

**Kent Local Area**  
**SENCO BRIEFING**  
**December 2020**

## On the agenda today

- Update on the Written Statement of Action programme
- Update on the local offer which is a cornerstone of our communication with parents and professionals
- Update on inclusion work – forming the basis of a new County Approach to Inclusive Education
- Update on the revised Mainstream Core Standards
- SEN Service Update
- SEND strategy

**Kent Local Area**

**SEND Improvement Programme update**

**December 2020**

# Background

- Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted an inspection of services for children with SEND in Kent between 28<sup>th</sup> January and 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019 and identified 9 areas of significant weakness.
- The Local Area developed a Written Statement of Action outlining a plan for delivery of improvements, tackling the 9 areas of weakness.
- A programme was developed to address these concerns with the 9 areas of weakness managed through 5 workstreams.

# The 5 workstreams

| Workstream  | Area of weakness  |
|---|---|
| A – Parental engagement & co-production                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The widely held concern of parents that the local area is not able, or in some cases not willing, to meet their children's needs</li><li>• The limited role parents and carers have in reviewing and designing services for children and young people with SEND</li></ul>   |
| B – Inclusive Practice and the Outcomes, Progress and Attainment of CYP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The variable quality of provision and commitment to inclusion in schools, and the lack of willingness of some schools to accommodate children and young people with SEND</li><li>• The poor standards achieved and progress made, by children and young people with SEND</li><li>• The lack of effective systems to track and improve outcomes for those children and young people whose progress to date has been limited by weakness in provision</li></ul> |
| C – Quality of Education, Health and Care Plans                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The inconsistent quality of the EHC process; the lack of up to date assessment and limited contributions from health and care professionals; the poor processes to check and review the quality of EHC plans</li></ul>  |
| D – Joint commissioning and governance                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The inability of current joint commissioning arrangements to address known gaps and eliminate longstanding weaknesses in the services for children and young people with SEND</li><li>• The governance of SEND arrangements across the EHC system at strategic and operational level and absence of robust action plans to address known weaknesses</li></ul>   |
| E – Service Provision   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The unacceptable waiting times for children and young people to be seen by some health services, particularly CAMHS, tier 2 services, SALT, the wheelchair service, and ASD and ADHD assessment and reviews</li></ul>   |

# Key updates by workstream

| Workstream  | Area of weakness   |
|---|--|
| A – Parental engagement & co-production                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased development in the Local Offer. Further development over the next 12 months. Desired links to school websites/ accessibility statements</li> <li>• Co-production charter being developed</li> <li>• Draft SEND strategy developed – public consultation December/ January</li> </ul>  |
| B – Inclusive Practice and the Outcomes, Progress and Attainment of CYP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion discussion with schools – initial discussion closed 31<sup>st</sup> October</li> <li>• County Approach to Inclusive Education being developed alongside system leadership processes and support</li> <li>• PEO recruitment – do you know how they can support you?</li> <li>• Core Mainstream standards – published in December</li> <li>• SEN updates reinstated</li> </ul>  |
| C – Quality of Education, Health and Care Plans                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New template for EHCPs now being used for new plans (EHCPs on the previous template will be transferred to the new template during the annual review process)</li> <li>• New quality assurance framework implemented</li> <li>• Work ongoing to improve the quality of reports, advice and information provided during the assessments</li> <li>• Additional capacity to clear backlog. Aiming to complete assessments within statutory timescales by April 21</li> </ul> |
| D – Joint commissioning and governance                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New joint commissioning framework approved</li> <li>• Joint Health/ KCC governance in place</li> <li>• Updated Health Needs Assessment published</li> <li>• Special school nursing – recruited to and full complement by April 21</li> </ul>  |
| E – Service Provision   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kent ND handbooks developed for all those waiting for a referral or diagnosis – available on the local offer</li> <li>• Significant Covid impact</li> <li>• 5 years SLCN plan developed along with short term action plan</li> </ul>  |

