

## **Locality Model: Frequently Asked Questions**

This document is broken down into the 3 key areas of the Locality Model: Communities of Schools, Professional Resource Group, and the Area Boards. There will be regular updates to this document as the work progresses. There is a dedicated page on Kelsi for all updates and background information: [Locality Model for School Inclusion - KELS!](#)

These questions have been collated from various engagement opportunities over the last few months including Communities of Schools events, SEN System Funding Consultation engagement sessions, Locality Model – Keeping in Touch meetings, The Education People – Finance Information Group Meetings and meetings with the Community Chairs.

**For any questions on the whole Locality Model please direct your emails to: [localitymodel@kent.gov.uk](mailto:localitymodel@kent.gov.uk)**

**For any questions relating to Communities of Schools please direct your emails to: [cosadmin@kent.gov.uk](mailto:cosadmin@kent.gov.uk)**

### **Communities of Schools (CoS)**

Question	Response
<b>If I have a child with HNF and the child doesn't need it anymore, what would I do?</b>	Please contact your area High Needs Funding Officer: North <a href="mailto:rebecca.walsh@kent.gov.uk">rebecca.walsh@kent.gov.uk</a> East <a href="mailto:maria.white@kent.gov.uk">maria.white@kent.gov.uk</a> South <a href="mailto:alison.sandford@kent.gov.uk">alison.sandford@kent.gov.uk</a> West <a href="mailto:nicola.hockney@kent.gov.uk">nicola.hockney@kent.gov.uk</a>
<b>How often will Communities of Schools (CoS) meet?</b>	It is intended that the CoS will meet once a month, with a minimum of 7 meetings over the course of the academic year. Keeping in Touch (KiT) meetings for chairs will be extra and will focus on producing an evaluation report.
<b>Where do I find who my chair is?</b>	This is now available on Kelsi - <a href="https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/210080/Community-Chair-Allocation-and-June.July-Meeting-Dates-Updated-11.06.25.pdf">https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/210080/Community-Chair-Allocation-and-June.July-Meeting-Dates-Updated-11.06.25.pdf</a>

Question	Response
<b>How can the dates and times of the community meetings be organised to fit with everyone in the group when so many people work different hours or have different responsibilities including safeguarding, teaching etc?</b>	Meetings will be set in advance, by the CoS clerk and the chair. Scheduling will be for individuals to manage.
<b>Are CoS meetings face to face or virtual? How long will they be?  What happens if schools do not attend?</b>	This is the decision of the CoS chair and members. Recommended is 3 hours / half a day but this will depend on the CoS and chair. CoS funding cannot be accessed by schools who do not attend. The clerk and chair will monitor attendance and feedback centrally.
<b>When will the recruitment process be completed for CoS? Having a Chair to help establish the positive relationships within the CoS from the outset will be really important.</b>	We are recruiting to the final couple of CoS chair posts currently; we have organised temporary cover until all posts are filled.
<b>What time and processes are in place to ensure time is available for schools to get to know the other schools?</b>	CoS are encouraged to have two meetings across Terms 5 and 6 to build relationships and become familiar with the new processes.
<b>Will there be enough time to discuss all the issues / children from so many schools?</b>	This is for the chair and the clerk to manage in the CoS agenda planning.
<b>Will there be any work around standardisation of SEN registers? Audits of need may be useful for the introductory meetings.</b>	This is not planned at this stage, but we would consider this during the evaluation process
<b>I am new to this LA. How as a SENCo can I get more involved with the CoS model?</b>	Discuss attendance with your head teacher / senior management team in school.
<b>If CoS aren't officially starting until Sept, how can we budget for support from Sept? I know there are some in June &amp; July, this is a major cause for concern, staffing and resource wise.</b>	Schools have received budget information for the transition year based on an amount of protected funding. Please email <a href="mailto:SchoolFunding@kent.gov.uk">SchoolFunding@kent.gov.uk</a> if you have not seen this.
<b>If formal meetings are from September 2025, does that mean we can't access funding for incoming EYFS cohort before?</b>	The process for Year R is being looked at separately and will be communicated to schools as soon as possible.
<b>Is the expectation that we attend every meeting? Are the dates set in advance and how long will the meetings be - diaries need to be maintained in advance? This could be a lot of time out away from the day to day working?</b>	Yes, schools are encouraged to be represented at every meeting, June and July 2025 dates have been set by chairs, and the dates for next academic year's meetings will be set at these first two meetings.
<b>How many people from a school may attend the CoS meetings?</b>	Ideally this will be <b>one</b> person from each school. The maximum attendance can be decided on a CoS basis in conjunction with your

Question	Response
<p>Discussion around the ongoing opportunities for feedback once CoS meetings have started, use of clerk to feedback to KCC over issues as well as chair reporting back?</p>	<p>chair. Feedback can be sent at any point, by anyone, to <a href="mailto:cosadmin@kent.gov.uk">cosadmin@kent.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>My CoS area includes two specialist provisions. Will this have a negative impact on access to resources?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Equitable - we have specialist schools within the group?</p>	<p>Special schools are not funded via CoS but can attend meetings to support professional discussions if invited by the chair and/or they wish to attend.</p>
<p>What is the role of special schools in the new CoS?</p>	<p>Special Schools have been allocated a community based on the PCN. However, KSENT (special school trust) have submitted a proposal that special schools should form part of the Professional Resource Group. KCC will work with Special Schools over the summer to plan a cohesive offer across the county.</p>
<p>Many questions and comments were received on the directive that attendees should be a SENCo or inclusion lead with decision-making responsibility in school. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SENCo works part time or over two schools (the Head could stand in).</li> <li>• Could it be made statutory that it is for SENCo only.</li> <li>• Can HT attend the first couple of meetings in addition to SENCo? It would be useful to see how the process works first hand.</li> <li>• I think for the first year, HT should accompany SENCo. Surely if we want inclusive practices, we need the HTs to be there? Not all SENCos will have the ability to be able to make decisions on an individual basis, so HT &amp; SENCo together ensures parity and equity.</li> <li>• As a SENCo we would appreciate it being kept consistent as 1 per school, otherwise schools are pushing for a delegation Vs others sticking to just 1.</li> </ul>	<p>KCC have suggested it is SENCo who attend the CoS meetings, in other LAs running a similar system this works best with the SENCo in attendance.</p> <p>It is the decision of the individual school who attends the meeting. KCC cannot mandate who represents the schools. Meetings can be attended by the head teacher, SENCo, or other inclusion lead from the school, but they must have the (delegated) authority to request funding on behalf of the school.</p> <p>The meeting attendee does not have to have knowledge or responsibility of schools' budgets, but they need a delegated responsibility to request funding from the CoS budget on behalf of the school.</p> <p>The attendance can be decided on a CoS basis in conjunction with your chair.</p>

