to improve inclusive practice, strengthen the universal offer, support early intervention and remove barriers to learning and participation.

Our programmes help schools evidence investment in leadership development, workforce capability, trauma-informed practice, adaptive teaching, positive mental health, family partnership and cultures of belonging. They also provide practical evidence of how schools are implementing the Department for Education's 7 Principles of Inclusion through leadership, staff development and sustainable whole-school improvement.

Inclusive by Design

Creating truly inclusive schools requires more than individual interventions—it requires leaders who can shape culture, staff who share a common understanding of inclusion, and practitioners equipped to meet the diverse needs of children.

Our leadership programmes, whole-school training, consultancy and Level 5 Diploma provide schools with a coherent pathway for building sustainable, trauma-informed, relationally rich and psychologically safe environments where children are not simply present but genuinely welcomed, understood, supported and able to thrive.

