



On behalf of



# Countywide SENCO Forum

Term 6

Secondary 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025



# Today's Presenters

- Emma Shelton: SEND Countywide Project Manager
- Clara Green: SEND Quality Assurance and Practice Development Officer
- Kayleigh Hales & Sue Waddington – Inclusion Champions
- Siobhan Price: Assistant Director, School Inclusion (KCC)
- Craig Chapman: Assistant Director – Fair Access and (Interim) SEN Processes
- Elizabeth Pole & Hester Mackay – Kent Professional Speech & Language Therapists for the Balanced System.
- Ruth Gately: TEP Specialist Lead Adviser SEND

# Agenda

Item	Topic	Lead/Time
1	Welcome/Housekeeping/Introduction – Ruth Gately	5 mins
2	Emma Shelton: SEN Data Coordination/Transfer Team – Statutory process Clara Green: SEND Quality Assurance and Practice Development Officer Annual Review Audit Update	20 mins
3	Craig Chapman: Assistant Director – Fair Access and (Interim) SEN Processes Improved EHCNA Process	15 mins
4	Kayleigh Hales & Sue Waddington: Inclusion Champions	15 mins
5	Siobhan Price: Assistant Director School Inclusion – Next Phase of Improvement	10 mins
6	Elizabeth Pole & Hester Mackay: Kent Professional Speech & Language Therapist for the Balance System Balanced System – update and impact survey Celebration – School presentation – TBC	20 mins
7	New Countywide SENCO Forum dates and times for 2025/26 MCS Training Evaluation	5 mins

# SEND Phase Transfer 2026 - Secondary

Process/ timelines

# Phase Transfer team

- In April 2025 the case work team divided the officers and the statutory processes to allow officers to have one key area of focus.
- The Phase Transfer team will be responsible for completing annual reviews for the year groups prior to phase transfer, in addition to completing the phase transfer process.
- Emma Small (Shelton) is the lead for Phase Transfer within the SEND service and the team manager is Gemma Buckle.
- The team consists of 4 senior officers who each have case officers reporting to them for their specific area/ year group. There are two senior officers for school age annual review/ phase transfer and each have two geographical areas of responsibility. Then there are two senior officers for the post 16 transfers, one focused on years 10 and 11 and the other years 13 and 14. Queries can be shared with the senior officers, who will then allocate actions to individual case officers. Contact details will be on the last slide.
- As discussed in previous meeting, we work directly with the SEN Data Coordination team who provided an overview of timescales regarding preferences and consultations.

# Annual Reviews and Transition Reviews

The Annual Review and Phase Transfer processes are both statutory and run simultaneously. Each has its own timescales and deadlines.

Annual Reviews should be held on an annual basis within a month of the original EHCP issue date. In the academic year prior to phase transfer the Annual Review documentation should include all up to date advice and any requests for significant amendments in order to have a reflective EHCP document to consult with in term 1 of the phase transfer year. If an Annual Review is held early in the academic year prior to phase transfer and additional information becomes available, an early review may be held in term 5 or 6 in order to ensure the LA has the information for consultation.

Phase Transfer/ Transition reviews can be held in term 1 of the phase transfer year if the Annual Review is not due until later in the academic year. Preferences can be discussed at this meeting, however requests for preferences will have been made prior to this in order to ensure consultations are sent to families preference settings. Documentation should be sent to the LA following these meetings and will be processed accordingly.

The team will be able to answer queries surrounding specific cases.

# Timeline of events detail – Yr R, Yr 3 & Yr 7 transfers

Key dates	Activity
W/c 2nd June 2025	Email to all parents/guardians advising them the window is open to provide their parental preference
Monday 2nd June 2025	Kent Test Registration Opens (Secondary transfer only)
Tuesday 1st July 2025	Closing date for Kent Test Registrations (Secondary transfer only)
Friday 18th July 2025	All annual or transition reviews must be completed by schools, relevant paperwork returned to KCC
Thursday 11th September 2025	Kent Test – pupils in Kent Primary Schools (Secondary transfer only)
Friday 12th September 2025	Close of application window for parents/guardians to provide a parental preference
Weekend of 13th/14th September 2025	Kent Test – pupils not in Kent Primary Schools (Secondary transfer only)
Monday 15th September 2025	Consultations sent to schools via SharePoint
Wednesday 1st October 2025	Last date for changes to parental preferences in order to be considered in the consultation period
Thursday 16th October	Kent Test Assessment Decision Day
Friday 17th October 2025	Deadline for Consultation Responses
15th February 2026	National statutory deadline for naming school placement on the child's EHCP

