

# Headteacher Briefings Autumn 2022

*Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November – St. Augustine's*

*Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November – The Darenth*

*Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November – The Orchards Events Centre*

*Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November – Dover Marina Hotel*

# AGENDA

Time	Item	
12:30	Refreshments on arrival	
13:00	Welcome and Introductions	Christine McInnes
13:10	Inspection of Kent County Council of Children's Services	Stephen Fitzgerald
13:25	Working Together to Improve Attendance	Lee Kennedy
13:45	Virtual School Kent (VSK)	Emma Wills
14:00	Finance Update	Karen Stone
14:20	Break	
14:25	Joint Area SEN Ofsted Revisit	Christine McInnes
15:35	Spring SENCO Forum and Conference	Siobhan Price
15:40	Questions and Discussion	All
16:00	End	

# Introduction

- **Schools Bill and academisation** – assuming the government will proceed with plans for academisation. KCC establishing regular meetings with Trust Chief Executives, Diocesan Board and other stakeholders
- **Pathways for All** – post 16 Board launched to implement recommendations from the review. This is a key government policy area
- **Kent Commissioning Plan** – publication schedule 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022; in discussion with the DfE and Home Office about pressures on places
- **Transport** – creation of extra capacity to manage demand for KCC provided transport, exploring more schools providing own transport. Working with the bus companies to manage the reduction in demand

# Inspection of Kent County Council Children's Services

# Inspection of Kent County Council Children's Services

- Children are at the centre of KCC's culture and practice
- Outstanding practice is evident for children in care
- Parents who spoke to inspectors were unanimously positive about their engagement with social workers and the support they receive
- 20 schools participated in meeting with inspectors and gave overwhelming positive feedback about engagement with children's services
- Strategic and operational partnership working across the county council is a strength
- Leaders across KCC demonstrate that they are ambitious parents to children in their care
- Children's participation is well promoted within the council
- There is a strong focus on and a commitment to workforce development

# What Needs to Improve?

- The practice of conducting visits to children during school hours, resulting in them missing lessons
- Manageable caseloads and workload support for social workers and their managers
- The response and the quality of assessment of need for young people aged 16 and 17 years who present as homeless

