



October 2023

Specialist Employment Service
delivering the Kent Supported
Employment Programme

THE EDUCATION
PEOPLE



Introduction

The Education People's Supported Employment Service continues to deliver the Kent Supported Employment programme as part of the Commissioned Education Services Contract. The commission is to support 215 referred SEND clients per annum who must meet the Care Act Criteria to move into and towards paid work.

The outcomes for the service exceed the standards as set out by the British Association of Supported Employment (BASE), with the service exceeding all performance indicator targets each year set within the contract service specification. In September 2023 the service received an Excellent rating by the British Association of Supported Employment through their assessment of the Supported Employment Quality Framework Audit (SEQF). The only supported employment provider in Kent to hold this accolade, and nationally is seen by BASE as the 'the market leader in the country for supported employment'.

The demand for the service has grown considerably since the commission began over 25 years ago ensuring clients aged 16 and over do not become NEET or progress into costly day care services when not necessary. The service enables anyone aged 16 onwards through to retirement to find and sustain paid employment. Since 2019 the baseline has been reached by October creating a waiting list of 100+ referrals, delaying support to clients or clients being referred back into social care or becoming NEET.





The service works closely with KCC staff and services, in particular SEN (16-24), ASCH (25+), parents, secondary schools and academies, day care services, Job Centre Plus, and the NHS. In October 2022 the service reached the 215 referrals baseline with the service then unable to take more referrals until April 2023 when further funding became available. During that time, an additional 168 referrals were received with clients needing to wait until the beginning of the next financial year. This is the fifth year that this has occurred, resulting in vulnerable SEND clients becoming NEET, disengaged, and unable to access support.

Aim of the paper



Currently the service is on track to again receive more referrals than contractually able to work with during 23/24. It is estimated that the service will reach the baseline of 215 clients by the end of October 2023. The aim of this paper is to request additional funding on an on-going basis to support more SEND clients into paid work, in line with demand.

Benefits

The client gaining sustainable employment

Individuals with disabilities gaining meaningful employment are more self-sufficient in terms of not relying on the state. Individuals not only become financially independent they also have a richer social life, have the opportunity to travel independently, live independently and form wider relationship in terms of the wider community. This in turn encourages more people with disabilities to move into work as leading by example and also helps those who are not vulnerable recognise the true worth of an individual with a disability therefore society coming inclusive and not divisive.

KCC benefits

By investing in Kent Supported Employment, clients that would otherwise access Kent social services provision in terms of day care, social workers, travel costs and leading a life of dependency of provision from the local authority. The savings that are made by working with those clients that can work ensures value support can be provided to those that need it most.

The cost to the Local Authority of registering SEND clients with a training provider can conservatively cost in excess of £20K per annum plus additional transport costs. By using the Kent Supported Employment programme there is the potential to save the local authority £17K plus transport costs alone in the first year for each client who gains sustainable employment. Over a 6 year period to 25 years of age the savings could be at least £117K per client, plus transport costs.

From a cost perspective it is calculated (independent cost analysis study commissioned by government) that the savings of moving a person into work and helping them sustain it, as opposed to a life on benefits, social care dependency and travel costs can save a local authority up to £1.4 million per person, over a lifetime.

Impact

In 2022/23 we received referrals for 215 clients and saw the following impact:



71% moved into paid work, of those
88% sustained that work for more than 13 weeks



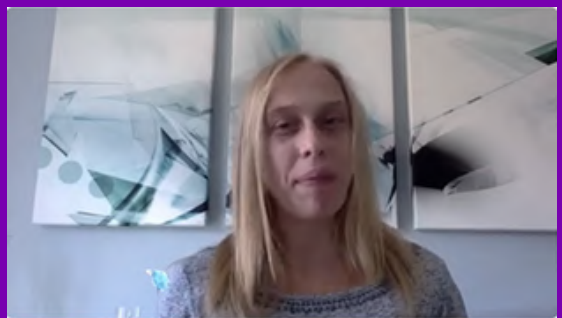
9% moved into further education
or training



17% moved into a work placement
or voluntary work

Client Journeys into Employment

Please click on each of the images below to watch short video testimonials.





Cost

The current cost of supporting a client is £3,000 per annum, this is averaged working with a client over an 80 hour period. The service works with the client through a person centred approach, using the 5 stages of supported employment. The service are therefore seeking funding for an additional 150 clients for 2023/24 at a cost of £450K per annum, and to be reviewed in future years in line with the SLA. This will allow the service to support all the referrals received each year and bring in estimated savings of £17K per client. For the 150 clients per annum requested this could provide the Local Authority with an estimated immediate cost saving of at least £1.4 million each year for those clients supported into sustainable employment.



If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact:

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