Question	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why are SENCOs expected to attend alone, where outcomes of decisions will have far wider impact? It is an unfair responsibility on them, and unfair on heads who have ultimate responsibility.</li> <li>• As only SENCOs are expected to attend - is the expectation that SENCOs understand and have responsibility for finances across school?</li> <li>• As a SENCO I am now required to have an in-depth knowledge of the funding in schools - am I correct?</li> <li>• As a SENCO how can I request and argue for funding - how involved are head teachers going to be in this process as they are the ones holding the funding and budgets.</li> </ul>	<p>Funding is accessed by attending CoS meetings and submitting a Request for Resource form, please see the <a href="#">CoS Terms of Reference</a> and <a href="#">Operating guidance on Kelsi</a> for more detail.</p>
<p>Can KCC share examples of where changes akin to those being proposed in Kent have been successfully implemented in other areas and have led to positive impact for children and young people?</p>	<p>Nottingham, Croydon, Sutton, Brent, Luton, Essex, Hampshire, are some examples (although not one model is implemented in the same way). The KCC Assistant Director for Education Inclusion also attends National fora for LAs who run 'versions' of this model.</p>
<p>Who measures the impact of the CoS decisions and / or funding that has been allocated?</p>	<p>The intention is to share a balance sheet regularly so the CoS can see spend and remaining balance. Impact will be reported to SEND Partnership Board, Schools Funding Forum, and Area Boards which will review the financial sustainability and outcomes for children.</p>
<p>What's the evidence of outcomes for children who received HNF?</p>	<p>In the past this evidence has been difficult to identify, with new CoS processes and implementing Area Boards we will agree in advance the impact measures and ensure the reporting and governance mechanisms support this.</p>
<p>Will there be a requirement to evidence the impact of funding?</p>	<p>Yes, there will be a requirement for each CoS to demonstrate the impact of the spending as part of their reporting. It is expected that outcomes for children improve through interventions made. It will not be necessary to provide evidence of what the money has been spent on but has the intended impact been achieved.</p>
<p>How is the impact of funding measured? There will need to be a</p>	<p>In the previous system the funding impact was not well measured. The</p>

Question	Response
<b>common language about this, especially if schools are using pathways which stem from engagement models, or other pathways.</b>	new model will require each CoS to demonstrate the impact of the spending as part of their reporting. Impact will be measured on how outcomes for children have improved as a result. This is being developed over Summer 2025
<b>How are decisions being moderated between CoS across regions?</b>	At the KiT meetings and Area Boards. Further moderation may also be required.
<b>How can funding be used to employ other services to support EYFS transitions?</b>	CoS will support in answering task specific questions like this through peer-to-peer discussion, sharing of ideas and information and group decisions on how to utilise CoS funding resource.
<b>Many questions around Early Years and Year R were received:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What happens if a child has an EHCP in pre-school and SENIF funding. Will we need to reapply when they get to Year R?</li> <li>• What happens with funding for children entering reception in September with EHCP's?</li> <li>• Will the funding available be enough to support the increasingly challenging reception cohort that start in September 25? These children may not have been receiving any previous, and therefore protected, funding.</li> <li>• How do we request funding for year R? We have two pupils with significant medical needs arriving and are concerned about how we will ensure they have the full support they need.</li> <li>• What consideration is there for a child starting EYFS with medical needs, this will have to be in place from day 1?</li> <li>• What happens to new children starting in Year R who are currently going through Statutory assessment and are going to require additional support, known to STLS and have been through Plan, Do Review process?</li> <li>• What is the solution in terms of making sure that pupils with EHCPs (or EHCPs pending in draft) and SENIF</li> </ul>	The process for Year R is being looked at separately and will be communicated to schools asap.

Question	Response
<p>funding in place for complex needs have some continuity? How can we plan for meeting the needs of these vulnerable children when we don't know what we are going to be able to provide beyond the £6000 commitment. It all seems a bit late in the budget planning and Year R transition to schools planning processes.</p>	
<p>I run a nursery, why is there no EYFS funding?</p>	<p>EY funding is not part of the new model, EY funding is requested via the EY / SENIF route.</p>
<p>Are school Nurseries included in this model?</p>	<p>School nurseries access HNF via EY / SENIF.</p>
<p>Many questions were received around equity and fairness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will bias be avoided in CoS decisions?</li> <li>• How will it work with very large secondaries not swallowing up all the money in a CoS against a small primary?</li> <li>• How can all types of schools be considered on an equal basis within the CoS? (e.g. small school vs large MAT)</li> <li>• I am concerned that some schools will only fight their own corner - how can we guarantee it will be fair?</li> <li>• If we are prioritising the greatest need over advocating for your own school, how can there be equitable sharing if the bigger schools have the greatest need or those in more deprived areas? How will there be some fairness to the system to ensure all children are considered?</li> <li>• What will be the success / decision criteria for awarding funds from the budget?</li> <li>• What safeguards are in place to ensure that all schools have a fair hearing and not just those with the biggest voices?</li> <li>• The premise is understandable, and we are always willing to collaborate. We all work hard to meet the needs of all children but with such limited resources for external</li> </ul>	<p>Recruitment of Independent chairs was stated by schools as integral to the development of the new system. The chairs hold the responsibility for ensuring equity in CoS. They are supported in this by CoS Terms of Reference and guidance.</p> <p>The strength of the chair is important, along with effective collaboration between all CoS participants.</p> <p>Regular reporting back to the CoS will show the impact of decisions on the funds available, and the group is responsible for collective monitoring of spend.</p> <p>Chairs will not operate where schools from their federation or trust are based, or where there are any personal interests. Chairs are required to complete a Declaration of Interests form at the beginning of their tenure and update as changes occur.</p> <p>There are advocates for the voice of small schools in the CoS chair group.</p>



Question	Response
<b>support and specialist places for children who should not be in mainstream, there will always be competition to get what you need in your school. How can this managed for the best interests of everyone?</b>	
<b>What provisions exist for schools with high mobility, emergency situations, new in-takes who are requesting EHCNA or awaiting a decision for EHCP?</b>	Please see the CoS Terms of Reference - <a href="https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/204932/CoS-Terms-of-Reference-v1.pdf">https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/204932/CoS-Terms-of-Reference-v1.pdf</a>
<b>How do you access funds if you are directed to take a vulnerable child between meetings an interim decision will be made but how do you access?</b>	Please see the CoS Terms of Reference - <a href="https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/204932/CoS-Terms-of-Reference-v1.pdf">https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/204932/CoS-Terms-of-Reference-v1.pdf</a>
<b>Is KCC planning to pilot CoS or to roll-out the new model universally? Have these processes been tested within the county anywhere?</b>	Schools are encouraged to meet as CoS in Terms 5 and 6 of 2025 to test processes before becoming fully operational in Sept 2025. The 2025/26 academic year has schools being given some protected funding with a smaller CoS budget in the first year to help schools transition to the new model.
<b>How does KCC plan to mitigate the risk of increased numbers of EHCP applications in the short term?</b>	Applications will follow the normal process, and additional moderation will apply if a steep increase is evident.
<b>Can KCC clarify the governance and quality assurance processes intended for the CoS (i.e. beyond that of the Chair and members)?</b>	Area Boards will be reporting into the Kent SEND Partnership Board and School Funding Forum, and any other relevant board as required. Processes are being developed and will be shared once finalised.
<b>Will there be a complaints procedure that members can use if they believe that CoS funding has not be appropriately allocated, or is declined?</b>	Yes, please see the CoS Terms of Reference - <a href="https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/204932/CoS-Terms-of-Reference-v1.pdf">https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/204932/CoS-Terms-of-Reference-v1.pdf</a>
<b>What is the interface between SEN and Virtual School Kent (VSK)?</b>	VSK are represented on KCC's Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education (CATIE) Steering Group as are SEN; they contribute to Annual Reviews; they are both teams within KCC.
<b>Is this also replacing LIFT with regards to external professional support and the EHCP process?</b>	The Locality Model, with CoS, is a new process introducing peer-to-peer support. Access to professionals are via direct access through the Link Practitioner model. <a href="#">Professional Resource Group - KELSI</a> .
<b>Is there a move for the Catie Dashboard to drill down to school level? (This was the plan originally, I believe) This will hopefully</b>	Developments to the District Dashboard are in discussion and will be communicated via Kelsi and the Director of Education and SEN's