## The programme and SENCO

- SENCOs are critical to the success of our children and young people with SEND
- With access to parents, children and young people, and being part of the leadership of schools you are uniquely positioned to support the shaping and communication of improvements in our local area
- We need you to provide feedback, tell us what works and what doesn't, and be part of the programme.
- Share your good practice, celebrate success

# The Local offer

## December 2020





# Our Local Offer Team

SEND Partnership and Engagement  
Manager Sharon McLaughlin

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Local Offer Marketing Apprentice  
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SEND Code of Practice  
The Local Offer should be:

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Collaborative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•→ Coproduced by parent carers, young people and professionals</li></ul>   |
| Accessible    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•→ Accessible</li></ul>  |
| Comprehensive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•→ Holistic</li><li>•→ Empowering for parent carers, young people and professionals</li><li>•→ Starting with what is widely available</li><li>•→ Factual</li></ul> |
| Up-to-date    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•→ Sustainable and sustained</li><li>•→ Factual</li></ul>  |
| Transparent   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•→ Transparent</li><li>•→ Factual</li></ul>  |

## Why are SENCOs key to help us getting this right

The majority of families who answered our 2019 SEND Questionnaire had received the questionnaire through their SENCO at school

Good communication with SENCOs is vital to getting the right support at the right time .



Too many parent carers have not heard of the Local Offer

Parent carers have told us that they would information about this earlier from their SENCOs



While some improvements have been noted

Parents carers told us that content is incomplete or missing, links don't always work and the tone can still be adversarial

More funding for SENCOs

The SENCO was good support

# Self-Evaluation Framework

**Content**  
**Engagement**  
**Governance**

A. How closely have educational settings been involved in the development and review of the Local Offer?

B. How have educational settings been supported to contribute to the Local Offer and also publish the required information?

C. How comprehensive is the information about and for educational settings on the Local Offer

Improvements  
needed

Content

Collaboration

Promotion



# SEND Local Offer

## [What to do if you think your child has SEND](#)

Who to speak to first if you think your child has special educational needs and what will happen next.

## [Guidance for families during COVID-19 outbreak](#)

Information for families about SEND services during the COVID-19 outbreak.

## [SEND strategies and policies](#)

Read the SEND strategy, dyslexia policy and the autism pathway documents.

## [Latest SEND improvements newsletter](#)

Find out about the latest SEND improvements being made in Kent.

## [Support for children under 5](#)

Includes [what to expect from your early years provider](#) , [Portage - supporting pre-school children with SEND](#) , [pre-school children with sensory impairments](#)

## [Support for young adults](#)

The move towards adulthood can be challenging. You'll need to consider issues such as housing, education, work and adult social care.

## [Health and wellbeing](#)

Health services that support children and young people with their physical, emotional and mental health needs.

## [Contact SEND teams and support services](#)

Contact numbers for our SEND teams and SEND support groups.

## [Support for school age children](#)

Find out how to choose a school that meets your child's needs or how to get additional support (including how to get an EHC Plan).

## [Local offer your voice](#)

Find out more about the local offer, give feedback and shape SEND services and information.

## [Working together with parents, children and young people](#)

We've been bringing together parents, carers, young people, practitioners and senior leaders to understand how we can work together to improve the service.



# Apply for or choose a school if your child has SEND

Most children with special educational needs attend mainstream schools. If your child has more severe or complex needs they may have their needs met at a mainstream school with more specialised provision or a special school.

## Applying for school

If your child has SEND but does not have an education health and care (EHC) plan you should [apply for a school place](#) in the same way as other parents.

If an [EHC needs assessment](#) has been started for your child, but is not yet complete, then you should follow the normal process for applying for a school place. If you don't apply for a place and we don't issue an EHC plan for your child, you may miss out on a place at one of your preferred schools.

## Applying for school if your child has an EHC plan

If your child has an EHC plan the admissions process is slightly different. Schools must give priority to requests for a place for children and young people with EHC plans. The process is managed by your [SEN Area Team](#).

