CHILDREN'S, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION CABINET COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 18th November, 2025

10.00 am

Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone

AGENDA

CHILDREN'S, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION CABINET COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 18 November 2025 at 10.00 am

Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone

Ask for: **Georgia Humphreys**

Telephone: **03000 412133**

Membership (13)

Reform UK (9):	Mr B Fryer (Chairman), Mr D Burns (Vice-Chair), Mr A Kibble, Mr R Mayall, Dr G Sturley, Mrs P Williams and 3 X Vacancy
Liberal Democrat (1):	Mrs T Dean, MBE
Green (1):	Mr P Stepto
Conservative (1):	Ms C Russell
Labour (1):	Ms C Nolan

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

1 Introduction/Webcast announcement

2 Apologies and Substitutes

3 Declarations of Interest

4 Minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2025 (Pages 1 - 12)

5 Verbal Update by Cabinet Members

6 Performance Monitoring (Pages 13 - 76)

7 25/00086 Parkwood Hall Expansion (Pages 77 - 92)

8 25/00087 Broomhill Bank North Expansion (Pages 93 - 110)

9 Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership Annual Report (Pages 111 - 158)

10 25/00065 Independent and Non-Maintained Special School (INMSS) Procurement (Pages 159 - 212)

11 25/00056 KCC Community Learning and Skills (CLS) Adult Education Funding Reform - Apprenticeship Programme (Pages 213 - 232)

12 25/00099 Kent Commissioning Plan (Pages 233 - 418)

13 25/00085 Specialist Resourced Provisions (Pages 419 - 450)

14 25/00097 External Tuition (Pages 451 - 470)

15 25/00092 School and Early Years Funding Arrangements for 2026-27 (Pages 471 - 488)

16 25/00100 In-House Provision of Children's Residential Homes - Match Funding (Pages 489 - 510)

17 25/00093 KCC Sufficiency Strategy (Pages 511 - 524)

18 Complaints and Representations Report (Pages 525 - 544)

19 Work Programme (Pages 545 - 546)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

Benjamin Watts
Deputy Chief Executive (Monitoring Officer)
03000 416814

Monday, 10 November 2025

This page is intentionally left blank

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee held at Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 16th September, 2025.

PRESENT: Mr B Fryer (Chairman), Mr D Burns, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Ms I Kemp, Mr A Kibble, Ms C Russell, Mr P Stepto, Mr P Thomas, Mrs P Williams, Mr A Brady (Substitute for Ms C Nolan), Mr J Finch (Substitute for Mr R Mayall), Mr T Mallon (Substitute for Dr G Sturley), Mrs S Roots (Substitute for Mr O Bradshaw), Mr M Reidy and Ms R Ainslie-Malik

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs B Fordham (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills) and Mrs C Palmer (Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services)

OFFICERS: Sarah Hammond (Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education), Christine McInnes (Director of Education & SEND), Katherine Atkinson (Assistant Director, Management Information and Intelligence, Integrated Children's Services), Christy Holden (Head of Children's Commissioning), Kevin Kasaven (Director of Children's Countywide Services), Steve Lusk (Senior Commissioner), Hayley Bodiam (Service Manager) Nick Abrahams (Area Education Officer), David Adams (Assistant Director Education, South Kent), Susannah Burden (LADO and Education Safeguarding Manager) and Georgia Humphreys (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

11. Election of Vice-Chair
(Item 1)

1. Mr Thomas proposed, and Mr Mallon seconded that Mr Burns be elected as Vice-Chair of the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee.

2. As there were no further nominations, the Chairman declared Mr Burns as Vice-Chair of the Committee.

3. RESOLVED that Mr Burns be elected Vice-Chair of the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee.

12. Apologies and Substitutes
(Item 2)

Apologies had been received from Dr Roper, Mr Bradshaw who was substituted by Mr Mallon, Mr Mayall who was substituted by Mrs Roots, Dr Sturley who was substituted by Mr Finch and Ms Nolan who was substituted by Mr Brady.

13. Declarations of Interest
(Item 3)

1. Mr Stepto declared an interest in item 9 of the agenda, that he was a Governor at Nexus School.

14. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2025
(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2025 was a correct record.

15. Verbal Updates by Cabinet Members
(Item 5)

1. Mrs Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, gave a verbal update on the following:
    a. Mrs Fordham undertook numerous visits to both mainstream and special educational schools, as well as to services supporting young people experiencing homelessness and in need of assistance.
    b. On 14th August, Mrs Fordham visited Tunbridge Girls' Grammar School for A- Level results day, where she offered her congratulations to students on their achievements. She also highlighted the availability of resources for those requiring additional support.
    c. Mrs Fordham attended GCSE results day at St John's Catholic Comprehensive School, expressing her congratulations for the students' academic outcomes and their commendable behaviour and attendance records. She shared her enthusiasm about returning to the school in the future.
    d. Mrs Fordham visited the Home to School transport system operating in Aylesford, emphasising the importance of its efficiency and effectiveness. She commended staff for their efforts in preparing the Q Roots system for its phased introduction in September 2025 and expressed her intention to return to observe its progress and further implementation.
    e. In relation to the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Programmes, Mrs Fordham visited DDivine in Northfleet, where she praised the work being done and emphasised the significance of such services. Following the Government's announcement of continued funding for three more years, she committed to visiting more providers to explore how KCC could help expand the programme to benefit more children.
    f. Mrs Fordham visited the Amber Foundation in Ashford, a charity supporting young adults transitioning out of homelessness. She engaged with the young people to hear their stories and gain insight into how the service had positively impacted their lives.
    g. Mrs Fordham visited CLS at Oakford House to review the provision and funding available for adult education. In light of reductions in Government funding, she noted the shift towards skill-based courses designed to prepare students for employment.
    h. Mrs Fordham visited Nexus School, the only provision in Tunbridge and Malling for children with highly complex needs. She stressed the importance of ensuring that the needs of children with disabilities were fully considered when planning educational provisions.

2. In response to comments and questions it was said:

a. Due to the timing of the local elections, Mrs Fordham had limited opportunity to visit schools during term time. She prioritised visits to special educational needs schools in light of upcoming decisions. Over the following year, she planned to visit schools that had begun implementing inclusive practices, with the aim of observing best practice and gathering feedback.
b. Mrs Fordham emphasised that the cost of home-to-school transport was not the primary concern, rather the individual needs of each child were the key factor in decision-making. Work was ongoing to identify the most efficient ways to meet those needs.
c. Officers were asked to provide a Member with details regarding the number of providers offering activity fund and HAF programmes during the summer holiday period.
d. Mrs Fordham explained that a home-to-school transport information session had been scheduled to give Members a comprehensive overview of the entire process.

3. Mrs Palmer, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services, gave a verbal update on the following:
    a. Mrs Palmer met with directors and staff within her portfolio, accompanied by her Deputy Cabinet Member. An Education Grant Scheme of up to two million pounds was successfully secured for Project Athena, which aimed to develop provisions for children with complex mental health needs and challenging behaviour.
    b. Mrs Palmer wrote to Janet Daby, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families, inviting her to visit KCC and witness the dedication of Directors and Officers. In her letter, Mrs Palmer praised the staff's efforts in improving the lives of cared-for children and requested a discussion on the high fees charged by independent fostering agencies.
    c. Mrs Palmer and her Deputy Cabinet Member attended the Virtual School Kent (VSK) award ceremonies, where she highlighted the vital role played by the Virtual School in supporting children and young people.
    d. Mrs Palmer visited the KCC Youth Council and commended the council's efforts in generating ideas and working proactively to bring them to fruition.
    e. In August, Mrs Palmer visited the Young Lives Foundation to observe the work of volunteers supporting young attendees. She particularly praised the organisation's impressive advocacy service.
    f. During her visit to Fairlawn Short Breaks Unit, Mrs Palmer emphasised the essential nature of the service provided there.
    g. Mrs Palmer announced the opening of two new reception centres in Kent, Conners House in Canterbury and Aspen Lodge in Deal. She emphasised the importance of delivering high-quality care and support to Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC), while ensuring full compliance with all relevant legislation.
    h. The Suicide, Self-Harm and Prevention Strategy 2026–2030 was due to enter its consultation phase. The strategy aimed to significantly reduce the number of suicides in Kent and Medway, with the goal of bringing figures below the national average by 2030, if not sooner.
    i. Mrs Palmer was scheduled to attend the Big Mental Health Talk Conference in October.

4. In response to comments and questions it was said:
    a. Project Athena aimed to secure four residential units for looked-after children in Kent. Each unit was designed to provide two beds for children with the most profound emotional wellbeing challenges. The initiative sought to bring the service in-house, reducing reliance on the private sector. KCC was on track to purchase two units and Mr Kasaven believed the service was progressing well towards having all four units operational by September 2026.
    b. Project Athena was funded through capital investment secured from the Department for Education (DfE), which was added to the agreed capital allocation for the four residential units. Officers expressed their willingness to provide ongoing feedback and updates on the project to the Committee.
    c. Mrs Palmer had not yet visited Conners House but intended to visit as many reception centres as possible in the future. She reassured Committee Members that the team remained committed to safeguarding both staff and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC).

RESOLVED that the verbal updates were noted.

16. Performance Monitoring
(Item 6)

1. Ms Atkinson, Assistant Director Management Information and Intelligence, introduced the report, providing the Committee with an overview of the performance data of the individual indicators.

2. In response to comments and questions it was said:
    a. Ms Atkinson clarified that some targets were based on the academic year, while others aligned with the financial year. She emphasised the importance of ensuring the service had access to the latest national and statistical neighbour benchmarks to set appropriate and meaningful targets.
    b. Ms Atkinson explained that recruitment varied across different areas of the county, noting that it was particularly challenging in districts located deeper within Kent.
    c. The Department for Education (DfE) published annual Education, Health and C are Plan (EHCP) data each July, based on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) returns from local authorities. This enabled comparisons across school types and geographical areas. The Kent Commissioning Plan (KCP) was reviewed annually and included a specific focus on SEND. While efforts were made to reduce out-of-county placements, some children had complex needs that could not be met within Kent, necessitating external placements. As part of a wider SEND improvement journey, a special school review was undertaken to assess the provision and distribution of special schools. Several internal initiatives were introduced to support individuals entering social work, resulting in the recruitment of over 50 newly qualified social workers during the year. However, it was acknowledged that burnout led many to leave the profession early, both nationally and locally, creating a need for

ongoing recruitment. Challenges were also identified in university programmes and the student pipeline. In response, local programmes were developed and implemented to maintain a steady flow of professionals into children's services.

d. It was noted that upcoming reforms under the Children's Wellbeing Bill were expected to shift responsibilities not only to qualified social workers but also to alternatively qualified staff. Consequently, key performance indicators (KPIs) would need to be reviewed and adjusted to reflect the broader workforce contribution.
e. There was a focus on schools working collaboratively at a local level. Through a local agreement, a permanently excluded pupil could be placed in another school and supported to succeed as quickly as possible. Mrs Atkinson confirmed that there were no Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) for primary-aged children.
f. A Member highlighted the potential impact of the merger between the Universities of Kent and Greenwich.
g. The timeliness of the Performance Monitoring report was influenced more by submission deadlines for Cabinet Committee reports than by technology. Ms Atkinson explained that if later submission dates were permitted, the service could provide more current data. In response to concerns about the number of primary school exclusions, she suggested that the Head of Service could be asked to provide a more detailed report.
h. Efforts were made to streamline and improve processes in educational psychology. Measures included reviewing previous reports from independent educational psychologists, shortening report lengths and periodically using local educational psychologists to increase capacity. As part of the 20-week EHCP process, work was undertaken to improve inter-service communication, with a pilot running during the zero to six-week stage to identify potential time savings. Early learning from the pilot was already emerging and the initiative continued to be closely monitored with the aim of further improvement.
i. Mrs Fordham agreed to request a list of providers whose funding had been cut, with the intention of initiating direct conversations to offer support and foster collaborative relationships aimed at better serving young people in need.
j. Provisional results for the Early Years Foundation Stage were reviewed. Although results had dropped significantly in the first year following the Covid-19 pandemic, they had gradually improved since. Analysis of the provisional data revealed that children in care faced fewer challenges than other vulnerable groups. A detailed analysis was commissioned from the Corporate Analytics Team to examine learning patterns and identify areas where children were falling behind. This work aimed to inform future strategy, including school support and alignment with the Start for Life initiative focused on family hubs.
k. Ms Atkinson acknowledged the ongoing challenges in educational outcomes since the Covid-19 pandemic. The Corporate Analytics Team was tasked with conducting a deeper analysis to identify patterns and provide more detailed insights.
l. Ms Atkinson explained that the average duration for EHCP cases open beyond 20 weeks was below 24–25 weeks. She noted that the

structure of the educational psychology service meant that psychologists undertook more than just EHCP reporting. A calendar of training and drop-in sessions was in place and while not continuous, it did not delay EHCP turnaround times.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the report.

17. Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Education Safeguarding Service (LESAS) Annual Report 2024-25
(Item 10)

1. Mrs Palmer introduced the report and gave an overview into the role of a Local Authority Designated Officer.

2. Ms Burden, LADO and Education Safeguarding Manager, presented a report to the Committee, outlining the significantly transitional year for the service.

3. In response to comments and questions it was said:
    a. Ms Burden was happy to offer safeguarding training to Members.
    b. It was noted that LESAS had not previously engaged with the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). Ms Burden recorded this for the faith lead to follow up. Kirsty Owens had been identified as the lead officer for work with faith groups. The team had joined a national focus group to explore barriers to engagement and collaborated with the organisation Thirtyone:eight to reach smaller faith communities. While strong links existed with larger groups such as the Church of England and the Catholic Church, smaller groups particularly those led by independent pastors, remained more difficult to engage. Ongoing work with partners aimed to raise awareness of services, address challenges and offer support, sometimes in collaboration with police colleagues or other churches.
    c. The service could be asked by partners within the Local Authority to do particular reviews, also schools select to commission them to do them themselves.
    d. Ms Burden had written peer auditing reports with Lancashire County Council, as well as Oxfordshire County Council, these would be circulated to the Committee after the meeting.
    e. Ms Burden confirmed that parents who educate their children from home could access the service. Whether the child was educated at home or not was not monitored by the service, Ms Burden explained that this was something that could be monitored in the future.
    f. The 75% increase in referrals came from a single local authority, considered to be an outlier. The National LADO Network had explored reasons for the upward trend, identifying factors such as high profile cases including the Lucy Letby case, which had raised awareness of LADO's among communities previously unfamiliar with it. It was also noted that with publicity demand would increase which was seen as a positive in many ways.
    g. In terms of the 'inappropriate conduct' category in the Allegation Types 2024/25 category, Ms Burden explained that it acted as a catch all for a wide range of concerns that could not be categorised elsewhere.

h. Ms Burden explained that funding was being sought to subsidise courses for early year providers, though this had not yet been secured and no promises could be made. In the meantime, alternative cost effective ways of engaging with providers was being explored, including running network meetings and potentially twilight sessions to avoid impacting nursery ratios
i. The project being conducted with the Isle of Wight had no relevance to the prison population, alternatively it was related to the service for UASC.
j. LESAS did not have a blanket view on the use of mobile phones by children in schools. LESAS aimed to support schools to manage the procedures they have in place, Ms Burden noted the difficulty schools would face trying to implement a blanket ban on mobile phone use. Ms Burden recognised the importance of mobile phones in situations such as diabetes blood sugar level monitoring. Additionally, Ms Burden explained that some of the physical interventions mentioned in the report had been due to mobile phones.
k. It reported that the quality assurance framework for family hubs was being delivered in partnership with the safeguarding unit with the service contributing. Visit to each district family hub was scheduled to be completed by July 2026 and no issues were anticipated in meeting this target.
l. For UASC homes and supported lodging units, the IRO team was leading practise inquiries and collaboration visits with the service participation in line with the timeline set by the IRO service. There was a program in place to oversee these homes, aligned with their Ofsted regulation, ensuring good quality of care and awareness of circumstances prior to inspections. For homes with heightened concerns, safety plans were implemented to address potential protests, alongside daily safety measures.
m. A Member asked that within the next LESAS Report presented to the Committee, an update on the KPI's and the outcomes of the action plan that would show that results were moving in the right direction.
n. The service had changed its data collection method since developing LESAS, as there were some overlap between external safeguarding issues and inappropriate conduct. It was clarified that situations were classified as external safeguarding if they did not occur within the workplace, such as in a nursery or school.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the report and its findings.

18. Private Fostering Annual Report 2024-25
(Item 11)

1. Mrs Palmer introduced the report and gave an overview of the purpose of the Private Fostering Annual Report.

2. Ms Bodiam, Service Manager, provided the Committee with an overview of the report, highlighting its findings and how the service was working to improve.

3. In response to comments and questions it was said:

a. There was support in place under the Child in Need Framework for 'Child Five' as referred to in the report.
b. Ms Hammond explained that private fostering regulations were significantly tightened after the death of Victoria Climbié. It was important to remember that some parents did not want their family arrangements to be investigated by Local Authorities. The service was reliant on families being honest about their arrangements and colleagues in schools and health referring any changes in care to the Local Authority.
c. Ms Bodiam assured Members that areas that required improvement went back to management and officers to investigate and rectify. There were no comparisons to other local authorities available, but it was something that the team would look into. Mr Kasaven added that the inspection of the service observed a good improvement from the previous inspection in 2017. Only twenty percent of authorities received outstanding rating, this showed that nationally there was a challenge around various aspects of practice.
d. Ms Crisan explained that it was not a criminal offence to not declare a private fostering arrangement.
e. Ms Bodiam explained that the domestic abuse incident related to 'Child Five' was not linked to a lack of DBS.
f. Ms Bodiam explained that 'Child Two' was not in fostering arrangement, instead they had remained in family arrangement.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the report and its recommendations for 2025-2026.

19. 25/00073 Release of capital for the second phase of works to increase the Designated Number at Nexus Foundation Special School
(Item 7)

1. Mrs Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, introduced the item and reasoning behind the decision.

2. Mr Abrahams, Area Education Officer, introduced the report and explained the level of needs at the school and explaining that this was linked to a previous Key Decision taken, the implementation of the decision would allow for extra teaching areas and other rooms to support students. Additionally, Mr Abrahams highlighted that the funding came from dedicated DfE grants.

3. In response to comments and questions it was said:
    a. When asked about the increase costs from those that were projected, Mr Abrahams explained that Officers were disappointed to see such a dramatic increase. In response to this, the service had integrated a second step into the process of contractor's providing costs. Quantity surveyors were to go through contracts to ensure the costs estimated were appropriate.
    b. When asked about the cost of the original contactor, Mr Abrahams explained that the estimates were pre-construction estimates. Additionally, the contractors would have been paid by revenue funding as part of the design of the project and he would come back to the Committee with the exact figure.

c. A Member thanked Mrs Fordham for her complimentary comments about Nexus School and encouraged Members to visit the school and see the work that was done.
d. Mr Abrahams explained that this decision would avoid the need for future children to travel further. The majority of children that would be placed at Nexus School would have otherwise been put into the independent sector, which would have resulted in higher costs and further distances to travel.
e. When asked if there was a delivery programme in place, Mr Abrahams explained that contractually KCC could not spend money until decision had been formally taken. There was a programme that would have pre-groundwork starting in November 2025, with construction starting at the beginning of 2026 and the target was the building would be completed for the September 2026 cohort.

RESOLVED that the Committee considered and endorsed the proposed decision.

20. 25/00071 Funding of Services to Schools 2026-27
(Item 8)

1. Mrs Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, introduced the item, explaining the reasoning behind the decision.

2. Mr Adams, Assistant Director Education (South Kent), introduced the report, highlighting the potential saving to the Council of circa £2.6 million. The purpose of the decision was to ensure that there was parity between the funding that went to the academy and maintained school sectors.

3. In response to comments and questions it was said:
    a. In terms of listening to feedback from schools and the potential risk of increased costs if issues arose, Mr Adams explained that top-slicing was not a decision that KCC could make as they needed the support of the Schools Funding Forum or the decision of the Secretary of State. The service thought the safest, lowest risk option was for KCC to continue to provide the service in the way that they had previously. Mr Adams acknowledged that if the questions within the survey had been altered slightly, there may have been more clarity with the responses. The decision would be debated through Schools Funding Forum and Mr Adams was to relay the feedback made by the Committee to the Forum.
    b. Mr Adams explained that the Government had changed some grant funding that KCC had received, for example if a grant had ceased then equivalent funding would have gone into school budgets. Kent had been slow in telling schools to pay for services with their funding and consequently they had continued to fund services out of the general fund. Mr Adams highlighted that in some cases this would have been a conscious choice and historically, Kent's maintained schools were amongst some of the lowest funded in the country. As the funding was now with schools, Members would have to make policy choices as to whether KCC continued to fund these services out of the general fund or whether schools should fund services out of their own budgets and what mechanisms would be used to do that. Mr Adams recognised the importance of the challenge to keep a balance

between risk to the Council, the cost to schools and the autonomy for people to make their own decisions.

c. The grant funding previously received by the Local Authority would have detailed its purpose of use. When the equivalent funding went into school's budgets, the expectation was that either schools purchase those themselves or buy them from the Local Authority.
d. Mr Adams had spoken to colleagues in Infrastructure to investigate how to have conversations with the Forum about meetings of a school's group to have a look at matters such as the FM Contract. The service were aware they needed to be better at engaging with schools around what they were buying on their behalf and how to assure quality. There was a focus on how to work collectively for all schools.
e. The survey response rate was lower than anticipated, which prompted efforts to encourage greater participation. Whilst proposals had already been shared and it was acknowledged that schools were under significant time pressures, the service was to continue working with the Forum to explore further ways to improve engagement.
f. In terms of discharging liability, the Local Authority had different responsibilities for different maintained schools. Mr Adams explained that trying to unpick liability can become confusing as health and safety legislation does not allow duties to be delegated, only responsibilities. The service was to investigate with the School's Forum to see how this was to look in a year or so time.

4. In accordance with paragraph 16.31 of the Constitution, Mr Brady wished for it to be recorded in the minutes that he voted against endorsing the proposed decision 25/00071 - Funding of Services to Schools 2026-27.

RESOLVED that the Committee considered and endorsed the proposed decision.

21. 25/00069 Commissioning of Short Break Day Activities 2026 to 2028
(Item 9)

1. Mrs Palmer, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services, introduced the item, explained that these short breaks were a vital service for families who look after profoundly disabled children.

2. Ms Holden, Head of Children's Commissioning, gave an overview of commissioning and introduced the report.

3. In response to comments and questions it was said:
    a. Mr Lusk, Senior Commissioner, explained that providers were required to record their information on Core Plus, the Council's early help system. This gave the service an increased amount of visibility on the number of children, their needs type and the outcomes of each session. The service looked into annual reviews of the grant project, to ensure feedback was provided by parents and carers. The service had received positive feedback detailing how important the breaks were for parents and careers and how their children had developed and grown due to the activities. The service was achieving value for money in those grants, however it was highlighted that the budget had not changed in numerous years. The service was continuing to seek

best value of money through the voluntary community sector. In terms of next steps there had only been one full year of data, but this had been encouraging. Ms Holden added that an outcomes framework had been developed with colleagues within SEN, which was led by children and the outcomes that they wanted to see.

b. When asked if there was capacity within the voluntary sector to manage demand, Ms Holden assured the Committee of sufficient capacity and emphasised that this was a vital part of the commissioning landscape.
c. Ms Holden explained that the use of the term ‘disabled children’ had only recently been changed from ‘children with disabilities’, but she was happy to pass back feedback to the service.

RESOLVED that the Committee considered and endorsed the proposed decision.

22. Work Programme
(Item 12)

RESOLVED that the work programme was noted.

This page is intentionally left blank

Children, Young People and Education Performance Management

Children, Young People and Education Directorate Scorecard

September 2025

Produced by: Management Information & Intelligence, KCC

Publication Date: 24th October 2025

Kent County Council
kent.gov.uk

This page is intentionally blank

Children, Young People and Education Directorate Scorecard

Guidance Notes

Notes:
Figures for indicator CYPE8 (Rate of proven re-offending by CYP) shown in red have not been published by the Minstry of Justice (MoJ) but are included for information in this scorecard. The latest available data for this indicators remains as at Q4 for 2024-25. Updated data is not available, for the following reason stated by the MoJ: *Following discovery of a small data issue impacting some juveniles discharged from custody, these figures have been removed and will be updated as soon as possible.*
Please note that not all Children's Social Work indicators can be shown broken down by District for the associated CSWS team, as caseloads relating to these indicators are held by Area and Kent LA level teams. Cases included in a dataset are based on the Service working with the child and not the child's geographical residence.

POLARITY

H	The aim of this indicator is to achieve the highest number/percentage possible
L	The aim of this indicator is to achieve the lowest number/percentage possible
T	The aim of this indicator is to stay close to the target that has been set

RAG RATINGS

RED	Floor Standard* has not been achieved
AMBER	Floor Standard* achieved but Target has not been met
GREEN	Target has been achieved

* Floor Standards are set in Directorate Business Plans and if not achieved must result in management action

DIRECTION OF TRAVEL (DOT)

⇧	Performance has improved
⇩	Performance has worsened
⇔	Performance has remained the same

INCOMPLETE DATA

N/A	Data not available
	Data to be supplied
	New indicator - historical data not available

Data in italics indicates previous reporting year

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION CONTACT DETAILS

Wendy Murray	03000 419417
Maureen Robinson	03000 417164
Matt Ashman	03000 417012
Celene Rudling	03000 417022

MIEducation&WiderEH@kent.gov.uk
MIIntensiveEH&SocialCare@kent.gov.uk

DATA PERIOD

R12M	Monthly Rolling 12 months
MS	Monthly Snapshot
YTD	Year To Date
Q	Quarterly
A	Annual

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION SCORECARDS

CYPE	Children, Young People and Education Directorate Scorecard
EY	Early Years Scorecard
NEET	NEET Monthly Scorecard
SEND	Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Scorecard
ICS	Intensive EH and CSWS Monthly Performance Report

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

CIC	Children in Care
CSWT	Children's Social Work Teams
CYP	Children and Young People
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
EY	Early Years
EYFE	Early Years Free Entitlement
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
FF2	Free For Two
FSM	Free School Meals
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
SCS	Specialist Children's Services
SEN	Special Educational Needs

Directorate Scorecard - Kent Activity/Volume

as at May 2025

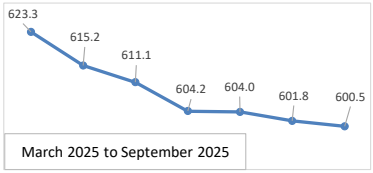
131,009 pupils in 460 primary schools
27.9 % with free school meals (24.7%)

113,859 pupils in 103 secondary schools
25.0 % with free school meals (25.8%)

6,544 pupils in 25 special schools
48.5 % with free school meals (49.2%)

as at Sep 2025

Rate of Early Help Unit Referrals per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (inclusive, rolling 12 months)



as at Sep 2025

Open cases

Intensive Early Help	2,009 (Families)
Open Social Work Cases	11,202
Including:	
• Child Protection	1,165
• Children in Care	1,959
• Care Leavers	2,021

as at Aug 2024

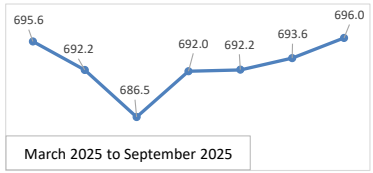
Ofsted judgements

EY providers	98.7	(97%)
Primary	92.4	(91%)
Secondary	88.0	(85%)
Special	92.3	(90%)

Note: From 1st September 2024, inspections of state-funded schools no longer include a judgement on overall effectiveness, and outcomes of ungraded inspections no longer refer to the previous good or outstanding grade. No aggregations of data are now published by Ofsted and no replacement measure has been devised.