Question	Response
<b>support accountability and challenge.</b>	bulletin.
<b>Where will we find the district inclusion dashboard?</b>	On <a href="#">Kelsi</a>
<b>How will a child's provision and funding be adjusted if they move from one group / area or locality to another?</b>	This will depend on the type of provision and funding and should be looked at as individual circumstances dictate. For the most complex children, this will be protected via specific allocation funding which will follow the child, for pupils funded via CoS the specific circumstances will determine what is required. Any changes in provision will be the responsibility of the receiving school.
<b>Do school staff have the time to be able attend / chair the CoS?</b>	Yes, other LAs evidence this is workable. Other bureaucratic burdens from the previous system will reduce, freeing up more time.
<b>Can children who live in another borough, or who have a GP in another borough, still access funding from a KCC Community Hub?</b>	CoS funding is available for schools to provide additional required resources for pupils in their Community. This is based on pupils who attend a school within the CoS, not based on the pupils home address or where their GP is located.
<b>For pupils who move to Kent from out of area with an EHCP, how is funding being supported in the interim to support their successful transition? (E.g. if they have been in receipt of funding from a different LA) How will CoS budgets be able to support high levels of unexpected need?</b>	If a child from another LA (OLA) is placed in a Kent school, it is the responsibility of the school to access funding directly from OLA.
<b>What about schools who have a different primary NHS network to the other schools in their hub?</b>	This will not adversely impact the school. CoS were grouped primarily based on the geography of their Primary Care Network in order to bolster health collaboration opportunities wherever possible.
<b>What is the flexibility of aligning federated and acadamised schools who fall in different CoS but that are in same primary health trusts?</b>	Schools were grouped into CoS broadly by their Primary Care Network (PCN) but also by other factors such as number of schools and phase of school. Relationships cross CoS and cross PCNs can only strengthen peer networks and local relationships.
<b>Are the links for Keeping in Touch meetings published on KELSIs?</b>	Yes, please find them here: <a href="#">Updates and Keeping in Touch - KELSIs</a>
<b>Many questions concerned funding, please see below:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>How is funding assigned, released, managed, and allocated throughout the academic year?</b></li> </ul>	Every CoS will have a budget allocated on an annual basis. The CoS decide how they manage and use their budget, assisted by CoS Terms of Reference. It is the CoS' responsibility to manage the resource. Once



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>First CoS meeting can we just share the pot of money between all schools? From there no more money talk, it's all about shared resources?</b></li> <li>• <b>Will expenditure be staggered over the year? Or will the first meeting of the cycle end up being the most crucial in order to secure funding for pupils?</b></li> <li>• <b>How frequently must schools reapply for funding?</b></li> <li>• <b>Do we request support for the year or termly?</b></li> <li>• <b>How long is funding agreed for? A set amount of time or different for each case? (If it is a case of paying a salary we need security of funding continuing.)</b></li> <li>• <b>If we were to bid for provision next year, would we need to bid again for the following year?</b></li> <li>• <b>How should the budget be managed throughout the year to accommodate children who enter schools mid-year with needs?</b></li> <li>• <b>Will funding transfer between school where children move mid-year?</b></li> <li>• <b>What happens if you require additional support / resources given the needs of a new pupil and all funding accessible to the community budget is exhausted?</b></li> <li>• <b>How will schools make long-term funding decisions, and will it be guaranteed year on year?</b></li> </ul>	<p>agreed, funding will be released by KCC to the relevant school.</p> <p>Frequency of reallocation and length of funding is for schools and your CoS to determine and agree collectively. The new process is intended to reduce the bureaucracy from the previous system and agree allocations of money dependent on the reason for the application. It is intended that CoS make more long-term decisions so 're applications' can be at a minimum.</p> <p>CoS will receive regular budget updates; it is the CoS' responsibility to manage their own allocations for the whole year.</p> <p>For the most complex children with specific allocation funding, this will move with the child. For CoS funding, this is a decision for the CoS, although funding should be more cohort based and less for individual children at this level.</p> <p>The current system does not guarantee long-term funding and is dependent on individual claims on an annual basis. The new model is designed to give schools some certainty of what allocation to expect without the need for annual re applications. The CoS can decide how long to agree an allocation for and what basis for renewal they require.</p>
<p><b>No funding available between now and the first meeting? How can we meet need of new pupils joining the school, sometimes very suddenly?</b></p>	<p>It is intended that the protections given will allow schools to start to plan differently. The system is moving away from individual pupil claims to a group-based model. Where there is a new pupil, it is intended that you look at the provision you have, then consult with your link practitioners to amend/evaluate your provision. Then consider how you train/retrain the staff that you have.</p>
<p><b>What safeguards are in place to ensure that the system remains</b></p>	<p>The transition year has guaranteed a level of funding based on historic</p>

Question	Response
<b>objective and reasonably predictable so that schools can plan and budget realistically?</b>	payments, so schools have a level of predictability for that year. By September 2026, Specific Allocation Funding will be in place for the most complex pupils with EHCPs, providing longer term reassurance with their funding. The CoS will have been in place for a year so schools will have grown accustomed to the new system for requesting resource for SEN Support / lower level EHCP need, with payments processed more rapidly than the previous system. All CoS activity is geared towards stability and transparency of funding for schools.
<b>Who makes the final decision on funding?</b>	The CoS, or in case of a dispute within the CoS the chair has final decision.
<b>What is the timeframe for allocating funds once a decision is made?</b>	It is intended to process the agreed funding in 30 working days and will be administered through the normal school advance system.
<b>If you don't know what we will receive for 3 years in advance, why do we need to budget for 3 years in advance. Isn't this just guesswork?</b>	It is expected you would review budgets on an annual basis. This is standard practice.
<b>What clarity will there be for 3-year budget setting? The FAQs on KELSI have a question around this, but the response was 'budgets should be reviewed annually'. Which obviously they are, but we do need an understanding of what we should be 'guessing' around years 2 and 3 for SEN funding.</b>	It is not for KCC to inform schools how to set budgets. Many schools and trusts are already reviewing their provision and costing out what they will need in the future. KCC has reviewed guidance about use of the notional SEN budget which will also inform budget planning.
<b>How long will the 70-75% protection for HNF last for? Is there an end date? Will the protected top up funding sit in the CoS to be called on or will it be automatically come to schools?</b>	Schools have received budget information for the transition year based on an amount of protected funding. Please email <a href="mailto:SchoolFunding@kent.gov.uk">SchoolFunding@kent.gov.uk</a> if you have not seen this. For children with EHCPs which have top-up funding of £6k and above, this will continue until August 2026.
<b>What will happen for any new claims, both SEN support and EHCPs between April and August 2025?</b>	New EHCPs will be mapped against the proposed Specific Allocation draft funding rates. This will inform allocation. SEN support will be allocated directly through the CoS
<b>What should be used for budget purposes for SRP rates from Sept 2026?</b>	The new contract and funding rates for all new and existing SRPs will be developed over the next 18 months.
<b>What support can be offered to Headteachers and School</b>	The Education People (TEP) run Financial Information Group Meetings,

