

## Countywide SENCO Forum- 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023

### Post- Session Question & Answer Document

#### **Questions for Kent County Council**

Q- Who is SEND Inclusion Advisor for South & East?

A- Please find all details of which SEN Inclusion Advisers cover which area within the updated slides attached to the post-session email.

Q- What is the timescale for Phased Transfer for placements in special schools?

A- The phased transfer timescale is the same for mainstream and special schools and can be found within the slides attached to the post-session email.

Q- I'm booked to attend the conference with our SENCo - where do we specify the workshops we want to attend?

A- If you have registered for the SENCO Conference via the following link, [\*\*SENCO and Inclusion Lead Conference 2023- Investing in Inclusion: Securing Future Pathways\*\*](#), then an email should have come out to you with a link to a Microsoft Forms survey which you can use to choose the two workshops that you would like to attend. Places on each will be limited so please respond to the form as soon as you can to avoid disappointment.

Q- Will SEND Inclusion Advisers or the Area SEND co-ordinators be attending LIFT?

A- There is no plan at the moment for the SEN Inclusion Advisers or the Area SEN Coordinators to attend LIFT meetings. This, however, will be kept under review.

Q- Will SEND Inclusion Advisers still mediate between parents and schools? Who will fulfil this role if not?

A- Please do invite the SEN Inclusion Adviser for your District meetings with parents/carers that have been arranged to discuss any concerns regarding SEN provision for their child.

Q- The need to refer to LIFT will just further delay paediatric referrals. It's also time-consuming for already busy LIFT meetings, particularly where LIFT / STLS support is not being sought other than just to agree the paediatric referral; I can imagine meetings being filled just with these?! I presume there will be an amendment to the LIFT referral form to reflect this too?

A- Thank you to SENCOs and STLS for bringing this issue to our attention. We have gone back to NHS and challenged the decision and the fact that the letter was sent without any communication with KCC. NHS have agreed to re word the letter. The message should be that if a LIFT referral was done it should be attached to a paediatric referral. But a LIFT referral is not necessary.

Q-

What happens for children in year 6 whose plans have not been issued yet (and so are out of timescale)?

A- Year 6 children (and their parents) should use the standard admissions process if they do not have an EHCP. The fact that the EHCP may be pending, in most cases should not affect the choice of secondary school.

Q- I completed and sent in a number of EHCP annual reviews in September 2023 and have not heard back.

A- Please feel free to chase these but, unfortunately, KCC SEND Service is still working through the backlog.

Q- Please can we have these slides being shown from kent and medway integrated care system?

A- All of the slides that were presented during the Forums on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> February are attached to the post-session email. If you did not receive them before attending the session then please get in touch with Rory Abbott ([rory.abbott@theeducationpeople.org](mailto:rory.abbott@theeducationpeople.org)) so that he can investigate this. All delegates who register for the Countywide SENCO Forums via CPD Online and have their place authorised by their CPD Manager within school will be sent the link and the supporting documents for the sessions ahead of time.

Q- When / where can we find more information on the engagement award?

A- If you would be interested in consulting on the Family Engagement Award (FEA) ahead of it going live then please email [rory.abbott@theeducationpeople.org](mailto:rory.abbott@theeducationpeople.org). The Award itself will go live once the documents and processes have been consulted on by all stakeholders involved (parents, schools, local authority, Kent PACT).

Q- It would also be helpful for KCC to include the GP based 'Children's Health and Wellbeing Navigators'. A seemingly new role which seems, at times, to work at cross-purposes to the advice and guidance within SEND. We have reached out and repeatedly attempted to meet up to ensure a shared vision. Can you please update us on what you are doing to work in a joined up way with this project?

A- That is a very interesting comment and I would like to know more before giving an answer. KCC have commissioned this team to provide services from GP surgeries (but not yet in all districts). The feedback has been largely positive so if you have specifics that you are not happy about or is contradictory, please contact me directly. I will need to know this as we have a rigorous process of contract monitoring. [Siobhan.Price2@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Siobhan.Price2@kent.gov.uk). I have already sent a message to the commissioning team to alert them that you have raised this issue. Many thanks for this. It is much appreciated.

Q- Can parents no longer state a preference for specialist provision?

A- I'm not sure I understand the question. Parents can express a preference for a special school or a mainstream school with SRP.

