

A COUNTYWIDE APPROACH TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Working together to improve outcomes for children and young
people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

2023 – 2028

Updated February 2024

KENT
COUNTY
COUNCIL

1. Introduction

Kent County Council (KCC) has developed this strategy in conjunction with children and young people, parents and carers, schools, settings, and other key stakeholders. In addition to local collaboration, the strategy has been informed by the Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice¹, and the Kent Strategy for Children and Young People with SEND 2021-24², research published in the Local Government Association (LGA) report 'Developing and sustaining an effective local SEND system'³.

Once approved, this strategy will support the inclusion of all children and young people in Kent. Schools and education settings are key partners in delivering this transformation and the SEND Code of Practice sets out that a graduated approach to meeting the needs of children and young people is the best way of obtaining good outcomes.

This document sets out the actions we will take to realise that vision and our commitment to genuine co-production. A wide range of people will play an important part in delivering this vision.

We have grouped this work under four key principles:

Priority One: Supporting a school led system to deliver the highest quality core inclusive education,

Priority Two: Providing additional intervention and support with engagement and integration,

Priority Three: Inclusive Education is part of a broader, holistic, and joined-up offer of support, and

Priority Four: Ensuring smooth transition between education phases.

Whilst this strategy covers the area of Kent, we are committed to continue working with neighbouring Local Authorities (LAs) to share best practice, data, and information and to explore opportunities to improve services.

What is inclusion?

Inclusion is described as the practice of ensuring that people feel they belong, are engaged, and connected. It is a universal human right whose aim is to embrace all people. It is about valuing all individuals, giving equal access and opportunity to all and removing discrimination and other barriers to involvement.

What does inclusion mean in Kent?

As the champion of families, children, and young people our collective priorities are to be certain that all children and young people are engaged with and included in the provision of high-quality inclusive education. Ensuring that, whatever their circumstance or ability, our children have a sense of belonging, feel respected, are valued for who they are and develop the knowledge and skills required for adult life. In doing so, we strive to achieve a continuous improvement in standards, a significant narrowing of achievement gaps for vulnerable

¹ [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#)

² [Kent Strategy for SEND 2021-24](#)

³ [LGA Report](#)

groups of learners and a wholly inclusive education system which ensures:

- **Equitable access for all.** Sufficient, appropriate, quality education provision is available for all children and young people in Kent.
- **No child is left behind.** All children and young people are supported to be engaged fully in their education.
- **Effective collaboration.** There is collaboration and multi-agency working providing a self-improving, sustainable system which supports the education of all.

The Kent Inclusion Statement⁴ was co-produced with Kent Parents and Carers Together (PACT), Kent Headteachers, Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator's (SENCOs) and KCC Officers. The statement reflects partnership working between education leaders and KCC in developing a countywide approach to inclusive education. We strive to ensure that all schools, academies, and early years and childcare settings can provide inclusive education, and to follow both the spirit and the letter of the law with inclusive values. The statements reflect a joint commitment of all the partners across the Kent education system including settings, schools, colleges, and the LA.

The Kent Vision

Establishing our collective ambitions in the CATIE for children, young people, and their families in Kent we will make sure no child is left behind. Working together in a collaborative, sustainable system, we will ensure equity of education means all children feel they belong, are respected and valued as individuals, and are fully supported to achieve their best.

⁴ [Kent Inclusion Statement](#)

2. Support Empower Challenge

The success of an effective, inclusive, education system is dependent on all stakeholders collaborating with their shared aims. We aim to support and empower schools and settings, incentivising, and motivating engagement by:

- Supporting the development of a school-to-school system of continuing professional development and improvement support.
- Ensuring processes and priorities are based on school led evaluation, using a robust framework, with evidence from a variety of sources.
- Using data and information to support impact analysis that is contextualised, and presents a richer, realistic picture.
- Providing a high level of training and support with an equitable core offer for all providers.
- Supporting the development of locality collaborations, with collective control over resources to meet the local needs.
- Committing to a collective endeavour to ensure all children experience inclusive education.

Accountability and challenge are the responsibility of all stakeholders, collaborative working enables transparency between providers and other stakeholders. It is vital all parties work together to eradicate weaknesses in the system for our children and young people.

3. Legislative and Kent Context

SEND Code of Practice (2015) Para 1.26: As part of its commitments under articles 7 and 24 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the UK Government is committed to inclusive education of disabled children and young people and the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in mainstream education.

The Children and Families Act 2014 secures the general presumption in law of mainstream education in relation to decisions about where children and young people with SEN should be educated.

The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination for disabled people. Para 1.31: The leaders of early years settings, schools and colleges should establish and maintain a culture of high expectations that expects those working with children and young people with SEN or disabilities to include them in all the opportunities available to other children and young people so they can achieve well.

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) sets out commitments around inclusive education and removal of barriers preventing children and young people with SEND from learning and participation in mainstream education.

In addition, the SEND Code of Practice sets out the presumption that children and young people with SEND should be able to receive their education within a mainstream setting. Schools are required to identify and assess the needs of the SEND pupils they support and use their 'best endeavours' to ensure they receive appropriate support and are fully included alongside their peers.