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<b>Business Managers to assist with budget setting? Many schools must set a budget by April 2025. They currently lack the information with which to accurately determine their SEN funding or the levels of SEN expenditure.</b>	and these are available for all schools in Kent; Maintained and Academies are free to attend. They occur 3 times a year and you can register to attend via the TEP website. TEP and KCC are working closely through this change. Follow this link to register - <a href="#">Finance Information Group</a>
<b>We are all currently setting our budgets. What is the advice regarding ending temporary TA contracts to make the budgets balance given the uncertainty about SEN funding levels in the future?</b>	Transition arrangements including a % guarantee of historic funding are allocated in the interim period, please see Kelsi for more information. Schools are responsible if they choose to make staff redundant
<b>What support might be in place for schools that have permanent staff in place whereby the funding model may lead to redundancies?</b>	Transition arrangements including a % guarantee of historic funding are allocated in the interim period, please see Kelsi for more information. Schools are responsible if they choose to make staff redundant
<b>If schools need to make staff redundancies between January and July 2025, who will meet the redundancy costs?</b>	Schools are responsible for their staff and associated costs within their own terms and conditions.
<b>When will funding information be available to forecast recruitment, especially for fixed-term contracts transitioning to permanent?</b>	CoS budget information is available now; specific allocation funding rates will be subject to key decision later in the year. Please see Kelsi for more information, including the transition arrangements. Staffing decisions and associated costs are subject to school terms and conditions.
<b>A lot of schools are making TA redundancies. How is this going to build capacity and support children.</b>	It is the decision of schools and trusts to manage their workforce accordingly.
<b>Will children in year two in infant schools who currently receive funding for support have access to the same funding in year three in their junior school from Sept 25?</b>	The funding will follow the child from infant to junior school if they have an EHCP and in receipt of funding over £6k. This is the same for all other phase transfer arrangements.
<b>Does the money allocated for a child's education follow them from primary to secondary school, and will the workload on transition be manageable for schools?</b>	For CoS funding it will be the CoS decision. For the most complex children with specific allocation funding it will move with the child from primary to secondary without the need for re application and will be subject to annual review based on the Continuum of Need and Provision.
<b>What is the LA's vision for phase transition alignment through CoS?</b>	CoS should automatically strengthen phase transfer for schools within the same CoS via regular attendance and collaboration. Existing phase

Question	Response
<p><b>How will the LA ensure joined-up work between feeder primaries and secondaries within a CoS (e.g. through shared transition reviews, common planning formats)?</b></p> <p><b>Is there a plan to align practices across phases, particularly for Year 6–7 transitions where provision planning is crucial?</b></p>	<p>transfer processes will continue and KCC continues to focus on improvements in this area following gains made in the process over the past 2 years.</p>
<p><b>If there are children who are in mainstream but should be being taught in Special, how will that be funded?</b></p>	<p>Every child who has an EHCP will be mapped onto a Specific Allocation descriptor. It is intended that Element 3 will be the same, regardless of whether a child is educated in a special school, SRP, or mainstream.</p>
<p><b>Is there still a cap on the percentage of notional SEN funding to be used for HNF?</b></p>	<p>The notional SEN budget is indicative (up to a maximum of £6,000 per pupil), and schools must use their discretion to allocate it appropriately, based on pupil needs. It is allocated to schools based on a local formula that follows the National Funding Formula. <u>Schools funding guidance</u> and a separate <u>notional SEN budget guidance</u> is available on Kelsi.</p>
<p><b>Does the notional budget and tariff funding mean schools will no longer be expected to fund the first £6,000 of any application?</b></p>	<p>Schools are still expected to meet the first £6k costs, this is from their notional SEN budget. The new process only affects the allocation of Element 3 top-up funding.</p>
<p><b>We are a tiny primary - £6K to us is a lot more of our proportion of budget than that of a larger school. Could it go on pupil numbers rather than just a £6k across the board?</b></p>	<p>For some small schools, there has been a contribution to the first £6k from LA. This will continue until August 2026.</p>
<p><b>Where is the funding coming from for the universal offer if this is available to all schools?</b></p>	<p>Mainstream funding is made up of 3 elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Element 1 – Core education funding (age weighted pupil unit rate)</li> <li>• Element 2 – Notional SEN budget</li> <li>• Element 3 – Top-up funding (accessed via CoS)</li> </ul> <p><u>Schools funding guidance</u> and a separate <u>notional SEN budget guidance</u> is available on Kelsi. This ‘top up’ and all special school funding comes from the high needs block</p>
<p><b>Can we still access additional funds for staffing where there are significant needs?</b></p>	<p>Element 3 top-up funding / HNF is not intended to be used for staffing costs. Mainstream funding is made up of 3 elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Element 1 – Core education funding (age weighted pupil unit rate)</li> <li>• Element 2 – Notional SEN budget</li> <li>• Element 3 – Top-up funding (accessed via CoS)</li> </ul>

Question	Response
	<u>Schools funding guidance</u> and a separate <u>notional SEN budget guidance</u> is available on Kelsi.
<b>What happens to the funding for children with complex PD needs who historically have received exceptional level HNF in mainstream?</b>	These children will be mapped as part of the next phase for those most complex children. This will support future funding decisions.
<b>What will happen with funding for pupils in receipt of exceptional funding?</b>	This will depend on whether the child is in mainstream or in a special school. The Continuum of Need and Provision will inform what is exceptional need. Any child currently in receipt of exceptional funding will need to be mapped onto Specific Allocation funding.
<b>How does KCC intend to recognise in the funding allocations cases where schools have low historic levels of EHCPs because they have met complex need without EHCP applications?</b>	CoS will decide how their funding is allocated in their area. CoS funding and EHCP funding all come from the same High Needs Funding Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. The CoS model is intended to incentivise this practice whereby schools can be more creative with available resources. It is intended that by incentivising this practice and therefore reducing the need for EHCP, more money will be available in the community budget for schools to spend as they see fit.
<b>How do Kent's plans fit in with the new government's headline re: increasing the funding for High Needs Funding?</b>	Kent will follow the National direction and adhere to all statutory changes.
<b>Will Reform about to lead KCC alter the direction of travel for SEND? What's the likelihood of this now being reversed with a reform council in mind?</b>	It is too early to know any detail of the impact of the political changes at KCC, more will be communicated as it is known.
<b>What steps should schools take if the level of available funding is not sufficient to meet legal requirements set out in a pupil's EHCP?</b>	The legal requirements of EHCP does not mean that LA has to meet all costs. LA only needs to make a contribution to the funding necessary. It is expected that schools utilise all training and expertise available in the system to ensure that they can meet need.
<b>Is section F going to be written differently? If they say 1:1 TA support for an intervention, we must do this.</b>	This is part of ongoing training and improvements in KCC for EHCPs
<b>Will EHCPs guarantee funding, or will schools still need to 'bid' for this?</b>	EHCPs for the most complex children will receive a level of funding via specific allocations, regardless of where the child is educated. There is no requirement to 'bid' or apply for this funding, it will be reviewed