Most children and young people with an EHC plan can attend their local mainstream school.

## Choosing a school

Before selecting a school you may find it helpful to:

- read their OFSTED report
- read the school's SEN Policy and SEND Information Report, both should be available on their website
- attend open days or evenings
- contact the school directly to arrange a visit.

## Mainstream schools

Most children and young people with an EHC plan can attend their local mainstream school.

There are some things you should think about when deciding what school you would like your child to attend.

- If the school has experience of children with similar needs to your child and how they have supported children with similar needs.
- What the school's special educational needs policy is.
- How the SENCO makes sure all staff are aware of children's needs and how they are best supported in the classroom and during breaks.
- How your child would be supported in class, during breaks and lunchtime.
- How you would be involved in decisions about your child, for example, support or provision.
- How the school will communicate with you about your child.

If you want your child to go to a grammar (selective) school, you must speak to your child's primary school about taking the [Kent Test](#).

If your child has an EHC plan and you're unsure if a school is suitable for them, you can talk to your [named officer](#).

Use our [school search to find a mainstream school](#).

## Special schools or mainstream schools with specialist provision

Normally only children and young people with the most complex or severe needs attend a special school.

For children and young people who need significantly more support than can be provided within a mainstream class it may be appropriate for them to attend a mainstream school with additional provision rather than a special school. This is called special resourced provision (SRP). All the children and young people who attend special schools or special resourced provisions have an EHC plan.

[Find a special school or a school with specialist provision](#).

## Starting school

When you know what school your child will be going to you can speak to the headteacher or SENCO about your child's needs. This will help the school to decide how to best support your child.

We also have some further information and advice to help with [starting or changing school](#).

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If you want your child to go to a grammar (selective) school, you must speak to your child's primary school about taking the Kent Test. If your child has an EHC plan and you're unsure if a school is suitable for them, you can talk to your named officer.

Use our school Search to find a mainstream school

Kent Test

Talk to your named officer

Search to find a mainstream school



Improvements  
needed

Content

Collaboration

Promotion

# School SEN information report on front page of website checklist

- The kinds of special educational needs that are provided for in the school.
- Policies for identifying children and young people with SEN and assessing their needs ...
- Arrangements for consulting parents of children with SEN and involving them in their child's education.
- Arrangements for assessing and reviewing children's progress towards outcomes.
- Arrangements for children and young people moving between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood.
- Approach to teaching, the expertise and training of school staff and how specialist expertise will be available.
- Support for improving emotional and social development, including listening to the views of children with SEN and measures to prevent bullying.
- How children with SEN are supported to access activities in the school that are available to pupils without SEN.
- How the school involves health, social care and local authorities to provide support for families.
- Arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with SEN.

Collaboration  
with  
Education  
settings

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Effective processes for involving  
**Education** settings,

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The sustained strategic  
involvement of **Education** settings  
in overseeing the Local Offer

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The sustained strategic  
involvement of **Education** settings  
in reviewing the Local Offer

Improvements  
needed

Content

Collaboration

Promotion

We need  
your help to  
promote the  
Local Offer  
to more  
families  
earlier

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Local Offer links on the school  
website

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Local Offer Promotion information on  
schools' electronic notice boards

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IASK Local Offer Leaflets send / given  
to parents carers at the first  
conversation had about thinking their  
children might have SEND



We provide free, impartial and confidential information, advice and support about special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) for children, young people up to age 25, parents and carers.



**For Young People**



**For Parents & Carers**



**For Practitioners**



# You don't need to be a SEND expert IASK have leaflets you can give to families on:

- Special Educational Needs support in mainstream schools
- Education, health and care plans
- Annual review of an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
- Funding for special educational needs in mainstream schools
- Finding out about support near you
- Getting the right kind of support (EHCPs)
- Personal budgets
- Types of special educational needs support in college
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) support in the early years
- Education, health and care needs assessment
- What if I do not agree with decisions about SEN provision?
- A guide to exclusions
- Personal budgets for Special Educational Needs
- **The SEND Local Offer**
- Finding out what support you need
- Preparing for adulthood – Year 9 onwards
- What if I do not agree with the decision?