The Kent Strategy for Children and Young People with SEND 2021-24 sets out the following priorities:

- Priority One: Improve the way we work with children and young people, parents, and carers.
- Priority Two: Ensure children, young people and their families have positive experiences at each stage of their journey including a well-planned and smooth transition to adulthood.
- Priority Three: Identify and assess the needs of children and young people earlier and more effectively.
- Priority Four: Improve education, care and health outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- Priority Five: Ensure children and young people with SEND are included in their local community.

Schools and education settings are key partners in delivering this vision, working in collaboration with other professionals to ensure children and young people receive the support that they need to achieve their full potential in education. To accomplish this, the strategy seeks to support schools such that there is:

- Improved inclusive practice in our schools. Children and young people with SEND feel they belong, are respected, valued, are supported to make progress, achieving

their ambitions and aspirations through high quality teaching, and a challenging, wide-ranging, curriculum.

- A countywide programme of peer reviews of inclusion with an identified focus on SEND provision.

Many schools in Kent have a commitment to inclusion and use best efforts to support children and young people with SEND. However, the outcomes achieved, and progress made by these young people falls significantly below the national average for this group.

Pupils with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) in Kent are less likely to be educated in a mainstream school (selective or non-selective), than would be expected nationally. The following summary is taken from the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision, 2023- 27⁵:

‘The LA is responsible for issuing and maintaining EHCPs for children and young people between the ages of 0-25 years. As of January 2022, this totaled 17,733 children and young people with an EHCP. This is an increase of 2,452 since January 2021, an increase of 16% compared to 9.9% in England. In Kent 33.5% (31.1% in 2021) are educated in mainstream (including Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs)), whilst the England figure is 40.5%. In Kent 39.7% of children and young people with EHCPs are educated in a special school compared to 34.8% nationally.

To ensure the LA is able to provide sustainable high-quality provision, the system needs to be realigned and the proportion of children and young people catered for within each provision type brought in line with national figures, so that specialist places are for only those children and young people with the most complex needs. A significant change programme is ongoing to improve mainstream school SEND inclusion capacity, so staff are skilled, confident, and able to educate and support more children with EHCPs.

To meet the need for specialist places across Kent, including meeting the needs in areas of population growth, a mixture of new special schools, expansions of existing schools and the establishment of satellites and SRPs will be commissioned across Kent. This plan will only reflect a proportion of our commissioning intentions at this stage as the full plan will need to be informed by the review of our continuum of SEND provision, reporting in the first half of 2023.’

Relevant legislation

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015
- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Care Act 2014
- Children Act 1989/ 2004

⁵ [Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 23-27](#)

4. Outcomes

The CATIE monitoring arrangements aim to support the delivery of activities, provide assurance, and advise the Directorate Management Team (DMT) on management actions where required. The CATIE Monitoring and Evaluation Group plan, monitor and quality assure the delivery of this strategy. Measures of success and key performance indicators are used to monitor progress of the delivery activities which supports achievement of the strategic objectives.

To know if we are getting it right, we will keep listening to the experiences of schools, settings, children, young people, and their families. We will be flexible in our approach so that if any stakeholder tells us that what we are doing is not making a difference, we will review what we are doing and change it where necessary.

For children, young people, and families:

- a) Children and young people experience a high quality, inclusive education within the most appropriate setting to meet their needs. *The Code of Practice sets out that for the majority of children with SEND, there is a presumption that this will be within a mainstream setting.*
- b) Children and young people with SEND can thrive socially and emotionally at school.
- c) Children and young people with SEND have their needs identified early and receive appropriate levels of support that enables them to engage and make appropriate progress in their learning.
- d) Children and young people with SEND achieve their potential academically, gaining skills, knowledge, and confidence to move to the next stage of learning and independence with success.
- e) Children and young people with SEND receive timely and holistic support from education and wider services that respond to their health, wellbeing or social care needs and supports their inclusion in education.
- f) Children and young people experience positive transitions between key stages of education and settings as well as wider life events and are prepared to live as independently as possible.
- g) Parents and carers are confident that their child's school or setting has the knowledge, skills, and confidence to meet their needs.
- h) Parents/carers have confidence that their child or young person's broader health, wellbeing and social care needs are being supported.

For Schools:

- a) Schools meet the needs of children and young people with SEND and strengthen inclusive practice through access to a graduated core offer of training, development, and peer review activities.
- b) Staff in mainstream schools have the necessary knowledge, skills, and confidence in responding to the needs of children and young people with SEND through:
 - access to high-quality information, advice and support from multi-agency professionals and specialist teachers
 - thorough and regular Continuing Professional Development programmes that ensure staff are aware of Mainstream Core Standards, Quality First Teaching, and other strategies to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.
 - streamlined and effective locality structures through which to share advice, best practice and information as well as accessing wider support for individual children and young people with SEND.
 - Flexible locality resources, in the form of financial and practical support.
- c) Support delivered within and through schools is connected to a wider, integrated offer from partner services, which support the child or young person's broader social, emotional, and physical wellbeing. Schools can draw upon, and work in partnership with, a wider range of professionals to ensure a holistic response to meeting the needs of children and young people.
- d) Schools are able facilitate smooth and successful transitions through effective local collaboration, built upon:
 - a shared understanding of best practice in relation to transition
 - tools and approaches to support planning for individual children and young people, including preparing for adulthood.
 - access to resources and opportunities for transition activities.