Question	Response
	<p>annually as part of the Annual Review process. However, some children with EHCP's will not have funding attached as it will be expected that lesser needs can be met through whole school provision or through CoS.</p>
<p><b>Can we have some further understanding of the mapping of complex needs children with EHCPs to the tariff model? We are particularly worried about potential shortfalls if HNF wasn't secured prior to December 31st. We are also concerned about particularly complex children coming into schools in September, with no EHCP/funding (i.e. those pre-verbal children, not yet communicating basic need, needing toileting support etc).</b></p>	<p>This work is continuing in terms 5 and 6 and more information will be available shortly, please review Kelsi regularly for updates.</p>
<p><b>Will KCC be rewriting SEND policy to reflect this new model to save every school rewriting this nice model into policy and procedure?</b></p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p><b>Will there be specialist training, i.e. training for SENCos?</b></p>	<p>Yes, there is currently training available, the offer is under review and will be updated via Kelsi and through the Director of Education and SEN's weekly bulletin. KCC has funded I-THRIVE training. Balanced System training and AET training to ensure that all school staff can have appropriate levels of training.</p>
<p><b>Is there a date for business manager training yet?</b></p>	<p>There are Finance Information Group sessions run by The Education People for schools' finance teams that happen 3 times a year. <u><a href="#">Finance Information Group</a></u></p>
<p><b>What professional development will be available to support secondary leaders within CoS?</b>  <b>Can the LA provide or endorse training targeted at secondary SENCos and senior leaders on the CoS processes, funding criteria, and request writing?</b>  <b>How can secondary SEND leads be upskilled to support peer moderation or triage within CoS meetings?</b></p>	<p>There is currently training available, the offer is under review and will be updated via Kelsi and through the Director of Education and SEN's weekly bulletin. KCC has funded I-THRIVE training. Balanced System training and AET training to ensure that all school staff can have appropriate levels of training.</p>
<p><b>How can secondary schools establish meaningful peer networks within CoS structures? Is there scope to form secondary-</b></p>	<p>CoS is one opportunity of peer networking for schools, this process does not prevent schools from collaborating with other peer networks they</p>



Question	Response
<p>specific working parties or forums under the CoS umbrella?  Given that LIFT groups in primary settings foster regular collaboration and shared strategies, what mechanisms will the LA put in place to ensure secondary schools can connect regularly with similar-phase peers (e.g. through secondary-only subgroups or CoS breakouts)?</p>	<p>may find useful.</p> <p>LIFT will no longer run in Kent from September 2025.</p>
<p>Will CoS meetings offer structured space for phase-specific discussions?  With secondary needs often differing significantly from primary (e.g. transitions, curriculum complexity, mental health), how will CoS meetings allocate time or space for secondary-only agenda items?  Could there be secondary ‘leads’ or reps within each CoS to ensure secondary priorities are voiced and addressed?</p>	<p>Agenda setting and prioritising will be determined by the CoS chair, in collaboration with CoS members.</p> <p>All secondary schools are mapped to a CoS.</p>
<p>Can the LA support cross-CoS collaboration between secondary schools?  Is there funding or permission to pilot “Secondary SEND Clusters” across CoS areas to share resources, training, or interventions?</p>	<p>The LA supports the CoS structure, this does not inhibit other cross collaboration schools find useful.</p> <p>The CoS budget can be utilised how the CoS decides, which could include these initiatives.</p>
<p>How might data sharing or case studies from successful secondary practice be disseminated more widely?</p>	<p>Case studies will be shared by KCC, and sharing of case studies is encouraged within and between CoS, these should be anonymised for data protection principles.</p>
<p>How can secondaries influence the use of CoS budgets for older pupils’ needs?  Given that CoS funding is often historically shaped by primary-phase trends, what safeguards will ensure that secondary-specific challenges (e.g. mental health, reduced timetables, college placements) are recognised in funding decisions?  Could there be a ring-fenced proportion of the CoS budget for secondary-led projects?</p>	<p>By attending CoS meetings regularly, becoming an active participant in discussions, putting forward innovations in this area and requesting funding from the CoS if deemed appropriate.</p> <p>The CoS budget is for the whole CoS to decide how it should be utilised and if any portion should be ring-fenced to any specific area of focus.</p>
<p>How can secondaries access or coordinate with other</p>	<p>Please see information on the <a href="#">Professional Resource Group Kelsi page</a>,</p>

Question	Response
<p>professionals via the Professional Resources Group (PRG)?  <b>What routes exist for secondary schools to directly access PRG services (e.g. Educational Psychology, STLS, Attendance) without delays?</b>  <b>Will PRG support be differentiated by phase, and how can secondaries shape what services are offered?</b></p>	<p>which will be updated regularly.</p>
<p><b>It would be really useful to have a member of STLS at each CoS meeting. This would provide a bank of expertise around inclusion.</b></p>	<p>Attending CoS meetings would reduce the time available to directly support schools. Attendance at CoS is for schools only. Schools will be able to access their support from services directly, therefore ensuring direct access.</p>
<p><b>It's all very aspirational but Thanet had a great system of support in place in the form of TISS (STLS) how can we be sure that the same level of support will be in place?</b></p>	<p>Changes in the system are intended to strengthen collaboration and levels of support across the whole county, where this already works well it should not diminish, but it will ensure more equity across the county. KCC is aware of the success of the Thanet model and is working to ensure that much of this can be replicated across the county.</p>
<p><b>We had a question from the team yesterday that if we wanted to hire e.g. a SALT with some of our budget, can we pay for Kent services to increase our access to this? The team were saying that some had their meetings back in Autumn with their Link salt person but she has 62 schools so she can't come back in to see the children till July</b></p>	<p>We are working with SALT so they can work in a different way to reduce their caseloads. This will avoid the need to buy extra which will reduce what is available for others.</p>
<p><b>Will there be clear pathways for individual students now that LIFT has been removed?</b>  <b>The team had question about with LIFT being removed whether they can be provided with clear pathways for individual students e.g. like a flow chart of all the things that you need to do to access any extra support for students as the community is more about groups of students.</b></p>	<p>The Locality Model is the new pathway, with CoS, the PRG and ABs. LIFT is no longer necessary for determining the path a child or group of children will take. Schools should go directly to their link practitioners.</p>
<p><b>Does the change mean my child won't have a TA? If not, how will you keep my child safe?</b></p>	<p>CoS can decide how to allocate its budget. It is the decision of every school to put in place relevant provision for their entire cohort. The Education Endowment Foundation research shows that TAs are very</p>

Question	Response
	high cost with low impact evidenced for individual children. Schools have their own individual safeguarding policies in place for all pupils. It is expected that schools train and retrain their support staff regularly to meet changing needs.
<b>Great for schools to share good practise and support each other, but where mainstream schools have children with such extreme and physical/medical needs that require 1:1 support to keep them alive / safe; how will this continue with reduced funding? We can only include certain children because they have a 1:1.</b>	If these children are SEN support it would mean a request to your CoS for funding for the duration of time, they are with you, if they are Specific Allocation Funding this would be set by their EHCP.
<b>Are the cuts for each area the same, or are some areas going to be hit more than others? Certain areas of Kent do not benefit from SRPs locally, or outreach from this, has this been considered?</b>	There are no cuts. The amount of money available for the CoS is equal to the amount claimed by schools in the last two years. The emphasis will be on improving outcomes for children, particularly to develop their independence. KCC is planning an expansion of SRP provision countywide so this will support where there are gaps. It is expected that schools use all the training available to them locally and the CoS will support with this.
<b>What happens if a child has an EHCP in final draft now - do they still get protected funding?</b>	In the interim, that funding will go into the CoS pot. However, new EHCPs will be a priority group to be mapped onto Specific Allocation funding.
<b>For HNF without an EHCP do we still need to re-apply in August?</b>	Schools have received budget information for the transition year based on an amount of protected funding. Please email <a href="mailto:SchoolFunding@kent.gov.uk">SchoolFunding@kent.gov.uk</a> if you have not seen this. HNF top-up for SEN Support will be available through the CoS from September 2025.
<b>Will newly issued EHCPs be linked to funding at the time or will they be issued, and then we have to go to CoS to apply for funding after?</b>	If a new EHCP issued is deemed to be CoS level, you will need to request resource from your CoS if funding is required. If the EHCP is deemed to be Specific Allocation Funding, you will receive the amount allocated for the relevant band applied.
<b>How can we be supported to manage pupils who have been issued an EHCP since Dec 24? We rely on funding to continue to meet need, or these pupils are at risk of exclusion or being failed.</b>	If these pupils had SEN support previously, 75% of this is protected for the school. It is also intended that schools use their link practitioners differently to advise on support and deliver necessary training such as this.