Q- Is release time for the KAH project (SENCOs helping to reduce the backlog of EHCP requests) funded?

Q-

A- This piece of work is not funded.

Will the Mainstream Core Standards training for middle leaders be offered again?

A- If there is a need and enough schools come forward to say they would like this training then KCC can look at how it could be funded.

Q- I often feel that information for purely Infant schools is very limited.

A- There is now a Countywide SENCO Forum for Early Years Providers, coordinated by the Early Years Service. You can book onto these forums via the following link

Q- I understand there is a lot to cover but it would be really helpful if questions raised could be answered within a forum. Could they be made slightly along to allow a Q&A session?

A- Whilst we get the occasional request to lengthen the Forums, we underwent a lengthy consultation process in terms 5 and 6 of the last academic year where we went out to all SENCOs to ask when during the week would be the best times for forums to occur and for how long they should last. The overwhelming majority responded with an hour and a half as being an optimum length for the forum. Although facilitators cannot answer all questions within the session, it is hoped that they will be answered here, within this document. However, if you feel that a question hasn't been answered or that it hasn't been answered fully enough, then please email Rory Abbott ([rory.abbott@theeducationpeople.com](mailto:rory.abbott@theeducationpeople.com)) so that he can look into this and try and gather the information that you request.

Q- Is the family engagement award the same as FIQA?

A- The short answer is, no. The FIQA is a paid for award that has been offered by The Education People in the past. There is currently some research going into the effectiveness of this project and those working on the Family Engagement Award are in contact with those coordinating the FIQA to make sure there is consistency and learning across the piece.

### **Questions for NHS- Answers provided by NELFT and KCHFT**

Q- The SPA form does not allow for you to upload documents - so therefore you cannot add supporting evidence - can this be investigated?

A- There are 4 upload sections in the SPA form for supplementary documents, 3 are labelled but one is free stated 'other'

Q- We had been sent an email with forms attached because the website isn't working still. We were told this was being fixed. Has it been?

A- The website is working and the NLDS page has been removed. Items previously found on the NLDS pages are amongst those that have been removed.

Q- We have often had to send referrals at least 3 times - parents are not communicated with and, as a result, blame the school. Can a receipt of referral be provided please?

Q-

A- An email receipt is now received by every submission within 5 minutes of submitting. (NB- From today's date- 11.04.23- if you do not receive an email receipt then please contact Rory Abbott- [rory.abbott@theeducationpeople.org](mailto:rory.abbott@theeducationpeople.org), who will feed this back to the NHS team).

Is there a way we can attach information on the NELFT referral form?

A- There are 4 upload sections in the SPA form. One is labelled 'other' for anything a person wishes to attach. We do not ask for the screeners or any nlds forms as we are using 1 form

Q- The EWP support has been useful - but they are not able to work with children with a diagnosis or identified SEN - is this going to change?

A- Assuming that this is referring to the Emotional Wellbeing Teams, I am pleased to hear that the support provided so far has been useful. The remit of the team is to work with children and young people who present with mild to moderate emotional wellbeing / mental health difficulties and the support available from the team is aligned with this remit. This does not exclude a child with identified SEN. We would consider on an individual basis whether the direct individual support that we are able to offer is the appropriate evidence-based support for the presenting need, whether we can support through consultation and liaison, at a whole school approach level, and/or whether signposting would be more appropriate. With regards to a diagnosis, this would depend on the specific diagnosis but again, it would depend on whether the presenting difficulties are consistent with mild to moderate emotional wellbeing / mental health difficulties.

Q- After an OT referral is made we get acknowledgement of the referral instantly but in a lot of cases we then hear nothing.

A- In KCHFT we are working towards a 12 week target for therapy referrals; the majority are seen within 20 weeks. The referrer can contact their local team (contact details on the pod [Children's Therapies - The Pod | Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust \(kentcht.nhs.uk\)](#)) to find out the status of a referral.

Q- I haven't received any communication to say that paed referrals now have to go via LIFT, can I ask who sent this info?

A- The guidance is that for all referrals discussed at LIFT, advice should be implemented before a referral to community child health. The LIFT discussion outcome should also be attached to the referral. Comm paed referrals to KCHFT do not need to go via LIFT.