# Timeline of events detail – Post 16 transfers

Key dates	Activity
June 2025	Settings sent details of current pupils in the phase transfer cohort (leaving them) for data quality checks
01 September 2025	Email to all young people/their families advising them the window is open to provide their parental preference
07 November 2025	Close of application window for parents/guardians to provide a parental preference
28 November 2025	Last date for changes to preferences in order to be considered in the consultation period
12 December 2025	Deadline for consultation responses
31st March 2026	National statutory deadline for naming school placement on the child's EHCP



# Consultation Period – School age

**Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

Schools will be sent a SharePoint link

Schools can respond using the Microsoft Form

SEN Data Coordination Team will be chasing schools close to the end of the consultation period

- Parents will receive the amended EHCP naming their secondary setting by Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026

# Consultation Period – School age (continued)

**Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November – Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

Schools and will be sent a SharePoint link

Schools can respond using the Microsoft Form

SEN Data Coordination Team will be chasing schools close to the end of the consultation period

Young people/ their families will receive the amended EHCP naming their secondary setting by Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026

# Contact details

- Emma Small (Shelton) SEND Countywide Project Manager – [Emma.Shelton@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Emma.Shelton@kent.gov.uk)
- Gemma Buckle Phase Transfer Team Manager – [Gemma.Buckle@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Gemma.Buckle@kent.gov.uk)
- Bethan McHale Senior Case Officer (School age – East and South) – [Bethan.McHale@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Bethan.McHale@kent.gov.uk)
- Naomi Dewberry Senior Case Officer (School age – North and West) – [Naomi.Dewberry@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Naomi.Dewberry@kent.gov.uk)
- Lily Sheridan Senior Case Officer (Post 16 Yr 10 and 11) – [Lily.Sheridan2@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Lily.Sheridan2@kent.gov.uk)
- Jacqueline Hudson Senior Case Officer (Post 16 Yr 13 and 14) [Jacqueline.Hudson@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Jacqueline.Hudson@kent.gov.uk)



# Quality Assurance and Practice Development team

# Latest webinar feedback

Thank you 😊

- Useful information shared
- Slides helpful as reference after webinar
- Supportive, particularly to those new to role

Key areas for practice development –

- Amendment clarification and support on-going (we are also working closely with CWO in 1:1s and workshops to ensure consistency and understanding)
- Phase transfer clarification on-going

# Latest Audit feedback



- Information provided by schools was timely and detailed
- Relationship based practice
- Safeguarding procedures were robustly in place and in a recent situation had provided additional support to the CYP and their family
- Setting working closely with all professionals
- Setting felt heard with a successful relationship with caseworker

‘This has been a good way to prepare for Ofsted and understand how other professionals are involved’

‘I didn’t have to worry as much as I did!’

Practice development area: App 1 completion with CYP to be supported further to ensure Golden Thread present and seen within documentation.

# Amendment audit request for info



Please send information directly to  
[clara.green@kent.gov.uk](mailto:clara.green@kent.gov.uk)

- Name of CYP
- Date of birth
- Area (to find their area please ask your admin team)

Cases where you feel you have recommended **significant** amendments, and these have not been made.

# SEN EHCNA 0-6 Week Pilot Project SENCO Forum update

Craig Chapman  
July 2025



# Project Overview

## Problem Statement:

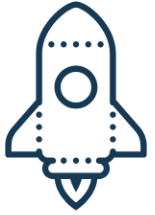
Currently, within Kent County Council's Special Educational Needs (SEN) Service, high workloads are exacerbated by the time consuming multi-step Synergy workflow's and the service's reliance on manual communication methods such as phone calls, letters, and emails. The current process increases the volume of work SEN staff are required to undertake to complete statutory functions and leads to inconsistent levels of communication for parents.



## Goal Statement:

By end-June 2025, to develop and test a proof of concept that streamlines and increases the efficiency of the 0-6 week assessment process within Kent County Council's Special Educational Needs (SEN) Service. This will be achieved by making more effective use of the Synergy system, through the reduction of the synergy workflow. Additionally, it will harnessing automated communication methods and a broader range of technologies, outside of Synergy. The proof of concept aims to reduce the workloads, as well as enhancing the efficiency and consistency of communication, to improve the overall experience for both staff and parents.

# SEN EHCNA 0-6 Week Pilot Study



Following a series of in-person workshops across SEN, we are excited to announce the launch of a pilot study for the first six weeks of the EHCNA process.

This pilot will be tested within a single assessment team, while the rest of the service will continue with the current process.