Question	Response
<p><b>What will the EHCP process be and will this be tied to funding from CoS?</b></p> <p><b>How about children with high level of need? EHCPs? Will there be a separate allocation?</b></p> <p><b>Will EHCPs be allocated funding so we can meet bespoke needs in section E and F?</b></p>	<p>Children and young people with EHCPs will receive funding, if and where it is required, via CoS or specific allocation funding. For children with the highest level of need, they will receive a specific allocation, The EHCP process will not change.</p>
<p><b>If there isn't going to be as much 1:1 work with individuals, as this is a CoS approach, how will school evidence the need for an EHCP? Will there still be individual work so schools can follow the graduated approach?</b></p>	<p>All provision maps and plans are acceptable evidence. It is the decision of the school how provision is delivered.</p>
<p><b>With the need to reduce EHCPs, what support will there be for schools where parents have huge anxiety around secondary provision, and this is the driver for parental requests for EHCPs?</b></p>	<p>KCC is working with KALE to produce some information for parents which can be delivered by schools. Kent PACT is also working with KCC to deliver webinars for parents</p>
<p><b>How up to date are the EHCPs that they are banding, as often annual review information is not updated on the EHCP and the information regarding a child can be out of date and inaccurate?</b></p>	<p>This will be reviewed as the process is undertaken, work is due to begin in Summer 2025.</p>
<p><b>Who will be ultimately responsible for agreeing the mapping of a student's needs to the tariff? This is particularly relevant where a pupil has complex, multi-faceted needs which do not align clearly with tariff descriptors.</b></p>	<p>Initially this will be a co-constructed process with schools (mainstream, SRP and special) and KCC staff. By 2026 it will be KCC Officer decisions with moderation by schools. The descriptors are still being developed.</p>
<p><b>Will current EHCPs start to show hours of support / funding as they had prior to HNF or will we just follow the recommendations and put this in place.</b></p>	<p>Follow the recommendations</p>
<p><b>Will EHCPs be updated more often so that we know the current statutory requirements for each child?</b></p>	<p>The Annual Review process is where EHCPs are updated.</p>
<p><b>How will the CoS model link to the process of applying for an EHCP?</b></p>	<p>Schools and parents can still apply for EHC Needs Assessment in the same way</p>
<p><b>How will the EHCP assessment process be affected as they always ask for evidence of HNF and STLS involvement?</b></p>	<p>EHCP assessment processes are not impacted by CoS implementation. Evidence of STLS involvement and HNF will no longer be necessary. However, schools will still need to demonstrate that they have utilised all available resources before requesting an EHCP.</p>

Question	Response
<b>What happens to children who currently have health needs funded through HNF?</b>	This will depend on if they have an EHCP or are SEN Support. Under the new system HNF will be accessed either via CoS budgets from September 2025 or Specific Allocation Funding from September 2026.
<b>Where does 1-1 (one to one) funding received for additional pupil support for specials, map to on the tariff / CoS system?</b>	All additional pupil needs applications will be examined through the mapping exercise and will inform future decisions. This work will start in Term 5 and will take about 18 months to complete.
<b>Will you be sharing the mechanism to seek support for SEND, with a particular emphasis on very complex (awaiting specialist provision) children in mainstream settings? We can 'be creative', however would be somewhat lost without specialist, expert support.</b>	If these children are SEN support it would mean a request to your CoS for funding for the duration of time they are with you, if they are Specific Allocation Funding this would be set by their EHCP.
<b>Many questions related to Parents and carers, as follows:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When will parents be informed of the HNF changes?</li> <li>• How are parents being informed of the current changes?</li> <li>• Will there be the infographic to support parent understand of implications for funding, support, SEN and rates of EHCP requests?</li> <li>• Is there going to be Localities Model guidance for schools to share with parents? Or is the expectation that schools pass the message on or that parents find this information for themselves?</li> <li>• KCC should issue a generic letter to parents stating changes to SEN provision in Kent. Failure to do this will cause huge confusion and potentially put schools in very tricky situations.</li> <li>• How will schools ensure parents access strategic information shared to avoid SENCos and HTs needing to spend a lot of time unpicking individual cases?</li> <li>• Schools need dates and times for parent meetings to signpost families to.</li> </ul>	<p>KCC are working closely with Kent PACT and taking their lead on communications to parents.</p> <p>KCC are supporting schools' conversations with parents via a quick reference guide of the changes.</p> <p>Communication with parents should come from KCC and schools.</p> <p>KCC are developing communications to parents, these will be issued in due course.</p>
<b>How will parents be informed of the funding changes? How will</b>	KCC are working closely with Kent PACT and taking their lead on



Question	Response
<p><b>they be guided regarding children no longer having 1:1 support? Hearing that their child will get 75%, may lead them to believe that their child will still have 75% of 1:1 time rather than us being able to be more flexible with the funding. This could lead to confusion and perhaps conflict.</b></p>	<p>communications to parents.</p> <p>KCC are supporting schools' conversations with parents via a quick reference guide of the changes.</p> <p>Communication with parents should come from KCC and schools.</p> <p>KCC are developing communications to parents, these will be issued in due course.</p>
<p><b>Will this also lead parents and carers to expect an outcome?</b></p>	<p>Parents and carers should expect an outcome of the school utilising HNF for their child/ren.</p>
<p><b>When is the next Area Review visit?</b></p>	<p>The next DfE visit to the Kent Local Area will be in the Autumn</p>
<p><b>Why is IDACI being used for SEN funding? PPG covers this demographic, children with SEND is not always linked to deprivation.</b></p>	<p>IDACI is being used as it mirrors the National Funding Formula.</p>
<p><b>If we are collaborating between the CoS (which some schools in collaborations already do), will we have to undertake a lot of sharing and ensure all avenues have been exhausted before applying for any funding? Which we already do.</b></p>	<p>The Request for Resource form does not require a lot of information, it presents a summary with schools then vocalising their request at the CoS meeting. It is for the CoS to agree what information it requires before approving resource or releasing funding.</p>
<p><b>Will there be an example of the request for support form given?</b></p>	<p>This is available in the CoS Terms of Reference.</p>
<p><b>Having more than one child on a form, do they all count in the 250-word count?</b></p>	<p>No, the names are included in a different box to those limited to a word count.</p>
<p><b>What is required by CoS to evidence that schools have spent a certain % of their notional SEN budget in order to access SEN top up?</b></p>	<p>A summary of resources accessed, and interventions used prior to requesting funding from the CoS budget.</p>
<p><b>If we have more than one request for support with different children in mind, is it one form per school or is it one form per type of request?</b></p>	<p>This should be decided on a case-by-case basis and in conjunction with your CoS chair. It may be appropriate for only one form per school, and it may be more appropriate for one form per 'type' of request.</p>
<p><b>I still worry about the consistency of the chairs to make balanced decisions with people in front of them as a group.</b></p>	<p>This worry will be alleviated over time and with experience. There are CoS Terms of Reference detailing the procedures to raise concerns if they materialise.</p>



