

Aspiring Leaders for Special Education

Tutor Biographies

The Aspiring Leaders for Special Education programme is taught by an independent consultant, Vivien Rosier, and an experienced special school headteacher, Jo Hodges.



Vivien Rosier has had over 20 years experience in SEN starting with the role of SENCO in 1994 and moving on to become the Essex county lead for SEN training from 2002 to 2015. She co-ordinated the training programme for teachers and teaching assistants for a range of special needs and also the professional masters level training courses for SENCOs. Vivien has worked in collaboration with several universities and organisations over the years – including the Eastern Leadership Centre, Eastern Partnership (part of the Herts for Learning), Gateway qualifications, the Faculty of Education at Cambridge university, the Institute of Education, the University of Hertfordshire and the University of East London. When working for Essex, she was asked to take part in an exciting project to create a leadership program for ESSET for potential head teachers in special schools. This programme was created in collaboration with four experienced Essex special school head teachers and proved to be a very positive mutual learning experience for all concerned. In 2015 she retired from Essex local authority and became an independent consultant. She now works with Eastern Partnership/University of Hertfordshire on the accredited SENCO (Level 7) and Gateway Teaching Assistant (Level 4) courses and the ESSET Aspiring Leaders for Special Education programme.

Vivien holds a BEd (Hons) degree from the University of Nottingham, an MA (distinction) in SEN and a post graduate diploma in Specific Learning Difficulties (dyslexia).



Jo Hodges has spent her whole career working within the SEN education sector. For 17 years, until July 2016, she was the headteacher of a very successful special school in Essex.

Under her leadership the school was judged 'Outstanding' during its last three Ofsted inspections.

Jo has also worked as a school improvement partner in London borough special schools, acted as a peripatetic headteacher within special schools at times of challenge and crisis and is a trained and experienced headteacher mentor.

She now runs her own business providing leadership support and training in the education sector and is an associate of Willow Tree Learning which provides SEND training and school improvement support across Norfolk schools.

Jo has been involved with writing and delivering the Aspiring Leaders for Special Education course since its start in 2015.

Jo holds a diploma in Humanistic Integrative Counselling, and sees clients in clinical practice as part of ongoing advanced training.