System-level outcomes:

Through strengthening outcomes at an individual and school-level, we will see longer-term progress towards the following countywide outcomes:

- A greater proportion of children and young people with SEND access a high-quality, inclusive education within a mainstream setting (where this is appropriate to their needs).
- There is improvement in outcomes, attainment and progress made by all children and young people.
- Achievement gaps close for pupils on free school meals, children in care, and pupils with SEND.

5. Outlining standards and expectations

Through discussions with schools, settings, parents/carers, young people, and other key stakeholders, we have agreed the underpinning standards and expectations for Inclusive Education provision. These are detailed in the following documents:

Inclusion Statement: Our collective values and aims are captured in our inclusion statement, which can be found [here](#). The statement is also included as Appendix One to this document.

Mainstream core standards for schools: Provision that the local area expects to be made available for children and young people with SEND attending mainstream schools. Guidance for schools, parents and carers and professionals working with children and young people can be found [here](#).

Early Years Best Practice and Mainstream Core Standards: Best Practice Guidance for the Early Years has been developed by professionals within Kent to offer advice and guidance to Early Years practitioners in supporting all children, including those with SEND, to achieve their potential. Guidance can be found [here](#).

Inclusion Toolkit: A clear toolkit which underpins the structure of the design and evaluation of our shared work. Used as a basis for the system approach to inclusive education, peer to peer discussions, and the curriculum for the Inclusion Leadership programme. The toolkit can be found [here](#).

6. CATIE Priorities

Inclusive education is the most effective way to give all children a fair chance to go to school, learn and develop the skills they need to thrive. It means all children in the same classrooms, in the same schools with real learning opportunities for groups who have traditionally been excluded. Inclusive systems value the unique contributions students of all backgrounds bring to the classroom and allow diverse groups to grow side by side, to the benefit of all. UNICEF

'Inclusive education allows students of all backgrounds to learn and grow side by side, to the benefit of all.'

The recent LGA Report, *Developing and sustaining an effective local SEND System* emphasises that *“effective practice in mainstream settings and schools in identifying young people’s needs and putting in place the right support is at the foundation of the local SEND system. Getting this wrong can create unsustainable pressure on more targeted and specialist forms of provision and can close off opportunities for young people and choices for parents.”*

Their research, which involved exploration of local systems across the country, identified several core features of effective practice that are essential to improving inclusive capacity within mainstream schools. These are summarised below:

1. **Putting in place clear expectations about what needs mainstream schools and settings will meet** (in Kent, these have already been defined in collaboration with schools and settings through our Mainstream Core Standards and Early Years Standards).
2. **Backing these expectations with a clear offer of capacity-building support** – *“agreeing expectations is important, but equally important is ensuring that staff in local mainstream settings and schools have access to support that can enable them to translate those expectations into practice.”*
3. **Engaging “system leaders”** who can play a role in supporting practice beyond their immediate school, drawing on the expertise and building capacity across the local SEND system. Research highlighted the importance of engaging *“not just SENCOs, but headteachers, leaders and governors.”*
4. **Ensure that schools and settings have access to an explicit offer of targeted inclusion support:** *“an effective local SEND system has a clear offer of support that can be accessed by mainstream schools and settings at an agreed point and to enable them to keep young people included. The research noted that “if the only way of accessing additional support was by accessing statutory EHCPs, then this was likely to create greater demand for EHCPs” and that local systems needed “a mechanism for providing additional support in a way that was not linked to statutory services, and in ways that were more flexible and time-limited.”*
5. **Ensure that education inclusion support is part of a broader, holistic, and joined-up offer of support of support for young people’s care and health needs.** This recognises that dependencies between a child or young person’s needs within an education setting and their wider social, emotional, and physical wellbeing which requires the inclusion agenda to be linked to a wider, integrated offer of early help, family support, and targeted support from local health services.

The recently published Government SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan⁶, also has a focus on the 'Right Support, Right Place, Right Time'. This plan has the following aims:

1. Deliver for children and families so that the system can:
 - fulfil children's potential,
 - build parents trust,
 - provide financial sustainability.
2. Create a more inclusive society through a new national SEND and AP system,
3. Deliver National SEND and AP standards.

The success of this plan will be achieved when the following is implemented:

- National standards will be well established,
- The system will be financially sustainable,
- Parents have confidence,
- Children and young people can access a range of support through a fair and consistent process,
- All proposals and plans will be tested, co-produced and delivered.

We have explored each of these features of effective systems, and they are taken forward over the following pages, within four core interdependent priorities which form KCC's Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education 2023-2028.

The following are the priorities for Inclusion that KCC will deliver on in Kent over the next five years. They have been shaped by the current and future context Kent faces, and by the ideas and feedback we have received from our partners and stakeholders. Each priority includes specific commitments and supporting objectives, and will focus our efforts as a council, and collectively with our partners, to meet those challenges and improve outcomes in mainstream settings for children and young people with SEND.