# ***Working Together to Improve School Attendance***

## **Headteacher Briefings**

November 2022

# New DfE guidance

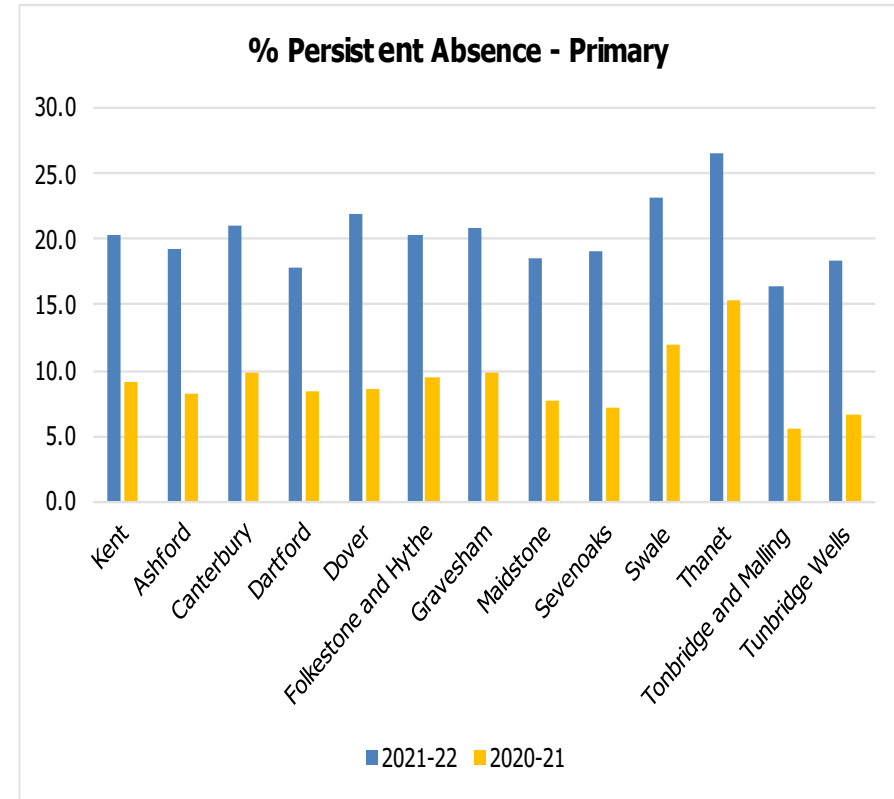
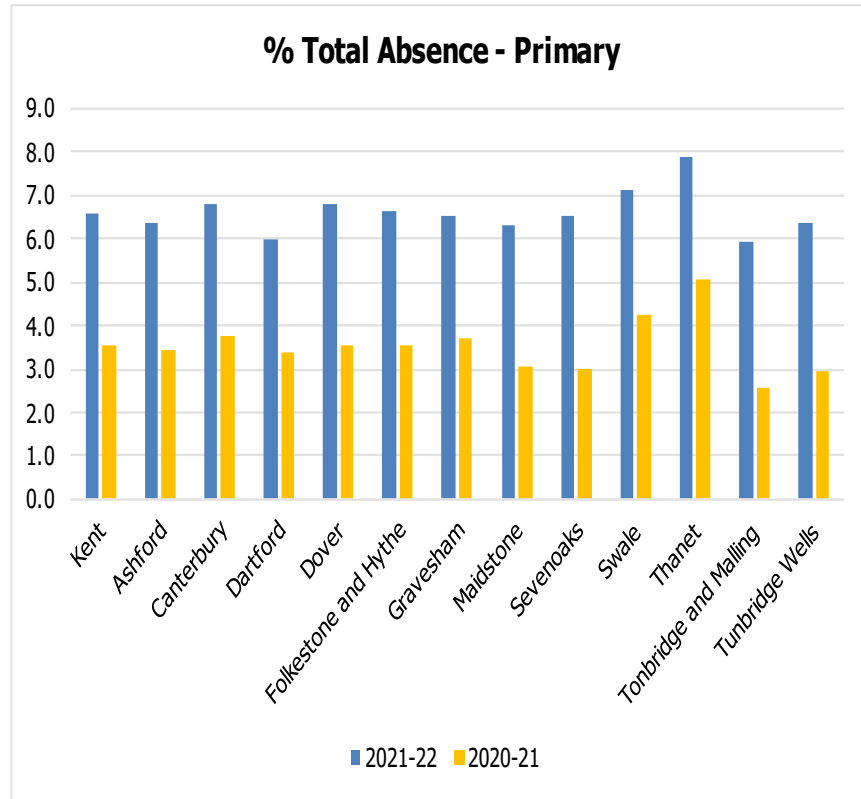
- Government published 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidelines in May 22; affects **all** maintained schools, academies, independent schools, free schools and local authorities
- Changes the way schools, local authorities and families work together, with support from a wide range of partners.
- Expectations around robust data reporting and monitoring (LA, Schools, partnerships).
- Guidance for implementation now and expected to be **statutory from September 2023**.



*The most effective schools consistently promote the benefits of good attendance at school, set high expectations for every pupil, communicate those expectations clearly and consistently to pupils and parents, systematically analyse their data to identify patterns to target their improvement efforts, and work effectively with the local authority and other local partners to overcome barriers to attendance. They also recognise that attendance cannot be seen in isolation and that the foundation to good attendance is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment in which all pupils want to attend and can learn and thrive.*

