# High Needs Funding Update

Louise Langley
SEN Monitoring & Quality Assurance Manager

Kent County Council
kent.gov.uk

# The New Process

- The new process went live on 1st April 2015.
- Building on the guidance from the Government's School Funding Reforms (April 2013) and SEN Code of Practice 2015 section 6.99, we wanted a funding process that was fairer, based on provision required and not tied in with the need for a SSEN (with hours) or EHCP.
- An online web based application form was developed to automatically calculate the costs of interventions based on average hourly rates dependent on the staff providing the support.
- We ensured schools could easily list the interventions that they have put in place.
- The system was designed to capture the absolute minimum amount of information needed to make a decision about funding.
- The system has inbuilt validation and calculations to make the process as efficient as possible.
- Working with SEN/Schools finance we ensured processes were in place to enable funds to be in schools as quickly as possible.
- To ensure robust, consistent decision making and quality assure applications, SEN created the High Needs Funding & Monitoring Officer role.

# Aims of HNF Team

1) To respond to applications within two weeks.
2) We wanted the process to be less bureaucratic and quicker than previous systems.
3) We wanted the funding to be targeted at the pupils who required the highest levels of provision to meet their needs, regardless as to whether they have a Statement of SEN or EHC Plan or not.
4) We wanted to continue to develop the system with feedback from the SENCos and schools.

# Progress Towards Our Aims

Aim 1

- We wanted to respond to applications within two weeks.
- *We are currently making contact with schools to discuss applications within a few days and making decisions on HNF applications within a fortnight. This means that most schools will begin to receive funds within 6 weeks of their initial application (backdated to date of initial application).*

# Progress Towards Our Aims

## Aim 2

- We wanted the process to be less bureaucratic and quicker than previous systems.
- *Initially due to unfamiliarity with the form and what information was required, applications were taking SENCos a long time to complete. Therefore, we have attended AEN Update meetings and SENCo Forum meetings to provide more details on the process. We have also been offering individual support to SENCos either over the phone or at their school. SENCos who have made several applications to us are now reporting that they can complete it within an average of 2 hours.*

# Progress Towards Our Aims

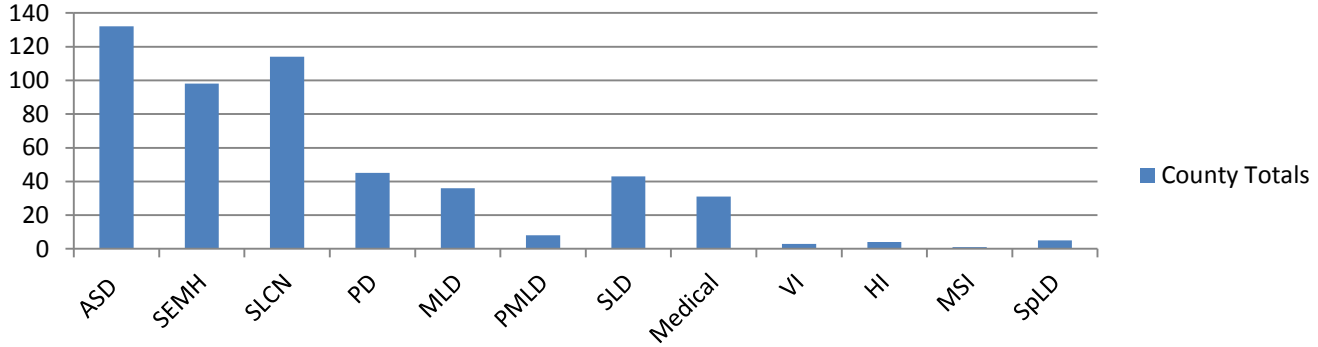
Aim 3

- We wanted the funding to be targeted at the pupils who required the highest levels of provision to meet their needs, regardless as to whether they have a Statement of SEN or EHC Plan or not.
- *Provision is shown by schools providing the pupil's personalised/provision plan. To date* ***over 300*** *pupils without a Statement of SEN or EHC Plan have had high needs funded agreed.*