⁶ [SEND and AP Improvement Plan](#)

Our Priorities are:

Priority One:

Supporting a school led system to deliver the highest quality core inclusive education

This priority focuses on building capacity within settings through a tripartite model (illustrated below), which brings together the development of a core training offer, leadership development programmes, and peer-to-peer review structures across the county. In this way it combines recommendations 2 and 3 from the LGA research above into a mutually sustaining model.

Priority Two:

Providing additional intervention and support with engagement and integration

This priority responds to recommendation 4 from the LGA research, exploring the best ways to facilitate access to additional inclusion support for children and young people with SEND. This includes locality structures and forums, as well as opportunities to strengthen local resources and pilot opportunities.

Priority Three:

Inclusive Education is part of a broader, holistic, and joined-up offer of support

This priority responds to recommendation 5 from the LGA research, that education support for inclusion is linked to the broader system of services and support available to children, young people, and families in Kent. This will involve working in partnership with a range of agencies as part of the implementation of the wider SEND strategy.

Priority Four:

Ensuring smooth transition between education phases

This priority aims to develop collaborative approaches between settings to achieve successful and sustained transitions for children and young people at key phases and times of transition in their lives.

Education practitioners in Kent raised transition as a key area requiring our collective focus, and so we have included this as an additional priority.

Priority One:

Supporting a school led system to deliver the highest quality core inclusive education

This priority focuses on building capacity within settings through a tripartite model (illustrated below), which brings together the development of a core training offer, leadership development programmes, and peer-to-peer review structures across the county.

We aim to support, challenge, and empower education providers to deliver the highest quality of inclusive education provision for Kent’s children and young people such that:

- there is improvement in outcomes, attainment, progress, attendance, and exclusion, made by all children and young people.
- achievement gaps close for pupils on free school meals, children in care, and pupils with SEND.
- all children and young people have equitable access to a challenging and wide-ranging curriculum.

We will do this by:

1. Committing to Inclusive Leadership to develop and grow the inclusive nature of our mainstream schools,
2. Establishing a system of peer moderation to support the sharing and growth of inclusive practice in a non-judgmental manner,
3. Ensuring that Inclusive Leadership mirrors a school improvement approach as per the following diagram:



4. Developing a core training offer for all mainstream schools to access which is accessible and is based on the universal and targeted approach which will support the development of knowledge and skills as well as building capacity in mainstream settings.
5. Providing high quality and accurate data for schools and districts through the District Dashboard – Supporting the Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education in Kent so that schools and localities have accurate information and evidence on which to base decisions regarding further interventions and training.
6. Improving transparency of financial data so that schools can improve the quality of SEND Information report for the purposes of accountability and governance.
7. Developing a countywide partnership of local schools with to develop locality work to a form a secure partnership network for school improvement across Kent with Inclusion at its core, to support teacher development and spread the influences of the best practice in improving quality first teaching and raising standards, including narrowing achievement gaps.

Priority Two:**Providing additional intervention and support with engagement and integration**

This priority focuses on exploring the best ways to facilitate access to additional inclusion support for children and young people with SEND. This includes locality structures and forums, as well as opportunities to strengthen local resources and pilot opportunities.

Whilst the highest quality of inclusive education is core business for our schools and settings, it is recognised that some children and young people may need additional specialist support, over and above the provision that is ordinarily provided to their peers.

For children and young people with SEND, this is likely to be planned support throughout their journey, for other children and young people, situations arise where support is needed for a shorter period.

We aim to ensure support is easily accessible, targeted to meet the needs and delivered at the appropriate time and ensure access to pre-emptive strategies that prevent escalation to the need developing are employed, where this is not effective, support into education is the overarching priority.

We will do this by:

1. Providing wider community practices and locality working. Locality Working will provide schools with the opportunity to contribute to local inclusion plans and have access to a multi-disciplinary team which will provide more targeted support for schools.
2. Reviewing how High Needs Funding (HNF) is distributed so that schools can have flexibility to plan a curriculum and/or therapies to meet ever changing needs and local priorities.
3. Developing Local Inclusion Plans in line with current government strategy to improve provision at all levels.
4. Exploring how children in 'crisis' can be supported to ensure their safeguarding and to maintain the effective education of others.
5. Designing and creating local structures so that appropriate outreach can be accessed, and local commissioning can be improved.
6. Exploring and developing how to improve attendance of children and young people with SEND.
7. Developing an approach to Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) in line with the recommendations of the SEMH review from 2022. We will do this in partnership with SEMH school leaders, Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) leaders, Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS), and Emotional and Mental Health practitioners to reverse the trends of Permanent Exclusions (PEX) and reduced timetables.

Priority Three:**Inclusive Education is part of a broader, holistic, and joined-up offer of support**

This will involve working in partnership with a range of agencies as part of the implementation of the wider SEND strategy to ensure that education support for inclusion is linked to the broader system of services and support available to children, young people, and families in Kent.

The need for integrated approaches lies at the heart of the Children and Families Act 2014 and are reflected in the SEND Code of Practice.