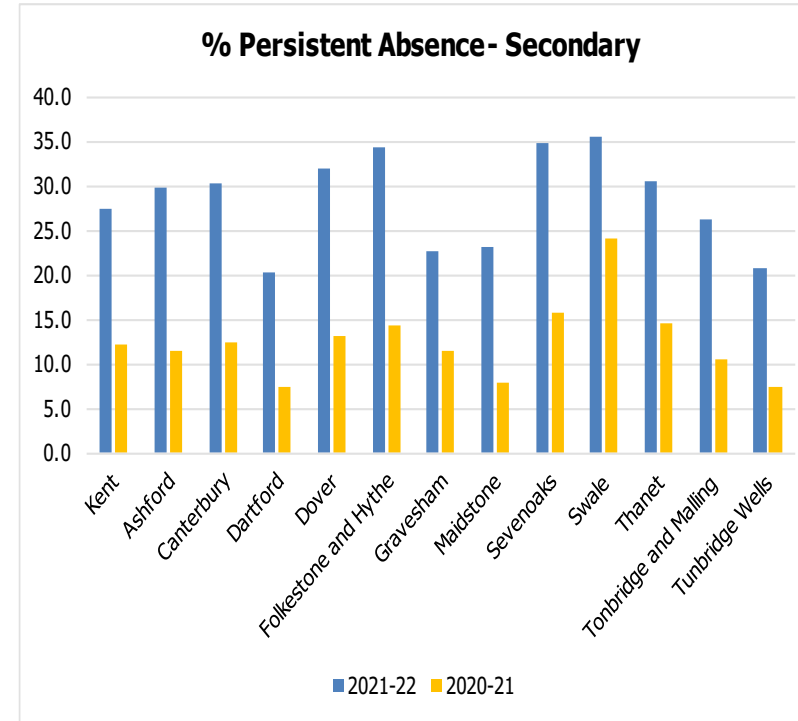
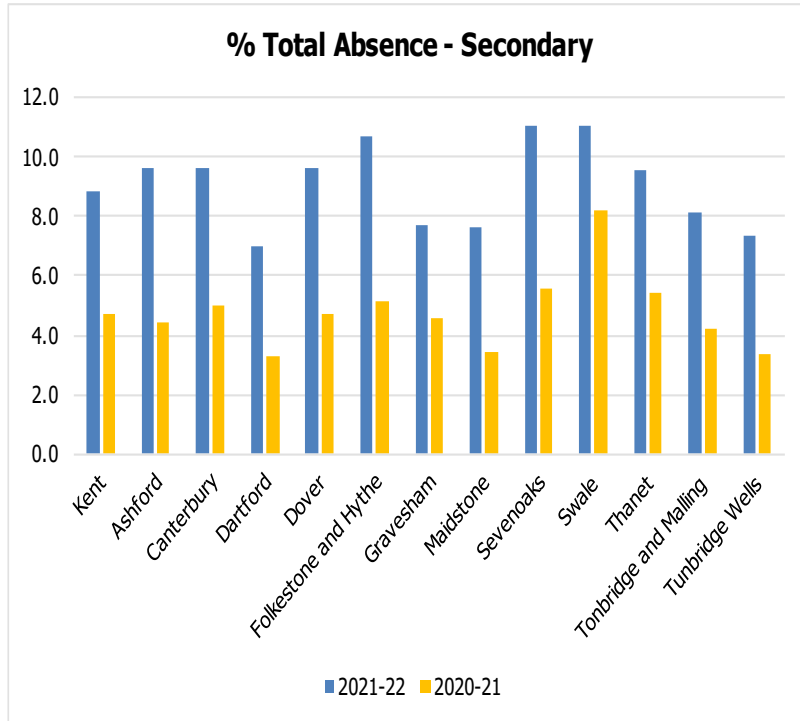
DfE Working together to improve school attendance (May 2022) – Paragraph 15

# Kent Data – Primary schools



- 3.1% increase in overall absence and 11.1% increase in Persistent Absence from 2020/21 to 2021/22

# Kent Data – Secondary schools



- 4.2% increase in overall absence and 15.4% increase in Persistent Absence from 2020/21 to 2021/22

# Working Together – Support First Principle

- Key principle of 'support first' involves:
  - Listening & understanding barriers to attendance.
  - Helping to remove barriers and access support.
  - Gaining multi-agency support if needed for wider family issues.
  - Where absence persists, formalising support through parenting contracts
- When all support options exhausted and support not working enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution.

# 21/22 school attendance data headlines

- Data showing the difference in positive tests between the Autumn and Spring terms showed more **Covid related illness/absence** for these 2 terms in 2021/22 than in 2020/21 and contributes to the upward trend in total and persistent absence.
- Over **25,000 days** were lost countywide to suspensions/exclusions.
- We also had **50 permanent exclusions** and many were due to violent behaviours towards peers and adults.
- **Anxiety Based School Avoidance (ABSA)** continues to be a big area of focus, mainly related to family context rather than school issues.

# Tackling the root cause of poor attendance: Multi-disciplinary support

- ‘Attendance is everyone’s focus’ to treat root causes of absence and remove barriers to attendance at home, in school. It requires schools, local authority and local partners to work together to offer multidisciplinary support.

*Multi-disciplinary support should build on the existing Early Help offer in local authorities. In line with EH principles, families should receive a single assessment plan, and (where necessary) a single lead practitioner from the team or service best place to support their needs.*

*E.g. Pupils with barriers to attendance due to housing issue, it would be sensible for the lead practitioner to be the family’s housing officer.*

# New category of Severe Absence

## Persistent Absence:

- ❑ Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year).
- ❑ Schools should sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.