Questions to  
consider

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How to improve the  
content of the Local  
Offer together

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How to promote the  
Local Offer better  
together



# Update on inclusion work – forming the basis of a new County Approach to Inclusive Education

# Activity

- Term 1 – countywide discussion with schools re:
  - Statement of Inclusion
  - Inclusion Framework
  - Mainstream Core Standards (MCS)
  - System Leadership of Inclusion
  - A model for Inclusion Peer Review
  - Leadership of Inclusion development programme for school leaders
  - Designation, training and deployment of Inclusion System Leaders
  - Inclusion Dashboard
  - Parent Voice
  - Characteristics of an Inclusive School
- Review of countywide offer of support

# Next steps:

Term 2 and 3:

- Feedback documentation available on:

<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/news-and-events/news/primary/inclusion-in-kent-schools-feedback>

Development of **'A Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education'**,

Further development of the school to school support system, including:

- The model for Inclusion Peer Review
- Leadership of Inclusion development programme for school leaders
- Designation, training, and deployment of Inclusion System Leaders
- Core Offer and Directory of Support and the use of the 9.8m funding

Review of our current network meeting structures to support inclusive education

Develop methodology for measuring the quality and impact of our inclusive practices

Looking at transition especially primary to secondary

Get involved – share pilot work or good practice, express interest in peer to peer groups, ILE or leadership training

# The revised Mainstream Core Standards update



## Section 1: Expectations of all schools

- Sets out legal duties of schools
- Much of this section will already be an integral part of the school's provision for all children.
- Provision will be put in place for presenting needs, with or without any formal diagnosis
- Children and their families are at the centre of the work of all schools.
- Describes the whole school approach to: working with CYP and their families, pastoral support, assessment, T & L, the physical and sensory environment, resources, staff skills/ training and transition.

## Section 2: Additional support

- Describes additional support available as part of resources normally available in (and to) schools.
- It is likely that pupils will have needs spread across the areas of need set out in Section 2.
- CYP may have been identified as having a particular need but may not present with *all* the difficulties set out under that heading.
- Describes the Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR) Cycle and The Graduated Approach

## Section 2: Additional support (cont)

- Explains that not all provision described will be required for CYP with a particular need or disability.
- Acknowledges that schools may not have knowledge or experience of all of the strategies, interventions and resources described
- States that CYP and their families are the experts on the impact of their condition or disability and that collaborative working is the starting point when planning, implementing and reviewing SEND provision.
- Explains that provision is put in place in response to current presenting, underlying or emerging need and is not dependent on a child or young person receiving a formal diagnosis of a specific condition or disability

## Revised Mainstream Core Standards – final document

- Consultations with families and schools have been completed – feedback has been largely very positive
- All suggestions for amendments and additions have been considered during final drafting
- CYP voice has been verified
- Document to be published in the next month



# **SEN Service update:**

**Kent Educational Psychology Service (KEPS)**

**SEND Provision Evaluation Officer (PEO) team**

**EHC needs assessment process**



# The Kent Education Psychology Service (KEPS) update

## Focus over recent months:

- Increase in the capacity of the team – we have interviewed and appointed a number of newly qualified EPs
- Continuing with our highly regarded Trainee EP programme
- Working collaboratively with universities, we have set up the new Assistant EP programme
- Increase in the number of locums to support KEPS to meet the demand for EP information and advice as part of the statutory assessment process – there is now a clear path to clear the backlog of assessments and meet the statutory timescales.

***Dan Jones, Interim Principal EP***

# SEND Provision Evaluation Officer (PEO) team update

## Focus over recent months:

- The team has increased in size over the last 18 months; we now have 18 PEOs line managed by two Senior PEOs:
  - **Alice Gleave, Senior PEO (North and East)**
  - **Teri Rutherford, Senior PEO (South and West)**
- PEO work includes: support with personalised provision planning, SEN provision review or monitoring, attending SRP Steering Group meetings, SRP and SPI monitoring/support visits, exploring parental concerns, involved in decision making during statutory assessment process.