## Goals and Aims

Streamline  
Workflows



Improve experience for  
both staff and parents

Consistent  
communication



Increase efficiency  
of process

# How will this impact on schools

There are 2 key changes that schools will see:

Method to  
submitting an  
EHCNA request

- Upload Appendix 2 to an online form

Selected  
communications for  
0-6 week element

- Children living in North Area will follow a new process

# Submitting an EHCNA request

## Current Process

Email Appendix 2 to KCC



## Future Process

Upload Appendix 2 via online form  
(similar to the Annual Review process)

### ➤ What's changing?

- Just the **way** to submit the Appendix 2, so upload the document via an online form rather than attaching to an email. The word document itself will remain the same.

### ➤ Why the change?

- Improved information handling and this will feed into a wider project KCC are working on to improve the communications and timeliness for the EHCNA process.

### ➤ Expected benefits

- More efficient and faster processing time.

# Submitting an EHCNA request continued

## Current Process

Assessment officers email asking for additional evidence



## Future Process

For CYP in the North Area –  
Automated communications to upload evidence via an online form

### ➤ What's changing?

- For CYP in the North Area of Kent, we will be running a pilot for the 0–6-week EHCNA process. Selected communications will be automated, and we will be asking settings and professionals to upload any additional evidence via an online form. Please note this will only impact selected schools for the 0-6-week process.

### ➤ Why the change?

- Improved information handling.

### ➤ Expected benefits

- More efficient and faster processing time.

# Next Steps

- We will be in touch when this will be actioned and will ask for feedback on the change.
- This will likely be implemented in the Summer 2025

# Inclusion Champions

Kayleigh Hales & Sue Waddington

### **Who are we?**

- Our group consists of headteachers, assistant heads and SENCos across EYFS, primary, secondary and post-16 provisions.
- Being an Inclusion Champion is about championing inclusion (not that we're perfect and completely on top of everything).

### **What do we do?**

- Key pieces of work this academic year have been - CoP, Transition, Scrutiny of provision, informing strategy.

### **How do we do it?**

- 1 meeting per term and a flexible time commitment.
- We break off into working parties between meetings.
- There are a range of activities including whole group and table discussions.
- It is a creative and innovative space



# Next Phase of Improvement Communities of Schools

Countywide SENCO Forum  
July 2025  
Siobhán Price

# What we want for all of Kent's children – the Kent children and young people outcomes framework



Meeting Needs Locally





# First CoS meetings

June and July – first meetings

Meeting with chairs on 17<sup>th</sup> July.

Chairs have been sent form to submit their thoughts and feedback.

Need feedback from the sector

5 mins to put feedback into the Q&A function.

More formal evaluation in November 2025.

# Communications to Parents

- A guidance document has been collated to support schools in conversations with their parents – this is now on [Kelsi - here](#)
- Inclusion Champions and KALE have supported the content alongside questions and comments from the Induction meetings
- KentPACT and KCC are hosting parent webinars – the information is on [Kelsi - here](#)
- Registration links for the sessions:

[Monday 14th July 3.00pm](#)

[Wednesday 16th July 6.30pm](#)

[Friday 18th July 11.00am](#)

# Communication with Parent

- [Support-for-Schools-Conversations-with-Parents-June-2025-Updated-180625.pdf](#)

# New EHCPs

- All new EHCPs which were issued between January and July are also being mapped against funding descriptors
- Have started mapping exercise with Special Schools and SRPs
- Will work with schools in the autumn to map existing children with EHCPs and ensure there is strong moderation across the system



# Timeline of activity

TERM 6	TERM 1		TERM 2	
June / July	September	October	November	December
Community meetings taking place Community Chairs Keeping in Touch Meeting	Community Meetings to begin	Community Meetings	Chairs Keeping in Touch Meeting	Community Meetings
Publication of Continuum of Need and Provision	Training/ Information Sessions for Continuum of Need and Provision			
Finalisation of funding descriptors for Specific Allocation Funding (SAF)	KCC Finance to confirm Specific Allocation Funding		Cabinet Approval required for Specific Allocation Funding	
Mapping and moderation activity for children with the highest level of need				
STLS TUPE Process	KCC STLS Onboarding and Induction			
Mock Community Video Series published				

# Inclusion Champions background

- Recruiting for Inclusion Champions
- Will have some speaking to you today.
- Must be a senior leader in your school.
- Require more representation from Post 16, Early Years and Special.
- JD will go out via KELSI bulletin. Please speak to current Inclusion Champions
- Minimum commitment is 6 days per academic year.
- Supporting KCC with development of strategy and operational detail during a period of significant change.
- Need to have the signed agreement by your HT or CoG

# Community of Schools Provision Maps

2025- 2026 Community of Schools Provision Map

<b>Name of Community of Schools:</b>				
<b>Name of setting or: service</b>	<b>Focus</b> (eg training; accreditation; assessment; outreach; observation/ review etc)	<b>Brief outline</b>	<b>Referral process/ details</b>	<b>Contact details</b>
<b>Schools</b>				
<b>Specialist settings</b> (eg PRU; SRPs; Special schools)				
<b>Professional Resource Group:</b>				
<b>Other agencies/ services:</b>				

- Specialist settings and Professional Resource Group information- centrally populated for each Community of Schools ready for September.
- Community of Schools- take ownership of their Provision Map, to record any approaches, resources or provisions that individual schools have and can show/ share with others.
- Used by KCC to support their strategic review of available resources in each area.