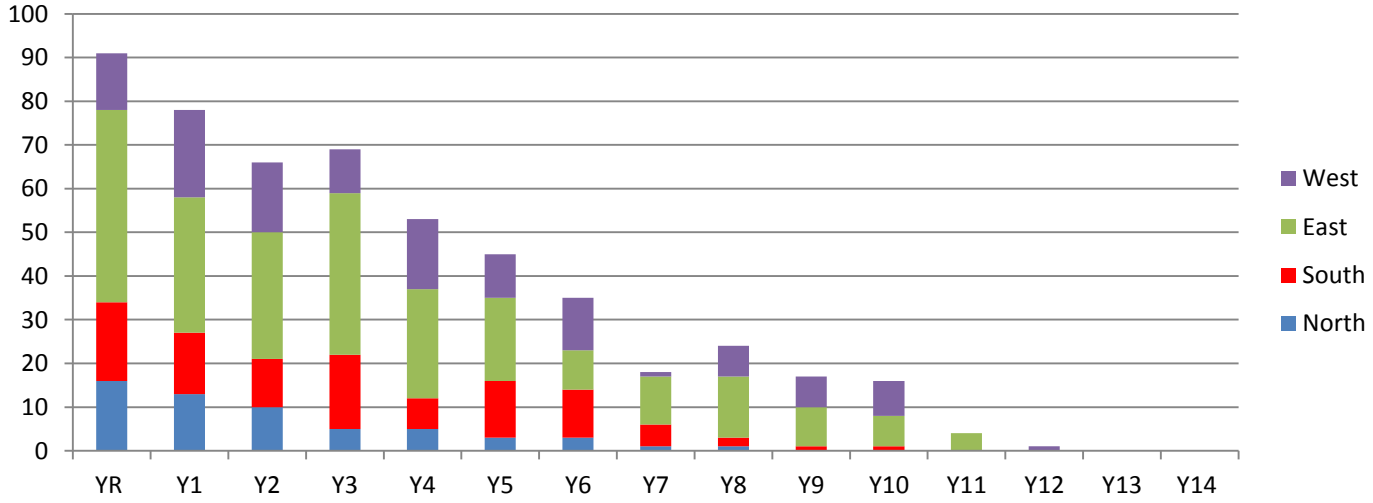
# Applications

- 667 applications
- 519 accepted (78%) – the majority of the deferred applications will be accepted once additional information has been provided
- 53% have EHCP or SSEN
- 47% without an EHCP or SSEN
- Need type with the most claims ASD (132) followed by SLCN (114) and SEMH (98)
- Year group with the most claims was Year R

## Number of accepted claims for the county total broken down by need type November 2015




## Number of Accepted Claims broken down by year group November 2015



# Progress Towards Our Aims

Aim 4

- We wanted to continue to develop the system with feedback from the SENCos and schools.
- *A summary of the feedback and suggestions we have received, along with what we did in response follows.*

# Feedback from schools and what we did (April to August)

## You Said:

- That you wanted more support from KCC with applying for HNF.
- You want to be able to claim resources that have been purchased to support the individual pupil from the recommendation of the appropriate professional during the last academic year.

## We Did:

- *We ensure that we now make contact with every school that is registered on the HNF System to offer a personal visit to support and train school staff free of charge. We are following this up by contacting schools who have not yet registered to offer the same service.*
- *Agreed that resources purchased within the last academic year, for the individual pupil, and not funded through other mechanisms can be claimed.*

# Feedback from schools and what we did

## You Said:

- You would like some additional staff to be able to enter information on applications to save Headteachers/SENCos valuable time.

- You want applications that have been deferred to have funding backdated to the date of initial application once it is agreed.

## We Did:

- *Agreed to allow admin staff to access the system to enter information if requested and headteachers to delegate their responsibility to submit the form by a nominated member of staff.*

- *Agreed that no school should be disadvantaged by the request for additional information. As of 1st September schools will be required to submit their updated applications within 6 weeks for funding to be backdated to the initial date of submission.*

# Feedback from schools and what we did

## You Said:

- You would like a quick link from the auto-generated password email.
- You were being timed out of the application form on the ‘narrative questions’ and losing your answers.
- The purpose of the resubmit button was not clear.

## We Did:

- *Revised the email to direct users to the high needs funding Kelsi webpage.*
- *Issued every school registered on the system with a word document template that can be used to edit your answers before copying and pasting them into the online form. ICT were unable to extend the time out facility as this is required for data protection purposes.*
- *Changed the button to read ‘Edit Application’.*

# Changes that have happening since 1st September

## You Said:

- Attainment level data for NC Levels did not contain P7/8 levels or EYFS.
- The amount of information needed for the application was time consuming.
- The format of the timetable was not user-friendly and parents wanted one they could stick to their fridge door.

## We Did:

- *Added P7/8 levels to the drop-down choices and an additional box for entering EYFS data and any other attainment data that you felt was relevant.*
- *Streamlined and reduced the number of 'narrative questions'.*
- *Sourced a single sheet timetable that can be easily viewed and printed off*.

# Changes that have happening since 1st September

## You Said:

- Information on the timetable regarding named staff delivering interventions was not helpful to you or parents.
- You are able to accidently enter duplicate interventions that resulted in applications being rejected for amendment.

## We Did:

- *Changed the timetable to only give the name of the intervention being delivered.*
- *Worked with ICT on the website to stop duplicate entries or overlapping.*

# Future Developments

- Process for reapplication will be available from December.
- We need to finalise a protocol for providing the end date of funding at time of agreement.
- For pupils with an EHCP or SSEN the funding is tied in with the Annual Review date but continues until the payment period after that date (December 31st, March 31st or August 31st). Schools will need to apply for HNF directly after the AR but funding won't be updated until the date stated above.
- The updated provision plan from the Annual Review will be agreed by the HNF Officer and passed on to the SEN Placement Officer with details of the funding agreed. These will both be included in the amended EHCP.
- Feedback and comments from HNF User Group held on 16th October to be actioned before 13th January.