## Severe Absence is a new category:

- ❑ Particular focus should be given by all partners to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school).
- ❑ These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance. They are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners therefore a concerted effort is needed across all relevant services to prioritise them.
- ❑ All partners should work together to make this group the top priority for support: ...*including specific support with attendance or a whole family plan, and consideration for an EHC plan or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.*

# Summary Table of Responsibilities for School Attendance

This guidance summarises the attendance responsibilities outlined in the main guidance for schools, trusts, governing bodies, and LA's:

## The responsibilities covered include monitoring of:

- All pupils
- Pupils **at risk of** becoming **persistently absent**
- **Persistently absent** pupils
- **Severely absent** pupils
- Support for **cohorts of pupils** with lower attendance than their peers
- Support for pupils with **medical conditions or SEND** with poor attendance
- Support for pupils with a **social worker**

Link to guidance:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1073619/Summary\\_table\\_of\\_responsibilities\\_for\\_school\\_attendance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073619/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance.pdf)



# Responsibilities for Schools

## All pupils

- Have a clear, easy to understand school [attendance policy](#) on the website
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture promoting the benefits of good attendance, dedicating a [senior leader with responsibility for championing and improving attendance](#)
- Complete accurate admission and attendance registers, and have robust daily processes following up absence

## Persistently absent, severely absent, and pupils at risk of becoming so

- ❑ **Proactively use data** to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance, working with pupils and their parents to address the reason for absence and signposting / supporting them to access any required services
- ❑ If absence becomes persistent, put **additional targeted support** in place and hold more formal conversations with parents to be clear about possible future steps and interventions
- ❑ If there are safeguarding concerns, intensify this support through children's social care
- ❑ Once a pupil reaches "severely absent" status, a joint approach will need to be agreed with the LA

# Responsibilities for Governing Bodies and Academy Trustees

- Take an active role in attendance improvement, supporting schools to prioritise attendance and create a [whole school culture](#)
- Ensure school leaders [fulfil expectations and statutory duties](#)
- Ensure school staff receive [training](#) on attendance
- Regularly review attendance [data](#) and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it

# Responsibilities for Local Authorities

## All pupils

- ❑ Strategic approach to improving attendance across the whole county, making it **a key focus across all frontline council services**
- ❑ Have a School Attendance Support Team (PIAS) working with **all schools** to remove common barriers to attendance & providing each school with a named point of contact
- ❑ Offer all schools the opportunity share effective practice (Network meetings)
- ❑ A new responsibility – Targeting support meetings (TSM's) are required for **all schools 3 times a year**

## Persistently absent, severely absent, and pupils at risk of becoming so

- ❑ **Termly conversations** held with all schools to discuss, signpost, or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently/ severely absent or at risk of becoming so.
- ❑ Identify “out of” school barriers and provide access to services needed in the first instance.
- ❑ Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners, particularly children’s social care services where there are safeguarding concerns.
- ❑ Where support is not working, enforce attendance through legal intervention.
- ❑ All services make ‘**Severely absent**’ pupils top priority – Support may include a whole family plan, consideration for an EHCP, or an alternative form of education provision, staying especially conscious of safeguarding issues.

# Our current offer

**Digital Front Door** is the single point of access for all inclusion and attendance matters through provision of 13 online pathways.



# Current support to schools

- ❑ All mainstream schools, special schools and independent schools have an allocated School Liaison Officer (SLO) to provide advice & guidance to improve attendance.
- ❑ Education Engagement Officers (EEO) provide targeted interventions and outreach work for children particularly from GRT and ethnic communities.
- ❑ Inclusion & Attendance Advisers deal with enquires from teachers about YP behaviour, absence and exclusion. Also linked with Pupil Referral Units (PRU's).

# Additional roles completed by area Attendance & Inclusion teams

Non statutory work includes:

- Assemblies.
- Consultations.
- Project work in schools.
- Forums.
- Appeals.
- School staff / Governor training.
- Safeguarding meetings.
- Local partnership groups.
- Inclusion steering groups.



