Central Region Schools Trust
Founded by the RSA

CRST People Development Institute

ssat the schools, students and teachers network

STEPPING UP TO SENIOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME 2026-7







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Central Region Schools Trust
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"Supporting social justice through exceptional schools."

Career Stage
Stepping up to Senior Leadership Programme

What is the SUSL programme: The Stepping Up to Senior Leadership (SUSL) programme equips new and aspiring senior leaders to successfully make the step up into senior leadership roles

Aims of the Programme

- Greater self-awareness in areas of strength and those for development.
- Development of key skills, knowledge and attributes to be a successful senior leader.
- Increased leadership effectiveness and impact.
- Retention and development of aspiring and current senior leaders.

Moving from middle to senior leadership requires a mindset shift to whole school thinking. The SUSL programme develops the understanding, skills and attributes to make the transition and supports leaders positively impact the teams they lead now. There are five Stepping Up to Senior Leadership modules. Each module is two-hours and supported by intersessional activities and resources.

Module 1 begins by reflecting on your personal and professional journey, considering how your experiences have prepared you for senior leadership. This involves evaluating our strengths and areas for development, as well as any concerns or limiting beliefs.

Modules 2-4 then explore key leadership attributes – vision, leading change, influencing and motivating others.

In module 5 participants tackle areas that can be new and potentially daunting – school budgets, finance and HR – to build confidence and awareness.

Who is this for: Aspirant SLT, new to Assistant Head/Principal

Accreditation: All modules will be accredited by SSAT. Participants will receive a certificate for modules completed

Module 1 Personal and professional readiness

Module aims

- Reflect on what may be different about senior leadership roles.
- Discuss concerns and potential challenges.
- Reflect on your professional journey and how experiences have prepared you for senior leadership.
- Evaluate your own strengths and areas for development.
- Become more self-aware, more emotionally intelligent.
- Engage in reflective leadership coaching.

Module 2 Developing a vision for yourself as a senior leader

Module aims

- Develop your own leadership vision, moral purpose and values.
- Consider the importance of vision alignment.
- Reflect on how culture contributes to high performance.
- Understand the differences between strategic leadership and management.
- Explore leadership approaches and styles and their application.
- Consider the characteristics of strong schools.

Module 3 Leading change and managing complexity

Module aims

- Explore the implications for leading in a time of constant change.
- Understand theories and models to support effective change management.
- Reflect on how we can lead change and manage complexity.
- Consider the difference between 'wicked' and 'tame' problems.
- Apply learning to your contexts.

Module 4 Leading, motivating and influencing

Module aims

- Explore the three circles model of leadership.
- Consider theories of motivation and how we can motivate others.
- Understand the power of influence, how we can influence others and how others influence the work we do.
- Develop strategic leadership for school improvement.

Module 5 School budgets, finance and HR management

Module aims

- Consider some key principles related to financial management in schools.
- Explore how schools are funded and how finance is managed.
- Reflect on how schools can save money and generate income.
- Understand the role a senior leader plays in HR issues and the skills they need to do this.
- Build on and apply the learning.

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Facilitators



Ange Crawley

Angela is Trust Primary Executive Principal and Deputy Director of Education, leading school improvement across the Trust's primary phase. She has played a key role in developing curriculum and assessment, with a particular focus on strengthening provision and ensuring effective transition into Key Stage 3.

With extensive leadership experience, including Deputy Headship and Headship, Angela brings expertise in curriculum design, assessment, pedagogy and strategic planning. She is passionate about oracy, having trained as a National Leader, as well as the arts. Her leadership is underpinned by a strong commitment to educational equity, social justice and ensuring all pupils experience ambitious, inclusive and high-quality education.



Michelle Martin

Michelle is Trust Director of Art, with over 14 years' experience as a Trust Lead Professional for Art and Design. She leads the strategic development of arts education across the Trust, including curriculum co-design, creative opportunities and professional learning.

Michelle also contributes nationally as a Lead Moderator and Lead Assessment Writer for AQA and as a content writer for the Initial Teacher Education programme at the National Institute of Teaching. Alongside her Trust role, she is an Assistant Principal at Gospel Oak School. She is passionate about empowering educators to deliver high-quality, inclusive and inspiring learning experiences.

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Schedule

Session	Date	Timing	Activity	Venue
1	Wednesday 25th November 2026	2.45pm arrival for 3pm start and 5pm finish	Personal & Professional Readiness	Waseley Hills High School
2	Wednesday 20th January 2027		Senior Leader vision	
3	Thursday 18th March 2027		Leading Change	
4	Thursday 6th May 2027		Leading, Motivating & Influencing	
5	Wednesday 30th June 2027		School budgets, finance & HR	







Contact:

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