Question	Response
<b>Consistently we are talking about the needs of the cohort (school/group) rather than the needs of the individual. What will happen for those pupils who enter school with needs that are very individualised and that impact highly on the school in terms of the need for advice, guidance, additional support (personnel or equipment or adaptation/ modification). Will there be a system whereby they can be discussed through the CoS?</b>	Where there are individual complex situations, schools will have direct access to services e.g. link EP, link SALT etc. This will build up over time. These services will provide the support required.
<b>In small schools the need may well be, and often is, individual rather than cohort wide - how is this going to be facilitated? It's a real concern in terms of the burden this can be in a small cohort.</b>	Small schools have the same direct access to services via the link practitioner model. Small schools have the same voice at the CoS table, and it is agreed by the chairs that what might be a group provision for a larger school would be individual provision for a small school.
<b>Is there a limit for how many requests can be brought to the communities' meetings?</b>	No, this will be managed by the CoS clerk and chair, and members of the CoS.
<b>For a child with an EHCP who is allocated individual funding, how do we manage parent expectations around that, if they then move into a small group. Will parents question the school around how this money is being spent? How do we answer this? We already have a parent who has a child with an EHCP: she has said that she will remove the child from our school if the child is put into a small group context.</b>	Schools should access their link practitioner to get advice on specific children.
<b>As a Senco, it would be really useful to see some good, different examples of the 'request for support form'.</b>	This is being developed, please check periodically for updates on Kelsi.
<b>Is there a medical pathway or form for children with medical needs and need for funding but not SEND?</b>	This process is for children and young people eligible for High Needs Funding. Any pupils who are open to STLS Sensory and Medical Service are also being considered.
<b>Several questions concerned parental consent:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Do schools require parental consent to submit a request to their CoS?</b></li> <li><b>Can we be sharing names and DoB without parental permission on the resource form?</b></li> <li><b>Will there be a generic consent form for schools to use</b></li> </ul>	<p>No, the sharing of information with CoS should be covered with the consent you request when a child joins your school. Please check your documents include sharing details with other professionals.</p> <p>Names and DoB will not be shared with CoS or chairs, they are retained for KCC use only.</p>

Question	Response
<p>with parents when requesting support (we will need this is providing names and DOB of children)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why is parental consent not needed when it was for LIFT</li> </ul>	<p>There is no need for parental consent, therefore no consent form will exist. There was no legal requirement for consent for LIFT. Some districts had ceased that process.</p>
<p>If you complete a form does that mean your request will definitely be discussed? If not, how is it decided whose requests will be discussed?</p>	<p>This is for the chair and the clerk to manage in the CoS agenda planning.</p>
<p>Several questions were received in relation to GDPR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sharing Request for Resource form with students names and needs. What about GDPR?</li> <li>Student name and DOB included, so is there a GDPR/data protection 'issue' to consider?</li> <li>GDPR - will other schools in the community know the d.o.b. and name of children? Is this OK?</li> </ul>	<p>There are no GDPR/data protection issues. The identifiable pupil level information is required internally by KCC and will not be shared with CoS.</p>
<p>What would good examples be of evidence-based research to submit in the solution required box?</p>	<p>Dr Alison Ekins is developing case studies. Please also look at NASEN and Whole School SEND websites</p>
<p>Will there be a list of suggested research that schools can access?</p>	<p>Dr Alison Ekins is developing case studies. Please also look at NASEN and Whole School SEND websites</p>
<p>Is it correct that the notional budget should not be used for SENCo salary?</p>	<p>Please see <a href="#">notional SEN budget guidance</a> on Kelsi</p>
<p>What do you mean by "referral for KCC review"?</p>	<p>Please see <a href="#">CoS Terms of Reference</a> on Kelsi</p>
<p>Where do we get our notional budget sum from?</p>	<p>Details can be found on <a href="#">Kelsi</a></p>
<p>250 words to describe a child? Some of the children with an exceptional level of need would need a lot more than that to fully describe their experience of the world. The rush for convenience (by having the word limit) diminishes their full experiences that are relevant to the fact a school might actually need a 1-1 to support a child where the LA has named specialist as type but can't find a school for them.</p>	<p>The section is for you to enter details of your request of the CoS resource, not to describe the child and all their context. There will be opportunities at the meeting to provide further detail and answer questions. The intention is to describe what you need, why you need it, what the outcomes will be and how you intend to measure them.</p>
<p>Can the Kelsi website be made easier to navigate with the search option being more effective?</p>	<p>Kelsi is constantly being reviewed and updated but we must work within its parameters, if you navigate to <a href="#">this link</a>, all relevant information can be</p>

Question	Response
	accessed for the Locality Model from this first page.

## Professional Resource Group (PRG)

Question	Response
<b>Please can you make it clear where to find link practitioner information. I have just checked Kelsi and the spreadsheet that it generates only seems to show “East” Kent link practitioner information.</b>	The information on Kelsi as one spreadsheet sectioned into 4 worksheets, East, North, South and West, they are separated by tabs found at the bottom of the spreadsheet.
<b>Where will STLS fit in the new ways of working?</b>	STLS will be in KCC from September 2025 and be accessed as a resource within the PRG, further information will be released as this transfer progresses
<b>Are specialist teachers allocated yet? I have noticed they are not on the lead practitioner list.</b>	They are not allocated currently; this will be progressed from September 2025 when the service is within KCC.
<b>Is there a chance KCC can confirm if the clinics of STLS will continue. I think this will alleviate some of the stress being felt currently around new starters and unidentified need.</b>	STLS is currently moving to KCC, further information will be released as this transfer progresses and working practices agreed.
<b>How do we access STLS support moving forward? Request support from CoS or through a link practitioner?</b>	STLS will be in KCC from September 2025, further information will be released as this transfer progresses
<b>Within the PRG, please could you confirm where STLS sits, enhanced offer, universal offer, link practitioner or all three?</b>	This will be clarified when STLS become KCC employees.
<b>Will schools require an SLA with the EP service before they can access support?</b>	No
<b>As an academy we have access to our own EP, however for report purposes will the local authority insist we use Kent EP service?</b>	No
<b>Do we still have to buy in to the EP service? Do we pay for each visit from our link practitioner team? If we decide we need a visit from EP does this deduct from the budget?</b>	No. All access to link practitioners is at no cost to schools.

<b>Do we pay for the Ed psychologist from this money?</b>	
<b>Will the professional resource group be part of the CoS meetings? How will it work if the schools want to access knowledge/expertise - will this add another layer of dialogue beyond the PRG?</b>	No, the PRG is a resource schools can access at any time to seek advice and services before or after attending the CoS meeting. Please see the PRG page on Kelsi for more information.
<b>Will the link SALT for our CoS replace the link therapist we currently have under the Balanced System?</b>	No, it is the same thing.
<b>Would it not have made sense for CoS to have the same SALT/EP etc?</b>	In many cases where the resource is provided by KCC they are the same professional (SENIA and EP for example), for SALT (provided by NHS staff) they do differ, and we cannot influence this. It will not impact CoS functions.
<b>SALT - I've been told by my link practitioner that speech is not yet covered by the balance system only language. Therefore, speech is still referral.</b>	Please discuss with your link practitioner, details can be found on the <a href="#">PRG Kelsi page</a> .
<b>Salt - my link practitioner has very little time capacity - I have about 15 children to discuss - do I need to book a surgery for each one?</b>	SALT can come into school and discuss a group of children. There should be no need for individual surgeries. However, some providers are still working towards this model.
<b>Not all CoS have SALT - an issue in the last Ofsted - this hasn't changed? Will it?</b>	Swale is the last district not to have SALT. This is being commissioned and there will be an announcement very soon.
<b>How are these [PRG] working separately to the CoS meetings? Is it just a separate referral?</b>	The services have been re-framed so there is no requirement for referrals where there is a link practitioner model in place. The PRG are not meetings, they are a resource and are separate to CoS meetings.
<b>You speak a lot about SALT from the health team, where do OT and physio come into this picture? There was no mention of OT (occupational therapy) in the link model and the team feel they really need this, where can they access this?</b>	OT and Physio are accessible in the same way as they have been previously. There is no change.
<b>Is there an additional cost to PRG?</b>	Not for initial contact and advice, additional services may have costs attached but these would be fully discussed with individual services.
<b>Are the link practitioners for all children in a school, regardless of the address of GP or child's address?</b>	Yes
<b>Will the link practitioners be attending CoS meetings?</b>	No, they are a resource to reach out to outside CoS meetings. Attending

