

SEND REFORM PLAN – SECTOR BRIEFING

Purpose: Inform
sector of SEND
Reform Plan
development
and how to
engage

WHAT IS THE SEND REFORM PLAN?

- ▶ A local partnership plan to improve SEND systems
- ▶ Focus on inclusion, early support, and partnership working
- ▶ Required by DfE and NHS England
- ▶ Prerequisite of the HNF deficit repayment
- ▶ Not dissimilar to the Accelerated Progress Plan that was required following the Improvement Notice

WHAT IS THE SEND REFORM PLAN NOT?

- ▶ An opportunity to challenge the DfE White Paper or SEND Reform plans
- ▶ A one-shot finalised product – expect refinement and review as DfE guidance and plans are made clear – although each submission must be completed by the deadline
- ▶ A KCC plan

WHAT DOES THE DFE EXPECT?

Each LA is expected to act as a “system ‘convener’; taking the lead to bring together all system partners and ensure they work together to develop and deliver the Local SEND Reform Plan. Similarly, the government has clear expectations on all system partners to proactively respond to the local authority’s leadership, ensuring they commit resources and fulfil their responsibilities in the partnership. Central government will actively engage where system partners are not responding to the local authority’s leadership.”

KEY DEADLINES

- ▶ Confirmation of Governance structures - 28 April
- ▶ DfE Deadline for SEND Reform consultation – 18 May – This is where schools can submit views on DfE's plan
- ▶ Draft Local SEND Reform Plan - 19 May 2026
- ▶ “Final” Local SEND Reform Plan submission – 19 June 2026
- ▶ DfE advice on whether plans are approved is expected in September 2026

WHAT WILL THE PLAN INCLUDE?

- ▶ Current system baseline
 - ▶ Maturity assessment
 - ▶ Reform priorities
 - ▶ Strategy and delivery model
 - ▶ Governance and accountability
 - ▶ Monitoring and success measures
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- ▶ KCC sees a lot of similarities between current DFE proposals and existing local reform plans

HOW WE ARE DEVELOPING THE PLAN

- ▶ Working with:
- ▶ Local Authority
- ▶ ICB
- ▶ Kale
- ▶ KSENT
- ▶ Kent Pact
- ▶ Schools Funding Forum
- ▶ Partners will support development, governance and sign-off

- ▶ Your individual feedback is also hugely important

YOUR ROLE

- ▶ We need input from education providers
- ▶ Your insight will shape priorities and actions
- ▶ Engagement is critical to ensure plan is realistic
- ▶ Reminder – At this stage, this is a plan on how we deliver the SEND Reforms, not our individual thoughts on the DFE's core thesis
- ▶ Don't feel the need to respond through every channel or to every question – we will consolidate – but please take part

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

- ▶ MS Forms survey to gather feedback – broken down into key themes, respond where you have a view
- ▶ Targeted engagement sessions
- ▶ Opportunities to review and comment on drafts
- ▶ Opportunities to ask questions to Mark Vickers SEND Reform DfE advisor

NEXT STEPS

- ▶ Engagement launches Wednesday
- ▶ Feedback will directly inform the plan
- ▶ Further updates will be shared regularly through Kelsi, LinkD SEND page and Pathways for all page