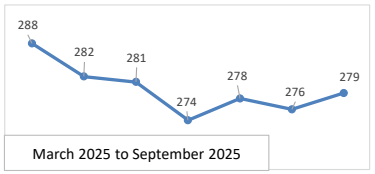
as at Sep 2025

Rate of referrals to Children's Social Work Services per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (inclusive, rolling 12 months)



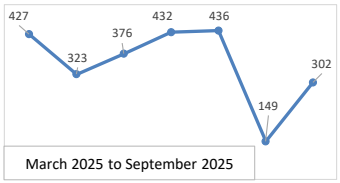
as at Sep 2025

Number of First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice system



as at Sep 2025

Requests for SEND statutory assessment



as at Sep 2025

Activity at the Front Door (children)

Total contacts	7,152
Number resolved at FD	3,053
Number to CSWS	2,087
Number to EH Units	1,570

as at Sep 2025

Family Hub Indicators

Pending Family Hub scorecard development

- Figures shown in brackets are National averages
- Free School Meal averages are as at January 2025 school census and based on state funded schools only
- Ofsted National averages are as at 31st August 2024, except EY Providers average which is as at 31st March 2024

Directorate Scorecard - SEND Monthly Indicators

Education Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East Average as at 31st December 2024	England Average as at 31st December 2024
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25										
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		81.7	85.3	60.2	53.9	51.9	41.8	44.3	82	185	⇧	65	RED	33.3	60	RED	38.2	46.4
APP17-N	Total number of EHCPs issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		107	168	68	69	80	51	82										
APP17-D	Total number of EHCPs issued	L	MS		131	197	113	128	154	122	185										
APP17-A	Average duration in days from assessment request to EHCP completion	L	MS		146	144	149	155	156	159	162			⇩							
APP-EP	Percentage of assessment requests sent to Educational Psychology returned within 6 weeks	H	MS		10.2	13.0	9.4	17.9	21.4	22.3	10.5	22	209	⇩	65	RED	39.2	60	RED	N/A	N/A
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	L	MS		10.8	11.0	10.0	10.1	10.0	10.1	10.3	2,198	21,346	⇩	9	AMBER	10.1	9	AMBER	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of open Educational Psychology referrals waiting more than 6 weeks	L	MS		27.2	36.4	49.5	55.4	51.4	51.8	65.1	391	601	⇩						N/A	N/A
	Percentage of SEND statutory assessment requests waiting more than 20 weeks	L	MS		4.7	8.1	8.9	10.5	15.3	22.0	17.0	209	1,229	⇧						N/A	N/A

Note: 2023-24 targets for APP17 and APP-EP are using the June 2024 targets from the APP scorecard

Commentary on Education SEND Indicators:

While 20 week rolling annual average continues to increase, exceeding national averages by over 20%, limited EP capacity has temporarily negatively impacted monthly figures. However, these too continue to outpace the national average. Assessment teams are engaging with EP lead officers to ensure that backlogs are balanced with finalisation of new cases to ensure lower performance is as short lived as possible. In addition, EP service is investigating opportunities to increase their overall capacity. In spite of these difficulties, the service is keeping the number of cases open over 20 weeks to a manageable amount and monitoring this closely.

Directorate Scorecard - Kent KPIs

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	21.9	21.8	21.9	22.0	21.8	21.9	21.9	5,317	24,245	⇔	25.0	GREEN	21.9	25.0	GREEN	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		88.4	88.2	88.0	87.8	88.1	88.5	87.9	1,567	1,782	⇩	90.0	AMBER	88.4	90.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		24.3	24.8	25.0	26.0	26.4	27.7	28.2	388	1,377	⇩	20.0	RED	24.3	20.0	AMBER	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		71.6	73.6	74.2	73.7	73.5	73.7	72.7	338	465	⇩	70.0	GREEN	71.6	70.0	GREEN	69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	72.8	71.4	71.5	70.9	70.1	70.0	69.3	713	1,029	⇩	85.0	RED	72.8	85.0	RED	N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		367.6	393.0	388.7	416.7	421.8	429.8	412.0	22,246	54	⇧	426.0	GREEN	367.6	426.0	GREEN	468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	56.6	55.9	57.2	57.8	55.7	55.8	56.5	669	1,185	⇧	65.0	AMBER	56.6	65.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		87.3	87.3	87.8	87.8	87.6	87.6	87.6	530	605	⇔	85.0	GREEN	87.3	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	73.9	72.9	73.2	73.3	74.0	74.5	77.9	491.1	630.5	⇧	85.0	AMBER	73.9	85.0	RED	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		16.5	16.3	16.7	16.6	16.9	16.7	16.7	1,681	100.5	⇔	15.0	AMBER	16.5	15.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		21.7	20.6	20.0	21.6	20.7	20.6	20.6	5,505	267.4	⇔	18.0	AMBER	21.7	18.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	L	R12M		26.1	26.3	26.6	26.7	26.4	26.3	26.2	3,103	11,864	⇧	25.0	AMBER	26.1	25.0	AMBER	21	N/A
EH52-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	H	MS		90.6	90.6	90.8	90.8	91.4	92.2	92.1	4,590	4,983	⇩	85.0	GREEN	90.6	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	H	R12M		93.7	93.7	90.6	90.6	90.5	90.5	91.7	133	145	⇧	85.0	GREEN	93.7	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	L	R12M	✓	14.9	14.9	14.4	14.5	14.6	14.5	14.3	575	4,020	⇧	15.0	GREEN	14.9	15.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	L	MS		14.2	12.7	13.7	13.3	13.1	11.5	12.6	1821	144.6	⇧	20.0	AMBER	14.2	20.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Integrated Children's Services Quarterly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Quarterly Trends			Latest Quarter			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East as at Jan 2025	England & Wales as at Jan 2025
								Rate	Numerator	Denominator								
					Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26										
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	L	Q		33.2	33.5	33.1	30.4	135	444	⇧	32.9	GREEN	33.5	32.9	AMBER	32.6	32.5

Directorate Scorecard - Kent KPIs

Education Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET) [seasonally impacted indicator]	L	MS		4.2	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.3	3.0*	1,165	39,516	⇩	TBC			2.8	GREEN	*2.8*	*3.2*
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	H	R12M		86.1	87.4	90.2	91.9	93.2	93.4	95.3	4,498	4,722	⇧	90	GREEN	93.4	65	GREEN	N/A	N/A
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	H	R12M		66.6	72.7	79.2	85.3	87.9	87.9	88.3	3,150	3,567	⇧	85	GREEN	87.9	60	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	L	R12M		30	31	30	33	30	30	33	N/A	N/A	⇩	<= 25	RED	30	<= 25	RED	N/A	N/A
EH44	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		67	66	62	58	67	62	63	N/A	N/A	⇩	<= 79	GREEN	62	<= 79	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Percentage (rate) of pupils permanently excluded from primary and secondary phase schools - all Year R to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	N/A	N/A	⇔						0.07	0.13

Note: *The NEET percentage for September is provisional data as at 22/10/25 and subject to change.

Exclusion rates have been added alongside the numbers of permanent exclusions, as this is the only way that Kent's performance can be benchmarked to national.

Education Termly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Termly Trends			Latest Term			DOT	Target Summer 2024-25	RAG 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator			
					Summer 23-24	Autumn 24-25	Spring 24-25	Summer 24-25					
	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator]	H	T		67.8	68.0	60.0	53.7	2,118	3,947	⇩	64.0	RED

Please note that KS5 provisional attainment data for 2024-25 will be available in the next scorecard (January CYPE cabinet committee)

Education Annual Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	H	A		65.8	68.3	68.0	68.9	11,841	17,176	69	AMBER	⇧	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		23.2	21.3	24.7	22.7	N/A	N/A	20	AMBER	⇧	21	25.1	21.1
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	H	A		59	59	62	61	18,904	11,489	62	AMBER	⇧	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		28	28	26	27	N/A	N/A	23	RED	⇩	25	25	21
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	H	A		49.3	47.0	47.0	46.6	N/A	N/A	47.0	AMBER	⇩	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		18.5	17.8	18.2	18.6	N/A	N/A	17.0	AMBER	⇩	17.0	18.7	14.8
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		37.68	34.20	34.22	*34.22*	N/A	N/A	35	AMBER	⇔		*35.07*	*34.38*
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		32.01	29.14	28.03	*28.03*	N/A	N/A	30	AMBER	⇔		*28.45*	*29.09*
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		34.61	33.47	27.17	*27.17*	N/A	N/A	38	RED	⇔		*28.38*	*28.11*

Data sources for attainment data: FSP = 2025 School Returns, NCER Emerging National/Regional data. KS2 = 2025 DfE Provisional SFR, 11/09/25. KS4 = 2025 DfE Provisional SFR, 16/10/25. KS5 = 2024 DfE Published SFR, 13/02/25

Directorate Scorecard - Kent KPIs

Education Annual Indicators (Continued) (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	L	A		4.8	5.2	5.4	5.8	15,586	270,731	4.8	RED	⇩	5.8	5.8	5.8
CYPE2	Percentage of parents getting first preference of primary school	H	A		90.1	90.1	91.3	90.6	14,973	16,527	N/A				91.3	92.6
CYPE3	Percentage of parents getting first preference of secondary school	H	A		79.6	78.2	78.6	80.6	14,735	18,283	N/A				83.2	83.5
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		19.1	17.2	15.8	15.1	17,145	113,706	15.8	GREEN	⇧	14.3	13.8	14.3
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		29.2	29.2	26.8	22.2	21,638	97,440	23.0	GREEN	⇧	21.1	20.9	21.1
EH48	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		0.7	0.9	1.0	1.0	1,190	113,706			⇧	0.9	0.9	0.9
EH49	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		2.9	3.7	3.8	3.4	3,265	97,440			⇧	3.2	3.2	3.2

Note: The Working Together to Improve School Attendance statutory guidance has been in place since August 2024, so we have expanded the reporting on school absence to include Severe Absence as well as Persistent Absence, as these are now the two key measures. Persistent Absence is absence of 10% or more, and Severe Absence is absence of 50% or more.

Directorate Scorecard - Kent KPIs

Commentary on Integrated Children's Services Indicators:

Children's Social Care

RED: The percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time is 28.2% which is above the target range of 17.5% - 22.5%. This compares to average rates for England of 24.7%, Statistical Neighbours 24.5% and the South East 25.3% (2023/24). The current performance is impacted by repeat plans for large sibling groups over the last three months. In July and August 2025 two sibling groups comprising of six children became subject to a Child Protection Plan, and in August and September there were also two sibling groups of five children. This measure includes all children subject to a subsequent plan regardless of the timescale between those plans. Of the 388 children subject to a repeat plan starting in the 12 months to September 2025, the durations were as follows: 54.6% with more than 24 months between previous plan ending and new one starting; 22.2% between 12-24 months; and 23.2% were less than 12 months.

RED: At 69.3% the percentage of children in care placed in KCC foster care, or in placements with relatives/friends, is below the floor standard of 75.0%. The target of 85.0% is an aspirational target set to drive up the use of in-house provision. The highest performance achieved during the last 3 years was 75.5% in December 2022. This is therefore a performance target that needs review for 2026/2027 reporting. The availability of in-house foster placements is a national issue. Actions being taken to increase the number of fostering households include increased information events, recruitment stands at large community events, specific campaigns using social media and use of the "refer a friend" payment, to encourage existing foster carers to support recruitment of family and friends to join Kent Fostering. Part of the recruitment strategy is to look to our existing KCC staff group, to promote becoming a foster carer and completing the initial work on whether KCC can become a "Fostering Friendly" employer. The service is at the initial stages of developing a "Create a Room" project, to support existing approved foster carers to create an additional bedroom for fostering.

AMBER: The Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with Children's Social Work Involvement is 87.9%, which is close to the Target of 90.0%. For those Returner Interviews that did take place, 87.4% took place within timescale (3 working days) which is above the 80.0% target.

AMBER: The percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with) is 56.5% which is below the Target of 65.0%. Those not in employment will include those not able to work due to illness, disability, pregnancy or parenting responsibilities and unaccompanied asylum seeking young people who remain without status and are not able to remain in education or gain employment when they reach the age of 18. The Home Office have confirmed unaccompanied children will have their applications prioritised which should then lead to an improvement in performance. The 18+ Care Leavers Service have two specialist staff to support young people access opportunities.

AMBER: The percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers is 77.9%, the highest level since December 2022 (78.1%). The target for this measure is 85.0% which is based on the previous national average for Agency Social Workers of 15%. That increased to 16.2% (September 2024) but the Kent target of 85.0% was retained. Recruiting and retaining qualified social workers remains a priority for CYPE and a range of initiatives are continually being explored and implemented. The annual collection of Children's Social Care Workforce data, provides some comparative data as at 30th September 2024 - Social Work Vacancies: Kent 15.1%, England average 17.3%, SE average 16.0%; Percentage of Agency Social Workers covering vacancies - Kent 67.6%; England average 76.2%, SE average 74.4%; Social Worker turnover - Kent 11.1%, England average 13.8%, SE average 14.4%.

AMBER: The average caseload in the Children in Care (CIC) Teams is 16.7 children, which is above the target of no more than 15 children/young people. The average caseload has remained stable at around this level since the start of the reporting year.

AMBER: The average caseload in the Children's Social Work Teams (CSWT) is 20.6 children, which is above the target caseload of no more than 18 children. The average caseload has remained stable at this level since the start of the reporting year.

GREEN: The percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral was 21.9% , achieving the Target of below 25.0%. This performance compares to the latest published England average of 22.4%, and averages of 19.2% for Kent's Statistical Neighbours and 26.6% for the South East (all comparative rates are for 2023/24).

GREEN: The percentage of Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more) is 72.7%, achieving the Target of above 70.0%. Kent's performance remains above the latest published average for England of 68.0% and the South-East 66.0% and Kent's Statistical Neighbours of 67.7% (comparative data is for 2023/24).

GREEN: The average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family is 412 days, within the nationally set guide of less than 426 days. This compares to the latest published England average of 485 days for 2023/24.

GREEN: The percentage of Children's Social Work Case File Audits graded good or outstanding is 87.6%, which is above the 80.0% Target.

Intensive Early Help

AMBER: The percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months is 26.2%, which is above the target of 25.0%.

AMBER: The average caseload within Early Help Units is 12.6 families. The Target for this measure was increased to 20 families for 2024/25.

GREEN: The percentage of Early Help Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation, is at 92.1%, achieving the target of above 85.0%.

GREEN: The percentage of Early Help Unit cases that were audited and graded as good or outstanding is 91.7% , achieving the 85.0% target.

GREEN: The percentage of Early Help cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to Early Help units or Children's Social Work teams in 3 months is 14.3%, achieving the Target rate of 15.0% or less.

Directorate Scorecard - Kent KPIs

Commentary on Education Indicators:

The majority of education indicators are annual. Commentary has only been provided for indicators where new data has been published since the last scorecard was issued where targets exist.

RED: The numbers of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase, as a 12-month rolling average, at 33 exceeds the target of 25 or under. Kent PRU and Attendance Service (KPAS) continues its work regarding suspensions and permanent exclusions. Common themes are identified, and additional processes developed to support schools to ensure all interventions are exhausted and exclusion remains a last resort.

RED: The percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator] continues to decline and is below the target and last year's performance. Reasons not clear although the new Working Parent Entitlement is thought to be having a negative impact. We have raised the issue with the DfE and are awaiting their steer/position.

RED: The percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap at 27 is higher than both the target and the national.

AMBER: The provisional data for the percentage of pupils at Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) achieving a Good Level of Development at 68.9% is 0.1% below the target if 69.0% however is above the NCER National figure of 68.3%

AMBER: The provisional data for the percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap at 22.7 is higher than the target of 20.

AMBER: The provisional data for the percentage of pupils at Key Stage 2 (KS2) achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics is 61% which is below the target by 1 percentage point but in line with National.

AMBER: The average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 at 46.6 is just below the target of 47.0 but higher than National (45.9%)

AMBER: The average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 – FSM gap at 18.6 is higher than the target of 17.0 and that nationally (14.8) but marginally better than the South East (18.7)

GREEN: The rate of proven re-offending by children and young people has reduced from 33.1 to 30.4 and is now green.

GREEN: The percentage of Children Missing Education (CME) cases, closed within 30 school days is now 95.3% with 4,498 cases closed out of a total of 4,722

GREEN: The percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention at 88.3% remains above the target of 85%

Directorate Scorecard - Kent KPIs - Vulnerable Learners

Annual Indicators - Primary (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - all pupils	H	A		65.8	68.3	68.0	68.9	11,841	17,176	69	AMBER	⇧	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		22.6	23.2	24.7	22.7	N/A	N/A	20	AMBER	⇧	21	25.1	21.1
	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - Kent CIC gap	L	A		17.6	22.5	44.4	32.9	N/A	N/A	23	RED	⇧	N/A small cohort	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - SEN Support gap	L	A		48.6	50.4	52.9	51.8	N/A	N/A	50	AMBER	⇧	50	49.9	50.3
	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - SEN EHCP gap	L	A		66.3	70.5	72.9	74.2	N/A	N/A	70	RED	⇩	73	73.2	72.8
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - all pupils	H	A		59	59	62	61	18,904	11,489	62	AMBER	⇩	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		28	28	26	27	N/A	N/A	23	RED	⇩	25	25	21
	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - Kent CIC gap	L	A		32.6	35.4	30.6	33.3	N/A	N/A	30	RED	⇩	30	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - SEN Support gap	L	A		48	47	46	44	N/A	N/A	45	GREEN	⇧	43	45	44
	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - SEN EHCP gap	L	A		61	62	64	64	N/A	N/A	61	AMBER	⇔	63	63	63

Note - There are no KS1-2 Progress measures for 2023-24 and none planned for 2024-25 as there is no KS1 prior attainment data for the relevant years.

Annual Indicators - Secondary (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SE Region	
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - all pupils	H	A		49.3	47.0	47.0	46.6	N/A	N/A	47.0	AMBER	⇩	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		18.5	17.8	18.2	18.6	N/A	N/A	17.0	AMBER	⇧	17.0	18.7	14.8
	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - Kent CIC gap	L	A		27.3	28.2	28.0	*28.0*	N/A	N/A					N/A	N/A
	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - SEN Support gap	L	A		16.7	16.3	17.5	17.5	N/A	N/A	15.0	AMBER	⇔	16.4	17.7	16.4
	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - SEN EHCP gap	L	A		39.5	37.9	37.7	36.6	N/A	N/A	36.0	AMBER	⇩	35.3	36.9	35.3

Note: There is no Progress 8 data available for 2024-25 due to the lack of KS2 prior attainment data during the Covid-19 pandemic. Progress 8 reporting is due to return in 2026-27.

Data Sources for Current Report

Code	Indicator	Source Description	Latest Data Description	Latest Data release date
Activity-Volume Measures				
CYPE10	Number of Primary Schools	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE11	Number of Secondary Schools	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE12	Number of Special Schools	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE13	Total pupils on roll in Primary Schools	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE14	Total pupils on roll in Secondary Schools	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE15	Total pupils on roll in Special Schools	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE16	Percentage of Primary School pupils eligible for Free School Meals	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE17	Percentage of Secondary School pupils eligible for Free School Meals	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE18	Percentage of Special School pupils eligible for Free School Meals	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
EY8	Percentage of EY settings with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness (non-domestic premises)	MI Ofsted Database	Inspections as at end of Aug 2024	Sept 2024
SISE35	Percentage of Primary Schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness	MI Ofsted Database	Inspections as at end of Aug 2024	Sept 2024
SISE36	Percentage of Secondary Schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness	MI Ofsted Database	Inspections as at end of Aug 2024	Sept 2024
SISE37	Percentage of Special Schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness	MI Ofsted Database	Inspections as at end of Aug 2024	Sept 2024
CYPE19	Number of requests for SEND statutory assessment	Synergy reporting	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH71-C	Rate of notifications received into Early Help per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (inclusive, rolling 12 months)	Early Help module	Rolling 12 months up to end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS02	Rate of referrals to Children's Social Work Services per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (inclusive, rolling 12 months)	Liberi	Rolling 12 months up to end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
FD01-C	Number of contacts processed in the Front Door	Early Help module	Children referred during the month of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
FD14-C	Number of Information, Advice and Guidance contacts processed in the Front Door	Early Help module	Children referred during the month of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
FD02-C	Number of contacts processed in the Front Door which met the threshold for CSWS involvement	Early Help module	Children referred during the month of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
FD03-C	Number of contacts processed in the Front Door which proceeded to Early Help	Early Help module	Children referred during the month of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH05-C	Number of cases open to Early Help Units	Early Help module	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS01	Number of open Social Work cases	Liberi	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Number of Child Protection cases	Liberi	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Number of Children in Care	Liberi	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Number of Care Leavers	Liberi	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH35	Number of First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice system	MI monthly reporting (CareDirector Youth)	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SEND Indicators				
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
APP17-N	Total number of EHCPs issued within 20 weeks	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
APP17-D	Total number of EHCPs issued	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
APP17-A	Average duration in days from assessment request to EHCP completion	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
APP-EP	Percentage of assessment requests sent to Educational Psychology returned within 6 weeks	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Percentage of open Educational Psychology referrals waiting more than 6 weeks	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Percentage of SEND statutory assessment requests waiting more than 20 weeks	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025

Data Sources for Current Report

Code	Indicator	Source Description	Latest Data Description	Latest Data release date
Key Performance Indicators				
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	Liberi	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	Liberi	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	Liberi	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	Liberi	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	Liberi	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	Liberi	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	Liberi	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	Liberi	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	Area Staffing Spreadsheets	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	Liberi / Area Staffing Spreadsheets	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	Liberi / Area Staffing Spreadsheets	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	Early Help module	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH52-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	Early Help module	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	Early Help module	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	Early Help module	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	Early Help module	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	MOJ quarterly reporting	Quarter 1 reporting for 2025-26	Sept 2025
SISE7	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET)	Monthly submission to DfE via NCCIS for KCC	Provisional Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
CYPE13	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	Fair Access Team Synergy reporting	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	Fair Access Team Synergy reporting	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	Synergy - monthly reported data	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH44	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	Synergy - monthly reported data	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Percentage (rate) of pupils permanently excluded from primary and secondary phase schools - all Year R to Year 14 pupils	Synergy - monthly reported data	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EY2	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place	FF2 Team in Early Years & Childcare	Snapshot as at August 2025	Aug 2025
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	End of year assessments based on EYFSP framework	2024-25 MI Calculations (LA & District)	Aug 2025
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM Eligible achievement gap	End of year assessments based on EYFSP framework	2024-25 MI Calculations (LA & District)	Aug 2025
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	Test/TA results for end of academic year	2024-25 DfE Provisional (LA)/MI Calcs (District)	Sep 2025
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	Test/TA results for end of academic year	2024-25 DfE Provisional (LA)/MI Calcs (District)	Sep 2025
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	Test results for end of academic year	2024-25 DfE Provisional (LA)/2023-24 NPD (District)	Oct 2025
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	Test results for end of academic year	2023-24 DfE Published (LA)/2023-24 NPD (District)	Oct 2025
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [School students only]	Test results for end of academic year	2023-24 DfE Published (LA)/2023-24 NPD (District)	April 2025
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [School students only]	Test results for end of academic year	2023-24 DfE Published (LA)/2023-24 NPD (District)	April 2025
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [School students only]	Test results for end of academic year	2023-24 DfE Published (LA)/2023-24 NPD (District)	April 2025
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with a Statement or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	DfE annual snapshot based on school census	Snapshot as at January 2025	June 2025
CYPE2	Percentage of parents getting first preference of primary school	Admissions school places offered for start of academic year	Offers data for academic year 2025-26	May 2025
CYPE3	Percentage of parents getting first preference of secondary school	Admissions school places offered for start of academic year	Offers data for academic year 2025-26	May 2025
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	Aut/Spr data for academic year 2024-25	2024-25 DfE Published (LA)/MI Calcs (District)	Aug 2025
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	Aut/Spr data for academic year 2024-25	2024-25 DfE Published (LA)/MI Calcs (District)	Aug 2025
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	Aut/Spr data for academic year 2024-25	2024-25 DfE Published (LA)/MI Calcs (District)	Aug 2025
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	Aut/Spr data for academic year 2024-25	2024-25 DfE Published (LA)/MI Calcs (District)	Aug 2025

Indicator Definitions

Code	Indicator	Definition
Activity-Volume Measures		
CYPE10	Number of Primary Schools	The number of Kent maintained Primary schools (excluding Nurseries) and Primary academies (including Free Schools). Total is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE11	Number of Secondary Schools	The number of Kent maintained Secondary schools and Secondary academies (including Free Schools). Total is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE12	Number of Special Schools	The number of Kent maintained Special schools and Special academies. Total is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE13	Total pupils on roll in Primary Schools	The number of pupils on roll in Kent maintained Primary schools (excluding Nurseries) and Primary academies (including Free Schools). Total excludes guest and subsidiary pupils and is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE14	Total pupils on roll in Secondary Schools	The number of pupils on roll in Kent maintained Secondary schools and Secondary academies (including Free Schools). Total excludes guest and subsidiary pupils and is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE15	Total pupils on roll in Special Schools	The number of pupils on roll in Kent maintained Special schools and Special academies. Total excludes guest and subsidiary pupils and is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE16	Percentage of Primary School pupils eligible for Free School Meals	The number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals in Kent maintained Primary schools (excluding Nurseries) and Primary academies (including Free Schools) as a proportion of all pupils on roll. Totals for both numerator and denominator are for statutory aged pupils only and excludes guest and subsidiary pupils. Data is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE17	Percentage of Secondary School pupils eligible for Free School Meals	The number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals in Kent maintained Secondary schools and Secondary academies (including Free Schools) as a proportion of all pupils on roll. Totals for both numerator and denominator are for statutory aged pupils only and excludes guest and subsidiary pupils. Data is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE18	Percentage of Special School pupils eligible for Free School Meals	The number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals in Kent maintained Special schools and Special academies as a proportion of all pupils on roll. Totals for both numerator and denominator are for statutory aged pupils only and excludes guest and subsidiary pupils. Data is as at the latest available termly school census.
EY8	Percentage of EY settings with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness (non-domestic premises)	The percentage of Kent Early Years settings (non-domestic premises only), judged good or outstanding for overall effectiveness in their latest inspection, as a proportion of all inspected Kent Early Years settings (non domestic premises only).
SISE35	Percentage of Primary Schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness	The percentage of Kent maintained Primary schools and Primary academies judged good or outstanding for Overall Effectiveness in their latest inspection, as a proportion of all inspected Kent maintained Primary schools and Primary academies.
SISE36	Percentage of Secondary Schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness	The percentage of Kent maintained Secondary schools and Secondary academies judged good or outstanding for Overall Effectiveness in their latest inspection, as a proportion of all inspected Kent maintained Secondary schools and Secondary academies.
SISE37	Percentage of Special Schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness	The percentage of Kent maintained Special schools and Special academies judged good or outstanding for Overall Effectiveness in their latest inspection, as a proportion of all inspected Kent maintained Special schools and Special academies.
CYPE19	Number of requests for SEND statutory assessment	The number of initial requests for assessment for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) for 0-25 year olds in Kent LA.
EH71-C	Rate of notifications received into Early Help per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (inclusive, rolling 12 months)	The total number of referrals to an Early Help Unit completed during the corresponding reporting month per 10,000 (Population figures are updated upon reciept of the latest ONS Mid Year population estimates). This is a child level indicator.
SCS02	Rate of referrals to Children's Social Work Services per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (inclusive, rolling 12 months)	This indicator shows the rate of referrals received by Children's Social Work Services. Numerator: Number of referrals (rolling 12 month period). Denominator: child population figure divided by 10,000 (Population figures are updated upon receipt of the latest ONS Mid Year Estimates).
FD01-C	Number of contacts processed in the Front Door	The total number of notifications received during the corresponding reporting month that were processed by the Front Door. District and Area splits are not available for this indicator. The data includes all contact reasons processed by the Front Door. This is a child level indicator.
FD14-C	Number of Information, Advice and Guidance contacts processed in the Front Door	The total number of notifications with a contact outcome of "Information, Advice & Guidance" received during the corresponding reporting month that were processed by the Front Door. District and Area splits are not available for this indicator. The data includes all contact reasons processed by the Front Door. This is a child level indicator.

Indicator Definitions

Code	Indicator	Definition
Activity-Volume Measures (Continued)		
FD02-C	Number of contacts processed in the Front Door which met the threshold for CSWS involvement	The total number of notifications with a contact outcome of "Threshold met for CSWS" received during the corresponding reporting month that were processed by the Front Door. District and Area splits are not available for this indicator. The data includes all contact reasons processed by the Front Door. This is a child level indicator.
FD03-C	Number of contacts processed in the Front Door which proceeded to Early Help	The total number of notifications with a contact outcome of "Proceed to Early Help Unit" received during the corresponding reporting month that were processed by the Front Door. District and Area splits are not available for this indicator. The data includes all contact reasons processed by the Front Door. This is a child level indicator.
EH05-F	Number of cases open to Early Help Units	The number of open cases as at the end of the corresponding reporting month. The data includes all cases sent to units at Early Help Record stage prior to the end of the month. This is a family level indicator.
SCS01	Number of open Social Work cases	The total caseload figures for Children's Social Work Services.
	Number of Child Protection cases	The number of Children who have a Child Protection Plan as at the end of the corresponding reporting month.
	Number of Children in Care	The number of Children in Care as at the end of the corresponding reporting month.
	Number of Care Leavers	The number of Care Leavers as at the end of the corresponding reporting month.
EH32	Number of First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice system	First time entrants are defined as young people (aged 10 – 17 years) who receive their first substantive outcome (relating to a Youth Caution with or without an intervention, or a Conditional Caution or a Court disposal for those who go directly to Court without a Youth Caution or Conditional Caution).