	CoS meetings would reduce the time available to support schools.
<b>What support is available from the Primary Care network? Will these be named?</b>	Primary Care Networks websites are very informative. Your PCN is named on your Link Practitioner spreadsheet
<b>Could the primary care network practitioners be added to the same document as the PRG practitioners to have all info in the same place?</b>	Yes, these have been added where known, we are collecting information and adding as it is gathered.
<b>Do the link practitioners have capacity to offer support that schools need? The link practitioner model sounds very powerful, but in the past, the day-to-day experience has been that there has not been enough capacity in the specialist professionals, rather than any lack of relationships. What is the local authority doing to expand the capacity of these services in order to ensure the success of the link practitioner model?</b>	Once the services start operating fully, KCC will be able to evaluate what is effective, what is not and why. Then strategic decisions can be made to improve outcomes for children.
<b>How will the PRG realistically be managed to ensure that these services are not monopolised by some schools? (The Balanced System was heralded as an example of positive cooperation; unfortunately, despite preparing our documents in Autumn 2024 we are still to receive a meeting with our linked therapist or to receive any pupil support via this means)</b>	Once the services start operating fully, KCC will be able to evaluate what is effective, what is not and why. Then strategic decisions can be made to improve outcomes for children.
<b>How is NHS capacity e.g. for Speech and Language therapy being integrated within the link practitioner model? This currently isn't available in our area and all schools buy their own speech therapy time.</b>	The only district which currently sits outside the Balanced System is Swale. An announcement is expected soon on new commissioning arrangements.
<b>When will Sittingbourne Schools have a link speech and language therapist?</b>	The only district which currently sits outside the Balanced System is Swale. An announcement is expected soon on new commissioning arrangements.
<b>Will schools in Swale SALT suffer as historically this has never been available?</b>	The only district which currently sits outside the Balanced System is Swale. An announcement is expected soon on new commissioning arrangements.
<b>Schools can go directly to link professional. If the CoS as a whole want to access support, whose role is it to make contact for the group?</b>	You can choose a school to lead the CoS request with the link practitioner.

<b>Why are CAMHS not in the PRG?</b>	CAMHS do not operate a link practitioner model so have not been included in the list for the PRG. They can be accessed by schools via their standard processes, the list of services presented at Induction meetings was not exhaustive.
<b>Can you agree that if a child resides outside of Kent they too will be able to access support from the practitioners?</b>	Yes, if they attend your school they have access to the same services.
<b>How many schools will a link practitioner be supporting?</b>	This will be different service by service
<b>Will it be possible to have as many of the dates that you plan to schedule SEN IA surgeries/CoS meetings in advance as possible? As school diaries get book up quickly and it will be important to know these in advance to be able to make the most of the services and resources.</b>	SENIAs distribute surgery information on a termly basis. CoS meetings will be booked by CoS themselves and are asked to set the schedule for the academic year in Terms 5 or 6 of the preceding year.
<b>I can see the list of PRGs which is great, when will the EH lead be assigned?</b>	We are currently gathering this information and will share as soon as it is received.
<b>Will link practitioners have allocated time for each school or will contact solely be on a needs led basis?</b>	Currently it is a Needs Led basis hence we have built in regular evaluation
<b>With the increasing roll out of the Balanced System do you foresee that children who are currently placed in speech and language SRPs will have their needs met fully in mainstream? If not, how will infant aged children get access to the SLCN SRPs as numbers are falling across Kent?</b>	Yes, but this may not be possible.
<b>What will happen for HNF for children with VI who do not have an EHCP? They need adult support to access learning, including using iPad to mirror the IWB. This child is also a CiC, not Kent.</b>	VI support can be sourced through STLS Sensory Services.
<b>Will you be sharing the mechanism to seek support for SEND, with a particular emphasis on very complex (awaiting specialist provision) children in mainstream settings? We can 'be creative', however would be somewhat lost without specialist, expert support.</b>	Support can be accessed by every mainstream school via Link Practitioners.
<b>Will we have access to the case studies submitted by other schools? It would be good to read for ideas.</b>	Yes, these will be shared with all schools, they are currently being created.



<b>If additional support is required for a student from a therapist outside of the normal guidance, do we have to apply for this at the CoS meetings or can we contact them directly for input?</b>	Please contact Link Practitioners directly. <a href="#">Professional Resource Group - KELSI</a>
<b>Will SALT have to prioritise their statutory duty to fulfil their obligations written on a section f. This will obviously have to occur, so has the risk that the new model will be enormously diluted down by fulfilling those obligations been considered?</b>	Yes, but it is intended that SALT work in school so they can work with a wider group/range of pupils.
<b>Are families able to access hubs outside of our allocated CoS? We are based near Paddock Wood, yet our family hubs are central Maidstone</b>	Yes, families can access Family Hubs anywhere in the county.
<b>How are the outcomes from the group solution discussions shared with STLS (not seen on the post meeting actions)?</b>	This will be for the school to share with their STLS link practitioner if necessary.
<b>Will services be producing reports when they are working with groups of children? How will this work in terms of GDPR (given that one document may be talking about more than one child) and subject access requests?</b>	This will vary case by case and would be covered by the professional's usual terms of service and DP / GDPR responsibilities.
<b>Will individual, specialist, bespoke support be requested through PRG or through direct contact with link practitioner?</b>	The school accesses the link practitioner, the PRG is a 'virtual' group not a meeting that will be attended.
<b>What is the expectation of time given to each school per term to support (some specialist teachers will have multiple CoS to support)? If bespoke is directly through link, then will this not increase individual case lists again.</b>	This question is STLS coverage and will be answered when STLS are KCC employees.
<b>In terms of accessing the PRG, if there are multiple requests for SEMH support for example, would representatives from the PRG who have that expertise be able to be invited to the CoS, or will the chairs have to request support following the meetings - which will then have a time lag and not have timely intervention potentially?</b>	PRG is not a group to be accessed. PRG is your link practitioners. Schools should refer directly to their link practitioners for support. <a href="#">Professional Resource Group - KELSI</a>
<b>If a child is already supported by a specialist teacher, will they still continue to be supported by the same practitioner even if they are not our community link?</b>	This will be reviewed when STLS become KCC employees.

When SALT are named as delivering an intervention on a section F (you implied this could be passed to STLS previously when they would not be named) how would a school go about invoicing for that amount of money to cover the cost of the sessions.	If SALT is delivering Section F provision, this is to be delivered by SALT
How will each Community ensure they are receiving their entitlement from STLS?	This will be looked at during evaluation.

### Area Boards (ABs)

Question	Response
What will these Boards do?	Area Boards (AB) are designed to ensure there is robust system wide governance and accountability for Outcomes for Children and financial sustainability. Each board will report into the newly reformed Kent SEND Partnership Board and Schools Funding Forum.