In Kent, there is a wide variety of services and structures supporting the broader health, wellbeing and social care needs of children, young people, and families. Through our part in delivering to the Kent Strategy for Children and Young People with SEND 2021-24, we will work with all relevant local partners to ensure services are joined-up and accessible to children and young people with SEND and their families.

We will do this by working with the following services (and others, this is not intended as a definitive list) to produce a joined-up offer for schools, contribute to the Resource Directory and create an equitable offer for all mainstream schools to improve the offer for children with SEND support and those with EHCPs.

- Health Services
- School Nursing Service
- Early Help / Integrated Children's Service
- PRU, Inclusion and Attendance Service (PIAS)
- Family Hubs
- Joint commissioning services
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service
- KENT SEND Team
- Virtual School Kent (VSK)
- Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)
- Specialist Teaching and Learning Services (STLS)
- The Balanced System
- Autism Education Trust
- Special Schools

We will assess the effectiveness of these services through the District Dashboard and local inclusion plans.

We will work with locality structures to inform how we prioritise resources which support the needs of children with EHCPs and children on SEND support registers.

We will work with the special school sector to define and deliver a continuum of support to deliver better outcomes for children with SEND and who receive SEND support in a financially sustainable manner.

Priority Four: Ensuring smooth transition between education phases

This priority aims to develop collaborative approaches between settings to achieve successful and sustained transitions for CYP at key phases and times of transition in their lives.

We will do this by focusing on the priorities for each of the key transition phases, to consider appropriate destinations for all children and young people, with a presumption of mainstream, and the opportunity to transition back into mainstream, at every transition point.

The Kent Transition Charter⁷ demonstrates KCC's commitment so that all professionals have a shared understanding of what transition is and means, and that a consistent approach is taken both in principle and in practice. All stakeholders will work together, with professional and mutual respect, to support children and young people and their families through transition.

Early Years to Primary

Our Early Years and Childcare Strategy 2020-2023⁸ outlines our priority to ensure increasing numbers of children are 'ready for the next stage' at the end of the Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) and make an effective transition into school. To achieve this, we will:

- Drive further enhancing family involvement in children's learning.
- Work with children's centres to ensure maximum and effective support for children's holistic development through early learning activities and services provided.
- Promote and support the take-up of all Free Entitlements.
- Promote and support the development of effective working relationships and mutual respect between early years and childcare providers and schools.
- Support well-informed, seamless, and effective transitions for all children in all circumstances, but particularly on starting school.

We continue to offer Portage, a service for pre-school children with SEND, offering bespoke packages of intervention to support a child's development through Pre-school learning groups and/or home learning sessions. Portage supports children's learning and development using a small steps approach.

Primary to Secondary



The National Association for Special Educational Needs (NASEN) guide to transition⁹ outlines key activities for this transition phase. In addition to Kent's work within localities, we will support local collaboration and prioritisation of this transition through:

- Improving the sharing of information between schools
- Providing best practice guidance on supporting transition
- Promoting and supporting schools with summer transition activities
- Considering time-limited transition funding that follows the child (part of the wider HNF review)

⁷ [Kent Transition Charter](#)

⁸ [Early Years and Childcare Strategy 2020-23](#)

⁹ [NASENs guide to transition](#)

The Kent Association of Headteachers (KAH) and Kent Special Educational Needs Trust (KSENT), along with KCC colleagues, have worked together to co-produce a more comprehensive Transition Charter which outlines the expectations and responsibilities of schools and other partners. A Transition team will develop a transition framework which will set out how schools and other partners can plan their conversations and activities so that parents can make informed decisions and be confident that their children will be welcomed in an appropriate setting in line with the principles of the charter. Improvements in statutory services will result in a cohesive structure for transition which will include appropriate advice and guidance, a phase transfer process which meets legislative timelines and complement local inclusion plans which will outline what provision is available.

Post-16

We will work to ensure children and young people experience smooth transition between secondary and into post-16 provision, such that progression provides a route to skilled employment and higher learning. Resource has been put into employer engagement to support schools in fulfilling the Gatsby benchmarks. The expansion of the Careers Enterprise Advisors means that all secondary schools can have an industry specialist working with them as their Enterprise Advisor.

The 16-19 qualification review challenged the robustness and skill level of some post-16 curriculum offers which essentially reduced the opportunities for young people aged up to 19 years of age (25 years¹⁰) to be engaged in purposeful education and training or being well prepared for skilled employment and higher learning. The review made eight key recommendations which are being taken forward by the Pathways for All Programme.

Preparing for Adulthood

Following two large multi-agency workshops focused on preparing children and young people with SEND for adulthood, a countywide action plan has been developed, with key priorities included within the Written Statement of Action. One of the key deliverables was the production of a Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) Core Standards document, providing guidance to mainstream and special education settings, as they prepare children, young people, and their families to plan for the transition to adult life. This document is shortly to be published.

One of the ways in which we will work with schools around the PfA agenda is through developing a countywide approach to Supported Employment for mainstream schools, summarised below.

Supported Employment programmes embedded in Secondary schools.



We will provide a training and support offer to mainstream secondary schools to implement programmes of Supported Employment within their school. This offer will provide an integrated programme of training and support for secondary schools in Kent, to support them in implementing whole school approaches to Supported Employment, as well as specific practices such as Travel Training, Vocational Profiling and Systematic Instruction within their settings.

