



The Incumbents' Leadership Programmes

2026-2027

Enabling ministries with Children,
Young People and Families to grow.



In Autumn 2026, the next round of Incumbents' Leadership Programmes will be starting across the country. These programmes enable clergy to strengthen their ministry with Children, Young People and Families (CYPF), helping younger generations grow in numbers and depth of faith.

The ILPs support the goals adopted by the Church of England's House of Bishops and General Synod to double the number of children and active young disciples by 2030, and to provide a church within reach of every child and young person.

Responses to initial pilot programmes have been most encouraging, with high levels of participant satisfaction. Our preliminary data records an average 18.4% increase of under 18s engaged with church in parishes led by participant incumbents.

Three Different Programmes

Three dedicated ILP pathways are available to help incumbents strengthen their CYPF ministry. Each programme is fully funded, and each has its own mix of blended learning, with residential and online elements.

Incumbents' Leadership Programme (ILP) for Mid-Sized Churches

For churches with around 11–24 CYP in weekly attendance

A year-long, part-time programme delivered through a range of theological colleges. This pathway offers incumbents the space and support to:

- Grow in their own journey as disciples and priestly leaders.
- Deepen and grow their CYPF ministry.
- Develop their leadership skills to enable culture change that empowers every adult disciple to play their part.
- Build a church community where CYPF are welcomed, prayed for and nurtured.

Following excellent feedback from the pilot, recruitment for the third cohort is now open. Six theological colleges are running the programme. We encourage dioceses to work with a local Theological Education Institution (TEI), though we recognise some incumbents may prefer another provider, which we will accommodate where possible.

There are up to 360 places available for 2026–27.



'I'm going back into my context with a lightness of heart, a childlike spring in my step, and lots of ideas to experiment with.'

'It has revolutionised my perspective and helped me to equip my church to engage intergenerationally.'

'The programme has helped me to see the positives in having a church with a high proportion of children and young people.'

Incumbents' Leadership Programme (ILP) for Larger Churches

For churches with around 25+ CYP in weekly attendance

This strand focuses on collaborative, team-based leadership. The incumbent forms a team of six who share an interest in CYPF ministry — lay or ordained, paid or voluntary.

Together, the team embarks on a programme designed to:

- Deepen their sense of call as disciples and leaders
- Strengthen shared leadership
- Build long-term sustainability in CYPF ministry
- Equip churches to grow and flourish across generations

Delivery partners Lead Academy and CPAS bring extensive experience in developing missional leadership teams. There are four venue options: CPAS (Barnsley or Newbury) or Lead Academy (Yarnfield, Staffordshire or High Leigh, Hertfordshire).

Space is available for 32 teams nationwide in 2026–27. Early booking is recommended.



'Being nominated for this programme by our Bishop means the world to our team. Thank you for putting it on.'

'My team all thought it was most worthwhile. I was impressed not just by the wisdom of the contributors, but also by their humility.'

Recruitment process

FOR BOTH OF THESE PROGRAMMES, RECRUITMENT STEPS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- Bishop confirms clergy participation and permission to share contact details
- Bishop's office submits nomination forms. (For the larger churches ILP, the incumbent then recruits their team and sends in contact details.)
- The National Leadership Development Team completes onboarding for all.
- Participants are contacted by the theological college or training partner for induction.

Camino: Strategic Training for Resource Church Leaders

Developed by St Hild College

Camino is preparing new leaders for Resource Churches—churches that plant, revitalise and pioneer new worshipping communities. It is overseen by the national Leadership Development Team, although recruitment is through St Hild College. Please email St Hild at planting@sthild.org to find out more and arrange a conversation.

The programme equips clergy to:

- Lead strategic, mission focussed churches
- Engage younger generations through creative worship, outreach and digital ministry
- Support dioceses in planting and revitalising congregations
- Reflect the diversity of local communities through a strong commitment to gender and ethnic inclusion



'The quality of input is consistently high, delivered by theologian-practitioners who not only know the stuff but have lived it.'

'Camino is giving me the space, input and peers to lead the Deanery with a resourcing vision.'

Find Out More

For further information about any of these programmes, please contact: Incumbents.Leadership@churchofengland.org

To see further details of each programme, please click on the links below:

FOR MID-SIZED CHURCHES

[RIPON COLLEGE, CUDDESDON](#)

[CRANMER HALL](#)

[TRINITY COLLEGE, BRISTOL](#)

[RIDLEY HALL](#)

[EMMANUEL THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE](#)

[OAK HILL COLLEGE](#)

FOR LARGER CHURCHES

[CPAS](#)

[LEAD ACADEMY](#)

CAMINO PROGRAMME

[ST HILD COLLEGE](#)