# What are we planning to implement?

- Communication on what the new guidance means to staff, schools, and external contractors and updating Kelsi to reflect the guidance
- Communication to engage multi-disciplinary partners such as Police, Health, Mental Health services in their role to improve attendance
- Delivering and monitoring engagement at Attendance Network Meetings: **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December, 10am – 11.30am (Teams)**
- Offering all schools a minimum of 3 annual focused Targeted Support Meetings (TSMs)
- Developing a new Power-BI Attendance app to report, monitor and use attendance data for all front line teams (allowing easy access to data for discussion with partner agencies, schools by all)
- Working closer with Early Help teams to offer support to families with issues affecting attendance

# Virtual School Kent (VSK)

November 2022

# Virtual School Kent (VSK)

VSK is an organisation which has been created for the effective co-ordination of educational services at a strategic and operational level:

- Kent Children in Care
- Previously Looked After Children
- Ever6 CWSW (Children with a social worker)

# VSK's Role in Inclusion

Prioritise inclusive practice that supports engagement in education:

- Promote inclusion through trauma informed practices
- Identify the needs of the cohorts within the education settings, districts and countywide levels
- Promote the importance of education settings in terms of safeguarding.
- Promote the protective factors education settings provide
- Level up children's outcomes and narrow attainment gaps, so that every child can reach their potential
- Increase confidence in using evidence based interventions
- Commission services to acquire additional support for the cohorts

VSK Website - <https://www.virtualschool.lea.kent.sch.uk/>

# School Budget Update 2023-24

# National School Funding Update

- In Nov 2021 Government announced planned school spending until 24-25
- No details published at the time, more recent information confirmed: for 23-24: average rate for primary & secondary schools 2%, High Needs 5%
- Early Years funded separately: awaiting outcome of recent consultation
- Teachers Pay announced
- Pressure on support staff: still to be confirmed
- Impact of Inflation
- Awaiting Chancellors update

Schools, High Needs & CSSB	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	Increase
<b>National Position</b>	£bs	£bs	£bs	£bs	£bs	£bs	£bs
Total School budget	44.4	47.6	49.8	52.2	55.3	56.8	
Previous Committed increases in funding (Autumn 19)		2.6	2.3	2.2			7.1
Autumn 21 Statement increases in funding				1.6	1.5	1.5	4.7*
<i>High Needs Block increases</i>		<i>0.8</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>0.8+0.3</i>	<i>0.45?</i>	<i>0.45?</i>	

# National Funding Formula

## Consultation Outcomes

- Focused on School Block & Central Schools Services Block of DSG (High Needs & Early Years block not the focus)
- Confirmed they will moving towards a hard national funding formula which has now been renamed a direct national funding formula
- Plan to review the services funded through the Central Schools Services Block
- Will retain flexibilities to de-delegate maintained schools' funding, and MATs will continue to have the ability to top-slice academy funding. Along with purchasing optional traded services.
- Look to improve transparency of MAT top-slices & pooling including standardising the process.

# Direct National Funding Formula

- Expecting to implement by 2027-28 by progressively tightening criteria for setting local school budgets from 23-24:
  - Local formulae must include all NFF factors so will expect to use mobility in Kent next year
  - All factors that aren't within 2.5% of NFF value must move at least 10% closer (further tightening expected in future years: 15% for 24-25, 20% 25-26),
  - Further consultations are taking place on premises related factors including how to standardise the allocation of funding for schools with split sites, rentals and PFI.
  - Local administration of the Falling rolls and Growth fund likely to continue but under more consistent formula options
  - Under a direct NFF the transfer to the High Needs block will still be possible but expecting a more standardised approach in future



# Key Funding Changes: 2023-24

## **School Budgets:** increases in NFF factor values

- Rolling the supplementary grant received separately in 22-23 into the NFF (schools core budget)
- 4.3% increase of FSM6 and IDACI factor values
- 0% increase for premise factors & 11.2% for PFI factor
- 2.4% other factors except....
- 0.5% increase for MPPL (minimum per pupil level)
- Minimum Funding Guarantee (minimum YOY increase per pupil) can be increased between 0% and 0.5%

## **High Needs:** Funding increasing by 5%

## **Early Years:** Recent consultation awaiting outcome:

## **Central services & other grants:**

- Ending of School Improvement Grant
- No indication the Ukraine Grant will continue
- Awaiting announcements on pupil premium & COVID recovery premium allocations and rates