Indicator Definitions

Code	Indicator	Definition
SEND Indicators		
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	The percentage of Education and Health Care Plans that are issued within 20 weeks as a proportion of all such plans. The data is a snapshot at the end of the month. An education, health and care plan (EHCP) replaced statements and are for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support.
APP17-N	Total number of EHCPs issued within 20 weeks	The number of Education and Health Care Plans that are issued within 20 weeks.The data is a snapshot at the end of the month. An education, health and care plan (EHCP) replaced statements and are for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support.
APP17-D	Total number of EHCPs issued	The total number of Education and Health Care Plans that are issued.The data is a snapshot at the end of the month. An education, health and care plan (EHCP) replaced statements and are for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support.
APP17-A	Average duration in days from assessment request to EHCP completion	
APP-EP	Percentage of assessment requests sent to Educational Psychology returned within 6 weeks	The percentage of Educational Psychology assessments returned within a 6 week timeframe as a proportion of all such requests.
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	The number of pupils with an EHCP that are placed in independent Special schools or out-of-county Special schools as a percentage of the total number of pupils with an EHCP
	Percentage of open Educational Psychology referrals waiting more than 6 weeks	The percentage of open referrals to the educational psychology service that have been waitng more than 6 weeks as a proportion of all such cases. The data is a snapshot at the end of the month.
	Percentage of SEND statutory assessment requests waiting more than 20 weeks	The percentage of cases where a request for a statutory assessment has been made but no final EHCP has been issued that have been waitng more than 20 weeks as a proportion of all such cases. The data is a snapshot at the end of the month.
Key Performance Indicators		
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	The percentage of referrals to SCS in the last 12 months where the previous referral date (if any) is within 12 months of the new referral date.
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	The percentage of returner interviews completed in the last 12 months where the case was open to SCS at the point the child went missing and the child was aged under 18 at the point of going missing.
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	The percentage of children who become subject to a Child Protection Plan during the last 12 months who have been subject to a previous plan.
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	The percentage of Children in Care aged under 16 at the snapshot date who had been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years who were living in the same placement for at least 2 years, or are placed for adoption and their adoptive placement together with their previous placement together last for at least 2 years.
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	The percentage of Kent Children in Care at the snapshot date who are in Foster Care and are placed with KCC Foster Carers or with Relatives and Friends. UASC are excluded
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	The average number of days between becoming a Looked After Child and moving in with Adoptive Family (for children who have been Adopted in the last 12 months)
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	The percentage of relevant and former relevant care leavers who we were in contact with in a 4 month window around their birthday who were aged 17, 18, 19, 20 or 21 and were in education, employment or training.
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	The percentage of all completed case audits in the last 12 months where the overall grading was good or outstanding

Indicator Definitions

Code	Indicator	Definition
Key Performance Indicators (Continued)		
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	The percentage of case holding posts (FTE) at the snapshot date which are held by qualified social workers employed by Kent County Council.
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	The average caseload of social workers within district based CIC Teams at the snapshot date.
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	The average caseload of social workers within the district based Children's Social Work Teams (CSWTs) at the snapshot date.
EH72-F	Percentage of re-referrals to an Early Help Unit within 12 months of a previous Unit case (R12M)	The percentage of referrals into an EH Unit (R12M) that previously had an episode open to an Early Help Unit in the preceding 12 months. The data only looks at referrals allocated to a Unit. It is calculated using a comparison between the episode end date of the previous episode and the episode start date of the subsequent referral.
EH52-F	Percentage of Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	The percentage of assessments completed in the reporting month, where the assessment was completed within 30 working days of allocation.
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	The percentage of all EH Unit completed case audits in the last 12 months where the overall grading was good or outstanding
EH162F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	The percentage of EH cases that have been closed with an outcome of "outcomes achieved" and then came back into either EH or CSWS in the next 3 months. Please note that there is a 3 month time lag on this data so the result shown for May 2020 is actually looking at all EH Closures in the 12 months up to February 2020.
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	Definition to be confirmed.
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	An offender enters the cohort if they are released from custody, received a non-custodial conviction at court or received a reprimand or warning (caution) in a three month period. A proven reoffence is defined as any offence committed in a one year follow-up period that leads to a court conviction, caution, reprimand or warning in the one year follow-up or within a further six month waiting period to allow the offence to be proven in court. **It is important to note that this is not comparable to previous proven reoffending publications which reported on a 12 month cohort.**
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET)	The percentage of young people who have left compulsory education, up until the end of National Curriculum Year 13, who have not achieved a positive education, employment or training destination.
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	The number of closed cases within 30 school days of their referral to Kent County Council's CME Team, as a percentage of the total number of cases opened within the period.
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	The number of CYP who register with the LA to Home Educate contacted to include information regarding a visit, within 10 days of receipt of the referral to Kent County Council's EHE Team, as a percentage of the total number of cases opened within the period.
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	The total number of pupils in Year R to Year 6 that have been permanently excluded from a Kent maintained Primary school, Special school or Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) or Primary academy or Special academy during the last 12 months.
EH44	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	The total number of pupils in Year 7 to Year 14 that have been permanently excluded from a Kent maintained Secondary school, Special school or Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) or Secondary academy or Special academy during the last 12 months.
	Percentage (rate) of pupils permanently excluded from primary and secondary phase schools - all Year R to Year 14 pupils	The number of Year R (Reception) to Year 14 pupils permanently excluded from Primary, Secondary, Special schools and PRUs (incl. academies) in the last twelve months expressed as rate over the school population.

Indicator Definitions

Code	Indicator	Definition
Key Performance Indicators (Continued)		
EY2	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place	The number of two year old children accessing a free early education place at an early years provider as a proportion of the total number of families identified as potentially eligible for funding by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	Percentage of pupils assessed as achieving Expected or Exceeding in all Prime Learning Goals and all literacy and mathematics Early Learning Goals at the end of reception year, based on the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM Eligible achievement gap	The difference between the achievement of non-FSM eligible pupils and FSM eligible pupils in terms of percentage assessed as achieving Expected or Exceeding in all Prime Learning Goals and all literacy and mathematics Early Learning Goals at the end of reception year, based on the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	The percentage of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 working at the Expected Standard in all of Reading, Writing & maths. Includes Kent maintained schools and academies.
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	The difference between the achievement of non-FSM eligible pupils and FSM eligible pupils in terms of percentage working at the Expected Standard in all of Reading, Writing & maths at KS2. Includes Kent maintained schools and academies.
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	The average Attainment 8 score for pupils at end of Key Stage 4. Attainment 8 is a point score based on attainment across eight subjects which must include English; mathematics; three other English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects (sciences, computer science, geography, history and languages); and three further subjects, which can be from the range of EBacc subjects, or can be any other approved, high-value arts, academic, or vocational qualification.
SISE	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	The difference between the Attainment 8 score of non-FSM eligible pupils and FSM eligible pupils at the end of KS4 (see above definition for SISE12a). Includes Kent maintained schools and academies.
CYPE	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [School students only]	The total number of points achieved in A-Level qualifications by pupils at the end of Key Stage 5 divided by the total number of entries made in all A-Level qualifications. Outcomes are for Kent maintained schools and academies only.
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [School students only]	The total number of points achieved in Applied General qualifications by pupils at the end of Key Stage 5 divided by the total number of entries made in all Applied General qualifications. Outcomes are for Kent maintained schools and academies only.
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [School students only]	The total number of points achieved in Tech Level qualifications by pupils at the end of Key Stage 5 divided by the total number of entries made in all Tech Level qualifications. Outcomes are for Kent maintained schools and academies only.
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with a Statement or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and care Plan (EHCP) as a proportion of all pupils on roll in all schools as at January school census. Includes maintained schools and academies, Pupil Referral Units, Free schools and Independent schools (DfE published data).
CYPE2	Percentage of parents getting first preference of primary school	The percentage of parents who got their first preference of Primary school (out of their three ordered preferences) for their child.
CYPE3	Percentage of parents getting first preference of secondary school	The percentage of parents who got their first preference of Secondary school (out of their three ordered preferences) for their child.
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	The percentage of pupils that have been persistently absent from a Kent maintained Primary school or a Primary academy for 10% or more of their expected sessions over the reported time period.
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	The percentage of pupils that have been persistently absent from a Kent maintained Secondary school or a Secondary academy for 10% or more of their expected sessions over the reported time period.
	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	The percentage of pupils that have been severely absent from a Kent maintained Primary school or a Primary academy for 50% or more of their expected sessions over the reported time period.
	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	The percentage of pupils that have been severely absent from a Kent maintained Secondary school or a Secondary academy for 50% or more of their expected sessions over the reported time period.

Children, Young People and Education Performance Management

Children, Young People and Education Directorate Scorecard

September 2025

Produced by: Management Information & Intelligence, KCC

Publication Date: 24th October 2025

This page is intentionally blank

Guidance Notes

Notes:
Figures for indicator CYPE8 (Rate of proven re-offending by CYP) shown in red have not been published by the Minstry of Justice (MoJ) but are included for information in this scorecard. The latest available data for this indicators remains as at Q4 for 2024-25. Updated data is not available, for the following reason stated by the MoJ: *Following discovery of a small data issue impacting some juveniles discharged from custody, these figures have been removed and will be updated as soon as possible.*
Please note that not all Children's Social Work indicators can be shown broken down by District for the associated CSWS team, as caseloads relating to these indicators are held by Area and Kent LA level teams. Cases included in a dataset are based on the Service working with the child and not the child's geographical residence.

POLARITY

H	The aim of this indicator is to achieve the highest number/percentage possible
L	The aim of this indicator is to achieve the lowest number/percentage possible
T	The aim of this indicator is to stay close to the target that has been set

RAG RATINGS

RED	Floor Standard* has not been achieved
AMBER	Floor Standard* achieved but Target has not been met
GREEN	Target has been achieved

* Floor Standards are set in Directorate Business Plans and if not achieved must result in management action

DIRECTION OF TRAVEL (DOT)

⇧	Performance has improved
⇩	Performance has worsened
⇔	Performance has remained the same

INCOMPLETE DATA

N/A	Data not available
	Data to be supplied
	New indicator - historical data not available

Data in italics indicates previous reporting year

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION CONTACT DETAILS

Wendy Murray	03000 419417
Maureen Robinson	03000 417164
Matt Ashman	03000 417012
Celene Rudling	03000 417022

MIEducation&WiderEH@kent.gov.uk
MIIntensiveEH&SocialCare@kent.gov.uk

DATA PERIOD

R12M	Monthly Rolling 12 months
MS	Monthly Snapshot
YTD	Year To Date
Q	Quarterly
A	Annual

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION SCORECARDS

CYPE	Children, Young People and Education Directorate Scorecard
EY	Early Years Scorecard
NEET	NEET Monthly Scorecard
SEND	Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Scorecard
ICS	Intensive EH and CSWS Monthly Performance Report

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

CIC	Children in Care
CSWT	Children's Social Work Teams
CYP	Children and Young People
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
EY	Early Years
EYFE	Early Years Free Entitlement
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
FF2	Free For Two
FSM	Free School Meals
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
SCS	Specialist Children's Services
SEN	Special Educational Needs

Directorate Scorecard - Kent Activity/Volume

as at May 2025

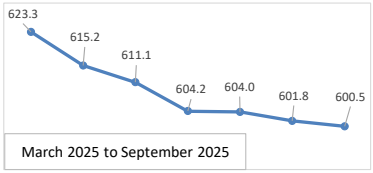
131,009 pupils in 460 primary schools
27.9 % with free school meals (24.7%)

113,859 pupils in 103 secondary schools
25.0 % with free school meals (25.8%)

6,544 pupils in 25 special schools
48.5 % with free school meals (49.2%)

as at Sep 2025

Rate of Early Help Unit Referrals per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (inclusive, rolling 12 months)



as at Sep 2025

Open cases

Intensive Early Help	2,009 (Families)
Open Social Work Cases	11,202
Including:	
• Child Protection	1,165
• Children in Care	1,959
• Care Leavers	2,021

as at Aug 2024

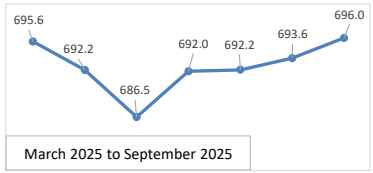
Ofsted judgements

EY providers	98.7	(97%)
Primary	92.4	(91%)
Secondary	88.0	(85%)
Special	92.3	(90%)

Note: From 1st September 2024, inspections of state-funded schools no longer include a judgement on overall effectiveness, and outcomes of ungraded inspections no longer refer to the previous good or outstanding grade. No aggregations of data are now published by Ofsted and no replacement measure has been devised.

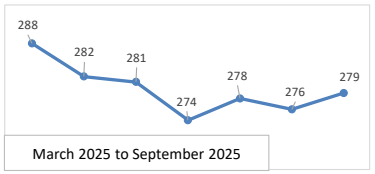
as at Sep 2025

Rate of referrals to Children's Social Work Services per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (inclusive, rolling 12 months)



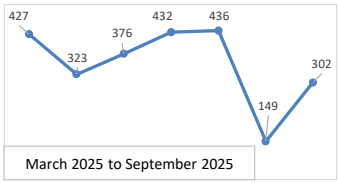
as at Sep 2025

Number of First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice system



as at Sep 2025

Requests for SEND statutory assessment



as at Sep 2025

Activity at the Front Door (children)

Total contacts	7,152
Number resolved at FD	3,053
Number to CSWS	2,087
Number to EH Units	1,570

as at Sep 2025

Family Hub Indicators

Pending Family Hub scorecard development

- Figures shown in brackets are National averages
- Free School Meal averages are as at January 2025 school census and based on state funded schools only
- Ofsted National averages are as at 31st August 2024, except EY Providers average which is as at 31st March 2024

Directorate Scorecard - SEND Monthly Indicators

Education Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East Average as at 31st December 2024	England Average as at 31st December 2024
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25										
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		81.7	85.3	60.2	53.9	51.9	41.8	44.3	82	185	⇧	65	RED	33.3	60	RED	38.2	46.4
APP17-N	Total number of EHCPs issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		107	168	68	69	80	51	82										
APP17-D	Total number of EHCPs issued	L	MS		131	197	113	128	154	122	185										
APP17-A	Average duration in days from assessment request to EHCP completion	L	MS		146	144	149	155	156	159	162			⇩							
APP-EP	Percentage of assessment requests sent to Educational Psychology returned within 6 weeks	H	MS		10.2	13.0	9.4	17.9	21.4	22.3	10.5	22	209	⇩	65	RED	39.2	60	RED	N/A	N/A
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	L	MS		10.8	11.0	10.0	10.1	10.0	10.1	10.3	2,198	21,346	⇩	9	AMBER	10.1	9	AMBER	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of open Educational Psychology referrals waiting more than 6 weeks	L	MS		27.2	36.4	49.5	55.4	51.4	51.8	65.1	391	601	⇩						N/A	N/A
	Percentage of SEND statutory assessment requests waiting more than 20 weeks	L	MS		4.7	8.1	8.9	10.5	15.3	22.0	17.0	209	1,229	⇧						N/A	N/A

Note: 2023-24 targets for APP17 and APP-EP are using the June 2024 targets from the APP scorecard

Commentary on Education SEND Indicators:

While 20 week rolling annual average continues to increase, exceeding national averages by over 20%, limited EP capacity has temporarily negatively impacted monthly figures. However, these too continue to outpace the national average. Assessment teams are engaging with EP lead officers to ensure that backlogs are balanced with finalisation of new cases to ensure lower performance is as short lived as possible. In addition, EP service is investigating opportunities to increase their overall capacity. In spite of these difficulties, the service is keeping the number of cases open over 20 weeks to a manageable amount and monitoring this closely.

Directorate Scorecard - Kent KPIs

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	21.9	21.8	21.9	22.0	21.8	21.9	21.9	5,317	24,245	⇔	25.0	GREEN	21.9	25.0	GREEN	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		88.4	88.2	88.0	87.8	88.1	88.5	87.9	1,567	1,782	⇩	90.0	AMBER	88.4	90.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		24.3	24.8	25.0	26.0	26.4	27.7	28.2	388	1,377	⇩	20.0	RED	24.3	20.0	AMBER	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		71.6	73.6	74.2	73.7	73.5	73.7	72.7	338	465	⇩	70.0	GREEN	71.6	70.0	GREEN	69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	72.8	71.4	71.5	70.9	70.1	70.0	69.3	713	1,029	⇩	85.0	RED	72.8	85.0	RED	N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		367.6	393.0	388.7	416.7	421.8	429.8	412.0	22,246	54	⇧	426.0	GREEN	367.6	426.0	GREEN	468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	56.6	55.9	57.2	57.8	55.7	55.8	56.5	669	1,185	⇧	65.0	AMBER	56.6	65.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		87.3	87.3	87.8	87.8	87.6	87.6	87.6	530	605	⇔	85.0	GREEN	87.3	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	73.9	72.9	73.2	73.3	74.0	74.5	77.9	491.1	630.5	⇧	85.0	AMBER	73.9	85.0	RED	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		16.5	16.3	16.7	16.6	16.9	16.7	16.7	1,681	100.5	⇔	15.0	AMBER	16.5	15.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		21.7	20.6	20.0	21.6	20.7	20.6	20.6	5,505	267.4	⇔	18.0	AMBER	21.7	18.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	L	R12M		26.1	26.3	26.6	26.7	26.4	26.3	26.2	3,103	11,864	⇧	25.0	AMBER	26.1	25.0	AMBER	21	N/A
EH52-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	H	MS		90.6	90.6	90.8	90.8	91.4	92.2	92.1	4,590	4,983	⇩	85.0	GREEN	90.6	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	H	R12M		93.7	93.7	90.6	90.6	90.5	90.5	91.7	133	145	⇧	85.0	GREEN	93.7	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	L	R12M	✓	14.9	14.9	14.4	14.5	14.6	14.5	14.3	575	4,020	⇧	15.0	GREEN	14.9	15.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	L	MS		14.2	12.7	13.7	13.3	13.1	11.5	12.6	1821	144.6	⇧	20.0	AMBER	14.2	20.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Integrated Children's Services Quarterly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Quarterly Trends			Latest Quarter			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East as at Jan 2025	England & Wales as at Jan 2025
								Rate	Numerator	Denominator								
					Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26										
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	L	Q		33.2	33.5	33.1	30.4	135	444	⇧	32.9	GREEN	33.5	32.9	AMBER	32.6	32.5

Directorate Scorecard - Kent KPIs

Education Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET) [seasonally impacted indicator]	L	MS		4.2	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.3	3.0*	1,165	39,516	⇩	TBC			2.8	GREEN	*2.8*	*3.2*
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	H	R12M		86.1	87.4	90.2	91.9	93.2	93.4	95.3	4,498	4,722	⇧	90	GREEN	93.4	65	GREEN	N/A	N/A
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	H	R12M		66.6	72.7	79.2	85.3	87.9	87.9	88.3	3,150	3,567	⇧	85	GREEN	87.9	60	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	L	R12M		30	31	30	33	30	30	33	N/A	N/A	⇩	<= 25	RED	30	<= 25	RED	N/A	N/A
EH44	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		67	66	62	58	67	62	63	N/A	N/A	⇩	<= 79	GREEN	62	<= 79	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Percentage (rate) of pupils permanently excluded from primary and secondary phase schools - all Year R to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	N/A	N/A	⇔						0.07	0.13

Note: *The NEET percentage for September is provisional data as at 22/10/25 and subject to change.

Exclusion rates have been added alongside the numbers of permanent exclusions, as this is the only way that Kent's performance can be benchmarked to national.

Education Termly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Termly Trends			Latest Term			DOT	Target Summer 2024-25	RAG 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator			
					Summer 23-24	Autumn 24-25	Spring 24-25	Summer 24-25					
	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator]	H	T		67.8	68.0	60.0	53.7	2,118	3,947	⇩	64.0	RED

Please note that KS5 provisional attainment data for 2024-25 will be available in the next scorecard (January CYPE cabinet committee)

Education Annual Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	H	A		65.8	68.3	68.0	68.9	11,841	17,176	69	AMBER	⇧	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		23.2	21.3	24.7	22.7	N/A	N/A	20	AMBER	⇧	21	25.1	21.1
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	H	A		59	59	62	61	18,904	11,489	62	AMBER	⇧	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		28	28	26	27	N/A	N/A	23	RED	⇩	25	25	21
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	H	A		49.3	47.0	47.0	46.6	N/A	N/A	47.0	AMBER	⇩	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		18.5	17.8	18.2	18.6	N/A	N/A	17.0	AMBER	⇩	17.0	18.7	14.8
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		37.68	34.20	34.22	*34.22*	N/A	N/A	35	AMBER	⇔		*35.07*	*34.38*
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		32.01	29.14	28.03	*28.03*	N/A	N/A	30	AMBER	⇔		*28.45*	*29.09*
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		34.61	33.47	27.17	*27.17*	N/A	N/A	38	RED	⇔		*28.38*	*28.11*

Data sources for attainment data: FSP = 2025 School Returns, NCER Emerging National/Regional data. KS2 = 2025 DfE Provisional SFR, 11/09/25. KS4 = 2025 DfE Provisional SFR, 16/10/25. KS5 = 2024 DfE Published SFR, 13/02/25

Directorate Scorecard - Kent KPIs

Education Annual Indicators (Continued) (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	L	A		4.8	5.2	5.4	5.8	15,586	270,731	4.8	RED	⇩	5.8	5.8	5.8
CYPE2	Percentage of parents getting first preference of primary school	H	A		90.1	90.1	91.3	90.6	14,973	16,527	N/A				91.3	92.6
CYPE3	Percentage of parents getting first preference of secondary school	H	A		79.6	78.2	78.6	80.6	14,735	18,283	N/A				83.2	83.5
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		19.1	17.2	15.8	15.1	17,145	113,706	15.8	GREEN	⇧	14.3	13.8	14.3
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		29.2	29.2	26.8	22.2	21,638	97,440	23.0	GREEN	⇧	21.1	20.9	21.1
EH48	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		0.7	0.9	1.0	1.0	1,190	113,706			⇧	0.9	0.9	0.9
EH49	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		2.9	3.7	3.8	3.4	3,265	97,440			⇧	3.2	3.2	3.2

Note: The Working Together to Improve School Attendance statutory guidance has been in place since August 2024, so we have expanded the reporting on school absence to include Severe Absence as well as Persistent Absence, as these are now the two key measures. Persistent Absence is absence of 10% or more, and Severe Absence is absence of 50% or more.

Directorate Scorecard - Kent KPIs

Commentary on Integrated Children's Services Indicators:

Children's Social Care

RED: The percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time is 28.2% which is above the target range of 17.5% - 22.5%. This compares to average rates for England of 24.7%, Statistical Neighbours 24.5% and the South East 25.3% (2023/24). The current performance is impacted by repeat plans for large sibling groups over the last three months. In July and August 2025 two sibling groups comprising of six children became subject to a Child Protection Plan, and in August and September there were also two sibling groups of five children. This measure includes all children subject to a subsequent plan regardless of the timescale between those plans. Of the 388 children subject to a repeat plan starting in the 12 months to September 2025, the durations were as follows: 54.6% with more than 24 months between previous plan ending and new one starting; 22.2% between 12-24 months; and 23.2% were less than 12 months.

RED: At 69.3% the percentage of children in care placed in KCC foster care, or in placements with relatives/friends, is below the floor standard of 75.0%. The target of 85.0% is an aspirational target set to drive up the use of in-house provision. The highest performance achieved during the last 3 years was 75.5% in December 2022. This is therefore a performance target that needs review for 2026/2027 reporting. The availability of in-house foster placements is a national issue. Actions being taken to increase the number of fostering households include increased information events, recruitment stands at large community events, specific campaigns using social media and use of the "refer a friend" payment, to encourage existing foster carers to support recruitment of family and friends to join Kent Fostering. Part of the recruitment strategy is to look to our existing KCC staff group, to promote becoming a foster carer and completing the initial work on whether KCC can become a "Fostering Friendly" employer. The service is at the initial stages of developing a "Create a Room" project, to support existing approved foster carers to create an additional bedroom for fostering.

AMBER: The Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with Children's Social Work Involvement is 87.9%, which is close to the Target of 90.0%. For those Returner Interviews that did take place, 87.4% took place within timescale (3 working days) which is above the 80.0% target.

AMBER: The percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with) is 56.5% which is below the Target of 65.0%. Those not in employment will include those not able to work due to illness, disability, pregnancy or parenting responsibilities and unaccompanied asylum seeking young people who remain without status and are not able to remain in education or gain employment when they reach the age of 18. The Home Office have confirmed unaccompanied children will have their applications prioritised which should then lead to an improvement in performance. The 18+ Care Leavers Service have two specialist staff to support young people access opportunities.

AMBER: The percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers is 77.9%, the highest level since December 2022 (78.1%). The target for this measure is 85.0% which is based on the previous national average for Agency Social Workers of 15%. That increased to 16.2% (September 2024) but the Kent target of 85.0% was retained. Recruiting and retaining qualified social workers remains a priority for CYPE and a range of initiatives are continually being explored and implemented. The annual collection of Children's Social Care Workforce data, provides some comparative data as at 30th September 2024 - Social Work Vacancies: Kent 15.1%, England average 17.3%, SE average 16.0%; Percentage of Agency Social Workers covering vacancies - Kent 67.6%; England average 76.2%, SE average 74.4%; Social Worker turnover - Kent 11.1%, England average 13.8%, SE average 14.4%.

AMBER: The average caseload in the Children in Care (CIC) Teams is 16.7 children, which is above the target of no more than 15 children/young people. The average caseload has remained stable at around this level since the start of the reporting year.

AMBER: The average caseload in the Children's Social Work Teams (CSWT) is 20.6 children, which is above the target caseload of no more than 18 children. The average caseload has remained stable at this level since the start of the reporting year.

GREEN: The percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral was 21.9% , achieving the Target of below 25.0%. This performance compares to the latest published England average of 22.4%, and averages of 19.2% for Kent's Statistical Neighbours and 26.6% for the South East (all comparative rates are for 2023/24).

GREEN: The percentage of Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more) is 72.7%, achieving the Target of above 70.0%. Kent's performance remains above the latest published average for England of 68.0% and the South-East 66.0% and Kent's Statistical Neighbours of 67.7% (comparative data is for 2023/24).

GREEN: The average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family is 412 days, within the nationally set guide of less than 426 days. This compares to the latest published England average of 485 days for 2023/24.

GREEN: The percentage of Children's Social Work Case File Audits graded good or outstanding is 87.6%, which is above the 80.0% Target.

Intensive Early Help

AMBER: The percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months is 26.2%, which is above the target of 25.0%.

AMBER: The average caseload within Early Help Units is 12.6 families. The Target for this measure was increased to 20 families for 2024/25.

GREEN: The percentage of Early Help Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation, is at 92.1%, achieving the target of above 85.0%.

GREEN: The percentage of Early Help Unit cases that were audited and graded as good or outstanding is 91.7% , achieving the 85.0% target.

GREEN: The percentage of Early Help cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to Early Help units or Children's Social Work teams in 3 months is 14.3%, achieving the Target rate of 15.0% or less.

Directorate Scorecard - Kent KPIs

Commentary on Education Indicators:

The majority of education indicators are annual. Commentary has only been provided for indicators where new data has been published since the last scorecard was issued where targets exist.

RED: The numbers of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase, as a 12-month rolling average, at 33 exceeds the target of 25 or under. Kent PRU and Attendance Service (KPAS) continues its work regarding suspensions and permanent exclusions. Common themes are identified, and additional processes developed to support schools to ensure all interventions are exhausted and exclusion remains a last resort.

RED: The percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator] continues to decline and is below the target and last year's performance. Reasons not clear although the new Working Parent Entitlement is thought to be having a negative impact. We have raised the issue with the DfE and are awaiting their steer/position.

RED: The percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap at 27 is higher than both the target and the national.

AMBER: The provisional data for the percentage of pupils at Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) achieving a Good Level of Development at 68.9% is 0.1% below the target if 69.0% however is above the NCER National figure of 68.3%

AMBER: The provisional data for the percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap at 22.7 is higher than the target of 20.

AMBER: The provisional data for the percentage of pupils at Key Stage 2 (KS2) achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics is 61% which is below the target by 1 percentage point but in line with National.

AMBER: The average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 at 46.6 is just below the target of 47.0 but higher than National (45.9%)

AMBER: The average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 – FSM gap at 18.6 is higher than the target of 17.0 and that nationally (14.8) but marginally better than the South East (18.7)

GREEN: The rate of proven re-offending by children and young people has reduced from 33.1 to 30.4 and is now green.

