

# SEN Plan of Action

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# Context

- Reforms to SEN in 2014 and 2015 have caused an increase in demand and higher expectations from parents.
- This has lead to the system becoming under increasing strain.
- Kent is now maintaining over 10,500 EHCPs which represents growth of over 40% since the reforms.
- LAs have an increased age range responsibility from 0 up to 25.

# Context

- The number of statutory assessment requests has increased by 81% in the last 18 months.
- 75% of requests are from parents.
- Non-educational drivers are underpinning these requests.
- Capacity within specialist provision to meet the increasingly complex needs of children with SEN is stretched.

# Mainstream HNF

Feedback from the head teacher briefings mainly indicated

- a majority support for maintaining the status quo at present
- resistance to limiting to only EHCP
- potential pilot in Ashford in the future

# Overarching Aim

To have the right local provision to meet the special educational needs of individual CYP within a sustainable funding envelope.

# SEN Plans to address High Needs Block Pressures

In response to increased INMSS costs in July we introduced greater scrutiny of requests for independent school placements and other funding requests by having a central panel that is made up of senior officers from SEN, educational psychology, finance and special school head teachers.

# Reducing Independent Placement Costs

- Many of the independent institutions have significant numbers of Kent pupils – we are looking at using our purchasing power to reduce costs.
- More challenge and negotiation around breakdown of costs.
- Ensure contracts with independent schools stipulate financial penalties for low or non-attendance of pupils.

# SEN Plans to Address High Needs Block Pressures

Increase the number of requests that do not go on to have a statutory assessment by SEN provision evaluation officers checking requests to ensure schools views are taken into account, that they have used their best endeavours and to interrupt progress data.

Progress to date

Refusal to assess rates have increased from 19% in 2017 to 35% in August 2018. This means that in August the lowest number of Statutory Assessments were agreed to be undertaken (170) since February 2018. This will also have a positive impact on the ability of the Educational Psychology Service being able to address the backlog of assessments and meet demand.



# Reducing Demand

- Develop the Local Offer to include clear information on the graduated response of provision to SEN.
- Supporting schools to improve inclusion.
- Increase parental confidence and understanding of the Local Offer.
- Develop robust criteria for EHCPs in line with the SEN Code of Practice in order to ensure appropriate statutory requests.

# SEN Plans to Address High Needs Block Pressures

Working in partnership with KsENT and district LIFT Executive groups we are aiming to increase inclusion and build the capacity of mainstream schools to meet the special educational needs of more children.

Schools will be able to access more training through LIFT and observation opportunities within special schools.

Reviewing the county specialist provision offer to address increased INMSS placements.

# Next Steps

- Continue to develop the SEN action plan. Then review and evaluate impact.
- Increase EP capacity.
- Integrate actions with other CYPE services and external partners and stakeholders.
- Gather appropriate evidence for the transfer of funds.
- Work in partnership FE providers to support inclusion.