¹⁰ For children and young people with SEND

8. How will performance against this delivery plan be monitored?

Governance and action monitoring:

Group	Role (Info or accountability)	Frequency
SEND Assurance Board	Overall governance and accountability	As required
Transformational Operational Groups	Information	As required
CATIE Monitoring and Evaluation Group	Programme and Project Governance Board	As per KAH / KSENT schedules
Commissioned Services (Contract and Performance Management)		As per contract monitoring schedule
KAH / SEND Inclusion Group	Co-production governance	Termly
Directorate Management Team (DMT)	KCC Senior Management Governance	As required
Schools Funding Forum	Financial governance	As required
CYPE Cabinet Committee	Political Governance	Termly
Annual Report and publication to KELSI	Information	TBD
DfE / Regional Director reporting	Information	As required

Key Performance Indicators:
Mainstream Education

2022 Outcomes	ALL	CIC	SEN K	EHCP	Kent Average	National Average
% placed in mainstream - May 2022 Census	97.7%	N/A	99.6%	33.5%	33.5%	44.5%
Number of suspensions 2021/22 (% in brackets – calculated from May 2022 Census cohort – all schools)	6,630 (2.7%)	180	1,920 (7.1%)	760 (6.5%)	6,630 (2.7%)	N/A
Number of PEX 2021/22 (% in brackets – calculated from May 2022 Census cohort – all schools)	50 (0.0%)	1	24 (0.1%)	12 (0.1%)	50 (0.0%)	N/A
Number reduced Timetable – October 2022 (% in brackets – calculated from October 2022 Census cohort – all schools)	831 (0.3%)	40	372 (1.4%)	258 (2.2%)	831 (0.3%)	N/A
% Persistent Absence – 2021/22 (National is Autumn/Spring Combined)	23.8	N/A	34.7	39.4	23.8	22.3
% Severe Absence – 2021/22 (National is Autumn/Spring combined)	1.7	N/A	3.0	6.0	1.7	1.5
% KS¹¹2 expected standard 2022	59%	25.9%	21%	8%	59%	59%
Progress score KS2 reading 2022	-0.8	-2.5	-2.5	-5.4	-0.8	0.0
Progress score KS2 Writing 2022	0.1	-2.3	-1.8	-4.4	0.1	0.0
Progress score KS2 Maths 2022	-0.9	-2.8	-2.2	-4.8	-0.9	0.0
A8 KS4 Selective	69.1	52.0	62.6	54.0	69.1	74.2
A8 KS4 Non-Selective	41.6	24.5	29.7	22.9	41.6	44.3
P8 KS4 Selective	0.40	-1.07	-0.08	-0.78	0.40	0.57
P8 KS4 Non-Selective	-0.38	-1.36	-0.86	-0.94	-0.38	-0.19

¹¹ Key stage

Data Notes:

- % Placed in Mainstream – “All” is a percentage of pupils attending primary and secondary schools using the May 2022 Total Roll (all schools and pupils) as the denominator.
- % Placed in Mainstream – “SEN K” is a percentage based on the number of SEN K pupils attending a Kent primary or secondary schools using the May 2022 Total Number of SEN Support pupils as the denominator.
- % Placed in Mainstream – “EHCP” is a percentage based on the number of EHCP pupils attending a Kent primary or secondary school using the May 2022 Total Number of EHCP pupils as the denominator.
- % Placed in Mainstream – “EHCP” * - this is using the entire population of EHCP pupils aged 0 to 25 which includes private provision and Kent pupils placed outside the LA. The data is from the January 2022 SEN2 return (sections 1.1 and 1.2).
- KS4 National is from the DfE SFR published 02/02/23
- KS4 Kent is from the Unamended NPD dataset of October 2022
- KS4 Kent CIC is Kent CIC only and is from the Unamended NPD dataset of October 2022

Other measures:

- Number of children and young people accessing Supported Employment
- % of parents who agree or strongly agree with the parental survey statements that they are confident that the educational provider can meet need (primary)
- % of parents who agree or strongly agree with the parental survey statements that they are confident that the educational provider can meet need (secondary)
- % children and young people on track to achieve their end of Key Stage (KS) outcomes (for those annual reviews not taking place in the final year of the KS)
- % children and young people who achieve at least 50% of their EHCP outcomes by the end of KS