GREEN: The percentage of Children Missing Education (CME) cases, closed within 30 school days is now 95.3% with 4,498 cases closed out of a total of 4,722

GREEN: The percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention at 88.3% remains above the target of 85%

Directorate Scorecard - Kent KPIs - Vulnerable Learners

Annual Indicators - Primary (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - all pupils	H	A		65.8	68.3	68.0	68.9	11,841	17,176	69	AMBER	⇧	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		22.6	23.2	24.7	22.7	N/A	N/A	20	AMBER	⇧	21	25.1	21.1
	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - Kent CIC gap	L	A		17.6	22.5	44.4	32.9	N/A	N/A	23	RED	⇧	N/A small cohort	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - SEN Support gap	L	A		48.6	50.4	52.9	51.8	N/A	N/A	50	AMBER	⇧	50	49.9	50.3
	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - SEN EHCP gap	L	A		66.3	70.5	72.9	74.2	N/A	N/A	70	RED	⇩	73	73.2	72.8
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - all pupils	H	A		59	59	62	61	18,904	11,489	62	AMBER	⇩	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		28	28	26	27	N/A	N/A	23	RED	⇩	25	25	21
	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - Kent CIC gap	L	A		32.6	35.4	30.6	33.3	N/A	N/A	30	RED	⇩	30	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - SEN Support gap	L	A		48	47	46	44	N/A	N/A	45	GREEN	⇧	43	45	44
	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - SEN EHCP gap	L	A		61	62	64	64	N/A	N/A	61	AMBER	⇔	63	63	63

Note - There are no KS1-2 Progress measures for 2023-24 and none planned for 2024-25 as there is no KS1 prior attainment data for the relevant years.

Annual Indicators - Secondary (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SE Region	
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - all pupils	H	A		49.3	47.0	47.0	46.6	N/A	N/A	47.0	AMBER	⇩	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		18.5	17.8	18.2	18.6	N/A	N/A	17.0	AMBER	⇧	17.0	18.7	14.8
	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - Kent CIC gap	L	A		27.3	28.2	28.0	*28.0*	N/A	N/A					N/A	N/A
	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - SEN Support gap	L	A		16.7	16.3	17.5	17.5	N/A	N/A	15.0	AMBER	⇔	16.4	17.7	16.4
	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - SEN EHCP gap	L	A		39.5	37.9	37.7	36.6	N/A	N/A	36.0	AMBER	⇩	35.3	36.9	35.3

Note: There is no Progress 8 data available for 2024-25 due to the lack of KS2 prior attainment data during the Covid-19 pandemic. Progress 8 reporting is due to return in 2026-27.

Directorate Scorecard - Ashford District

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
Ashford CSWT					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	21.1	20.5	21.8	22.1	22.0	21.9	22.1	390	1,768	⇩	25.0	GREEN	21.1	25.0	GREEN	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		92.1	92.3	92.3	91.5	93.2	93.5	91.1	51	56	⇩	90.0	GREEN	92.1	90.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		31.3	33.3	33.0	31.5	29.1	28.1	27.9	34	122	⇧	20.0	RED	31.3	20.0	RED	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		77.3	77.3	77.3	77.3	73.9	73.9	79.2	19	24	⇧	85.0	AMBER	77.3	85.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	72.3	67.9	73.1	75.7	75.7	75.7	94.0	21.6	23.0	⇧	85.0	GREEN	72.3	85.0	RED	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		27.0	26.7	24.3	25.2	24.0	23.0	20.6	470	22.8	⇧	18.0	AMBER	27.0	18.0	RED	N/A	N/A
Ashford EHU					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25										
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	L	R12M		25.2	25.1	25.7	26.1	25.9	25.6	24.4	229	940	⇧	25.0	GREEN	25.2	25.0	AMBER	21	N/A
EH52-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	H	MS		99.3	99.3	99.3	99.3	99.6	100.0	100.0	316	316	⇔	85.0	GREEN	99.3	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	H	R12M		100.0	100.0	91.7	91.7	91.7	91.7	91.7	11	12	⇔	85.0	GREEN	100.0	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	L	R12M	✓	16.5	17.1	17.8	18.1	18.5	19.0	17.8	43	242	⇧	15.0	AMBER	16.5	15.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	L	MS		12.2	12.5	13.4	12.8	12.5	10.8	10.8	140	13.0	⇔	20.0	RED	12.2	20.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Integrated Children's Services Quarterly Indicators - Ashford (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Quarterly Trends			Latest Quarter			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East as at Jan 2025	England & Wales as at Jan 2025
								Rate	Numerator	Denominator								
					Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26										
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	L	Q		37.5	31.6	39.1	36.4	8	22	⇩	32.9	AMBER	31.6	32.9	GREEN	32.6	32.5

Directorate Scorecard - Ashford District

Education Monthly Indicators - Ashford (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		100.0	100.0	60.0	43.8	26.3	54.5	23.5	4	17	⇩	65	RED	42.9	60	RED	38.2	46.4
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET) [seasonally impacted indicator]	L	MS		3.8	4.1	3.9	3.7	3.6	3.8				⇧	TBC			2.8	GREEN	*2.8*	*3.2*
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	L	MS		10.1	10.2	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.4	169	1,795	⇩	9	AMBER	9.1	9	AMBER	N/A	N/A
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	L	R12M		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	⇔	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
EH44	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		7	5	4	4	6	4	5	N/A	N/A	⇩	N/A	N/A	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	H	R12M		92.7	93.9	97.0	98.0	99.2	99.5	99.5	359	361	⇩	90	GREEN	99.5	65	GREEN	N/A	N/A
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	H	R12M		66.5	71.2	77.9	83.3	85.8	86.0	88.1	303	344	⇧	85	GREEN	86.0	60	GREEN	N/A	N/A

Education Termly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Termly Trends			Latest Term			DOT	Target Summer 2024-25	RAG 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator			
					Summer 23-24	Autumn 24-25	Spring 24-25	Summer 24-25					
EY2	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator]	H	T		65.0	71.3	56.3	54.6	183	335	⇩	64.0	RED

Education Annual Indicators - Ashford (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	H	A		67.6	68.6	68.6	68.9	1,038	1,506	69	AMBER	⇧	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		22.3	16.0	22.1	16.6	N/A	N/A	20	GREEN	⇧	21	25.1	21.1
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	H	A		55.7	56.9	58.9	59.5	955	1,606	62	AMBER	⇧	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		28.7	26.8	26.8	27.4	N/A	N/A	23	RED	⇩	25	25	21
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	H	A		48.2	45.8	44.9	*44.9*	N/A	N/A	47	AMBER	⇔	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		19.3	16.9	19.6	*19.6*	N/A	N/A	17	AMBER	⇔	17.0	18.7	14.8
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		36.50	32.8	32.50	*32.50*	N/A	N/A	35	AMBER	⇔		*35.07*	*34.38*
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		29.66	28.9	29.08	*29.08*	N/A	N/A	30	AMBER	⇔		*28.45*	*29.09*
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		28.68	29.7	30.11	*30.11*	N/A	N/A	38	RED	⇔		*28.38*	*28.11*
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	L	A		4.5	4.9	5.0	5.2	1,128	21,644	4.8	AMBER	⇩	5.8	5.8	5.8
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		18.9	15.5	16.1	14.4	1,394	9,658	15.8	GREEN	⇧	14.3	13.8	14.3
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		31.8	30.8	27.7	23.1	2,021	8,731	23.0	AMBER	⇧	21.1	20.9	21.1
EH48	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		0.6	0.9	0.9	1.2	117	9,658			⇩	0.9	0.9	0.9
EH49	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		3.2	4.3	4.5	3.5	306	8,731			⇧	3.2	3.2	3.2

Directorate Scorecard - Canterbury District

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
Canterbury CSWT					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	26.8	24.8	24.6	25.4	24.5	23.9	24.8	401	1,617	⇩	25.0	GREEN	26.8	25.0	AMBER	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		97.0	96.9	96.7	96.6	96.4	96.4	96.4	54	56	⇔	90.0	GREEN	97.0	90.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		15.8	15.3	14.8	16.3	18.0	20.9	21.9	28	128	⇩	20.0	GREEN	15.8	20.0	AMBER	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		93.1	93.1	89.7	89.7	86.2	86.2	84.6	22	26	⇩	85.0	AMBER	93.1	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	76.9	76.9	76.9	73.1	73.1	69.2	73.1	19.0	26.0	⇧	85.0	RED	76.9	85.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		21.3	22.0	20.6	25.4	24.6	26.1	29.8	596	20.0	⇩	18.0	RED	21.3	18.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
Canterbury EHU					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25										
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	L	R12M		22.8	22.6	23.0	22.7	21.2	21.2	20.7	180	870	⇧	25.0	GREEN	22.8	25.0	GREEN	21	N/A
EH52-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	H	MS		88.2	88.2	88.7	89.3	90.0	90.5	90.7	458	505	⇧	85.0	GREEN	88.2	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	H	R12M		100.0	100.0	94.1	94.1	93.8	93.8	93.3	14	15	⇩	85.0	GREEN	100.0	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	L	R12M	✓	12.1	11.7	9.4	9.1	9.5	8.5	8.2	30	364	⇧	15.0	GREEN	12.1	15.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	L	MS		16.6	14.8	16.5	13.7	14.3	12.8	13.3	198	14.9	⇧	20.0	AMBER	16.6	20.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Integrated Children's Services Quarterly Indicators - Canterbury (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Quarterly Trends			Latest Quarter			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East as at Jan 2025	England & Wales as at Jan 2025
								Rate	Numerator	Denominator								
					Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26										
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	L	Q		50.0	55.1	52.8	46.8	29	62	⇧	32.9	RED	55.1	32.9	RED	32.6	32.5

Directorate Scorecard - Canterbury District

Education Monthly Indicators - Canterbury (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		94.1	70.0	50.0	57.1	44.4	45.5	43.8	7	16	⇩	65	RED	31.7	60	RED	38.2	46.4
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET) [seasonally impacted indicator]	L	MS		4.6	4.8	4.9	4.0	3.9	4.2				⇧	TBC			2.8	GREEN	*2.8*	*3.2*
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	L	MS		12.2	12.2	11.1	11.4	11.4	11.6	11.9	234	1,962	⇩	9	RED	11.6	9	RED	N/A	N/A
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	L	R12M		2	2	2	1	1	1	1	N/A	N/A	⇔	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
EH44	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		3	3	3	1	1	1	0	N/A	N/A	⇧	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	H	R12M		86.1	86.9	92.5	94.9	96.1	96.1	97.2	345	355	⇧	90	GREEN	96.1	90	GREEN	N/A	N/A
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	H	R12M		67.0	74.9	81.5	85.4	86.8	86.3	87.5	265	303	⇧	85	GREEN	86.3	95	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Education Termly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Termly Trends			Latest Term			DOT	Target Summer 2024-25	RAG 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator			
					Summer 23-24	Autumn 24-25	Spring 24-25	Summer 24-25					
EY1	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator]	H	T		61.6	65.5	53.7	50.7	176	347	⇩	64.0	RED

Education Annual Indicators - Canterbury (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	H	A		61.9	65.0	67.0	67.8	936	1,380	69	AMBER	⇧	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		31.3	20.6	29.3	22.5	N/A	N/A	20	AMBER	⇧	21	25.1	21.1
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	H	A		59.7	56.6	56.6	56.9	882	1,551	62	RED	⇧	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		35.3	35.5	32.5	31.0	N/A	N/A	23	RED	⇧	25	25	21
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	H	A		48.1	46.2	45.4	*45.4*	N/A	N/A	47	AMBER	⇔	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		16.4	16.7	16.9	*16.9*	N/A	N/A	17	GREEN	⇔	17.0	18.7	14.8
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		37.10	33.2	34.61	*34.61*	N/A	N/A	35	AMBER	⇔		*35.07*	*34.38*
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		32.98	30.2	30.15	*30.15*	N/A	N/A	30	GREEN	⇔		*28.45*	*29.09*
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		30.26	31.2	27.33	*27.33*	N/A	N/A	38	RED	⇔		*28.38*	*28.11*
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	L	A		5.1	5.4	5.7	6.0	1,322	22,195	4.8	RED	⇩	5.8	5.8	5.8
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		19.8	18.2	17.3	17.4	1,638	9,430	15.8	RED	⇩	14.3	13.8	14.3
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		30.6	28.1	28.7	22.2	1,975	8,897	23.0	GREEN	⇧	21.1	20.9	21.1
EH48	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		0.6	1.1	1.5	1.4	133	9,430			⇧	0.9	0.9	0.9
EH49	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		3.6	4.6	4.6	3.6	319	8,897			⇧	3.2	3.2	3.2

Directorate Scorecard - Dartford District

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
Dartford CSWT					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	19.8	20.2	20.4	21.2	20.1	19.7	19.9	297	1,492	⇩	25.0	GREEN	19.8	25.0	GREEN	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		77.8	80.0	81.3	81.6	82.5	82.1	78.9	30	38	⇩	90.0	RED	77.8	90.0	RED	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		27.3	26.4	33.3	35.1	39.7	41.0	39.3	35	89	⇧	20.0	RED	27.3	20.0	AMBER	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		83.3	83.3	79.2	79.2	83.3	83.3	83.3	20	24	⇔	85.0	AMBER	83.3	85.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	80.1	80.1	75.8	75.8	83.7	82.8	83.7	19.2	23.0	⇧	85.0	AMBER	80.1	85.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		23.1	20.1	21.9	22.2	20.5	21.2	21.0	447	21.2	⇧	18.0	AMBER	23.1	18.0	RED	N/A	N/A
Dartford EHU					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25										
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	L	R12M		24.8	25.1	25.2	24.9	24.8	24.0	22.4	138	617	⇧	25.0	GREEN	24.8	25.0	GREEN	21	N/A
EH52-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	H	MS		84.7	83.9	85.6	85.1	85.7	87.7	87.2	224	257	⇩	85.0	GREEN	84.7	85.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	H	R12M		88.9	88.9	90.0	90.0	90.0	90.0	90.0	9	10	⇔	85.0	GREEN	88.9	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	L	R12M	✓	12.1	12.6	12.2	11.5	11.5	9.7	9.0	19	210	⇧	15.0	GREEN	12.1	15.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	L	MS		17.3	14.9	15.8	15.4	8.1	8.2	9.4	99	10.5	⇧	20.0	RED	17.3	20.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Integrated Children's Services Quarterly Indicators - Dartford (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Quarterly Trends			Latest Quarter			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East as at Jan 2025	England & Wales as at Jan 2025
								Rate	Numerator	Denominator								
					Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26										
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	L	Q		28.1	37.5	43.5	48.3	14	29	⇩	32.9	RED	37.5	32.9	RED	32.6	32.5

Directorate Scorecard - Dartford District

Education Monthly Indicators - Dartford (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		80.0	85.7	71.4	50.0	76.9	50.0	72.7	8	11	⇧	65	GREEN	29.6	60	RED	38.2	46.4
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET) [seasonally impacted indicator]	L	MS		3.0	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.3				⇧	TBC			2.8	GREEN	*2.8*	*3.2*
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	L	MS		10.5	11.0	11.4	11.4	11.5	12.6	12.5	207	1,655	⇧	9	RED	12.6	9	RED	N/A	N/A
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	L	R12M		3	4	3	5	4	4	4	N/A	N/A	⇔	N/A	N/A	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
EH44	Number of permanent exclusions from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		13	14	13	15	19	19	21	N/A	N/A	⇩	N/A	N/A	19	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	H	R12M		86.1	89.8	92.9	96.2	97.5	98.3	99.6	451	453	⇧		GREEN	98.3	90	GREEN	N/A	N/A
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	H	R12M		66.2	72.9	77.6	86.7	88.2	88.3	90.0	217	241	⇧		GREEN	88.3	95	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Education Termly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Termly Trends			Latest Term			DOT	Target Summer 2024-25	RAG 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator			
					Summer 23-24	Autumn 24-25	Spring 24-25	Summer 24-25					
	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator]	H	T		57.8	56.9	53.4	44.1	137	311	⇩	64.0	RED

Education Annual Indicators - Dartford (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	H	A		64.3	70.7	68.4	70.7	1,128	1,596	69	GREEN	⇧	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		26.5	25.0	24.7	20.9	N/A	N/A	20	AMBER	⇧	21	25.1	21.1
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	H	A		59.2	64.6	67.1	65.9	1,155	1,752	62	GREEN	⇧	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		25.1	25.2	21.0	22.6	N/A	N/A	23	GREEN	⇩	25	25	21
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	H	A		55.5	53.1	53.5	*53.5*	N/A	N/A	47	GREEN	⇔	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		18.2	18.6	15.3	*15.3*	N/A	N/A	17	GREEN	⇔	17.0	18.7	14.8
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		37.71	34.0	34.04	*34.04*	N/A	N/A	35	AMBER	⇔		*35.07*	*34.38*
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		32.48	30.7	31.02	*31.02*	N/A	N/A	30	GREEN	⇔		*28.45*	*29.09*
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		33.77	33.5	35.48	*35.48*	N/A	N/A	38	AMBER	⇔		*28.38*	*28.11*
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	L	A		2.8	3.0	3.2	3.4	850	24,663	4.8	GREEN	⇩	5.8	5.8	5.8
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		17.4	15.2	14.4	13.7	1,469	10,725	15.8	GREEN	⇧	14.3	13.8	14.3
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		21.1	22.7	23.5	18.0	1,850	10,271	23.0	GREEN	⇧	21.1	20.9	21.1
EH48	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		0.8	0.9	1.1	1.1	113	10,725			⇔	0.9	0.9	0.9
EH49	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		2.2	2.4	2.6	2.2	223	10,271			⇧	3.2	3.2	3.2

Directorate Scorecard - Dover District

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
Dover CSWT					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	26.4	25.9	25.4	25.3	23.8	23.8	22.9	327	1,428	⇧	25.0	GREEN	26.4	25.0	AMBER	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		95.3	95.6	95.2	93.6	93.2	92.9	91.7	33	36	⇩	90.0	GREEN	95.3	90.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		26.2	28.4	26.3	25.7	24.3	26.4	23.8	25	105	⇧	20.0	AMBER	26.2	20.0	AMBER	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		86.4	86.4	86.4	86.4	85.0	85.0	84.2	16	19	⇩	85.0	AMBER	86.4	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	86.1	81.8	81.8	81.8	77.4	77.4	90.5	20.8	23.0	⇧	85.0	GREEN	86.1	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		22.5	22.0	19.5	20.6	23.7	25.3	22.3	487	21.8	⇧	18.0	RED	22.5	18.0	RED	N/A	N/A
Dover EHU					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25										
EH12-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	L	R12M		27.6	27.4	27.4	26.8	26.5	26.7	26.2	225	860	⇧	25.0	AMBER	27.6	25.0	AMBER	21	N/A
EH52-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	H	MS		94.5	95.8	95.8	96.1	96.1	96.1	96.7	262	271	⇧	85.0	GREEN	94.5	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	H	R12M		81.8	81.8	81.8	81.8	81.8	81.8	90.9	10	11	⇧	85.0	GREEN	81.8	85.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	L	R12M	✓	13.4	13.8	15.6	17.2	15.9	16.7	15.6	37	237	⇧	15.0	AMBER	13.4	15.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	L	MS		10.9	10.6	11.7	11.7	11.3	10.6	12.3	164	13.3	⇧	20.0	AMBER	10.9	20.0	RED	N/A	N/A

Integrated Children's Services Quarterly Indicators - Dover (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Quarterly Trends			Latest Quarter			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East as at Jan 2025	England & Wales as at Jan 2025
								Rate	Numerator	Denominator								
					Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26										
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	L	Q		18.8	24.1	24.0	29.4	10	34	⇩	32.9	GREEN	24.1	32.9	GREEN	32.6	32.5

Directorate Scorecard - Dover District

Education Monthly Indicators - Dover (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		84.6	85.7	60.0	66.7	36.4	37.5	38.9	7	18	⇧	65	RED	40.1	60	RED	38.2	46.4
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET) [seasonally impacted indicator]	L	MS		5.0	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.8	5.0				⇧	TBC			2.8	GREEN	*2.8*	*3.2*
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	L	MS		12.8	13.0	12.2	12.1	11.8	12.1	12.1	197	1,629	⇔	9	RED	12.1	9	RED	N/A	N/A
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	L	R12M		2	3	2	1	1	1	1	N/A	N/A	⇔	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
EH44	Number of permanent exclusions from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	⇔	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	H	R12M		88.3	90.0	94.0	96.7	99.0	99.0	99.6	222	223	⇧		GREEN	99.0	90	GREEN	N/A	N/A
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	H	R12M		69.8	72.9	80.0	85.4	87.5	87.6	90.2	221	245	⇧		GREEN	87.6	95	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Education Termly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Termly Trends			Latest Term			DOT	Target Summer 2024-25	RAG 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator			
					Summer 23-24	Autumn 24-25	Spring 24-25	Summer 24-25					
	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator]	H	T		64.9	71.8	67.1	55.2	166	301	⇩	64.0	RED

Education Annual Indicators - Dover (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	H	A		64.9	68.2	67.7	65.2	702	1,076	69	RED	⇩	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		14.1	17.9	16.6	21.5	N/A	N/A	20	AMBER	⇩	21	25.1	21.1
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	H	A		51.9	56.1	54.7	57.4	686	1,195	62	RED	⇧	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		21.7	28.5	26.8	25.7	N/A	N/A	23	AMBER	⇧	25	25	21
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	H	A		44.5	42.0	42.8	*42.8*	N/A	N/A	47	RED	⇔	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		16.9	17.1	15.8	*15.8*	N/A	N/A	17	GREEN	⇔	17.0	18.7	14.8
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		34.89	32.5	32.24	*32.24*	N/A	N/A	35	AMBER	⇔		*35.07*	*34.38*
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		29.04	24.3	24.47	*24.47*	N/A	N/A	30	RED	⇔		*28.45*	*29.09*
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		30.32	24.9	36.92	*36.92*	N/A	N/A	38	AMBER	⇔		*28.38*	*28.11*
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	L	A		4.1	4.5	4.7	5.2	825	16,003	4.8	AMBER	⇩	5.8	5.8	5.8
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		20.7	19.9	18.0	16.9	1,265	7,464	15.8	RED	⇧	14.3	13.8	14.3
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		34.7	35.1	34.5	29.3	1,850	6,307	23.0	RED	⇧	21.1	20.9	21.1
EH48	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		0.4	0.8	0.8	1.0	76	7,464			⇩	0.9	0.9	0.9
EH49	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		2.8	4.3	5.5	4.0	255	6,307			⇧	3.2	3.2	3.2

Directorate Scorecard - Folkestone and Hythe District

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
Folkestone and Hythe CSWT					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	18.0	16.9	16.6	15.4	15.2	15.8	17.2	213	1,236	⇩	25.0	GREEN	18.0	25.0	GREEN	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		80.0	73.7	73.7	71.8	66.7	65.7	62.5	20	32	⇩	90.0	RED	80.0	90.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		24.3	25.2	23.0	27.3	27.7	32.0	33.3	37	111	⇩	20.0	RED	24.3	20.0	AMBER	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		95.7	95.7	87.5	87.5	79.2	79.2	73.9	17	23	⇩	85.0	RED	95.7	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	80.0	85.0	85.0	85.0	85.0	85.0	85.0	17.0	20.0	⇔	85.0	GREEN	80.0	85.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		30.7	29.4	25.7	26.3	23.6	25.3	24.2	436	18.0	⇧	18.0	RED	30.7	18.0	RED	N/A	N/A
Folkestone and Hythe EHU					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25										
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	L	R12M		23.7	23.4	23.7	22.6	21.7	22.5	22.1	150	680	⇧	25.0	GREEN	23.7	25.0	GREEN	21	N/A
EH52-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	H	MS		90.0	90.3	91.2	92.2	92.1	91.9	91.3	263	288	⇩	85.0	GREEN	90.0	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	H	R12M		87.5	87.5	87.5	87.5	88.9	88.9	90.0	9	10	⇧	85.0	GREEN	87.5	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	L	R12M	✓	17.5	18.6	16.2	15.5	15.5	15.2	14.5	29	200	⇧	15.0	GREEN	17.5	15.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	L	MS		11.3	9.3	9.4	10.9	11.1	9.8	10.1	126	12.5	⇧	20.0	RED	11.3	20.0	RED	N/A	N/A

Integrated Children's Services Quarterly Indicators - Folkestone and Hythe (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Quarterly Trends			Latest Quarter			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East as at Jan 2025	England & Wales as at Jan 2025
								Rate	Numerator	Denominator								
					Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26										
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	L	Q		50.0	45.5	35.0	26.1	6	23	⇧	32.9	GREEN	45.5	32.9	RED	32.6	32.5

Directorate Scorecard - Folkestone and Hythe District

Education Monthly Indicators - Folkestone and Hythe (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		62.5	84.6	33.3	50.0	38.5	22.2	37.5	3	8	⇧	65	RED	28.0	60	RED	38.2	46.4
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET) [seasonally impacted indicator]	L	MS		4.1	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.9	4.3				⇧	TBC			2.8	GREEN	*2.8*	*3.2*
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	L	MS		9.0	9.1	7.7	7.7	7.7	7.4	7.6	101	1,324	⇩	9	GREEN	7.4	9	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	L	R12M		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	N/A	N/A	⇔	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
EH44	Number of permanent exclusions from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	⇔	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	H	R12M		95.3	96.0	98.0	98.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	146	146	⇔		GREEN	100.0	90	GREEN	N/A	N/A
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	H	R12M		61.8	64.9	72.6	78.2	85.5	85.7	87.5	189	216	⇧		GREEN	85.7	95	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Education Termly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Termly Trends			Latest Term			DOT	Target Summer 2024-25	RAG 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator			
					Summer 23-24	Autumn 24-25	Spring 24-25	Summer 24-25					
	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator]	H	T		79.4	74.8	63.6	58.4	139	238	⇩	64.0	RED

Education Annual Indicators - Folkestone and Hythe (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	H	A		65.9	67.1	66.8	67.7	701	1,035	69	AMBER	⇧	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		23.5	24.2	26.3	24.5	N/A	N/A	20	RED	⇧	21	25.1	21.1
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	H	A		60.2	59.4	59.2	60.2	727	1,207	62	AMBER	⇧	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		21.0	28.1	24.5	24.6	N/A	N/A	23	AMBER	⇩	25	25	21
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	H	A		50.1	43.1	41.3	*41.3*	N/A	N/A	47	RED	⇔	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		18.5	17.4	14.4	*14.4*	N/A	N/A	17	GREEN	⇔	17.0	18.7	14.8
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		33.27	31.0	31.51	*31.51*	N/A	N/A	35	RED	⇔		*35.07*	*34.38*
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		33.70	30.9	30.62	*30.62*	N/A	N/A	30	GREEN	⇔		*28.45*	*29.09*
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		35.80	37.2	32.14	*32.14*	N/A	N/A	38	RED	⇔		*28.38*	*28.11*
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	L	A		4.8	5.0	5.2	5.5	826	15,078	4.8	RED	⇩	5.8	5.8	5.8
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		18.5	16.5	16.5	15.5	1,116	7,201	15.8	GREEN	⇧	14.3	13.8	14.3
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		35.1	33.1	31.6	22.9	1,300	5,679	23.0	GREEN	⇧	21.1	20.9	21.1
EH48	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		0.8	0.7	0.8	1.0	73	7,201			⇩	0.9	0.9	0.9
EH49	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		3.5	3.7	4.7	2.9	165	5,679			⇧	3.2	3.2	3.2

Directorate Scorecard - Gravesham District

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
Gravesham CSWT					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	21.8	21.8	20.9	20.5	22.1	22.5	23.2	418	1,801	⇩	25.0	GREEN	21.8	25.0	GREEN	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		86.0	86.4	90.0	90.5	89.2	88.6	93.5	29	31	⇧	90.0	GREEN	86.0	90.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		12.1	12.6	14.5	14.6	13.1	13.5	12.9	18	139	⇩	20.0	AMBER	12.1	20.0	RED	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	20	20	⇔	85.0	GREEN	100.0	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	61.7	57.5	61.7	57.5	57.5	57.5	65.9	15.8	24.0	⇧	85.0	RED	61.7	85.0	RED	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		22.3	18.5	18.0	22.7	23.1	23.1	21.6	472	21.8	⇧	18.0	AMBER	22.3	18.0	RED	N/A	N/A
Gravesham EHU					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25										
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	L	R12M		23.0	22.8	22.4	22.2	22.8	22.4	22.3	189	848	⇧	25.0	GREEN	23.0	25.0	GREEN	21	N/A
EH52-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	H	MS		90.7	90.1	89.2	87.2	86.5	86.7	86.2	367	426	⇩	85.0	GREEN	90.7	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	H	R12M		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	8	8	⇔	85.0	GREEN	100.0	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	L	R12M	✓	14.2	13.1	13.5	14.2	15.3	15.9	15.9	53	333	⇔	15.0	AMBER	14.2	15.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	L	MS		12.0	12.5	12.2	11.0	12.4	11.6	12.3	168	13.6	⇧	20.0	AMBER	12.0	20.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Integrated Children's Services Quarterly Indicators - Gravesham (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Quarterly Trends			Latest Quarter			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East as at Jan 2025	England & Wales as at Jan 2025
								Rate	Numerator	Denominator								
					Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26										
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	L	Q		40.9	45.0	44.4	42.1	8	19	⇧	32.9	RED	45.0	32.9	RED	32.6	32.5

