

Frequently Asked Questions

Governor training – January 2021

Question: Are there metrics the school can provide to demonstrate meeting standards?

Answer: There are many metrics that can give an indication of how inclusive a school is, for example attendance, exclusions and outcomes. However, inclusion is about ethos, practice and application of duties and metrics on their own do not always provide the richest or most accurate picture. KCC is currently commissioning support for schools to engage in comprehensive self-evaluation and peer to peer networks which will provide a framework for evaluating inclusive practice. This framework will be available from June, with peer cluster work starting in Sept 2021. It is important to ensure that the Governor role is not operational.

Question: Is there anywhere we can go that helps to understand where the directives are coming from and what the difficulties are?

Answer: The Written Statement of Action was developed following the Local Area OFSTED/ CQC inspection in 2019. Information relating to this can be found by clicking [here](#). In response to the Written Statement of Action, the local area has developed a SEND Improvement Programme with a significant Inclusion workstream. Information relating to this workstream, and the work ongoing can be found on KELSI by clicking [here](#).

Question: I see that the Mainstream Core Standards are branded as KCC, are they also used in Medway?

Answer: The Mainstream Core Standards (MCS) were developed for Kent mainstream schools, those within the jurisdiction of Kent County Council. Medway Council is a unitary council and therefore directives to schools and education settings are separate.

Question: What evidence can governors use to see if the mainstream core standards are being implemented?

Answer: There is no formal guidance on how to track use of the Mainstream Core Standards, however there are a variety of ways to monitor if the Mainstream Core Standards are being implemented across your school including:

- Data: The frequency with which CYP with SEND are excluded from school. How does this

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compare to the cohort of pupils who do not have SEND? Attainment and/or achievement outcomes for this cohort; are below average when compared to other cohorts and to national data. Number of admission applications that have been refused and why? The number of directions to educate that the school have received.

Exploring the school's responses to consultations from the Local Authority for places for CYP with EHC plans. Does the school leadership understand the duty of the LA to specify a mainstream provision in the EHC plan? (unless this would be against the wishes of the parent or young person or it would be incompatible with the efficient education of others).

- Does the school leadership understand the duty to admit a CYP when the school is named in Section I of the EHC plan?
- An audit of the reasons why the SENCo is making referral to LIFT for support and guidance – are referrals made more frequently for a particular need type?
- Requesting detail on how the SEN Notional Budget is being spent to improve provision for CYP with SEND using the MCS and the impact this is having on their progress and outcomes.
- What does the response to Parent feedback regarding provision for SEND children suggest?

Question: Does the Mainstream Core Standards guidance replace Best Practice Guidance in Early Years?

Answer: No. The Best Practice Guidance in Early Years is focused on the Early Years phase and provides specialist information. The Mainstream Core Standards is focused on the Primary and Secondary phases of education.

Question: Where can we find information about Quality First Teaching?

Answer: Quality First Teaching (QFT) is a term that is widely used to describe high quality teaching. Below is a link to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), a predecessor to the Department for Education (DfE), guide to personalised learning. The term QFT came out of this publication and, although this document is now archived, it sets out clearly the key characteristics of QFT as:

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- Highly focused lesson design with sharp objectives
- High demands of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning
- High levels of interaction for all pupils
- Appropriate use of questioning, modelling and explaining on the part of the teacher.
- An emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for pupils to talk both individually and in groups.
- An expectation that pupils will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently.
- Regular use of encouragement and authentic praise to engage and motivate pupils

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130323074445/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/00844-2008DOM-EN.pdf>

It is best practice for schools to have a policy/ strategy outlining how they ensure high quality teaching for all pupils.

Question: SENCOs are not always able to tell you what the official process as described by the Children and Family Act 2014 is. Will Kent improve SENCO training and review its own process?

Answer: KCC complies with the statutory guidance on duties, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations. All SENCOs must hold or be working towards the National Award for SEN Co-ordination (unless they were in post as a SENCO before 2009), which includes the requirement to demonstrate understanding of relevant legislation and associated guidance. It is expected that SENCOs will keep up to date with latest developments in policy and research both locally and nationally in relation to SEND. To support this KCC offer free termly SENCO update briefings.

Question: Is the SEND Information Report and the SEND policy the same document?

Answer: No, schools must publish information on their website about the implementation of the school's policy for pupils with SEN. The report should be updated annually. Guidance on the

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information required can be found in Section 6.47 of the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

Guidance can be found on KELSI:

[KELSI SEN ANNUAL INFORMATION REPORT](#)
[SEND Policy](#)

Question: Why is identification of children with SEND deemed to be subjective? The definition is in the legislation?

Answer: The definitions of SEN, learning difficulty and disability are set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2015

“A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- Has a significant greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions”.

Identifying CYP as requiring SEN Support is made at a school level. Where a CYP requires special educational provision, they should be recorded as receiving SEN Support. Guidance on SEN Support in schools are found in sections 6.44 to 6.62 of the SEND Code of Practice.

Question: What is the proportion of SEN in Kent mainstream schools compared to national?

Answer: Pupils with an EHC Plan in Kent are less likely to be educated in a mainstream school than would be expected nationally.

Based on this data: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england> which uses data from the January 2020 school censuses of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), in Kent 41.97% of children with an EHCP attend a mainstream school* compared to 52.04% nationally

*where mainstream provision includes academy converter, academy sponsor lead, community

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school, foundation school, free schools, local authority nursery, other independent, university technical college, voluntary aided school, voluntary aided schools

Non mainstream includes academy special converter, community special school, foundation special school, non-maintained special school, other independent special school and Pupil referral unit.

Question: When does a school need to apply for top up funding? Can they apply and get the top up later in the year or does it have to be applied for at the start of the year only?

Answer: Schools can apply for High Needs Funding at any time in the academic year when the cost of special educational provision for an individual CYP exceeds £6000.

The link to guidance on High Needs Funding on Kelsi is below:

[High Needs Funding link](#)