2023 Outcomes	ALL	CIC	SEN K	EHCP	Kent Average	National Average
% placed in mainstream – May 2023 Census	97.6	84.3	99.6	51.6 (* 34.0)	97.6	98.2
Number of suspensions 2021/22 (% in brackets – calculated from May 2022 Census cohort – all schools)	7716 (3.1%)	198 (14.6%)	2506 (8.7%)	890 (7.2%)	7716 (3.1%)	N/A
Number of PEX 2021/22 (% in brackets – calculated from May 2022 Census cohort – all schools)	69 (0.0%)	0	28 (0.1%)	14 (0.1%)	69 (0.0%)	N/A
Number reduced T/T – May 2023 (% in brackets – calculated from May 2023 Census cohort – all schools)	1330 (0.5%)	63 (4.7%)	622 (2.2%)	297 (2.4%)	1330 (0.5%)	N/A
% Persistent Absence – Autumn 2022 and Spring 2023 Combined	23.1	25.2	34.6	40.5	23.1	21.2
% Severe Absence – Autumn 2022 and Spring 2023 Combined	2.1	7.0	4.1	6.6	2.1	1.9
% KS2 expected standard 2023	59	31.4	23	8	59	60
Progress score KS2 reading 2023	-0.5	-1.5	-1.4	-6.0	-0.5	0.0
Progress score KS2 Writing 2023	0.0	-0.7	-1.5	-5.1	0.0	0.0
Progress score KS2 Maths 2023	-1.0	-2.7	-2.4	-6.0	-1.0	0.0
A8 KS4 Selective 2023 Provisional	66.5	55.8	60.6	54.5	66.5	N/A
A8 KS4 Non Selective 2023 Provisional	38.2	19.2	28.3	11.7	38.2	N/A
P8 KS4 Selective 2023 Provisional	0.48	-0.40	-0.01	-0.25	0.48	N/A
P8 KS4 Non Selective 2023 Provisional	-0.38	-1.48	-0.80	-1.44	-0.38	N/A

Notes:
 % Placed in Mainstream – “All” is a percentage of pupils attending primary and secondary schools using the May 2023

Total Roll (all schools and pupils) as the denominator.

% Placed in Mainstream – "CIC" is a percentage of matched CIC pupils as at 31/05/23 attending primary and secondary schools. The CIC data has been matched to the May 2023 School Census by UPN.

% Placed in Mainstream – "SEN K" is a percentage based on the number of SEN K pupils attending a Kent primary or secondary schools using the May 2023 Total Number of SEN Support pupils as the denominator.

% Placed in Mainstream – "EHCP" is a percentage based on the number of EHCP pupils attending a Kent primary or secondary school using the May 2023 Total Number of EHCP pupils as the denominator.

% Placed in Mainstream – "EHCP" * - this is using the whole population of EHCP pupils aged 0 to 25 which includes private provision and Kent pupils placed outside the LA. The data is from the January 2022 SEN2 return (sections 1.1 and 1.2).

% Placed in Mainstream - National - is a percentage of pupils attending primary and secondary schools using the January 2023 Total Roll (all schools and pupils) as the denominator.

Exclusions - figure in brackets for CIC is the percentage of CIC with an exclusion that uses the number of CIC as at 31/05/23 that were matched to the May 2023 School Census by UPN as the denominator.

Exclusions – no national data for 2022/23 has been published yet by the DfE.

Reduced Timetable - figure in brackets for CIC is the percentage of CIC with an RTT reported for Summer 2023 that uses the number of CIC as at 31/05/23 that were matched to the May 2023 School Census by UPN as the denominator.

Persistent Absence "All", "SEN K", "EHCP", "Kent" and "National" data is DfE published and is for primary, secondary and special schools (Year 1 to 11 pupils).

Severe Absence for "All" is DfE published and is for primary, secondary and special schools (Year 1 to 11) pupils.

Severe Absence for "SEN K" and "EHCP" is based on the 2022 School Census returns and is for all schools (Year 1 to 11 pupils).

Persistent and Severe Absence data for the whole 2022/23 academic year is not yet available.

Absence for CIC Pupils - CIC pupils as at 31/03/2023 have been matched to the 2023 January and May Census by UPN.

KS2 2023 "All", "SEN K", "EHCP", "Kent Average" and "National Average" are DfE published (14/12/2023).

KS2 2023 "CIC" is based on matching June 2023 Kent and OLA LAC pupils to the 2023 KS2 Results cohort.

KS4 2023 - "All", "SEN K", "EHCP", "Kent Average" is provisional data published October 2023. The DfE do not publish data for Selective and Non Selective schools.

KS4 2023 "CIC" is based on matching June 2023 Kent and OLA LAC pupils to the 2023 KS4 Results cohort (Provisional October 2023 data).

9. Linked Strategies

This delivery plan works alongside the following KCC strategies:

- Kent Strategy for Children and Young People with SEND 2021-24¹²
- Early Years and Childcare Strategy
- School Improvement Strategy
- Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision, 2023-27

¹² To be replaced by a new Education Strategy

Appendix 1: Inclusion Statement

Our collective values and aims are captured in our inclusion statement. This statement reflects partnership working between education leaders and Kent County Council in developing a countywide approach to inclusive education. We strive to ensure that all schools, academies, and early years and childcare settings can provide inclusive education, and to follow both the spirit and the letter of the law with inclusive values. The statements below reflect a joint commitment of all the partners across the Kent education system including settings, schools, colleges, and Local Authority.

Children and young people with SEND are individuals and rarely fall neatly into one need type, whole school approaches are, therefore, intended to be complimentary of each other and support the development of cultures, strategies and systems that benefit the wider cohort of pupils, not just those of the identified need type. Holistic assessment of a young person's needs, and support from across the need types will often be required to determine the most effective package of support.