Directorate Scorecard - Gravesham District

Education Monthly Indicators - Gravesham (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		60.0	76.9	50.0	60.0	44.4	11.1	66.7	6	9	⇧	65	GREEN	38.7	60	RED	38.2	46.4
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET) [seasonally impacted indicator]	L	MS		4.5	5.1	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.5				⇧	TBC			2.8	GREEN	*2.8*	*3.2*
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	L	MS		10.7	10.7	10.2	10.2	10.1	10.0	10.6	146	1,380	⇩	9	RED	10.0	9	AMBER	N/A	N/A
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	L	R12M		2	2	2	2	2	2	3	N/A	N/A	⇩	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
EH44	Number of permanent exclusions from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		2	3	3	2	2	2	2	N/A	N/A	⇔	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	H	R12M		77.2	80.1	82.8	85.3	87.8	90.5	93.3	471	505	⇧	65	GREEN	90.5	90	GREEN	N/A	N/A
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	H	R12M		68.8	75.1	82.8	90.7	91.3	91.5	89.3	191	214	⇩	60	GREEN	91.5	95	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Education Termly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Termly Trends			Latest Term			DOT	Target Summer 2024-25	RAG 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator			
					Summer 23-24	Autumn 24-25	Spring 24-25	Summer 24-25					
	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator]	H	T		51.1	54.4	47.4	46.0	155	337	⇩	64.0	RED

Education Annual Indicators - Gravesham (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	H	A		66.8	67.4	65.0	67.7	933	1,379	69	AMBER	⇧	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		21.2	15.6	20.6	25.3	N/A	N/A	20	RED	⇩	21	25.1	21.1
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	H	A		61.8	56.6	58.9	56.5	843	1,491	62	RED	⇧	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		20.8	26.1	25.8	25.4	N/A	N/A	23	AMBER	⇧	25	25	21
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	H	A		48.4	46.3	45.6	*45.6*	N/A	N/A	47	AMBER	⇔	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		15.6	11.8	16.5	*16.5*	N/A	N/A	17	GREEN	⇔	17.0	18.7	14.8
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		35.37	29.6	30.64	*30.64*	N/A	N/A	35	RED	⇔		*35.07*	*34.38*
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		31.26	27.2	26.52	*26.52*	N/A	N/A	30	RED	⇔		*28.45*	*29.09*
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		30.78	35.2	31.56	*31.56*	N/A	N/A	38	RED	⇔		*28.38*	*28.11*
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	L	A		3.1	3.2	3.2	3.5	737	20,785	4.8	GREEN	⇩	5.8	5.8	5.8
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		20.5	18.6	16.8	16.0	1,422	8,877	15.8	AMBER	⇧	14.3	13.8	14.3
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		26.0	38.1	24.2	19.2	1,589	8,275	23.0	GREEN	⇧	21.1	20.9	21.1
EH48	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		0.7	0.9	0.9	0.9	83	8,877			⇔	0.9	0.9	0.9
EH49	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		2.3	3.7	3.2	2.7	221	8,275			⇧	3.2	3.2	3.2

Directorate Scorecard - Maidstone District

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
Maidstone CSWT					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	26.0	26.1	27.0	27.0	26.2	26.1	25.6	555	2,169	⇧	25.0	AMBER	26.0	25.0	AMBER	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		100.0	100.0	100.0	97.0	96.7	96.7	96.4	27	28	⇩	90.0	GREEN	100.0	90.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		23.0	23.1	23.5	24.1	29.0	26.8	28.8	36	125	⇩	20.0	RED	23.0	20.0	AMBER	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		89.3	89.3	88.9	88.9	92.3	92.3	92.3	24	26	⇔	85.0	GREEN	89.3	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	68.3	61.4	57.9	61.4	66.9	66.9	74.7	22.4	30.0	⇧	85.0	RED	68.3	85.0	RED	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		22.1	22.2	20.6	19.4	20.6	16.9	16.4	490	29.8	⇧	18.0	GREEN	22.1	18.0	RED	N/A	N/A
Maidstone EHU					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25										
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	L	R12M		23.2	23.2	22.8	22.6	22.8	22.6	23.8	289	1,212	⇩	25.0	GREEN	23.2	25.0	GREEN	21	N/A
EH52-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	H	MS		96.9	97.0	97.6	97.3	97.2	97.0	97.0	616	635	⇔	85.0	GREEN	96.9	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	H	R12M		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	17	17	⇔	85.0	GREEN	100.0	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	L	R12M	✓	15.6	15.1	14.7	13.7	14.2	14.1	13.8	78	564	⇧	15.0	GREEN	15.6	15.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	L	MS		21.7	17.8	17.9	19.2	15.1	14.5	18.7	206	11.0	⇧	20.0	GREEN	21.7	20.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A

Integrated Children's Services Quarterly Indicators - Maidstone (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Quarterly Trends			Latest Quarter			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East as at Jan 2025	England & Wales as at Jan 2025
								Rate	Numerator	Denominator								
					Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26										
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	L	Q		28.9	28.3	30.0	26.1	18	69	⇧	32.9	GREEN	28.3	32.9	GREEN	32.6	32.5

Directorate Scorecard - Maidstone District

Education Monthly Indicators - Maidstone (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		78.6	93.3	77.8	50.0	70.6	60.0	53.3	8	15	⇩	65	RED	37.1	60	RED	38.2	46.4
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET) [seasonally impacted indicator]	L	MS		4.4	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.1	3.9				⇧	TBC			2.8	GREEN	*2.8*	*3.2*
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	L	MS		6.8	7.0	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.5	6.5	138	2,138	⇔	9	GREEN	6.5	9	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	L	R12M		5	5	5	4	4	4	4	N/A	N/A	⇔	N/A	N/A	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
EH44	Number of permanent exclusions from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		10	9	8	5	5	5	6	N/A	N/A	⇩	N/A	N/A	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	H	R12M		86.5	88.2	91.8	93.0	93.3	94.9	97.2	663	682	⇧	65	GREEN	94.9	90	GREEN	N/A	N/A
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	H	R12M		68.5	76.4	81.6	87.6	90.4	90.1	91.3	398	436	⇧	60	GREEN	90.1	95	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Education Termly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Termly Trends			Latest Term			DOT	Target Summer 2024-25	RAG 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator			
					Summer 23-24	Autumn 24-25	Spring 24-25	Summer 24-25					
	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator]	H	T		65.8	64.2	61.0	50.3	255	507	⇩	64.0	RED

Education Annual Indicators - Maidstone (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	H	A		64.2	70.6	69.7	70.4	1,479	2,100	69	GREEN	⇧	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		23.9	14.8	20.5	17.0	N/A	N/A	20	GREEN	⇧	21	25.1	21.1
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	H	A		58.5	59.0	60.1	59.8	1,301	2,175	62	AMBER	⇧	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		26.3	22.7	24.8	30.9	N/A	N/A	23	RED	⇩	25	25	21
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	H	A		50.8	46.7	48.3	*48.3*	N/A	N/A	47	GREEN	⇔	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		19.0	19.0	19.3	*19.3*	N/A	N/A	17	AMBER	⇔	17.0	18.7	14.8
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		38.22	34.5	32.74	*32.74*	N/A	N/A	35	AMBER	⇔		*35.07*	*34.38*
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		29.94	25.9	24.02	*24.02*	N/A	N/A	30	RED	⇔		*28.45*	*29.09*
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		37.98	30.0	24.72	*24.72*	N/A	N/A	38	RED	⇔		*28.38*	*28.11*
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	L	A		5.0	5.5	6.0	6.5	2,008	30,766	4.8	RED	⇩	5.8	5.8	5.8
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		18.0	16.8	14.6	13.8	1,813	13,096	15.8	GREEN	⇧	14.3	13.8	14.3
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		25.1	24.5	23.5	19.6	2,353	11,975	23.0	GREEN	⇧	21.1	20.9	21.1
EH48	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		0.7	0.7	1.0	1.1	145	13,096			⇩	0.9	0.9	0.9
EH49	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		2.1	2.8	2.8	2.5	304	11,975			⇧	3.2	3.2	3.2

Directorate Scorecard - Sevenoaks District

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
Sevenoaks North & Tonbridge and Malling CSWT					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	22.5	22.9	22.7	23.0	23.1	23.0	22.8	408	1,789	⇧	25.0	GREEN	22.5	25.0	GREEN	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		80.8	79.6	79.1	81.0	80.0	79.5	86.1	31	36	⇧	90.0	AMBER	80.8	90.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		17.0	17.5	20.0	22.6	23.6	24.3	24.3	35	144	⇔	20.0	AMBER	17.0	20.0	AMBER	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		88.5	88.5	88.9	88.9	89.7	89.7	89.7	26	29	⇔	85.0	GREEN	88.5	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	62.9	62.9	61.4	57.9	65.0	68.6	75.7	21.2	28.0	⇧	85.0	AMBER	62.9	85.0	RED	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		26.8	24.8	22.9	26.5	23.0	22.2	24.3	550	22.6	⇩	18.0	RED	26.8	18.0	RED	N/A	N/A
Sevenoaks South & Tunbridge Wells CSWT					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25										
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	29.2	30.5	30.7	30.5	30.8	31.1	30.8	479	1,554	⇧	25.0	RED	29.2	25.0	AMBER	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		97.5	97.4	97.4	97.5	97.4	97.6	97.5	39	40	⇩	90.0	GREEN	97.5	90.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		24.6	25.4	23.3	24.6	22.2	18.5	24.2	15	62	⇩	20.0	AMBER	24.6	20.0	AMBER	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		73.7	73.7	65.0	65.0	65.0	65.0	57.1	12	21	⇩	85.0	RED	73.7	85.0	RED	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	80.0	80.0	75.0	80.0	90.0	85.0	84.0	16.8	20.0	⇩	85.0	AMBER	80.0	85.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		22.8	21.4	24.0	23.7	17.5	18.7	19.9	391	19.6	⇩	18.0	AMBER	22.8	18.0	RED	N/A	N/A

Directorate Scorecard - Sevenoaks District

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
Sevenoaks North & Tonbridge and Malling EHU					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	L	R12M		22.9	24.0	24.4	25.2	24.5	24.3	24.0	273	1,139	⇧	25.0	GREEN	22.9	25.0	GREEN	21	N/A
EH52-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	H	MS		98.3	98.4	98.4	98.7	98.7	98.7	98.7	531	538	⇔	85.0	GREEN	98.3	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	H	R12M		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	12	12	⇔	85.0	GREEN	100.0	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	L	R12M	✓	12.5	12.8	12.0	12.9	13.2	13.6	13.7	73	534	⇩	15.0	GREEN	12.5	15.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	L	MS		15.5	13.8	14.6	14.3	20.1	13.8	14.3	171	12.0	⇧	20.0	AMBER	15.5	20.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
Sevenoaks South & Tunbridge Wells EHU					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25										
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	L	R12M		23.4	23.9	24.4	24.7	24.5	23.9	24.9	201	806	⇩	25.0	GREEN	23.4	25.0	GREEN	21	N/A
EH52-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	H	MS		94.9	95.2	95.3	95.4	95.5	95.1	94.9	372	392	⇩	85.0	GREEN	94.9	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	H	R12M		100.0	100.0	90.9	90.9	90.9	90.9	90.9	10	11	⇔	85.0	GREEN	100.0	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	L	R12M	✓	13.1	13.8	13.2	13.2	12.2	11.8	12.4	30	242	⇩	15.0	GREEN	13.1	15.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	L	MS		17.5	15.0	20.4	21.5	19.9	15.6	16.1	145	9.0	⇧	20.0	AMBER	17.5	20.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Integrated Children's Services Quarterly Indicators - Sevenoaks (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Quarterly Trends			Latest Quarter			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East as at Jan 2025	England & Wales as at Jan 2025
								Rate	Numerator	Denominator								
					Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26										
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	L	Q		37.5	30.4	21.1	16.7	3	18	⇧	32.9	GREEN	30.4	32.9	GREEN	32.6	32.5

Directorate Scorecard - Sevenoaks District

Education Monthly Indicators - Sevenoaks (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		100.0	66.7	100.0	42.9	90.9	42.9	42.1	8	19	⇩	65	RED	33.3	60	RED	38.2	46.4
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET) [seasonally impacted indicator]	L	MS		3.4	3.9	3.8	3.6	3.7	3.7				⇧	TBC			2.8	GREEN	*2.8*	*3.2*
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	L	MS		14.1	14.6	14.8	15.0	14.7	13.6	14.2	203	1,427	⇩	9	RED	13.6	9	RED	N/A	N/A
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	L	R12M		2	2	3	4	3	3	4	N/A	N/A	⇩	N/A	N/A	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
EH44	Number of permanent exclusions from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		6	5	5	7	8	8	8	N/A	N/A	⇔	N/A	N/A	8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	H	R12M		87.6	83.7	86.7	86.3	88.6	90.3	89.7	175	195	⇩	65	GREEN	90.3	90	GREEN	N/A	N/A
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	H	R12M		67.9	71.7	78.8	84.3	85.9	85.6	85.8	205	239	⇧	60	GREEN	85.6	95	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Education Termly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Termly Trends			Latest Term			DOT	Target Summer 2024-25	RAG 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator			
					Summer 23-24	Autumn 24-25	Spring 24-25	Summer 24-25					
	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator]	H	T		70.5	76.4	62.9	60.7	116	191	⇩	64.0	RED

Education Annual Indicators - Sevenoaks (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	H	A		68.8	72.4	69.0	70.8	855	1,207	69	GREEN	⇧	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		24.8	14.2	36.2	24.4	N/A	N/A	20	RED	⇧	21	25.1	21.1
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	H	A		63.9	63.5	65.7	67.4	876	1,300	62	GREEN	⇧	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		34.2	39.8	25.9	38.9	N/A	N/A	23	RED	⇩	25	25	21
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	H	A		43.8	41.0	41.2	*41.2*	N/A	N/A	47	RED	⇔	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		13.6	12.3	16.1	*16.1*	N/A	N/A	17	GREEN	⇔	17.0	18.7	14.8
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		34.91	33.8	31.65	*31.65*	N/A	N/A	35	RED	⇔		*35.07*	*34.38*
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		33.76	31.2	26.35	*26.35*	N/A	N/A	30	RED	⇔		*28.45*	*29.09*
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		N/A	N/A	N/A	*N/A*	N/A	N/A	38	GREEN	⇔		*28.38*	*28.11*
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	L	A		5.8	6.0	6.3	6.7	872	12,949	4.8	RED	⇩	5.8	5.8	5.8
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		17.7	15.3	13.3	13.6	1,115	8,191	15.8	GREEN	⇩	14.3	13.8	14.3
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		37.6	31.6	29.5	28.2	781	2,769	23.0	RED	⇧	21.1	20.9	21.1
EH48	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8	66	8,191			⇔	0.9	0.9	0.9
EH49	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		4.8	4.6	4.2	4.3	120	2,769			⇩	3.2	3.2	3.2

Directorate Scorecard - Swale District

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
Swale Central CSWT					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	27.6	26.7	27.5	27.4	26.9	26.8	27.3	358	1,312	⇩	25.0	AMBER	27.6	25.0	AMBER	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	97.0	32	33	⇩	90.0	GREEN	100.0	90.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		35.4	34.9	34.1	33.8	29.6	32.4	32.5	25	77	⇩	20.0	RED	35.4	20.0	RED	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		88.2	88.2	93.8	93.8	100.0	100.0	100.0	16	16	⇔	85.0	GREEN	88.2	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	54.5	60.1	57.9	63.4	57.9	63.4	64.6	11.6	18.0	⇧	85.0	RED	54.5	85.0	RED	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		21.7	18.9	20.3	21.7	19.2	17.2	22.1	270	12.2	⇩	18.0	RED	21.7	18.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
Swale Island & Rural CSWT					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25										
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	26.1	26.1	26.1	28.3	29.0	28.3	29.5	331	1,121	⇩	25.0	AMBER	26.1	25.0	AMBER	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	24	24	⇔	90.0	GREEN	100.0	90.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		25.0	24.4	22.4	23.1	27.8	31.0	30.0	18	60	⇧	20.0	RED	25.0	20.0	AMBER	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		83.3	83.3	83.3	83.3	83.3	83.3	94.4	17	18	⇧	85.0	GREEN	83.3	85.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	75.0	62.5	62.5	62.5	62.5	62.5	68.8	11.0	16.0	⇧	85.0	RED	75.0	85.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		20.8	19.4	16.1	23.0	21.3	20.0	22.4	291	13.0	⇩	18.0	RED	20.8	18.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Page 53

Directorate Scorecard - Swale District

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
Swale EHU					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	L	R12M		24.7	24.6	24.6	24.7	24.8	24.8	25.2	312	1,236	⇩	25.0	AMBER	24.7	25.0	GREEN	21	N/A
EH52-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	H	MS		74.1	74.8	75.4	77.9	82.8	86.6	85.8	380	443	⇩	85.0	GREEN	74.1	85.0	RED	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	H	R12M		94.1	94.1	88.9	88.9	77.8	77.8	82.4	14	17	⇧	85.0	AMBER	94.1	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	L	R12M	✓	14.0	14.0	13.1	13.8	14.3	14.6	13.7	52	380	⇧	15.0	GREEN	14.0	15.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	L	MS		12.0	9.5	11.2	9.6	10.0	8.8	10.9	185	17.0	⇧	20.0	RED	12.0	20.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Integrated Children's Services Quarterly Indicators - Swale (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Quarterly Trends			Latest Quarter			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East as at Jan 2025	England & Wales as at Jan 2025
								Rate	Numerator	Denominator								
					Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26										
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	L	Q		32.6	28.9	31.7	24.4	10	41	⇧	32.9	GREEN	28.9	32.9	GREEN	32.6	32.5

Directorate Scorecard - Swale District

Education Monthly Indicators - Swale (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		100.0	84.0	66.7	47.6	35.3	35.3	39.3	11	28	⇧	65	RED	30.1	60	RED	38.2	46.4
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET) [seasonally impacted indicator]	L	MS		5.4	5.5	5.8	5.6	5.5	5.7				⇧	TBC			2.8	GREEN	*2.8*	*3.2*
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	L	MS		12.8	13.0	9.2	9.1	9.0	9.3	9.5	290	3,046	⇩	9	AMBER	9.3	9	AMBER	N/A	N/A
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	L	R12M		4	3	3	6	5	5	5	N/A	N/A	⇔	N/A	N/A	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
EH44	Number of permanent exclusions from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		3	2	2	2	3	2	2	N/A	N/A	⇔	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	H	R12M		71.3	68.5	71.8	72.8	73.0	70.9	78.7	358	455	⇧	65	GREEN	70.9	90	RED	N/A	N/A
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	H	R12M		68.5	73.9	79.5	85.0	89.0	89.0	86.0	425	494	⇩	60	GREEN	89.0	95	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Education Termly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Termly Trends			Latest Term			DOT	Target Summer 2024-25	RAG 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator			
					Summer 23-24	Autumn 24-25	Spring 24-25	Summer 24-25					
	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator]	H	T		72.7	67.9	57.0	52.0	264	508	⇩	64.0	RED

Education Annual Indicators - Swale (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	H	A		64.2	66.8	67.3	68.7	1,197	1,742	69	AMBER	⇧	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		17.2	23.6	20.1	22.9	N/A	N/A	20	AMBER	⇩	21	25.1	21.1
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	H	A		55.1	55.6	60.7	58.8	1,146	1,949	62	RED	⇧	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		25.6	20.2	24.9	24.2	N/A	N/A	23	AMBER	⇧	25	25	21
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	H	A		43.9	42.4	41.6	*41.6*	N/A	N/A	47	RED	⇔	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		16.6	16.8	17.7	*17.7*	N/A	N/A	17	AMBER	⇔	17.0	18.7	14.8
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		34.50	31.9	32.19	*32.19*	N/A	N/A	35	AMBER	⇔		*35.07*	*34.38*
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		31.42	28.7	29.45	*29.45*	N/A	N/A	30	AMBER	⇔		*28.45*	*29.09*
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		35.12	35.5	31.98	*31.98*	N/A	N/A	38	RED	⇔		*28.38*	*28.11*
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	L	A		5.4	5.8	6.1	6.3	1,526	24,262	4.8	RED	⇩	5.8	5.8	5.8
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		22.1	19.3	17.7	16.2	1,904	11,751	15.8	AMBER	⇧	14.3	13.8	14.3
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		36.8	33.1	32.0	27.2	2,437	8,970	23.0	RED	⇧	21.1	20.9	21.1
EH48	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		0.8	1.0	1.1	1.0	115	11,751			⇧	0.9	0.9	0.9
EH49	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		4.9	5.9	6.1	5.7	511	8,970			⇧	3.2	3.2	3.2

Directorate Scorecard - Thanet District

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
Thanet Margate CSWT					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	27.3	27.9	27.7	27.5	28.3	28.9	29.4	661	2,249	⇩	25.0	AMBER	27.3	25.0	AMBER	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	36	36	⇔	90.0	GREEN	100.0	90.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		24.2	23.2	24.2	27.2	32.7	34.7	34.2	41	120	⇧	20.0	RED	24.2	20.0	AMBER	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		88.2	88.2	88.9	88.9	83.3	83.3	83.3	15	18	⇔	85.0	AMBER	88.2	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	86.2	86.2	85.0	85.0	85.0	95.6	94.4	16.0	17.0	⇩	85.0	GREEN	86.2	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		21.9	20.9	24.3	25.7	22.4	22.2	23.1	370	16.0	⇩	18.0	RED	21.9	18.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
Thanet Ramsgate CSWT					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25										
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	12.2	12.8	22.9	25.6	25.0	25.0	22.5	9	40	⇧	25.0	GREEN	12.2	25.0	GREEN	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		93.1	93.3	92.0	91.3	94.4	93.8	94.1	16	17	⇧	90.0	GREEN	93.1	90.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		54.2	51.9	50.9	55.4	43.8	44.7	52.0	26	50	⇩	20.0	RED	54.2	20.0	RED	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		76.5	76.5	76.5	76.5	76.5	76.5	70.6	12	17	⇩	85.0	RED	76.5	85.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	66.3	66.3	60.1	60.1	60.1	53.8	72.6	11.6	16.0	⇧	85.0	RED	66.3	85.0	RED	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		26.2	27.1	27.2	27.0	32.8	40.2	23.5	235	10.0	⇧	18.0	RED	26.2	18.0	RED	N/A	N/A

Directorate Scorecard - Thanet District

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
Thanet EHU					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	L	R12M		30.9	31.0	32.0	32.6	32.3	31.9	31.5	383	1,214	⇧	25.0	RED	30.9	25.0	RED	21	N/A
EH52-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	H	MS		89.3	89.5	89.2	88.9	90.5	92.5	93.0	466	501	⇧	85.0	GREEN	89.3	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	H	R12M		76.5	76.5	75.0	75.0	81.3	81.3	81.3	13	16	⇔	85.0	AMBER	76.5	85.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	L	R12M	✓	18.4	18.1	16.9	16.8	16.4	16.3	16.9	62	366	⇩	15.0	AMBER	18.4	15.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	L	MS		12.3	11.6	12.0	11.2	12.4	11.3	12.0	212	17.7	⇧	20.0	AMBER	12.3	20.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Integrated Children's Services Quarterly Indicators - Thanet (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Quarterly Trends			Latest Quarter			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East as at Jan 2025	England & Wales as at Jan 2025
								Rate	Numerator	Denominator								
					Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26										
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	L	Q		17.5	19.1	15.3	16.5	14	85	⇧	32.9	GREEN	19.1	32.9	GREEN	32.6	32.5

Directorate Scorecard - Thanet District

Education Monthly Indicators - Thanet (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		72.7	84.4	50.0	54.5	64.7	50.0	42.1	8	19	⇩	65	RED	27.1	60	RED	38.2	46.4
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET) [seasonally impacted indicator]	L	MS		5.6	5.3	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.7				⇧	TBC			2.8	GREEN	*2.8*	*3.2*
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	L	MS		12.4	12.4	12.1	12.1	12.2	11.2	11.7	266	2,276	⇩	9	RED	11.2	9	RED	N/A	N/A
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	L	R12M		7	7	7	7	7	7	9	N/A	N/A	⇩	N/A	N/A	7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
EH44	Number of permanent exclusions from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		2	2	1	1	2	2	1	N/A	N/A	⇧	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	H	R12M		88.4	90.2	92.6	95.3	96.7	97.0	97.2	494	508	⇧	65	GREEN	97.0	90	GREEN	N/A	N/A
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	H	R12M		64.5	71.2	78.4	85.8	87.0	86.8	86.6	298	344	⇩	60	GREEN	86.8	95	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Education Termly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Termly Trends			Latest Term			DOT	Target Summer 2024-25	RAG 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator			
					Summer 23-24	Autumn 24-25	Spring 24-25	Summer 24-25					
	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator]	H	T		72.9	71.1	67.4	60.4	277	459	⇩	64.0	RED

Education Annual Indicators - Thanet (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	H	A		60.1	61.2	60.1	63.3	908	1,434	69	RED	⇧	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		23.7	21.0	24.6	22.6	N/A	N/A	20	AMBER	⇧	21	25.1	21.1
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	H	A		52.2	53.9	55.1	56.6	928	1,639	62	RED	⇧	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		22.6	22.8	19.5	22.5	N/A	N/A	23	GREEN	⇩	25	25	21
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	H	A		43.9	44.1	43.1	*43.1*	N/A	N/A	47	RED	⇔	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		15.3	15.8	14.8	*14.8*	N/A	N/A	17	GREEN	⇔	17.0	18.7	14.8
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		32.93	32.4	34.78	*34.78*	N/A	N/A	35	AMBER	⇔		*35.07*	*34.38*
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		34.24	30.5	28.41	*28.41*	N/A	N/A	30	AMBER	⇔		*28.45*	*29.09*
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		47.00	40.4	47.77	*47.77*	N/A	N/A	38	GREEN	⇔		*28.38*	*28.11*
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	L	A		5.9	6.3	6.6	7.1	1,419	20,089	4.8	RED	⇩	5.8	5.8	5.8
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		24.7	22.0	20.7	19.8	1,824	9,219	15.8	RED	⇧	14.3	13.8	14.3
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		31.3	32.2	30.8	28.6	2,229	7,800	23.0	RED	⇧	21.1	20.9	21.1
EH48	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		1.1	1.3	1.5	1.3	119	9,219			⇧	0.9	0.9	0.9
EH49	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		3.1	3.8	4.3	5.0	390	7,800			⇩	3.2	3.2	3.2

Directorate Scorecard - Tonbridge and Malling District

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
Sevenoaks North & Tonbridge and Malling CSWT					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	22.5	22.9	22.7	23.0	23.1	23.0	22.8	408	1,789	⇧	25.0	GREEN	22.5	25.0	GREEN	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		80.8	79.6	79.1	81.0	80.0	79.5	86.1	31	36	⇧	90.0	AMBER	80.8	90.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		17.0	17.5	20.0	22.6	23.6	24.3	24.3	35	144	⇔	20.0	AMBER	17.0	20.0	AMBER	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		88.5	88.5	88.9	88.9	89.7	89.7	89.7	26	29	⇔	85.0	GREEN	88.5	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	62.9	62.9	61.4	57.9	65.0	68.6	75.7	21.2	28.0	⇧	85.0	AMBER	62.9	85.0	RED	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		26.8	24.8	22.9	26.5	23.0	22.2	24.3	550	22.6	⇩	18.0	RED	26.8	18.0	RED	N/A	N/A
Sevenoaks North & Tonbridge and Malling EHU					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25										
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	L	R12M		22.9	24.0	24.4	25.2	24.5	24.3	24.0	273	1,139	⇧	25.0	GREEN	22.9	25.0	GREEN	21	N/A
EH73-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	H	MS		98.3	98.4	98.4	98.7	98.7	98.7	98.7	531	538	⇔	85.0	GREEN	98.3	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	H	R12M		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	12	12	⇔	85.0	GREEN	100.0	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	L	R12M	✓	12.5	12.8	12.0	12.9	13.2	13.6	13.7	73	534	⇩	15.0	GREEN	12.5	15.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	L	MS		15.5	13.8	14.6	14.3	20.1	13.8	14.3	171	12.0	⇧	20.0	AMBER	15.5	20.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Integrated Children's Services Quarterly Indicators - Tonbridge and Malling (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Quarterly Trends			Latest Quarter			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East as at Jan 2025	England & Wales as at Jan 2025
								Rate	Numerator	Denominator								
					Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26										
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	L	Q		32.0	33.3	30.6	31.8	7	22	⇧	32.9	GREEN	33.3	32.9	AMBER	32.6	32.5