# School Budgets 23-24 Consultation

- Need to consult with schools on the approach to primary & secondary budgets for 23-24, with recommendations to be proposed to Schools Forum
- Consultation will focus on proposal to transfer 1% from schools block to High Needs block to support Deficit Recovery Plan
- Kent Primary & Secondary school budgets mirrors most NFF factors and rates except for the following
  1. Basic Entitlement Factor (AWPU) set at 99%
  2. Deprivation factor: Ever 6 FSM: Primary 58% & Secondary 72%
  3. Mobility factor not introduced
- Used to fund 1% transfer to High Needs and Falling Roll Fund
- Separate consultation on plans for De-Delegation (maintained schools)

# School Budgets KCC Consultation 23-24: Questions

1. Do you support the 1% transfer from the schools to the high needs block?
2. If the transfer is supported on what basis should the schools local funding formula be set?
  - **Continue with current targeted approach:** Introduce the mobility factor in full and continue with last years LFF applying increase in rates in line with 23-24 NFF rate changes (all factors reflecting NFF except FSM6 & Basic Entitlement which will continue to be lower than NFF)
  - **Move towards a shared approach:** Introduce mobility factor and spread the 1% reduction across all factors
3. What level should we set the MFG?

# High Needs Deficit & Safety Valve

	£
Total Accumulated Deficit as at March 2021	+£98m
Current forecast in-year overspend	+£47m
Estimated Accumulated Deficit as at March 2022	+£145m

- In March 2021 Kent had 23<sup>rd</sup> highest in-year deficit in Country
- In-year deficit will reach c£130m by 2027-28 with accumulated deficit c£659m if current trend continues
- Govt confirmed funding increases will start to reduce
- Importance of 1% transfer to support recovery
- Need to focus on meeting needs differently whilst still delivering better outcomes:

More children successfully supported in mainstream/Post 16 opportunities leading to reduction in special & independent placements

Focus on more cost effective SEN support services in mainstream schools

Review of individual packages of support for children in mainstream

Aiming to achieve breakeven position by 2027-28

# What Is the Safety Valve Programme?

- DfE running 3 programmes
  1. Safety valve programme: highest DSG deficits
  2. Delivering Better Value programme
  3. Direct conversation with ESFA
- Local Authority develops substantial plans to reform high needs systems and associated spending to reach a sustainable footing as quickly as possible
- Local Authority held to account for reform and deficit reduction targets via regular reporting
- Safety Valve: DfE helps local authorities with additional funding over time to **contribute** to their historic deficits, contingent on delivery of the reforms.
- Kent has been taking part: awaiting outcome

# Questions?

# Joint Area SEN Ofsted Revisit

# Overview

- Ofsted and the CQC revisited Kent during September to decide whether sufficient progress has been made in addressing the 9 significant weaknesses identified in the initial 2019 inspection
- Inspectors spoke with children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), parents and carers and representatives from the parent-carer forum Parents and Carers Together (PACT), school leaders representing the range of education provision across the area and local authority and National Health Service (NHS)



# Key Facts

- Kent has 20% higher rate of CYP on EHC Plans and they are X2+ more likely to attend an independent special school than anywhere else in England
- Dissatisfaction with provision for CYP with SEND remains widespread, despite spending more per CYP than anywhere else in the country
- Requests for assessment, appeals and demand for special schools continue to increase
- Almost 2,000 parents and carers and over 50 schools engaged in the inspection process

# Education – Positives Highlighted

- Parents praise the hard work and support of many individual schools
- Many schools welcome children with SEND providing high quality of education and care: Typically these engage with the LA and attend training relating to SEND
- The mainstream core standards are understood, implemented, with positive impact in some schools
- A core group of school leaders are helping to drive forward this agenda
- Anticipation the dashboard will drive improvement, promote inclusion and effectively target resources

# Education Positives Continued

- Some school leaders believe relationships and communication are improving
- Training enabled some children with specific medical needs to attend activities in the community
- PACT membership has trebled and outreach to parents and carers continues
- SNAPP (Special Needs Advisory & Activities Project) sessions were commented on positively
- And 74% of schools currently involved in SEND training and transformation activities

# Priorities - Education Sector

## System Level

- Improve communication
- Better promotion of projects and reviews intended to promote positive change:
  - Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education
  - The CATIE Dashboard
  - (LIFT) executive
  - Transition charter
  - Co-production charter
- Continue work on school and post-16 places required for CYPE with SEND (mainstream, SRP, special school)