This statement reflects partnership working between education leaders and Kent County Council in developing a county-wide approach to inclusive education. We strive to ensure that all schools, academies, and early years and childcare settings are able to provide inclusive education, and to follow both the spirit and the letter of the law with inclusive values. The statements below reflect a joint commitment of all the partners across the Kent education system including settings, schools, colleges and Local Authority.

Our commitment:

to children...	to parents and carers...	to schools and settings...	to our staff...
<p>Making sure that every child and young person in our schools and settings, whatever their circumstance or ability, has a sense of belonging, feels respected, and is valued for who they are.</p>	<p>Understanding that there are different types of provision that a child may need at different points in their lives, and that movement between provisions must have a specific purpose which will lead to better outcomes for them as they prepare for adulthood.</p>	<p>Having a responsibility to provide for Kent children whatever their background and current circumstances and ensuring that they receive accurate AND EARLY identification of their needs so that high quality learning and teaching leads to positive experiences and outcomes.</p>	<p>Inclusion being positioned at the heart of education leadership and not viewed as the exclusive preserve of the SENCO. Encouraging every school and setting to be inclusive and to take a whole school approach to inclusion and SEND.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely and equitable access to high-quality and appropriate education in a range of settings (mainstream, SRBP, special, early years and Portage). • a broad and varied curriculum differentiated to meet the individual needs of each student's ability whatever that may be. • Appropriate levels of support to enable each child to develop, flourish and build independence. • The skills, knowledge, and confidence to move to the next stage of learning with success. • Be part of the whole process. • The right to achieve full potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely support and advice in making decisions about your child's education through open and transparent communication. • Clear and up-to-date information about the offer across the county for children with SEN. • Opportunities to regularly review the efficacy of provision for your child. • Processes that meet all statutory and any other essential requirements and timescales. • To work with you to assess needs in a co-productive way. • A graduated response offers a pathway to suit all needs. SEND can be met without an EHCP. • Ensure advice and support is consistent and joined up across agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely support in providing high-quality provision for children with SEN, both practical and financial. • A clear and transparent process for allocation of High Needs Funding and SENIF. • Advice and support from officers in the fulfilment of statutory duties, including placements, transition between phases and EHCP & Annual Review processes. • Publication of mainstream core standards as a source of advice for schools, and Best Practice Guidance for Early Years settings. • Appropriate access, liaison, and clear communication across external agencies to ensure the right solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and retention of high-quality staff in the local area. • Appropriate and regular support from line managers. • Regular, high-quality CPD, training opportunities and updates to share experience and knowledge. • Greater integration between SEND service and SENCOs. • An opportunity to share views on how to maintain and improve systems. • A clear and fair process for appraising and recognising performance. • To seek and accept any learning, training, and development for inclusion for our staff, engage with research and to share our own good practice generously. • An openness to being challenged and to challenge as appropriate and necessary.

We will:

across the county...	in each area...	in our education and childcare settings...
<p>Making sure that every child and young person in our schools and settings, whatever their circumstance or ability, has a sense of belonging, feels respected, and is valued for who they are.</p>	<p>Understanding that there are different types of provision that a child may need at different points in their lives, and that movement between provisions must have a specific purpose which will lead to better outcomes for them as they prepare for adulthood.</p>	<p>Having a responsibility to provide for Kent children whatever their background and current circumstances and ensuring that they receive accurate AND EARLY identification of their needs so that high quality learning and teaching leads to positive experiences and outcomes.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a clear and up-to-date local offer on our website and on request to parents/carers and other stakeholders. • Publish and adhere to clear procedures for children with SEN starting school and at key points of transition (EY, post-11, post-14, post-16). • Maintain a forum for collecting the views of stakeholders, especially children and parents/carers, as part of our ongoing evaluation of provision. • Work collaboratively across the Council, schools, settings, academies, health, and social care in the interests of SEND students. • Improve communication across the SEND and KCC services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a consistent process for tracking and monitoring provision for SEN pupils, to be shared with and scrutinised by KAH Area Boards and PRU Management Committees, and Early Years and Childcare Provider Association. • Establish a supportive and improvement-focused peer-to-peer SEN review process between schools and settings, and with the support of the Local Authority including a commitment to research-based evidence learning. • Provide regular learning / training opportunities for parents/ carers, schools, settings, and other interested parties. • Provide a range of mainstream and SRBP places for children and access to specialist interventions at special school nurseries. • Establish a system for ensuring that the procedures for primary to secondary transition are timely and fair, using local panels of SENCOs and KCC Officers. • Ensure that there are mechanisms in place to support parents/ carers in finding out about local schools and settings, and what they can offer to their children. • Commitment to transparency of data across the area/ district. • Challenge and be open to challenge and make evidence-based decisions. • Commit that all professionals will be honest and open. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an inclusive approach, including admission, with an appreciation of diversity, individuality, and ambition for all to achieve their optimum potential is essential in raising attainment for all. • Be confident that before a decision is made, all possible options available have been exhausted and that this will lead to improved practice and provision available to meet all needs in the future. • Examine the way we do things in our own settings to become even more inclusive through systematically reviewing our practice and through working in partnership to review practice in other settings. • Carefully and accurately assess HOW a child's needs can be met and respond accordingly.

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Kent and Medway