Directorate Scorecard - Tonbridge and Malling District

Education Monthly Indicators - Tonbridge and Malling (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		69.2	92.9	54.5	69.2	14.3	38.5	53.3	8	15	⇧	65	RED	32.0	60	RED	38.2	46.4
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET) [seasonally impacted indicator]	L	MS		3.8	3.8	3.9	3.6	3.8	3.6				⇧	TBC			2.8	GREEN	*2.8*	*3.2*
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	L	MS		7.5	7.7	7.6	7.5	7.7	7.8	8.1	134	1,650	⇩	9	GREEN	7.8	9	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	L	R12M		2	2	2	2	2	2	1	N/A	N/A	⇧	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
EH44	Number of permanent exclusions from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		15	15	15	13	14	12	11	N/A	N/A	⇧	N/A	N/A	12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	H	R12M		93.6	94.7	96.9	98.0	99.5	99.5	99.5	191	192	⇔	65	GREEN	99.5	90	GREEN	N/A	N/A
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	H	R12M		62.3	71.5	78.8	83.8	89.0	88.9	89.4	228	255	⇧	60	GREEN	88.9	95	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Education Termly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Termly Trends			Latest Term			DOT	Target Summer 2024-25	RAG 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator			
					Summer 23-24	Autumn 24-25	Spring 24-25	Summer 24-25					
	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator]	H	T		77.2	68.2	62.9	54.0	129	239	⇩	64.0	RED

Education Annual Indicators - Tonbridge and Malling (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	H	A		70.6	69.8	72.0	71.5	1,091	1,525	69	GREEN	⇩	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		23.1	33.3	29.8	27.0	N/A	N/A	20	RED	⇧	21	25.1	21.1
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	H	A		59.1	60.5	63.7	63.0	1,092	1,732	62	GREEN	⇧	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		33.5	32.7	31.7	28.0	N/A	N/A	23	RED	⇧	25	25	21
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	H	A		55.9	53.3	53.8	*53.8*	N/A	N/A	47	GREEN	⇔	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		23.0	22.1	21.8	*21.8*	N/A	N/A	17	RED	⇔	17.0	18.7	14.8
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		41.92	39.4	39.42	*39.42*	N/A	N/A	35	GREEN	⇔		*35.07*	*34.38*
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		32.48	30.7	28.97	*28.97*	N/A	N/A	30	AMBER	⇔		*28.45*	*29.09*
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		31.84	32.5	33.15	*33.15*	N/A	N/A	38	RED	⇔		*28.38*	*28.11*
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	L	A		4.3	4.5	4.7	5.0	1,177	23,554	4.8	AMBER	⇩	5.8	5.8	5.8
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		15.5	14.3	13.2	13.0	1,339	10,264	15.8	GREEN	⇧	14.3	13.8	14.3
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		28.7	26.8	25.7	21.6	2,083	9,636	23.0	GREEN	⇧	21.1	20.9	21.1
EH48	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		0.5	0.9	1.0	0.8	83	10,264			⇧	0.9	0.9	0.9
EH49	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		2.4	2.7	3.4	3.1	301	9,636			⇧	3.2	3.2	3.2

Directorate Scorecard - Tunbridge Wells District

Integrated Children's Services Monthly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	Kent Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2023-24	England 2023-24
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
Sevenoaks South & Tunbridge Wells CSWT					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	L	R12M	✓	29.2	30.5	30.7	30.5	30.8	31.1	30.8	479	1,554	⇧	25.0	RED	29.2	25.0	AMBER	19.2	22.4
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	H	R12M		97.5	97.4	97.4	97.5	97.4	97.6	97.5	39	40	⇩	90.0	GREEN	97.5	90.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	T	R12M		24.6	25.4	23.3	24.6	22.2	18.5	24.2	15	62	⇩	20.0	AMBER	24.6	20.0	AMBER	24.5	24.7
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	H	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			69.7	68.0
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	H	MS	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	L	R12M		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			468	485
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	H	R12M	✓	N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	H	R12M		73.7	73.7	65.0	65.0	65.0	65.0	57.1	12	21	⇩	85.0	RED	73.7	85.0	RED	N/A	N/A
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	H	MS	✓	80.0	80.0	75.0	80.0	90.0	85.0	84.0	16.8	20.0	⇩	85.0	AMBER	80.0	85.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	L	MS		N/A						N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A	N/A
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	L	MS		22.8	21.4	24.0	23.7	17.5	18.7	19.9	391	19.6	⇩	18.0	AMBER	22.8	18.0	RED	N/A	N/A
Sevenoaks South & Tunbridge Wells EHU					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25										
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	L	R12M		23.4	23.9	24.4	24.7	24.5	23.9	24.9	201	806	⇩	25.0	GREEN	23.4	25.0	GREEN	21	N/A
EH32-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	H	MS		94.9	95.2	95.3	95.4	95.5	95.1	94.9	372	392	⇩	85.0	GREEN	94.9	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	H	R12M		100.0	100.0	90.9	90.9	90.9	90.9	90.9	10	11	⇔	85.0	GREEN	100.0	85.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	L	R12M	✓	13.1	13.8	13.2	13.2	12.2	11.8	12.4	30	242	⇩	15.0	GREEN	13.1	15.0	GREEN	N/A	N/A
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	L	MS		17.5	15.0	20.4	21.5	19.9	15.6	16.1	145	9.0	⇧	20.0	AMBER	17.5	20.0	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Integrated Children's Services Quarterly Indicators - Tunbridge Wells (reporting and targets relate to financial years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Quarterly Trends			Latest Quarter			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	South East as at Jan 2025	England & Wales as at Jan 2025
								Rate	Numerator	Denominator								
					Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26										
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	L	Q		50.0	42.9	50.0	40.0	8	20	⇧	32.9	RED	42.9	32.9	RED	32.6	32.5

Directorate Scorecard - Tunbridge Wells District

Education Monthly Indicators - Tunbridge Wells (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Monthly Trends						Latest Month			DOT	Target 2025-26	RAG 2025-26	District Outturn 2024-25	Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
											Measure	Numerator	Denominator								
					Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25									SN or SE	
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	H	MS		77.8	100.0	50.0	50.0	100.0	50.0	42.9	3	7	⇩	65	RED	33.9	60	RED	38.2	46.4
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET) [seasonally impacted indicator]	L	MS		2.6	2.6	2.5	2.3	2.5	2.4				⇧	TBC			2.8	GREEN	*2.8*	*3.2*
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	L	MS		9.8	9.7	9.6	10.1	10.0	10.5	10.7	109	1,015	⇩	9	RED	10.5	9	AMBER	N/A	N/A
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	L	R12M		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	⇔	N/A	N/A	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
EH44	Number of permanent exclusions from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	L	R12M		6	8	8	8	7	7	7	N/A	N/A	⇔	N/A	N/A	7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	H	R12M		92.7	93.0	96.2	98.1	98.2	98.8	98.9	180	182	⇧	65	GREEN	98.8	90	GREEN	N/A	N/A
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	H	R12M		68.2	75.1	80.6	88.1	89.4	89.4	88.5	169	191	⇩	60	GREEN	89.4	95	AMBER	N/A	N/A

Education Termly Indicators (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Termly Trends			Latest Term			DOT	Target Summer 2024-25	RAG 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator			
					Summer 23-24	Autumn 24-25	Spring 24-25	Summer 24-25					
	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place [seasonally impacted indicator]	H	T		68.8	71.0	60.2	54.0	94	174	⇩	64.0	RED

Education Annual Indicators - Tunbridge Wells (reporting and targets relate to academic years)		Polarity	Data Period	QPR	Annual Trends			Latest Year			Target 2024-25	RAG 2024-25	DOT	Target 2025-26	Benchmark Group 2024-25	England 2024-25
								Measure	Numerator	Denominator						
					2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25							SN or SE	
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	H	A		66.6	69.2	71.9	73.0	873	1,196	69	GREEN	⇧	71	69.8	68.3
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM gap	L	A		29.3	28.0	33.3	28.2	N/A	N/A	20	RED	⇧	21	25.1	21.1
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	H	A		63.4	63.4	68.6	68.6	897	1,308	62	GREEN	⇧	62	61	61
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	L	A		31.1	38.2	25.6	31.4	N/A	N/A	23	RED	⇩	25	25	21
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	H	A		56.6	53.5	54.6	*54.6*	N/A	N/A	47	GREEN	⇔	47.0	47.0	45.9
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	L	A		18.2	22.3	21.7	*21.7*	N/A	N/A	17	RED	⇔	17.0	18.7	14.8
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		42.35	37.8	38.86	*38.86*	N/A	N/A	35	GREEN	⇔		*35.07*	*34.38*
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		33.16	29.2	28.24	*28.24*	N/A	N/A	30	AMBER	⇔		*28.45*	*29.09*
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [State-Funded School students] [National and Benchmark Group averages are State-Funded School and College students]	H	A		37.25	37.2	36.13	*36.13*	N/A	N/A	38	AMBER	⇔		*28.38*	*28.11*
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	L	A		3.9	4.2	4.3	4.6	898	19,690	4.8	GREEN	⇩	5.8	5.8	5.8
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		15.9	14.6	11.8	10.8	846	7,830	15.8	GREEN	⇧	14.3	13.8	14.3
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	L	A		23.4	21.0	17.8	14.4	1,170	8,130	23.0	GREEN	⇧	21.1	20.9	21.1
EH48	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		0.6	0.8	0.8	0.9	67	7,830			⇩	0.9	0.9	0.9
EH49	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	L	A		2.0	2.5	2.1	1.8	150	8,130			⇧	3.2	3.2	3.2

Data Sources for Current Report

Code	Indicator	Source Description	Latest Data Description	Latest Data release date
Activity-Volume Measures				
CYPE10	Number of Primary Schools	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE11	Number of Secondary Schools	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE12	Number of Special Schools	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE13	Total pupils on roll in Primary Schools	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE14	Total pupils on roll in Secondary Schools	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE15	Total pupils on roll in Special Schools	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE16	Percentage of Primary School pupils eligible for Free School Meals	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE17	Percentage of Secondary School pupils eligible for Free School Meals	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
CYPE18	Percentage of Special School pupils eligible for Free School Meals	MI School Census Database	May 2025 School Census	July 2025
EY8	Percentage of EY settings with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness (non-domestic premises)	MI Ofsted Database	Inspections as at end of Aug 2024	Sept 2024
SISE35	Percentage of Primary Schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness	MI Ofsted Database	Inspections as at end of Aug 2024	Sept 2024
SISE36	Percentage of Secondary Schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness	MI Ofsted Database	Inspections as at end of Aug 2024	Sept 2024
SISE37	Percentage of Special Schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness	MI Ofsted Database	Inspections as at end of Aug 2024	Sept 2024
CYPE19	Number of requests for SEND statutory assessment	Synergy reporting	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH71-C	Rate of notifications received into Early Help per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (inclusive, rolling 12 months)	Early Help module	Rolling 12 months up to end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS02	Rate of referrals to Children's Social Work Services per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (inclusive, rolling 12 months)	Liberi	Rolling 12 months up to end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
FD01-F	Number of contacts processed in the Front Door	Early Help module	Children referred during the month of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
FD14-F	Number of Information, Advice and Guidance contacts processed in the Front Door	Early Help module	Children referred during the month of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
FD02-F	Number of contacts processed in the Front Door which met the threshold for CSWS involvement	Early Help module	Children referred during the month of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
FD03-F	Number of contacts processed in the Front Door which proceeded to Early Help	Early Help module	Children referred during the month of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH05-F	Number of cases open to Early Help Units	Early Help module	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS01	Number of open Social Work cases	Liberi	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Number of Child Protection cases	Liberi	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Number of Children in Care	Liberi	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Number of Care Leavers	Liberi	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH35	Number of First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice system	MI monthly reporting (CareDirector Youth)	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SEND Indicators				
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
APP17-N	Total number of EHCPs issued within 20 weeks	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
APP17-D	Total number of EHCPs issued	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
APP17-A	Average duration in days from assessment request to EHCP completion	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
APP-EP	Percentage of assessment requests sent to Educational Psychology returned within 6 weeks	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Percentage of open Educational Psychology referrals waiting more than 6 weeks	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Percentage of SEND statutory assessment requests waiting more than 20 weeks	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot data as at end of Sept 2025	Oct 2025

Data Sources for Current Report

Code	Indicator	Source Description	Latest Data Description	Latest Data release date
Key Performance Indicators				
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	Liberi	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	Liberi	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	Liberi	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	Liberi	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	Liberi	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	Liberi	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	Liberi	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	Liberi	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	Area Staffing Spreadsheets	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	Liberi / Area Staffing Spreadsheets	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	Liberi / Area Staffing Spreadsheets	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH72-F	Percentage of referrals to an Early Help Unit where a previous episode ended within 12 months	Early Help module	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH52-F	Percentage of EH Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	Early Help module	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	Early Help module	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH16-F	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	Early Help module	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	Early Help module	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	MOJ quarterly reporting	Quarter 1 reporting for 2025-26	Sept 2025
SISE7	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET)	Monthly submission to DfE via NCCIS for KCC	Provisional Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	Synergy - monthly reported data	Snapshot as at Sept 2025	Oct 2025
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	Fair Access Team Synergy reporting	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	Fair Access Team Synergy reporting	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	Synergy - monthly reported data	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EH44	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	Synergy - monthly reported data	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
	Percentage (rate) of pupils permanently excluded from primary and secondary phase schools - all Year R to Year 14 pupils	Synergy - monthly reported data	Rolling 12 months up to Sept 2025	Oct 2025
EY2	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place	FF2 Team in Early Years & Childcare	Snapshot as at August 2025	Aug 2025
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	End of year assessments based on EYFSP framework	2024-25 MI Calculations (LA & District)	Aug 2025
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM Eligible achievement gap	End of year assessments based on EYFSP framework	2024-25 MI Calculations (LA & District)	Aug 2025
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	Test/TA results for end of academic year	2024-25 DfE Provisional (LA)/MI Calcs (District)	Sep 2025
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	Test/TA results for end of academic year	2024-25 DfE Provisional (LA)/MI Calcs (District)	Sep 2025
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	Test results for end of academic year	2024-25 DfE Provisional (LA)/2023-24 NPD (District)	Oct 2025
SISE19	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	Test results for end of academic year	2023-24 DfE Published (LA)/2023-24 NPD (District)	Oct 2025
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [School students only]	Test results for end of academic year	2023-24 DfE Published (LA)/2023-24 NPD (District)	April 2025
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [School students only]	Test results for end of academic year	2023-24 DfE Published (LA)/2023-24 NPD (District)	April 2025
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [School students only]	Test results for end of academic year	2023-24 DfE Published (LA)/2023-24 NPD (District)	April 2025
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with a Statement or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	DfE annual snapshot based on school census	Snapshot as at January 2025	June 2025
CYPE2	Percentage of parents getting first preference of primary school	Admissions school places offered for start of academic year	Offers data for academic year 2025-26	May 2025
CYPE3	Percentage of parents getting first preference of secondary school	Admissions school places offered for start of academic year	Offers data for academic year 2025-26	May 2025
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	Aut/Spr data for academic year 2024-25	2024-25 DfE Published (LA)/MI Calcs (District)	Aug 2025
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	Aut/Spr data for academic year 2024-25	2024-25 DfE Published (LA)/MI Calcs (District)	Aug 2025
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	Aut/Spr data for academic year 2024-25	2024-25 DfE Published (LA)/MI Calcs (District)	Aug 2025
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	Aut/Spr data for academic year 2024-25	2024-25 DfE Published (LA)/MI Calcs (District)	Aug 2025

Indicator Definitions

Code	Indicator	Definition
Activity-Volume Measures		
CYPE10	Number of Primary Schools	The number of Kent maintained Primary schools (excluding Nurseries) and Primary academies (including Free Schools). Total is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE11	Number of Secondary Schools	The number of Kent maintained Secondary schools and Secondary academies (including Free Schools). Total is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE12	Number of Special Schools	The number of Kent maintained Special schools and Special academies. Total is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE13	Total pupils on roll in Primary Schools	The number of pupils on roll in Kent maintained Primary schools (excluding Nurseries) and Primary academies (including Free Schools). Total excludes guest and subsidiary pupils and is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE14	Total pupils on roll in Secondary Schools	The number of pupils on roll in Kent maintained Secondary schools and Secondary academies (including Free Schools). Total excludes guest and subsidiary pupils and is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE15	Total pupils on roll in Special Schools	The number of pupils on roll in Kent maintained Special schools and Special academies. Total excludes guest and subsidiary pupils and is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE16	Percentage of Primary School pupils eligible for Free School Meals	The number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals in Kent maintained Primary schools (excluding Nurseries) and Primary academies (including Free Schools) as a proportion of all pupils on roll. Totals for both numerator and denominator are for statutory aged pupils only and excludes guest and subsidiary pupils. Data is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE17	Percentage of Secondary School pupils eligible for Free School Meals	The number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals in Kent maintained Secondary schools and Secondary academies (including Free Schools) as a proportion of all pupils on roll. Totals for both numerator and denominator are for statutory aged pupils only and excludes guest and subsidiary pupils. Data is as at the latest available termly school census.
CYPE18	Percentage of Special School pupils eligible for Free School Meals	The number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals in Kent maintained Special schools and Special academies as a proportion of all pupils on roll. Totals for both numerator and denominator are for statutory aged pupils only and excludes guest and subsidiary pupils. Data is as at the latest available termly school census.
EY8	Percentage of EY settings with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness (non-domestic premises)	The percentage of Kent Early Years settings (non-domestic premises only), judged good or outstanding for overall effectiveness in their latest inspection, as a proportion of all inspected Kent Early Years settings (non domestic premises only).
SISE35	Percentage of Primary Schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness	The percentage of Kent maintained Primary schools and Primary academies judged good or outstanding for Overall Effectiveness in their latest inspection, as a proportion of all inspected Kent maintained Primary schools and Primary academies.
SISE36	Percentage of Secondary Schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness	The percentage of Kent maintained Secondary schools and Secondary academies judged good or outstanding for Overall Effectiveness in their latest inspection, as a proportion of all inspected Kent maintained Secondary schools and Secondary academies.
SISE37	Percentage of Special Schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted Judgements - Overall Effectiveness	The percentage of Kent maintained Special schools and Special academies judged good or outstanding for Overall Effectiveness in their latest inspection, as a proportion of all inspected Kent maintained Special schools and Special academies.
CYPE19	Number of requests for SEND statutory assessment	The number of initial requests for assessment for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) for 0-25 year olds in Kent LA.
EH71-C	Rate of notifications received into Early Help per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (inclusive, rolling 12 months)	The total number of referrals to an Early Help Unit completed during the corresponding reporting month per 10,000 (Population figures are updated upon reciept of the latest ONS Mid Year population estimates). This is a child level indicator.
SCS02	Rate of referrals to Children's Social Work Services per 10,000 of the 0-17 population (inclusive, rolling 12 months)	This indicator shows the rate of referrals received by Children's Social Work Services. Numerator: Number of referrals (rolling 12 month period). Denominator: child population figure divided by 10,000 (Population figures are updated upon receipt of the latest ONS Mid Year Estimates).
FD01-C	Number of contacts processed in the Front Door	The total number of notifications received during the corresponding reporting month that were processed by the Front Door. District and Area splits are not available for this indicator. The data includes all contact reasons processed by the Front Door. This is a child level indicator.
FD14-C	Number of Information, Advice and Guidance contacts processed in the Front Door	The total number of notifications with a contact outcome of "Information, Advice & Guidance" received during the corresponding reporting month that were processed by the Front Door. District and Area splits are not available for this indicator. The data includes all contact reasons processed by the Front Door. This is a child level indicator.

Indicator Definitions

Code	Indicator	Definition
Activity-Volume Measures (Continued)		
FD02-C	Number of contacts processed in the Front Door which met the threshold for CSWS involvement	The total number of notifications with a contact outcome of "Threshold met for CSWS" received during the corresponding reporting month that were processed by the Front Door. District and Area splits are not available for this indicator. The data includes all contact reasons processed by the Front Door. This is a child level indicator.
FD03-C	Number of contacts processed in the Front Door which proceeded to Early Help	The total number of notifications with a contact outcome of "Proceed to Early Help Unit" received during the corresponding reporting month that were processed by the Front Door. District and Area splits are not available for this indicator. The data includes all contact reasons processed by the Front Door. This is a child level indicator.
EH05-F	Number of cases open to Early Help Units	The number of open cases as at the end of the corresponding reporting month. The data includes all cases sent to units at Early Help Record stage prior to the end of the month. This is a family level indicator.
SCS01	Number of open Social Work cases	The total caseload figures for Children's Social Work Services.
	Number of Child Protection cases	The number of Children who have a Child Protection Plan as at the end of the corresponding reporting month.
	Number of Children in Care	The number of Children in Care as at the end of the corresponding reporting month.
	Number of Care Leavers	The number of Care Leavers as at the end of the corresponding reporting month.
EH39	Number of First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice system	First time entrants are defined as young people (aged 10 – 17 years) who receive their first substantive outcome (relating to a Youth Caution with or without an intervention, or a Conditional Caution or a Court disposal for those who go directly to Court without a Youth Caution or Conditional Caution).

Indicator Definitions

Code	Indicator	Definition
SEND Indicators		
APP17	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks	The percentage of Education and Health Care Plans that are issued within 20 weeks as a proportion of all such plans. The data is a snapshot at the end of the month. An education, health and care plan (EHCP) replaced statements and are for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support.
APP17-N	Total number of EHCPs issued within 20 weeks	The number of Education and Health Care Plans that are issued within 20 weeks.The data is a snapshot at the end of the month. An education, health and care plan (EHCP) replaced statements and are for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support.
APP17-D	Total number of EHCPs issued	The total number of Education and Health Care Plans that are issued.The data is a snapshot at the end of the month. An education, health and care plan (EHCP) replaced statements and are for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support.
APP17-A	Average duration in days from assessment request to EHCP completion	
APP-EP	Percentage of assessment requests sent to Educational Psychology returned within 6 weeks	The percentage of Educational Psychology assessments returned within a 6 week timeframe as a proportion of all such requests.
CYPE1	Percentage of pupils being placed in independent or out-of-county special schools - Kent responsible EHCPs	The number of pupils with an EHCP that are placed in independent Special schools or out-of-county Special schools as a percentage of the total number of pupils with an EHCP
	Percentage of open Educational Psychology referrals waiting more than 6 weeks	The percentage of open referrals to the educational psychology service that have been waitng more than 6 weeks as a proportion of all such cases. The data is a snapshot at the end of the month.
	Percentage of SEND statutory assessment requests waiting more than 20 weeks	The percentage of cases where a request for a statutory assessment has been made but no final EHCP has been issued that have been waitng more than 20 weeks as a proportion of all such cases. The data is a snapshot at the end of the month.
Key Performance Indicators		
SCS03	Percentage re-referrals to Children's Social Work Services within 12 months of a previous referral (R12M)	The percentage of referrals to SCS in the last 12 months where the previous referral date (if any) is within 12 months of the new referral date.
SCS08	Percentage of Returner Interviews completed for those with SCS Involvement	The percentage of returner interviews completed in the last 12 months where the case was open to SCS at the point the child went missing and the child was aged under 18 at the point of going missing.
SCS13	Percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time	The percentage of children who become subject to a Child Protection Plan during the last 12 months who have been subject to a previous plan.
SCS18	Children in Care in same placement for the last two years (for those in care for two and a half years or more)	The percentage of Children in Care aged under 16 at the snapshot date who had been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years who were living in the same placement for at least 2 years, or are placed for adoption and their adoptive placement together with their previous placement together last for at least 2 years.
SCS19	Percentage of CIC Foster Care in KCC Foster Care/Rel & Friends placements (exc UASC)	The percentage of Kent Children in Care at the snapshot date who are in Foster Care and are placed with KCC Foster Carers or with Relatives and Friends. UASC are excluded
SCS29	Average number of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family	The average number of days between becoming a Looked After Child and moving in with Adoptive Family (for children who have been Adopted in the last 12 months)
SCS34	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	The percentage of relevant and former relevant care leavers who we were in contact with in a 4 month window around their birthday who were aged 17, 18, 19, 20 or 21 and were in education, employment or training.
SCS37	Percentage of Case File Audits graded good or outstanding	The percentage of all completed case audits in the last 12 months where the overall grading was good or outstanding

Indicator Definitions

Code	Indicator	Definition
Key Performance Indicators (Continued)		
SCS40	Percentage of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	The percentage of case holding posts (FTE) at the snapshot date which are held by qualified social workers employed by Kent County Council.
SCS42	Average caseloads in the CIC Teams	The average caseload of social workers within district based CIC Teams at the snapshot date.
SCS43	Average caseloads in the CSWT Teams	The average caseload of social workers within the district based Children's Social Work Teams (CSWTs) at the snapshot date.
EH72-F	Percentage of re-referrals to an Early Help Unit within 12 months of a previous Unit case (R12M)	The percentage of referrals into an EH Unit (R12M) that previously had an episode open to an Early Help Unit in the preceding 12 months. The data only looks at referrals allocated to a Unit. It is calculated using a comparison between the episode end date of the previous episode and the episode start date of the subsequent referral.
EH52-F	Percentage of Assessments completed in the given month, within 6 weeks of allocation	The percentage of assessments completed in the reporting month, where the assessment was completed within 30 working days of allocation.
	Percentage of EH Unit Case Audits rated good or outstanding	The percentage of all EH Unit completed case audits in the last 12 months where the overall grading was good or outstanding
EH16	Percentage of EH cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to EH or CSWS in 3 mths	The percentage of EH cases that have been closed with an outcome of "outcomes achieved" and then came back into either EH or CSWS in the next 3 months. Please note that there is a 3 month time lag on this data so the result shown for May 2020 is actually looking at all EH Closures in the 12 months up to February 2020.
	Average Caseload within EH Units (Families)	Definition to be confirmed.
CYPE8	Rate of proven re-offending by CYP	An offender enters the cohort if they are released from custody, received a non-custodial conviction at court or received a reprimand or warning (caution) in a three month period. A proven reoffence is defined as any offence committed in a one year follow-up period that leads to a court conviction, caution, reprimand or warning in the one year follow-up or within a further six month waiting period to allow the offence to be proven in court. **It is important to note that this is not comparable to previous proven reoffending publications which reported on a 12 month cohort.**
SISE71	Percentage of Year 12-13 age-group (16-17 year olds) not in education, employment or training (NEET)	The percentage of young people who have left compulsory education, up until the end of National Curriculum Year 13, who have not achieved a positive education, employment or training destination.
CYPE6	Percentage of Children Missing Education cases, closed within 30 school days	The number of closed cases within 30 school days of their referral to Kent County Council's CME Team, as a percentage of the total number of cases opened within the period.
CYPE22	Percentage of CYP registered to EHE who receive contact and additional information within 10 school days of them being brought to our attention	The number of CYP who register with the LA to Home Educate contacted to include information regarding a visit, within 10 days of receipt of the referral to Kent County Council's EHE Team, as a percentage of the total number of cases opened within the period.
EH43	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the primary phase - all Year R to Year 6 pupils	The total number of pupils in Year R to Year 6 that have been permanently excluded from a Kent maintained Primary school, Special school or Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) or Primary academy or Special academy during the last 12 months.
EH44	Number of pupils permanently excluded from the secondary phase - all Year 7 to Year 14 pupils	The total number of pupils in Year 7 to Year 14 that have been permanently excluded from a Kent maintained Secondary school, Special school or Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) or Secondary academy or Special academy during the last 12 months.
	Percentage (rate) of pupils permanently excluded from primary and secondary phase schools - all Year R to Year 14 pupils	The number of Year R (Reception) to Year 14 pupils permanently excluded from Primary, Secondary, Special schools and PRUs (incl. academies) in the last twelve months expressed as rate over the school population.