# System Level Priorities Continued

- Allocate specialist school places rigorously according to need
- Management of demand for assessment and EHCPs
- Remove barriers to school attendance with the attendance service and early help
- Increase participation in locally offered training or networking events
- Establish more effective systems for sharing strong practice
- Improve engagement of parents and carers

# Priorities – Related to the Education Sector

## School / Institutional level

- Lack of willingness of some schools to accommodate CYPE with SEND; schools 'known' to be inclusive admit more CYPE with SEND adding to inequalities
- Variable quality of provision & commitment to inclusion
- Uneven distribution of CYPE with SEND across schools
- High rates of absence and persistent absence have continued
- Outcomes achieved and progress made by children and young people are not good enough
- Ensure young people feel they get the understanding of their SEND needs from staff

# LIFT Executive

- Move to become a decision making body – District Based Approach
- All LIFT exec meetings visited in summer 2022
- HNF sub group have given approval to proceed.
- LIFT exec chairs meeting – Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November
- Agenda –
- Terms of Reference
- Reference group confirmation.
- Initial proposal re structure.

# LIFT Executive

- Pilot districts for change to be identified
- Highest overspend
- Lowest overspend
- Good existing collaborations
- Decision made in December
- Schools Funding Forum 6<sup>th</sup> December to ratify the decision
- Scoping meeting – 12<sup>th</sup> December
- Cabinet Approval – Key Decision Spring 2022

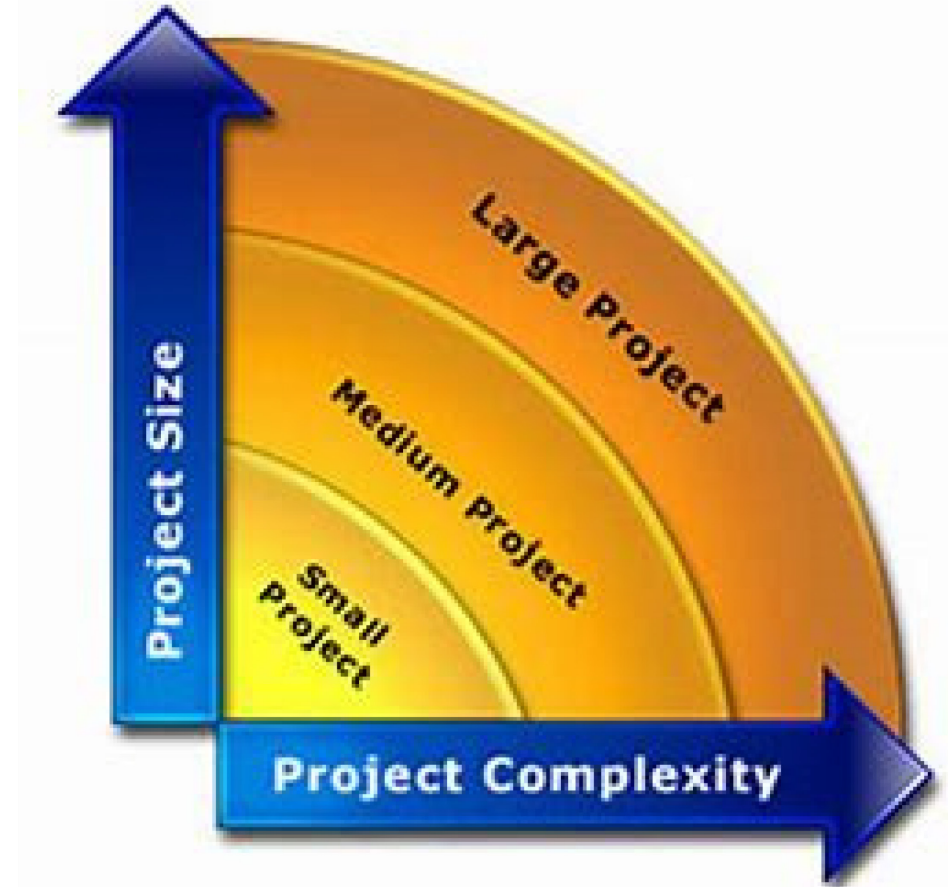


# Phase Transfer

- Thank you to HTs for your feedback.
- Plans to trial something slightly different this year.
- Consultation process is flawed.
- Need to work together to work within the spirit and the letter of the law.