# SEND Provision Evaluation Officer (PEO) team update

Focus over recent months:

- Following your feedback and so we can more closely measure the impact of the PEO team, we have developed new feedback forms so that we can monitor, analyse, review and evaluate our service more effectively.
- If you would like to get in touch with the PEO for your district please contact our administrative support officer, Tania Lawrence:

[Tania.Lawrence@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Tania.Lawrence@kent.gov.uk)

*Alice Gleave, Senior PEO*  
*Teri Rutherford, Senior PEO*

## EHC needs assessment process

Developments over recent months:

- Introduction of panels for 6 week and 16 week decisions
- Introduction of SRP consultation panels
- Recruitment of interim team of EHC plan writers to work on the backlog
- Ongoing recruitment of highly experienced interim case officers to increase the capacity of the assessment and placement team – this combined with the increased capacity of the EP team will enable us to greatly increase our ability to meet statutory timescales.

## The new EHCP template

- Developed by Workstream C
- Puts the CYP and their family at the centre of the document
- Set out in line with the guidance in the SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Moved sections for needs and strengths, outcomes and provision (B,E,F) together
- Section F (provision) includes only provision that is additional, personalised and specified.

# Kent's Strategy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities 2021-2024

# Our vision

Our vision for children and young people with SEND in Kent is that:-

- They learn and grow by being well cared for, have their health needs met and lead happy, fulfilled lives.
- Families can reach the right people at the right time to support their children in the way that they need.
- Services work together with families to improve outcomes and the achievements of their children.





# Priorities

- We have identified a programme of work for the next three years and beyond, grouping the work into five main priorities.

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>Priority 1</b> | <b>Improve the way we work with children and young people, parents and carers.</b>   |
| <b>Priority 2</b> | <b>Ensure children, young people and their families' have positive experiences at each stage of their journey including a well-planned and smooth transition to adulthood.</b> |
| <b>Priority 3</b> | <b>Identify and assess the needs of children and young people earlier and more effectively.</b>  |
| <b>Priority 4</b> | <b>Improve education, care and health outcomes for children and young people with SEND.</b>  |
| <b>Priority 5</b> | <b>Ensure children and young people with SEND are included in their local community.</b>   |

# Priorities

We are focussing on these areas because;

- Children, young people and families have told us that these are important to them.
- They support the work being undertaken as part of the Written Statement of Action.
- Analysis of our performance in these areas shows us that we need to do better if we are to improve outcomes for our children and young people with SEND.
- The updated SEND Health Needs assessment (2020) has highlighted the health inequities we need to address in Kent.

There are areas of Kent, like Autism, who are really well supported...and then there are others...there's nothing, they are like black holes

Where I've had the best experience it's because we've built a strong relationship

People should respect my opinions and feelings more



# Measuring Progress

- We will measure our progress against the Children and Young People's Outcomes Framework which was developed with families and reflects what children and young people told us was important to them.
- A set of indicators will sit underneath each outcome to measure progress. Feedback will be regularly collected from children, young people and their families and used to improve services and delivery.
- A detailed action plan will also be developed.



# Find out more and tell us your views

- The full Strategy can be found online at [www.kent.gov.uk/sendstrategyconsultation](http://www.kent.gov.uk/sendstrategyconsultation) alongside supporting documents and the questionnaire for giving us your views
- Please tell us what you think
- The consultation is open from Wednesday 2 December 2020 to Thursday 4 February 2021
- If you have any questions, please contact [sendstrategy@kent.gov.uk](mailto:sendstrategy@kent.gov.uk)
- Alternative formats: if you require any of the consultation material in an alternative format or language, please email [alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk](mailto:alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk) or call 03000 421553 (text relay 18001 03000 421553)

**Thank you**

**Thank you**