Indicator Definitions

Code	Indicator	Definition
Key Performance Indicators (Continued)		
EY2	Percentage of DWP and other identified eligible 2 year olds taking up a free early education place	The number of two year old children accessing a free early education place at an early years provider as a proportion of the total number of families identified as potentially eligible for funding by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
EY14	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development	Percentage of pupils assessed as achieving Expected or Exceeding in all Prime Learning Goals and all literacy and mathematics Early Learning Goals at the end of reception year, based on the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.
EY15	Percentage of pupils at EYFS achieving a Good Level of Development - FSM Eligible achievement gap	The difference between the achievement of non-FSM eligible pupils and FSM eligible pupils in terms of percentage assessed as achieving Expected or Exceeding in all Prime Learning Goals and all literacy and mathematics Early Learning Goals at the end of reception year, based on the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.
SISE4	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics	The percentage of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 working at the Expected Standard in all of Reading, Writing & maths. Includes Kent maintained schools and academies.
SISE16	Percentage of pupils at KS2 achieving age-related expectations in Reading, writing & mathematics - FSM gap	The difference between the achievement of non-FSM eligible pupils and FSM eligible pupils in terms of percentage working at the Expected Standard in all of Reading, Writing & maths at KS2. Includes Kent maintained schools and academies.
SISE12	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8	The average Attainment 8 score for pupils at end of Key Stage 4. Attainment 8 is a point score based on attainment across eight subjects which must include English; mathematics; three other English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects (sciences, computer science, geography, history and languages); and three further subjects, which can be from the range of EBacc subjects, or can be any other approved, high-value arts, academic, or vocational qualification.
SISE9	Average score at KS4 in Attainment 8 - FSM gap	The difference between the Attainment 8 score of non-FSM eligible pupils and FSM eligible pupils at the end of KS4 (see above definition for SISE12a). Includes Kent maintained schools and academies.
CYPE23	Average point score per A Level entry at KS5 [School students only]	The total number of points achieved in A-Level qualifications by pupils at the end of Key Stage 5 divided by the total number of entries made in all A-Level qualifications. Outcomes are for Kent maintained schools and academies only.
CYPE24	Average point score per Applied General entry at KS5 [School students only]	The total number of points achieved in Applied General qualifications by pupils at the end of Key Stage 5 divided by the total number of entries made in all Applied General qualifications. Outcomes are for Kent maintained schools and academies only.
CYPE25	Average point score per Tech Level entry at KS5 [School students only]	The total number of points achieved in Tech Level qualifications by pupils at the end of Key Stage 5 divided by the total number of entries made in all Tech Level qualifications. Outcomes are for Kent maintained schools and academies only.
SEND10	Percentage of pupils with a Statement or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	Percentage of pupils with an Education, Health and care Plan (EHCP) as a proportion of all pupils on roll in all schools as at January school census. Includes maintained schools and academies, Pupil Referral Units, Free schools and Independent schools (DfE published data).
CYPE2	Percentage of parents getting first preference of primary school	The percentage of parents who got their first preference of Primary school (out of their three ordered preferences) for their child.
CYPE3	Percentage of parents getting first preference of secondary school	The percentage of parents who got their first preference of Secondary school (out of their three ordered preferences) for their child.
EH46	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	The percentage of pupils that have been persistently absent from a Kent maintained Primary school or a Primary academy for 10% or more of their expected sessions over the reported time period.
EH47	Percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 10% threshold	The percentage of pupils that have been persistently absent from a Kent maintained Secondary school or a Secondary academy for 10% or more of their expected sessions over the reported time period.
	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from primary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	The percentage of pupils that have been severely absent from a Kent maintained Primary school or a Primary academy for 50% or more of their expected sessions over the reported time period.
	Percentage of pupils who are severely absent from secondary schools - all pupils based on 50% threshold	The percentage of pupils that have been severely absent from a Kent maintained Secondary school or a Secondary academy for 50% or more of their expected sessions over the reported time period.

This page is intentionally left blank

CYPE CABINET COMMITTEE REPORT

From: **Christine McInnes, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education**

Beverley Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

To: **Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee – 18 November 2025**

Subject: **Proposal to facilitate the expansion of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy, Beechenlea Lane, Swanley, Kent, BR8 8DR**

Decision no: 25/00086

Key Decision: **It affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions and Expenditure of over £1m**

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: **Swanley, served by Dean Truder**

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary:

This report sets out the proposal for KCC to facilitate the expansion of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy through capital investment, that will enable the school to increase its designated number from 120 to 192 and change its age range from 8 to 19 year olds (Year 4 to Year 14) to 4 to 19 year olds (Reception to Year 14).

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **ENDORSE or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on the proposed decision as set out in the attached PROD.**

---

1. Introduction

1.1 Kent County Council (KCC) as a Local Authority, has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient high quality school places are available, in the right places for all learners, while at the same time fulfilling our other responsibilities to raise

education standards and promote parental preference. The County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2025-2029 is a five-year rolling plan which is updated annually. It sets out KCC's future plans as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision across all types and phases of education in Kent.

1.2 The Kent Commissioning Plan 2025-2029 indicated that there will be a shortfall in Special School provision in North Kent. Even though KCC's direction of travel is to increase Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision in mainstream schools and associated Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs), due to already identified shortfalls and anticipated population growth in certain areas of North Kent, more specialist provision is required for children and young people with more complex needs.

1.3 KCC SEN Data for North Kent as at April 2025, evidenced that there were 237 children and young people waiting for a Special School placement, and 243 open cases, of which was anticipated that a large number would require a Special School placement.

1.4 In July 2023 KCC was informed that it had been successful in bidding for a new 250 place Profound, Severe, and Complex Needs (PSCN) Special School in North Kent (Swanley). The school had an initial target opening date of September 2026 and was to be funded and built by the Department for Education (DfE). However, for a number of reasons progress has been incredibly slow and there are now concerns that the school may not progress any further. Even if it were to continue, that school would not be built until 2028 at the very earliest and as the data shows, provision is required now. KCC Officers and the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills continue to push the DfE and Ministers for confirmation of the status of the proposed new Swanley Special School.

2. Key Considerations

2.1 The proposal to facilitate the expansion of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy will create 48 places of additional primary provision (Reception to Year 6) plus additional places for secondary aged pupils. The building project for this expansion will be managed by Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy, while KCC Infrastructure will oversee the scheme from a quality assurance perspective.

2.2 If no further action is taken in the longer term, KCC will find it extremely difficult to provide sufficient state-funded Special School provision in North Kent.

2.3 Any works undertaken by Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy are to be overseen by KCC Infrastructure with all costs validated by the appointed Project Manager.

2.4 This report set out the proposals for consideration by the CYPE Cabinet Committee, to inform the decision to proceed with the next stage of detailed feasibility and plans, ahead of the final proposed decision being recommended to the Cabinet Member.

2.5 The decision itself, will only be taken when the planning process has progressed to a stage where KCC Officers feel they have greater certainty of the overall scheme cost.

3. Background

3.1 Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is a Single Academy Trust and officially sits under the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) but is located in Swanley Kent. KCC is the main placing authority with the school.

3.2 Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is a Special School for children and people aged 8-19 (Year 4 to Year 14) who have moderate to severe learning difficulties and Autism. Many of the students have additional needs including ADHD, Downs Syndrome and language difficulties. All students have Education, Health and Care Plans.

3.3 Following an inspection that took place in July 2025, Ofsted deemed Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy to be a 'GOOD' in 4 out of the 5 areas, and 'OUTSTANDING' in the area of Behaviours an Attitudes.

3.4 Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is situated on an extremely large site, consisting of 78 acres of green and woodlands. Traffic congestion is kept to a minimal as the approach to the school from the main road is over ¼ mile long. The Academy own the land and buildings, as the school became a Foundation School prior to becoming an Academy.

3.5 The Principal of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is already admitting students over and above the designated number. Currently the number of students on roll is 135.

3.6 Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy continues to admit students with more complex needs, whilst ensuring the quality of education for all students is maintained.

3.7 Due to the school's location RBKC now has limited interaction with the school and places a very limited number of children and young people there. KCC continues to be one of the main placing authorities with Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy, placing 61 students out of a total school roll of 136 for the 2024/2025 academic year. For the start of this current academic year, 2025/2026, the school has 65 students placed by Kent out of a total school roll of 135 with no students placed from RBKC.

3.8 KCC has formed strong working relationships with the Senior Leadership of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy, and the school has indicated its very clear desire to be recognised as part of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) system in Kent.

3.9 Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy has acknowledged the need for more specialist placements for children with complex needs predominantly across the primary age groups, and has therefore proposed to expand its age range from what is currently 8 to 19 year olds (Year 4 to Year 14) to 4 to 19 year olds (Reception to Year 14) to support need in the North Kent area.

3.10 North Kent is still encountering significant growth primarily in Dartford, but the other two districts of Gravesham and Sevenoaks are fast approaching completion of their new Local Plans, which will see significant housebuilding required for the period up to 2040 and beyond.

3.11 Due to delays regarding the proposed new PSCN School, the numbers of students in North Kent still requiring specialist provision at this time, and the fact that all Special Schools in the locality are already over capacity, there is a clear need for further expansion of state-funded specialist provision to ensure the current number of places can be maintained on a permanent basis.

3.12 This proposal is part of a plan to help alleviate current pressures and help mitigate future population growth across the wider North Kent area, alongside the expansion of SRPs and mainstream inclusion.

3.13 The Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy have consulted on this proposal and agree to proceed with the process to permanently increase the schools designated number by 72 places subject to physical expansion of the school's infrastructure. This proposal seeks capital investment to facilitate the expansion by building 4 modular classrooms, upgrades to outdoor areas and modifications to the main school building.

4. Kent's Strategic Statement

4.1 The County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2025-2029 is a five-year rolling plan which is updated annually. It sets out KCC's future plans as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision across all types and phases of education in Kent. A copy of the latest plan can be viewed from this link: Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2025-2029.

4.2 The proposed decision supports KCC's strategic statement in the following ways:

- This proposal supports improved efficiency and timeliness in SEND services and compliments plans to also expand Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) and increase mainstream inclusion capacity.
- In line with Section 7 of the KCP: Commissioning Statutory School Provision by Districts, this proposal will assist in responding to housing growth and demographic pressures and help to ensure housing growth is sustainable.
- In line with Section 5 of the KCP: Capital Funding, which outlines the use of developer contributions, Basic Need funding, and cautious capital investment strategies, this proposal promotes in-house provision where financially viable and reducing reliance on independent placements.

4.3 This proposal is necessary for KCC to continue to deliver the statutory duty, in a cost-effective way, in line with the guidelines described KCC's strategic statement. It will help to maintain KCC's strategic role in supporting schools in Kent to deliver accessible, high quality education provision for all families.

5. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

5.1 KCC has considered whether other Special Schools in the North Kent area are viable candidates for a permanent increase to their formal designated numbers. There is also a proposal to expand Broomhill Bank School, but this alone will not produce sufficient places to meet current demand, as that expansion primarily relates to additional places for secondary age children. Therefore, Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is the most appropriate and viable option to also increase its designated number. It is however, recognised there is no guarantee these places will be offered to Kent children, and we have no statutory intervention powers to secure these placements. Although this has been considered an acceptable risk.

5.2 By increasing their formal designated number through the physical expansion of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy, which is a state-funded provision, it protects the Local Authority from increased revenue costs. The proposal will help to mitigate against the need to place students further away from home and incurring additional transport costs, alongside incurring increased costs from placing a greater number of children in high-cost independent settings to alleviate the current pressures in KCC state-funded Special Schools in the area.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Capital

6.1.1 Progression of the scheme will be dependent on the outcome of detailed feasibility and design work – these will inform the full overall cost of the scheme, at which point the formal decision will be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.

6.1.2 The project will be a school managed scheme and will be confirmed via legally binding funding and development agreements between KCC and Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy.

6.1.3 The cost of the works will be borne by the CYPE High Needs Capital Budget; this is funded from a ring-fenced Capital Grant from the DfE.

6.1.4 From initial feasibility studies, the estimated cost for the whole scheme was £1,500,000.

6.1.5 However, after initial feedback from KCC Infrastructure colleagues, there is a possibility that costs may increase, primarily due to the possible need for additional Highways mitigations around the Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy site and other requirements on the refurbishments of existing buildings. Therefore, we will not be requesting the formal decision to be taken until such time that planning has reached a is concluded, and the full extent of the cost of the scheme is known. The latest estimates indicate the costs could increase to as much as c£3,000,000, but much work still needs to be undertaken with Planners and Highways to determine the extent of any mitigations that may be required.

6.1.6 For Special School capital projects, the average cost per student place for a school expansion in Kent is c£85,000. However, the higher estimated cost for this scheme equates to a cost per place of only c£42,000, which demonstrates good value for money. KCC Project Managers will be undertaking continuous checks to keep build project costs as low as possible.

6.1.7 The final estimated cost of the project will be reported appropriately through KCC internal governance routes before the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills is requested to make the formal decision.

6.1.8 KCC Project Managers will be undertaking continuous checks to keep build project costs as low as possible.

6.1.9 Should the Cabinet Member Cabinet Member for Education and Skills agree to progress the scheme; the Funding Agreement will be finalised and sealed. The agreement will set out the milestones for when funding will be passported to Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy.

6.1.10 An allowance of up to £2,500 per teaching space may be payable to Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy; to outfit each new teaching room with appropriate ICT equipment, such as touch screens or projection equipment. This will be met from the overall Capital allocation for this scheme.

6.1.11 The High Needs Capital Programme has been running since 2020-21 with a total combined budget of just under £109m of which £67m has been either spent or committed to current known schemes (as at Quarter 1 2025 capital monitoring reported to Cabinet in September 2025). In the same way as the Basic Need programme is managed, to ensure all schemes are prioritised appropriately and expenditure is controlled within available funding, any proposed new or additional capital expenditure, first needs to be considered by KCC Officers through Education Asset Board, before being progressed through the formal governance processes and included in the capital programme.

6.2 Revenue

6.2.1 Should the scheme not proceed through to completion, any costs incurred at the time of cessation would become abortive costs and are likely to be recharged to Revenue. This would be reported through the regular financial monitoring reports to Cabinet. This will be a cost to the General Fund.

6.2.2 State funded Special School places are commissioned by Local Authorities and paid based on a rate per place. The rate per place for Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is currently between £30,430 to £31,400 dependent on the Key Stage. The higher rate for Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is approximately c£30,000 less than a place in an independent Special School. Local Authorities use the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant to pay for these places. Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy will use the revenue income they receive to facilitate additional staffing requirements and increased running costs.

6.2.3 Whilst there are no direct General Fund implications to these proposals, ensuring children are educated as locally as possible, avoids additional school transport costs, which are a General Fund expenditure. In addition, the Council is currently overspending on its Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block by approximately £55m-£60m per year. The use of independent Special Schools rather than state-funded provision (mainstream to Special School), has been highlighted as a key contributing factor to this position.

6.2.4 Whilst the cost of Special School places do not directly impact the General Fund, the Council is part of the DfE Safety Valve Programme, for which the Council has agreed to contribute a total of £82m between 2022-23 and 2027-28 to help reduce the accumulated deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block. KCC's contribution is alongside an extra £140m from DfE.

6.2.5 The DfE funding is contingent on the development of a plan to achieve value for money within the existing SEN regulatory framework, and the aim is to reach an in-year breakeven position by the end of 2027-28. Reducing the Council's reliance on independent sector education placements is a key part of the strategy to achieve this. Therefore, alleviating unsustainable pressures on existing Special Schools who are over-capacity by securing additional state-funded Special School places will help to avoid future dependence on the independent sector.

6.2.6 It is noted, there is a financial risk that these additional places are being built in a non-KCC school, and the places cannot be ring-fenced for KCC children. However, this is technically the same for KCC Special Schools.

6.3 Human

6.3.1 Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy will appoint additional staff as required; utilising revenue funding allocated through commissioned places for these additional students.

7. Legal implications

7.1 Under the Children and Families Act 2014 KCC has a duty 'to support the child and his or her parent, or the young person, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help him or her achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes'. By ensuring we have appropriate provision as locally as possible, we are delivering on our obligation in accordance with this legislation.

7.2 Local Authorities need to deliver their statutory duties and be aware of non-statutory guidance and advice, which relate to children and young people with SEN. These are:

- Department for Education-Making significant changes to an academy 2025: non-statutory guidance on collaborative school place planning and making organisational changes to academies.
- The Equalities Act which: places duties on Local Authorities to review support services and in doing so requires Local Authorities to have due regard to the way in which any changes will affect children and young people with a disability.

- The SEND Code of Practice places requirements on Local Authorities to: provide access to advice from a suitably qualified person as part of the EHCP process and subsequent “assess, plan, do, review” cycles, and make appropriate provision for those with an EHC plan in the 0-25 range.
- Sufficiency Duties: KCC is under a statutory duty to contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient primary education and secondary education are available to meet the needs of the population of their area: section 13 of the Education Act 1996 (“the 1996 Act”).
- KCC must ensure that its education functions are exercised by the authority with a view to promoting high standards, ensuring fair access to opportunity for education and training, and promoting the fulfilment of learning potential by every person under the age of 20 and those over the age of 20 and for whom an EHC Plan is maintained: section 13A. By section 14, KCC must secure that sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education are available for their area, defined as being sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide for all students the opportunity of appropriate education.
- Under section 27 of the Children and Families Act 2014 (“the 2014 Act”), KCC is under a duty to keep under review the educational provision, training provision and social care provision made in its area (and outside it) for children and young people who have special educational needs or a disability. KCC must consider the extent to which its provision is sufficient to meet the educational needs, training needs and social care needs of the children and young people concerned.
- KCC, when carrying out its functions must have “due regard” to the provisions of section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, known as the ‘public sector equality duty’.

7.3 Planning permission will be required for the new accommodation to enable the expansion of the school’s accommodation. As part of the Funding Agreement, Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy will be responsible for gaining the appropriate planning consent.

7.4 All individual proposals to either establish new, expand current or cease current provision will be required to go through the DfE process of making significant changes to an academy (non-statutory guidance on collaborative school place planning and making organisational changes to academies, August 2025).

7.5 The Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Director of Education will be overseeing the scheme to ensure public funds are utilised appropriately.

8. Equalities implications

8.1 Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) have been produced by KCC and Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy. No issues were identified in the early stage EqIAs to the proposed expansion of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy.

8.2 The proposed expansion of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy will not change the delivery of education with the school. Therefore, there should be no equalities implications.

8.3 The early-stage EqIAs will be reviewed as the scheme continues.

9. Data Protection Implications

9.1 Any information that would have Data Protection implication was gathered by Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy, as its own Data Controller. Any protected data will be managed by the school.

10. Other corporate implications

10.1 Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy will consult with Planners and KCC's Highways and Planning colleagues as appropriate, throughout the planning process.

11. Governance

11.1 The Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy are fully supportive of the proposal.

11.2 KCC Infrastructure Team are engaged in overseeing and ensuring that the funding is spent appropriately.

11.3 The decision itself, will only be taken when the planning process has progressed to a stage where KCC Officers feel they have greater certainty of the overall scheme cost.

12. Consultation

12.1 The KCC Member for Swanley, served by Dean Truder, has been informed of the proposal.

12.2 The school is an Academy and so ran its own Public Consultation on the proposal, with assistance from KCC. The consultation ran from 27 June 2025 to 18 July 2025.

12.3 Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy held a public drop-in session on 09 July 2025, which was attended by KCC Officers.

12.4 Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is the data controller for the consultation. KCC will not handle any personal data relating to this consultation or subsequent decision.

12.5 The Assistant Director of Education, SEN, Educational Psychology and Admissions from RBKC is supportive of the proposal.

12.6 The consultation results were presented to the Governing Body who agreed on 27 July 2025 to proceed with the expansion of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy.

12.7 The Assistant Director Education-North Kent, has said that the analysis of demand in North Kent shows that additional Special School capacity is required in the area. All alternatives have been considered, and the conclusion is to permanently expand Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy.

13. Conclusions

13.1 The Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy agree to proceed with the proposal to increase the school's designated number from 120 to 192 and change its age range from 8 to 19 year olds (Year 4 to Year 14) to 4 to 19 year olds (Reception to Year 14) subject to physical expansion of the school's infrastructure.

13.2 The analysis of demand in North Kent shows that additional Special School capacity is required in the area. All alternatives have been considered, and the conclusion is to facilitate the expansion of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **ENDORSE or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on the proposed decision as set out in the attached PROD.**

---

12. Background Documents

- Kent Commissioning Plan 2025-2029
- EqIA

13. Contact details

Report Author: Ian Watts Job title: Assistant Director Education-North Kent Telephone number: 03000 414302 Email address: ian.watts@kent.gov.uk	Director: Christine McInnes Job title: Director of Education Telephone number: 03000 418913 Email address: Christine.McInnes@kent.gov.uk

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NUMBER:
Beverley Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	25/00086

For publication *[Do not include information which is exempt from publication under schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972]*

Key decision: YES

Savings or expenditure of more than £1m

Affects 2 or more Electoral Divisions

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Proposal to facilitate the expansion of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy, Beechenlea Lane, Swanley, Kent, BR8 8DR

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree to:

I. APPROVE the requisite funding from the Children Young People and Education High Needs Capital Programme that will be required for the expansion of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy

II. DELEGATE authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Head of Law and Director of Education to enter into any necessary contracts or other legal agreements as required to implement the decision; and

III. AGREE for the Director of Infrastructure, to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts.

Reason(s) for decision:

To facilitate the expansion of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy through capital investment, that will enable the school to increase its designated number from 120 to 192 and change its age range from 8 to 19 year olds (Year 4 to Year 14) to 4 to 19 year olds (Reception to Year 14).

1. Background

Kent County Council (KCC) as a Local Authority, has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient high quality school places are available, in the right places for all learners, while at the same time fulfilling our other responsibilities to raise education standards and promote parental preference. The Kent Commissioning Plan 2025-2029 indicated that there will be a shortfall in Special School provision in North Kent. Even though KCC's direction of travel is to increase Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision in mainstream schools and associated Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs), due to already identified shortfalls and anticipated population growth in certain areas of North Kent, more specialist provision is required for children and young people with more complex needs.

KCC SEN Data for North Kent as at April 2025, evidenced that there were 237 children and young people waiting for a Special School placement, and 243 open cases, of which was anticipated that a large number would require a Special School placement.

In July 2023 KCC was informed that it had been successful in bidding for a new 250 place Profound, Severe, and Complex Needs (PSCN) Special School in North Kent (Swanley). The school had an initial target opening date of September 2026 and was to be funded and built by the Department for Education (DfE). However, for a number of reasons progress has been incredibly slow and there are now concerns that the school may not progress any further. Even if it were to continue, that school would not be built until 2028 at the very earliest and as the data shows, provision is required now. KCC Officers and the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills continue to push the DfE and Ministers for confirmation of the status of the proposed new Swanley Special School.

The proposal to facilitate the expansion of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy will create 48 places of additional primary provision (Reception to Year 6) plus additional places for secondary aged pupils. The building project for this expansion will be managed by Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy, while KCC Infrastructure will oversee the scheme from a quality assurance perspective.

If no further action is taken in the longer term, KCC will find it extremely difficult to provide sufficient state-funded Special School provision in North Kent.

2. Kent's Strategic Statement

The County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2025-2029 is a five-year rolling plan which is updated annually. It sets out KCC's future plans as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision across all types and phases of education in Kent. A copy of the latest plan can be viewed from this link: Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2025-2029.

The proposed decision supports KCC's strategic statement in the following ways:

- This proposal supports improved efficiency and timeliness in SEND services and compliments plans to also expand Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) and increase mainstream inclusion capacity.
- In line with Section 7 of the KCP: Commissioning Statutory School Provision by Districts, this proposal will assist in responding to housing growth and demographic pressures and help to ensure housing growth is sustainable.
- In line with Section 5 of the KCP: Capital Funding, which outlines the use of developer contributions, Basic Need funding, and cautious capital investment strategies, this proposal promotes in-house provision where financially viable and reducing reliance on independent placements.

This proposal is necessary for KCC to continue to deliver the statutory duty, in a cost-effective way, in line with the guidelines described in the Securing Kent's Future strategy. It will help to maintain KCC's strategic role in supporting schools in Kent to deliver accessible, high quality education provision for all families.

3. Financial Implications

Capital

Progression of the scheme will be dependent on the outcome of detailed feasibility and design work – these will inform the full overall cost of the scheme, at which point the formal decision will be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.

The project will be a school managed scheme and will be confirmed via legally binding funding and development agreements between KCC and Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy. The cost of the

works will be borne by the CYPE High Needs Capital Budget; this is funded from a ring-fenced Capital Grant from the DfE. From initial feasibility studies, the estimated cost for the whole scheme was £1,500,000.

However, after initial feedback from KCC Infrastructure colleagues, there is a possibility that costs may increase, primarily due to the possible need for additional Highways mitigations around the Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy site and other requirements on the refurbishments of existing buildings. Therefore, we will not be requesting the formal decision to be taken until such time that planning has reached a is concluded, and the full extent of the cost of the scheme is known. The latest estimates indicate the costs could increase to as much as c£3,000,000, but much work still needs to be undertaken with Planners and Highways to determine the extent of any mitigations that may be required.

For Special School capital projects, the average cost per student place for a school expansion in Kent is c£85,000. However, the higher estimated cost for this scheme equates to a cost per place of only c£42,000, which demonstrates good value for money. KCC Project Managers will be undertaking continuous checks to keep build project costs as low as possible. KCC Project Managers will be undertaking continuous checks to keep build project costs as low as possible.

An allowance of up to £2,500 per teaching space may be payable to Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy; to outfit each new teaching room with appropriate ICT equipment, such as touch screens or projection equipment. This will be met from the overall Capital allocation for this scheme.

The High Needs Capital Programme has been running since 2020-21 with a total combined budget of just under £109m of which £67m has been either spent or committed to current known schemes (as at Quarter 1 2025 capital monitoring reported to Cabinet in September 2025). In the same way as the Basic Need programme is managed, to ensure all schemes are prioritised appropriately and expenditure is controlled within available funding, any proposed new or additional capital expenditure, first needs to be considered by KCC Officers through Education Asset Board, before being progressed through the formal governance processes and included in the capital programme.

Revenue

Should the scheme not proceed through to completion, any costs incurred at the time of cessation would become abortive costs and are likely to be recharged to Revenue. This would be reported through the regular financial monitoring reports to Cabinet. This will be a cost to the General Fund.

State funded Special School places are commissioned by Local Authorities and paid based on a rate per place. The rate per place for Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is currently between £30,430 to £31,400 dependent on the Key Stage. The higher rate for Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is approximately c£30,000 less than a place in an independent Special School. Local Authorities use the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant to pay for these places. Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy will use the revenue income they receive to facilitate additional staffing requirements and increased running costs.

Whilst there are no direct General Fund implications to these proposals, ensuring children are educated as locally as possible, avoids additional school transport costs, which are a General Fund expenditure. In addition, the Council is currently overspending on its Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block by approximately £55m-£60m per year. The use of independent Special Schools rather than state-funded provision (mainstream to Special School), has been highlighted as a key contributing factor to this position.

Whilst the cost of Special School places do not directly impact the General Fund, the Council is part of the DfE Safety Valve Programme, for which the Council has agreed to contribute a total of £82m between 2022-23 and 2027-28 to help reduce the accumulated deficit on the Dedicated Schools

Grant High Needs Block. KCC's contribution is alongside an extra £140m from DfE.

The DfE funding is contingent on the development of a plan to achieve value for money within the existing SEN regulatory framework, and the aim is to reach an in-year breakeven position by the end of 2027-28. Reducing the Council's reliance on independent sector education placements is a key part of the strategy to achieve this. Therefore, alleviating unsustainable pressures on existing Special Schools who are over-capacity by securing additional state-funded Special School places will help to avoid future dependence on the independent sector.

It is noted, there is a financial risk that these additional places are being built in a non-KCC school, and the places cannot be ring-fenced for KCC children. However, this is technically the same for KCC Special Schools.

4. Legal Implications

Planning permission will be required for the new accommodation to enable the expansion of the school's accommodation. As part of the Funding Agreement, Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy will be responsible for gaining the appropriate planning consent.

All individual proposals to either establish new, expand current or cease current provision will be required to go through the DfE process of making significant changes to an academy (non-statutory guidance on collaborative school place planning and making organisational changes to academies, August 2025).

5. Consultation

The KCC Member for Swanley, served by Dean Truder, has been informed of the proposal.

The school is an Academy and so ran its own Public Consultation on the proposal, with assistance from KCC. The consultation ran from 27 June 2025 to 18 July 2025. Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is the data controller for the consultation. KCC will not handle any personal data relating to this consultation or subsequent decision.

The Assistant Director of Education, SEN, Educational Psychology and Admissions from RBKC is supportive of the proposal.

The Assistant Director Education-North Kent, has said that the analysis of demand in North Kent shows that additional Special School capacity is required in the area. All alternatives have been considered, and the conclusion is to permanently expand Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy.

6. Equalities implications

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) have been produced by KCC and Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy. No issues were identified in the early stage EqIAs to the proposed expansion of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy. The early-stage EqIAs will be reviewed as the scheme continues.