# PHASE TRANSFER 2023- SIZE AND SCALE OF TASK

- **Total Phase transfers= 2657**
  - Early Years = 40
  - **Years 6/7 = 1289**
  - Post 16 = 1278
- **Challenging context, including managing parental expectations.**
- **Need to think of a new way of working together**

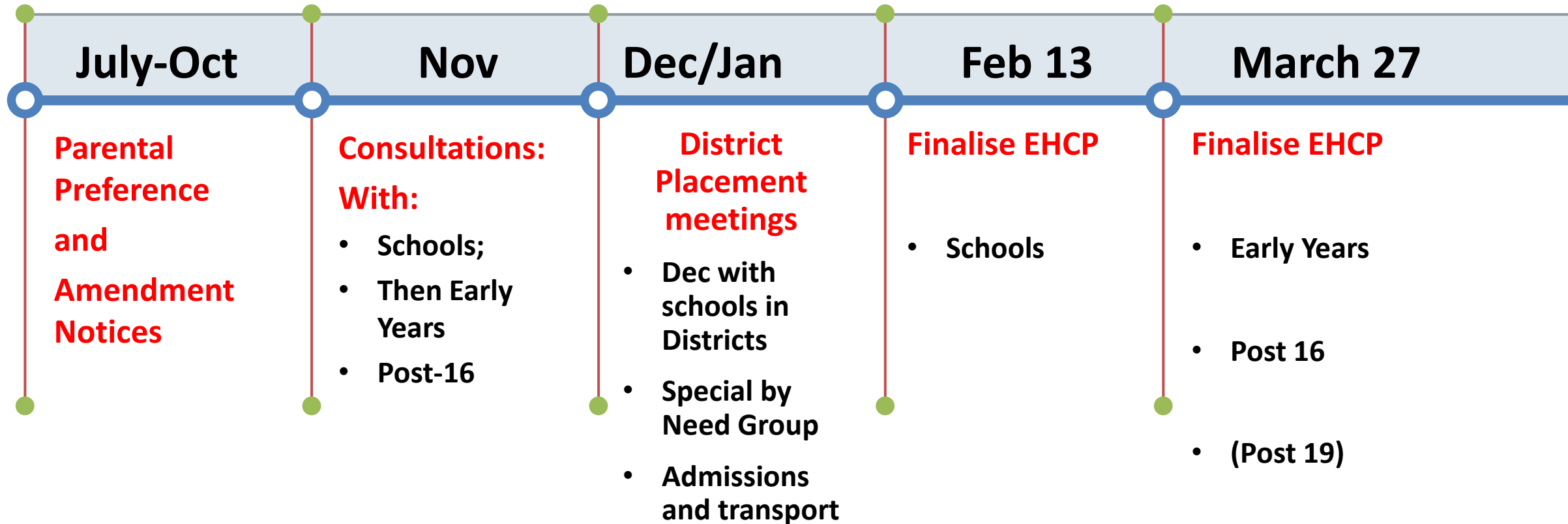


# LISTENED AND LEARNT

- Consultations with schools
- Greater dialogue
- Collaborative problem solving
- Culture shift – parents, schools and LA committed to providing mainstream pathways for the majority of CYP with SEND



# PHASE TRANSFER TIMELINE 2023



Date

# Phase Transfer

- 1289 children with EHCPs moving between Year 6 and Year 7
- Three cohorts of children
- Cohort 1
- Full agreement between parents, schools and LA – process will be as normal
- Cohort 2
- Difference of opinion between school, LA and parents
- District Placement Meetings
- Week beginning 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022

# Phase Transfer

- Details to be issued on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2022.
- Secondary schools to host.
- Cohort 3
- Where application is late and/or EHCP is late – will have a ‘mop up process’.
- We will need full feedback from schools as we prepare for the future and decide how this process meets the needs of children and schools in Kent

# SENCO Forum

- SENCOs are extremely important people
- Need to invest in them
- SENCO forum – every term. Organised by TEP as part of Kent contract
- Kent agenda.
- Last agenda - changes to STLS and SEND Inclusion Advisors
- All operational change will be communicated by this forum.

# SENCO Conference

- March 2023
- Detling
- All SENCOs are welcome
- The focus is Inclusion for School Improvement
- Phase specific
- Speakers from Ofsted, NASEN
- Rob Webster – author of The Inclusion Illusion
- Choice of workshops.



# Discussion and Questions