



**West Partnership**  
**Thinking About Headship**  
**Programme information – 2023-24**

**What is Thinking About Headship?**

Thinking About Headship (TAH) is a year-long programme that is a preparatory step for those on the journey towards headship. It is delivered by the West Partnership.

TAH supports participants to:

- develop their knowledge and understanding of leadership and management
- understand how to develop and demonstrate a shared strategic vision
- understand and demonstrate self-awareness and political insight
- critically engage with policy, research and practice to model, establish and promote a collaborative culture of professional learning; and
- lead, model and support professional values and professional commitment.

**Who is TAH for?**

Thinking About Headship (TAH) is a programme for practitioners in any sector who are beginning their journey to being a headteacher but don't feel quite ready to undertake *Into Headship*. It is aimed at effective deputy headteachers and principal teachers with at least two years of experience in a school-based leadership role and whose next role is likely to be that of headteacher. Working with colleagues in similar roles in other local authorities, the programme supports practitioners to develop their understanding of leadership from a strategic perspective. All participants are required to have the support of their headteacher before applying.

**What does the programme look like?**

The programme has a number of different elements that are described below.

**1. Participant groups**

Participants are placed in a small group and work together for the duration of the programme. Where at all possible, groups are set-up so that there are different local authorities and sectors represented. This allows for rich discussion and learning across the year, supports collaboration and gives the opportunity to develop cross-authority networks. There are also opportunities to work with other participants at different points too, including in sector-specific groups.

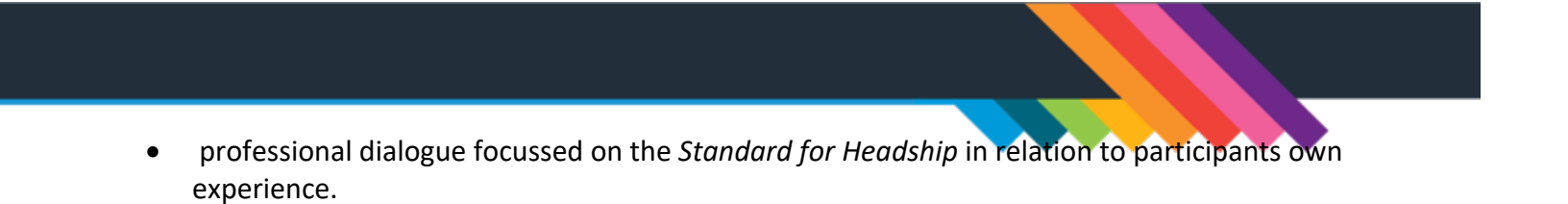
**2. Headteacher supporters**

Each group is allocated an experienced headteacher who works with them across the year. The headteacher supporters facilitate group discussions at TAH sessions. This provides an invaluable source of support, expertise and perspective.

**3. Sessions one to ten, September to April**

These sessions combine:

- inputs from senior leaders in the education system and experienced headteachers across the West Partnership; and

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- professional dialogue focussed on the *Standard for Headship* in relation to participants own experience.

This provides participants with a range of perspectives across the Scottish education system and the opportunity to consider these in relation to their own leadership journey. Sessions take place both online and face-to-face and last between an hour and a half and two hours. Most take place at the end of the school day but a small number are run together during the school day.

#### **4. The reflective frameworks, September to May**

A set of reflective frameworks and practical tools are used to support sessions one to ten. These are shared in order to support participants in reflecting on:

- developing their knowledge and understanding of leadership and management
- understanding themselves as leaders
- understanding and demonstrating self-awareness
- critically engaging with policy, research and practice to model, establish and promote a collaborative culture of professional learning; and
- leading, modelling and supporting professional values and professional commitment.

The frameworks are used to support professional dialogue across the sessions. This allows participants to reflect both on their own and other's leadership experiences. At the end of the programme participants engage in a reflective professional discussion with a small number of senior education staff. The purpose of this is to support participants to critically reflect on what they have learned and consider what their next steps are.

#### **Where can I find out more?**

Please speak to your headteacher in the first instance and share this information with them so you can discuss whether this is the right opportunity for you. Direct any questions and send completed application forms to, Alison Drever, West Partnership workstream lead officer by **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2023**. [alison.drever@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:alison.drever@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk). **Please copy in your local authority lead with responsibility for leadership.**