# The Balanced System<sup>®</sup> for Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) Update

Elizabeth Pole & Hester Mackay

Kent Professional Lead Speech & Language Therapist for the Balanced System

# The Balanced System® for Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) - Update



- Roll out of **link therapist** (KCHFT areas) – ongoing
- If you have not yet had a planning meeting with link therapist you can:
- Find out who to contact here: [Professional Resource Group – KELSI](#)
- Complete evaluations to support initial conversations [Balanced System® tools for schools – KELSI](#)
- Find out more: [The Balanced System® in Kent for SLCN - KELSI](#)
- Changes for NHS therapy providers next year – new contracts
- **Balanced System® Scheme for Schools and Settings accreditation** - 29 schools currently accredited and 19 working towards
  - Good for – schools who would like to strengthen SLCN provision as an area of priority, schools who have strong SLCN provision and want this recognised
  - £1000 + VAT for Kent schools
  - If your school would like to join the next cohort, contact [slcn@kent.gov.uk](mailto:slcn@kent.gov.uk)

# Balanced System Scheme for Schools & Settings Celebration Event



[S4SS Subtitles .mp4](#)





# Targeted SLCN support for Secondaries

[Secondary Language Link](#) age 11-14, screening for language difficulties, class strategies and targeted intervention

- Around half of Kent secondaries now have subscription.
- Ideal time to consider free trial to screen in September??

[Talk for Work - Speech and Language UK](#) – 13 week group intervention for pupils with SLCN aged 14+, ending in a workshop delivered to local employers.

- 1 day training for practitioners (ideally 2 per school) 1st December 2025 in Ashford. Contact [slcn@kent.gov.uk](mailto:slcn@kent.gov.uk) to register interest. Cost is around £250 just to cover resources, enabling schools to run the programme over and over again.

# The Balanced System® for Speech, Language and Communication (SLC)



**Quality assured information about the Balanced System® for SLCN for school websites** (shared with slides).

- Keep the key information and personalise for your school.

## **SLC Social media toolkit:**

- Series of posts explaining the Balanced System including [1.5 min explainer video](#)
- Working on general top tips
- Contact [slcn@kent.gov.uk](mailto:slcn@kent.gov.uk) if you would like to share info about the Balanced System on your school social media channel **or** if you already have 'top tips' posts you are happy to share with us.

Universal provision: [Voice 21 Oracy Education](#)

**We need to hear your views:** Schools Impact survey <https://forms.office.com/e/JcKBuMQrwd>



# Countywide SENCO Forum 2025/26

## Tuesday & Thursday

Date	Registration Link	Time
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2025	<a href="#"><u>Countywide SENCO Forum – Primary</u></a>	08:00 – 09:30
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2025	<a href="#"><u>Countywide SENCO Forum – Secondary</u></a>	15:30 – 17:00
Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2025	<a href="#"><u>Countywide SENCO Forum – Secondary</u></a>	08:00 – 09:30
Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2025	<a href="#"><u>Countywide SENCO Forum – Primary</u></a>	13:30 – 15:00

All term dates and times with links to register on the TEP website will be available on:  
Kelsi: Countywide SENCO Forum Year 2025/2026

# Mainstream Core Standards Training Offer 2025/26

Training Title	Audience	Dates and Times
An Introduction to the MCS	Teachers & TAs/LSA	Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> September 2025: 16:00 – 18:00 <b>or</b> Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2026: 16:00 – 18:00
Embedding Inclusive Practice through the MCS  Two sessions	Middle Leaders Pastoral & Curriculum	Session 1: Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup> November 2025 16:00– 18:00 <b>&amp;</b> Session 2: Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> February 2026: 16:00 – 18:00
Embedding Whole-School Inclusion through the MCS	Senior Leaders	Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> November 2025: 16:00 – 18:00
SEMH Inclusion using MCS	All staff	Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> October 2025: 16:00 – 18:00 <b>or</b> Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2026: 16:00 – 18:00

[Link to MCS training 2025/26](#)

# Thank you

If you have any questions, please email:  
[SENDandInclusion@theeducationpeople.org](mailto:SENDandInclusion@theeducationpeople.org)

with the subject title:  
Countywide SENCO Forum Query