7. Data Protection Implications

Any information that would have Data Protection implication was gathered by Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy, as its own Data Controller. Any protected data will be managed by the school.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

To be completed following consideration at Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 18 November 2025.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

KCC has considered whether other Special Schools in the North Kent area are viable candidates for a permanent increase to their formal designated numbers. There is also a proposal to expand Broomhill Bank School, but this alone will not produce sufficient places to meet current demand, as that expansion primarily relates to additional places for secondary age children. Therefore, Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy is the most appropriate and viable option to also increase its designated number. It is however, recognised there is no guarantee these places will be offered to Kent children, and we have no statutory intervention powers to secure these placements. Although this has been considered an acceptable risk.

By increasing their formal designated number through the physical expansion of Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy, which is a state-funded provision, it protects the Local Authority from increased revenue costs. The proposal will help to mitigate against the need to place students further away from home and incurring additional transport costs, alongside incurring increased costs from placing a greater number of children in high-cost independent settings to alleviate the current pressures in KCC state-funded Special Schools in the area.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

None.

....

signed date

This page is intentionally left blank

CYPE CABINET COMMITTEE REPORT

From: **Christine McInnes, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education**

Beverley Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

To: **Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee – 18 November 2025**

Subject: **Proposal to permanently increase the formal designated number of Broomhill Bank School, Broomhill Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Tunbridge Wells, TN3 0TB, from 318 students to 490 students**

Decision no: 25/00087

Key Decision: It affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions and Expenditure of over £1m

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: **Swanley, served by Dean Truder and Tunbridge Wells West, served by John Moreland**

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary:

This report sets out the proposal to permanently increase the formal designated number of Broomhill Bank School from 318 students to 490 students, facilitated through capital investment on both school sites.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **ENDORSE or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on the proposed decision as set out in the attached PROD.**

---

1. Introduction

1.1 Kent County Council (KCC) as the Local Authority, has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient high quality school places are available, in the right places for

all learners, while at the same time fulfilling our other responsibilities to raise education standards and promote parental preference. The County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2025-2029 is a five-year rolling plan which is updated annually. It sets out KCC's future plans as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision across all types and phases of education in Kent.

1.2 The Kent Commissioning Plan 2025-2029 indicated that there will be a shortfall in Special School provision in North and West Kent. Even though KCC's direction of travel is to increase Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision in mainstream schools and associated Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs), due to already identified shortfalls and anticipated population growth in certain areas of North and West Kent, more specialist provision is required for children and young people with more complex needs.

1.3 KCC SEN Data for North Kent as at April 2025, evidenced that there were 237 children and young people waiting for a Special School placement, and 243 open cases, of which was anticipated that a large number would require a Special School placement. For West Kent as at April 2025, there were 201 children and young people awaiting a Special School placement, with 207 open cases.

1.4 In July 2023 KCC was informed that it had been successful in bidding for a new 250 place Profound, Severe, and Complex Needs (PSCN) Special School in North Kent (Swanley). The school had an initial target opening date of September 2026 and was to be funded and built by the Department for Education (DfE). However, for a number of reasons progress has been incredibly slow and there are now concerns that the school may not progress any further. Even if it were to continue, that school would not be built until 2028 at the very earliest and as the data shows, provision is required now. KCC Officers and the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills continue to push the DfE and Ministers for confirmation of the status of the proposed new Swanley Special School.

2. Key Considerations

2.1 The proposal to permanently increase the formal designated number of the Broomhill Bank School from 318 students to 490 students, will require new teaching spaces and enhancements to existing infrastructure on both school sites in Tunbridge Wells and Hextable. The building projects for this expansion will be managed by Broomhill Bank School, while KCC Infrastructure will oversee the scheme from a quality assurance perspective.

2.2 If no further action is taken in the longer term, KCC will find it extremely difficult to provide sufficient state-funded Special School provision in North and West Kent.

2.3 Any works undertaken by Broomhill Bank School are to be overseen by KCC Infrastructure with all costs validated at every stage by the appointed experienced KCC Project Manager.

2.4 This report sets out the proposals for consideration by CYPE Cabinet Committee, to inform the decision to proceed with the next stage of detailed feasibility and plans, ahead of the final proposed decision being recommended to the Cabinet Member.

2.5 The decision itself, will only be taken when the planning process has progressed to a stage where KCC Officers feel they have greater certainty of the overall scheme cost.

3. Background

3.1 Broomhill Bank School is a Foundation Special School and a member of Kent Special Educational Needs Trust (KsENT), catering for students aged 11-19 years who have communication and interaction needs associated with Autism and speech, language and communication needs.

3.2 All students have Education, Health and Care Plans.

3.3 Following an inspection that took place in October 2023, Ofsted deemed Broomhill Bank School to be a 'GOOD' school.

3.4 A significant proportion of the proposed increase relates to the North (Hextable) site of Broomhill Bank School. North Kent is still encountering significant growth primarily in Dartford, but the other two districts of Gravesham and Sevenoaks are fast approaching completion of their new Local Plans, which will see significant housebuilding required for the period up to 2040 and beyond.

3.5 There will be a smaller increase in students on the West Kent site to facilitate the Executive Headteacher's commitment to continue to admit children and young people with a wider dimension of need.

3.6 Due to delays regarding the proposed new PSCN School, the numbers of students in North Kent still requiring specialist provision at this time, and the fact that all Special Schools in the locality are already over capacity; this is unsustainable in the short and medium term, and if not addressed will lead to further places in the independent sector. There is a clear need for further expansion of state-funded specialist provision, where appropriate, to secure the current number of places on a permanent basis alongside the expansion of SRPs and mainstream inclusion.

3.7 Broomhill Bank School is already admitting students over and above the designated number, and this proposal to permanently increase the formal designated number of the school from 318 students to 490 students, requires the provision of new teaching and ancillary spaces along with modifications and enhancements to existing infrastructure on both school sites. The majority of the work will focus on the Hextable site with the main proposal being the introduction of new teaching accommodation with capacity for 105 students.

3.8 The Executive Headteacher of Broomhill Bank School continues to admit students with a wider dimension of need, a practice that began three years ago and commits to continue this practice, whilst ensuring the quality of

education for all students is maintained. This proposal is part of a plan to help alleviate current pressures and help mitigate future population growth across the wider North and West Kent areas, alongside the expansion of SRPs and mainstream inclusion.

3.9 The Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body of Broomhill Bank School North have consulted on the proposal to permanently increase the formal designated number of Broomhill Bank School from 318 to 490 students and have agreed to progress with the scheme on the understanding that the requisite infrastructure is provided.

3.10 The building work required to facilitate this proposed expansion is as follows:

Broomhill Bank School North (Hextable) site:

- the demolition of Lindsay House (one of the original buildings now unusable due to the condition being beyond economical repair)
- building two new blocks totalling twelve modular classrooms and ancillary space
- upgrades to outdoor areas
- making internal modifications to the main school building
- carrying out remodelling work to the car park and any necessary highways mitigations

Broomhill Bank School West (Tunbridge Wells) site also requires some minor adaptations and enhancements to existing buildings to facilitate the increase in student numbers across the school:

- the creation of two lodges (one for social enterprise and one for skills for employment)
- improvements and enhancements to the existing perimeter fence line
- further site space needs development for increased outdoor learning opportunities
- the repurposing of accommodation used previously by the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS)

3.11 All of these developments will enable Broomhill Bank School to create a curriculum offer to support children and young people with a wider dimension of need

4. Kent's Strategic Statement

4.1 The County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2025-2029 is a five-year rolling plan which is updated annually. It sets out KCC's future plans as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision across all types and phases of education in Kent. A copy of the latest plan can be viewed from this link: Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2025-2029.

4.2 The proposed decision supports KCC's strategic statement in the following ways:

- This proposal supports improved efficiency and timeliness in SEND services and compliments plans to also expand Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) and increase mainstream inclusion capacity.
- In line with Section 7 of the KCP: Commissioning Statutory School Provision by Districts, this proposal will assist in responding to housing growth and demographic pressures and help to ensure housing growth is sustainable.
- In line with Section 5 of the KCP: Capital Funding, which outlines the use of developer contributions, Basic Need funding, and cautious capital investment strategies, this proposal promotes in-house provision where financially viable and reducing reliance on independent placements.

4.3 This proposal is necessary for KCC to continue to deliver the statutory duty, in a cost-effective way, in line with the guidelines described KCC's strategic statement. It will help to maintain KCC's strategic role in supporting schools in Kent to deliver accessible, high quality education provision for all families.

5. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

5.1 KCC has considered whether other Special Schools in the North and West Kent areas are viable candidates for a permanent increase to their formal designated numbers. There is also a proposal to expand Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy, but this alone will not produce sufficient places to meet current demand, as that expansion primarily relates to additional places for Primary age children. Therefore, Broomhill Bank School is the most appropriate and viable option to also increase its designated number.

5.2 By increasing their formal designated number through the physical expansion of Broomhill Bank School, which is KCC maintained provision, it protects the Local Authority from increased revenue costs. The proposal will help to mitigate against the need to place students further away from home and incurring additional transport costs, alongside incurring increased costs from placing a greater number of children in high-cost independent settings to alleviate the current pressures in KCC state-funded Special Schools in the area.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Capital

6.1.1 Progression of the scheme will be dependent on the outcome of detailed feasibility and design work – these will inform the full overall cost of the scheme, at which point the formal decision will be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.

6.1.2 The project will be a school managed scheme and will be confirmed via legally binding funding and development agreements between KCC and Broomhill Bank School.

6.1.3 The costs of the two new blocks on the North (Hextable) site, and upgrades and modifications across both the North (Hextable) site and West (Tunbridge Well) site will be borne by the CYPE High Needs Capital Budget, this is funded from a ring-fenced Capital Grant from the DfE. From initial feasibility studies, the estimated cost for the whole scheme was £4,000,000.

6.1.4 However, after initial feedback from KCC Planning and Highways colleagues, there is a possibility that costs may increase, primarily due to the need for additional Highways mitigations around the Broomhill Bank School North (Hextable) site. Therefore, we will not be requesting the formal decision to be taken until such time that planning is concluded, and the full extent of the cost of the scheme is known. The latest estimates indicate the costs could increase to as much as c£5.5m, but much work still needs to be undertaken with Planners and Highways to determine the extent of the mitigations required.

6.1.5 For Special School capital projects, the average cost per student place for a school expansion in Kent is c£85,000. However, even if this scheme were to produce only the teaching accommodation for 105 students the higher estimated cost equates to a cost per place of only c£52,000, which still demonstrates good value for money.

6.1.6 The final estimated cost of the project will be reported appropriately through KCC internal governance routes before the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills is requested to make the formal decision.

6.1.7 KCC Project Managers will be undertaking continuous checks to keep project costs as low as possible.

6.1.8 Should the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills agree to progress the scheme; the Funding Agreement will be finalised and sealed. The agreement will set out the milestones for when funding will be passported to Broomhill Bank School.

6.1.9 An allowance of up to £2,500 per teaching space may be payable to Broomhill Bank School; to outfit each new teaching room with appropriate ICT equipment, such as touch screens or projection equipment. This will be met from the overall Capital allocation for this scheme.

6.1.10 The High Needs Capital Programme has been running since 2020-21 with a total combined budget of just under £109m of which £67m has been either spent or committed to current known schemes (as at Quarter 1 2025 capital monitoring reported to Cabinet in September 2025). In the same way as the Basic Need programme is managed, to ensure all schemes are prioritised appropriately and expenditure is controlled within available funding, any proposed new or additional capital expenditure, first needs to be considered by KCC Officers through Education Asset Board, before being progressed through the formal governance processes and included in the capital programme.

6.2 Revenue

6.2.1 Should the scheme not proceed through to completion, any costs incurred at the time of cessation would become abortive costs and are likely to be recharged to Revenue. This would be reported through the regular financial monitoring reports to Cabinet. This will be a cost to the General Fund.

6.2.2 As the scheme progresses, £8,000 per newly provided learning space, would be provided towards the cost of furniture and equipment, such as tables, desks, chairs, cabinets and learning resources. This will be funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant Growth Fund.

6.2.3 State funded Special School places are commissioned by Local Authorities and paid based on a rate per place. The rate per place set by KCC for Broomhill Bank School is currently between £15,041 to £24,946 dependant on need type. The higher rate for Broomhill Bank School is approximately £35,000 less than a place in an independent Special School. Local Authorities use the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant to pay for these places. Broomhill Bank School will use the revenue income they receive to facilitate additional staffing requirements and increased running costs.

6.2.4 Whilst there are no direct General Fund implications to these proposals, ensuring children are educated as locally as possible, avoids additional school transport costs, which are a General Fund expenditure. In addition, the Council is currently overspending on its Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block by approximately £55m-£60m per year. The use of independent Special Schools rather than state-funded provision (mainstream to Special School), has been highlighted as a key contributing factor to this position.

6.2.5 Whilst the cost of Special School places do not directly impact the General Fund, the Council is part of the DfE Safety Valve Programme, for which the Council has agreed to contribute a total of £82m between 2022-23 and 2027-28 to help reduce the accumulated deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block. KCC's contribution is alongside an extra £140m from DfE.

6.2.6 The DfE funding is contingent on the development of a plan to achieve value for money within the existing SEN regulatory framework, and the aim is to reach an in-year breakeven position by the end of 2027-28. Reducing the Council's reliance on independent sector education placements is a key part of the strategy to achieve this. Therefore, alleviating unsustainable pressures on existing Special Schools who are over-capacity by securing additional state-funded Special School places will help to avoid future dependence on the independent sector.

6.3 Human

6.3.1 Broomhill Bank School will appoint additional staff as required; utilising revenue funding allocated through the Schools Funding Formula for these additional students.

7. Legal implications

7.1 Under the Children and Families Act 2014 KCC has a duty 'to support the child and his or her parent, or the young person, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help him or her achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes'. By ensuring we have appropriate provision as locally as possible, we are delivering on our obligation in accordance with this legislation.

7.2 Local Authorities need to deliver their statutory duties and be aware of non-statutory guidance and advice, which relate to children and young people with SEN. These are:

- Department for Education-Making significant changes to maintained schools 2025: statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers.
- The Equalities Act which: places duties on Local Authorities to review support services and in doing so requires Local Authorities to have due regard to the way in which any changes will affect children and young people with a disability.
- The SEND Code of Practice places requirements on Local Authorities to: provide access to advice from a suitably qualified person as part of the EHCP process and subsequent "assess, plan, do, review" cycles, and make appropriate provision for those with an EHC plan in the 0-25 range.
- Sufficiency Duties: KCC is under a statutory duty to contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient primary education and secondary education are available to meet the needs of the population of their area: section 13 of the Education Act 1996 ("the 1996 Act").
- KCC must ensure that its education functions are exercised by the authority with a view to promoting high standards, ensuring fair access to opportunity for education and training, and promoting the fulfilment of learning potential by every person under the age of 20 and those over the age of 20 and for whom an EHC Plan is maintained: section 13A. By section 14, KCC must secure that sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education are available for their area, defined as being sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide for all students the opportunity of appropriate education.
- Under section 27 of the Children and Families Act 2014 ("the 2014 Act"), KCC is under a duty to keep under review the educational provision, training provision and social care provision made in its area (and outside it) for children and young people who have special educational needs or a disability. KCC must consider the extent to which its provision is sufficient to meet the educational needs, training needs and social care needs of the children and young people concerned.
- KCC, when carrying out its functions must have "due regard" to the provisions of section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, known as the 'public sector equality duty'.

7.3 All individual proposals to either establish new, expand current or cease current provision are required to go through the statutory process under The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England)

(Amendment) Regulations, 2025. As part of this process, a public consultation was undertaken ahead of presentation of the proposal to CYPE Cabinet Committee. Should the Cabinet Member agree to the permanently increase to the formal designated number of the Broomhill Bank School from 318 students to 490 students, through a permanent expansion, a Public Notice will be issued for a period of 4 weeks.

7.4 The Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Director of Education will be overseeing the scheme to ensure public funds are utilised appropriately.

8. Equalities implications

8.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed and indicated that there are no issues to the proposal to permanently increase the formal designated number of the Broomhill Bank School from 318 students to 490 students. This assessment was re-examined, and no further or new issues have been identified.

8.2 The proposed permanent increase to the formal designated number of Broomhill Bank School will not change the delivery of education with the school. Therefore, there should be no equalities implications.

8.3 The early-stage EqIA will be reviewed as the scheme continues.

9. Data Protection Implications

9.1 Any information that would have Data Protection implication was gathered by Broomhill Bank School and KCC. A consultation was conducted by the school and KCC. Any protected data will be managed by Broomhill Bank School and KCC.

10. Other corporate implications

10.1 Broomhill Bank School will consult with Planners and KCC‘s Highways and Planning colleagues as appropriate, throughout the planning process.

11. Governance

11.1 The Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body of Broomhill Bank School are fully supportive of the proposal.

11.2 KCC Infrastructure Team are engaged in overseeing and ensuring that the funding is spent appropriately.

11.3 The decision itself, will only be taken when the planning process has progressed to a stage where KCC Officers feel they have greater certainty of the overall scheme cost.

12. Consultation

12.1 The KCC Members for Swanley, served by Dean Truder, and Tunbridge Wells West, served by John Moreland, have both been informed of the proposal.

12.2 A Public Consultation was undertaken on the proposal, which ran from 20 June 2025 to 18 July 2025.

12.3 Broomhill Bank School held a public drop-in session on 24 June 2025 which was attended by KCC Officers.

12.4 The consultation results were be presented to the Governing Body of Broomhill Bank School on 07 October 2025.

12.5 The Governing Body of Broomhill bank School are fully supportive and have made the decision to continue with the proposal to permanently increase the formal designated number of the school from 318 students to 490 students.

12.6 The Assistant Director Education-North Kent and Assistant Director Education-West Kent have said that the analysis of demand in North and West Kent shows that additional Special School capacity is required in the area. All alternatives have been considered, and the conclusion is to permanently increase the formal designated number of the school from 318 students to 490 students.

13. Conclusions

13.1 The Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body of Broomhill Bank School agree to the proposal to permanently increase the formal designated number of the school from 318 students to 490 students, subject to the requisite infrastructure being provided.

13.2 The analysis of demand in North and West Kent shows that additional Special School capacity is required in the areas. All alternatives have been considered, and the conclusion is to permanently increase the formal designated number of Broomhill Bank School from 318 students to 490 students.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **ENDORSE or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on the proposed decision as set out in the attached PROD.**

---

14. Background Documents

- Kent Commissioning Plan 2025-2029
- EqIA
- Appendix 1 - Responses to the Public Consultation 20 June 2025 to 18 July 2025

15. Contact details

Report Author: Ian Watts Job title: Assistant Director Education-North Kent Telephone number: 03000 414302 Email address: ian.watts@kent.gov.uk **and** Report Author: Nick Abrahams Job title: Assistant Director Education-West Kent Telephone number: 03000 410058 Email address: Nicholas.Abrahams@kent.gov.uk	Director: Christine McInnes Job title: Director of Education and SEND Telephone number: 03000 418913 Email address: Christine.McInnes@kent.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NUMBER:
Beverley Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	25/00087

For publication *[Do not include information which is exempt from publication under schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972]*

Key decision: YES

Savings or expenditure of more than £1m

Affects 2 or more Electoral Divisions

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Proposal to permanently increase the designated number of Broomhill Bank School, Broomhill Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Tunbridge Wells, TN3 0TB, from 318 students to 490 students

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree to:

I. APPROVE the increase of Broomhill Bank School's designated number from 318 students to 490 students

II. AGREE to allocate the funding from the Children Young People and Education Services High Needs Capital Budget that will be required to complete the expansion

III. AGREE to issue a Public Notice to permanently increase Broomhill Bank School's formal designated numbers following a representation period of four weeks with no substantive objections received, implement the decision

IV. DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education to Issue a Public Notice

V. DELEGATE authority for the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills to make minor revisions as required to the proposal following a representation period of four weeks

VI. DELEGATE authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Head of Law and Director of Education to take relevant actions including but not limited to entering into relevant contracts or other legal agreements as required to implement the decision; and

VII. AGREE for the Director of Infrastructure, to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts.

Reason(s) for decision:

1. Background

Kent County Council (KCC) as the Local Authority, has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient high quality school places are available, in the right places for all learners, while at the same time fulfilling our other responsibilities to raise education standards and promote parental preference. The Kent Commissioning Plan 2025-2029 indicated that there will be a shortfall in Special School provision in North and West Kent. Even though KCC's direction of travel is to increase Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision in mainstream schools and associated Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs), due to already identified shortfalls and anticipated population growth in certain areas of North and West Kent, more specialist provision is required for children and young people with more complex needs.

KCC SEN Data for North Kent as at April 2025, evidenced that there were 237 children and young people waiting for a Special School placement, and 243 open cases, of which was anticipated that a large number would require a Special School placement. For West Kent as at April 2025, there were 201 children and young people awaiting a Special School placement, with 207 open cases.

In July 2023 KCC was informed that it had been successful in bidding for a new 250 place Profound, Severe, and Complex Needs (PSCN) Special School in North Kent (Swanley). The school had an initial target opening date of September 2026 and was to be funded and built by the Department for Education (DfE). However, for a number of reasons progress has been incredibly slow and there are now concerns that the school may not progress any further. Even if it were to continue, that school would not be built until 2028 at the very earliest and as the data shows, provision is required now. KCC Officers and the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills continue to push the DfE and Ministers for confirmation of the status of the proposed new Swanley Special School.

The proposal to permanently increase the formal designated number of the Broomhill Bank School from 318 students to 490 students, will require new teaching spaces and enhancements to existing infrastructure on both school sites in Tunbridge Wells and Hextable. The building projects for this expansion will be managed by Broomhill Bank School, while KCC Infrastructure will oversee the scheme from a quality assurance perspective.

If no further action is taken in the longer term, KCC will find it extremely difficult to provide sufficient state-funded Special School provision in North and West Kent.

2. Kents Strategic Statement

The County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2025-2029 is a five-year rolling plan which is updated annually. It sets out KCC's future plans as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision across all types and phases of education in Kent. A copy of the latest plan can be viewed from this link: Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2025-2029.

The proposed decision supports KCC's strategic statement in the following ways:

- This proposal supports improved efficiency and timeliness in SEND services and compliments plans to also expand Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) and increase mainstream inclusion capacity.
- In line with Section 7 of the KCP: Commissioning Statutory School Provision by Districts, this proposal will assist in responding to housing growth and demographic pressures and help to ensure housing growth is sustainable.
- In line with Section 5 of the KCP: Capital Funding, which outlines the use of developer contributions, Basic Need funding, and cautious capital investment strategies, this proposal promotes in-house provision where financially viable and reducing reliance on independent placements.

This proposal is necessary for KCC to continue to deliver the statutory duty, in a cost-effective way, in line with the guidelines described in the Securing Kent's Future strategy. It will help to maintain KCC's strategic role in supporting schools in Kent to deliver accessible, high quality education provision for all families.

3. Financial Implications

Capital

Progression of the scheme will be dependent on the outcome of detailed feasibility and design work – these will inform the full overall cost of the scheme, at which point the formal decision will be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.

The project will be a school managed scheme and will be confirmed via legally binding funding and development agreements between KCC and Broomhill Bank School. The costs of the two new blocks on the North (Hextable) site, and upgrades and modifications across both the North (Hextable) site and West (Tunbridge Well) site will be borne by the CYPE High Needs Capital Budget, this is funded from a ring-fenced Capital Grant from the DfE. From initial feasibility studies, the estimated cost for the whole scheme was £4,000,000.

However, after initial feedback from KCC Planning and Highways colleagues, there is a possibility that costs may increase, primarily due to the need for additional Highways mitigations around the Broomhill Bank School North (Hextable) site. Therefore, we will not be requesting the formal decision to be taken until such time that planning is concluded, and the full extent of the cost of the scheme is known. The latest estimates indicate the costs could increase to as much as c£5.5m, but much work still needs to be undertaken with Planners and Highways to determine the extent of the mitigations required.

For Special School capital projects, the average cost per student place for a school expansion in Kent is c£85,000. However, even if this scheme were to produce only the teaching accommodation for 105 students the higher estimated cost equates to a cost per place of only c£52,000, which still demonstrates good value for money.

An allowance of up to £2,500 per teaching space may be payable to Broomhill Bank School; to outfit each new teaching room with appropriate ICT equipment, such as touch screens or projection equipment. This will be met from the overall Capital allocation for this scheme.

The High Needs Capital Programme has been running since 2020-21 with a total combined budget of just under £109m of which £67m has been either spent or committed to current known schemes (as at Quarter 1 2025 capital monitoring reported to Cabinet in September 2025). In the same way as the Basic Need programme is managed, to ensure all schemes are prioritised appropriately and expenditure is controlled within available funding, any proposed new or additional capital expenditure, first needs to be considered by KCC Officers through Education Asset Board, before being progressed through the formal governance processes and included in the capital programme.

Revenue

Should the scheme not proceed through to completion, any costs incurred at the time of cessation would become abortive costs and are likely to be recharged to Revenue. This would be reported through the regular financial monitoring reports to Cabinet. This will be a cost to the General Fund.

As the scheme progresses, £8,000 per newly provided learning space, would be provided towards the cost of furniture and equipment, such as tables, desks, chairs, cabinets and learning resources. This will be funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant Growth Fund.

State funded Special School places are commissioned by Local Authorities and paid based on a rate per place. The rate per place set by KCC for Broomhill Bank School is currently between £15,041 to £24,946 dependant on need type. The higher rate for Broomhill Bank School is approximately £35,000 less than a place in an independent Special School. Local Authorities use the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant to pay for these places. Broomhill Bank School will use the revenue income they receive to facilitate additional staffing requirements and increased running costs.

Whilst there are no direct General Fund implications to these proposals, ensuring children are educated as locally as possible, avoids additional school transport costs, which are a General Fund expenditure. In addition, the Council is currently overspending on its Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block by approximately £55m-£60m per year. The use of independent Special Schools rather than state-funded provision (mainstream to Special School), has been highlighted as a key contributing factor to this position.

Whilst the cost of Special School places do not directly impact the General Fund, the Council is part of the DfE Safety Valve Programme, for which the Council has agreed to contribute a total of £82m between 2022-23 and 2027-28 to help reduce the accumulated deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block. KCC's contribution is alongside an extra £140m from DfE.

The DfE funding is contingent on the development of a plan to achieve value for money within the existing SEN regulatory framework, and the aim is to reach an in-year breakeven position by the end of 2027-28. Reducing the Council's reliance on independent sector education placements is a key part of the strategy to achieve this. Therefore, alleviating unsustainable pressures on existing Special Schools who are over-capacity by securing additional state-funded Special School places will help to avoid future dependence on the independent sector.

4. Legal Implications

Planning permission will be required for the new accommodation to enable the expansion of the school's accommodation. As part of the Funding Agreement Broomhill Bank School will be responsible for gaining the appropriate planning consent.

All individual proposals to either establish new, expand current or cease current provision are required to go through the statutory process under The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) (Amendment) Regulations, 2025. As part of this process, a public consultation was undertaken ahead of presentation of the proposal to CYPE Cabinet Committee. Should the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills agree to the permanently increase to the formal designated number of the Broomhill Bank School from 318 students to 490 students, through a permanent expansion, a Public Notice will be issued for a period of 4 weeks.

A statutory consultation has been undertaken, comprising of a 4-week public consultation.

5. Consultation

The KCC Members for Swanley, served by Dean Truder, and Tunbridge Wells West, served by John Moreland, have both been informed of the proposal.

A Public Consultation was undertaken on the proposal, which ran from 20 June 2025 to 18 July 2025. The Governing Body of Broomhill bank School are fully supportive and have agreed to continue with the proposal to permanently increase the formal designated number of the school from 318 students to 490 students. The responses to the consultation were presented in full to CYPE Cabinet Committee on 18 November 2025. The school and KCC are the data controllers for the consultation. Any protected data will be managed by the school and KCC.

The Assistant Director Education-North Kent and Assistant Director Education-West Kent have said

that the analysis of demand in North and West Kent shows that additional Special School capacity is required in the area. All alternatives have been considered, and the conclusion is to permanently increase the formal designated number of the school from 318 students to 490 students.

A Public Notice will be issued for a consultation period of 4 weeks, after which, should no significant objections be received, the decision to permanently increase the designated number of Broomhill Bank School, from 318 students to 490 students will be implemented.

Should any significant objections, not already considered by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills when agreeing to issue the Public Notice, be received during the notice period, a separate decision may be required dependent on the level of modification required in order to continue the proposal and allow for proper consideration of the points raised.

6. Equalities implications

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed and indicated that there are no issues to the proposal to permanently increase the formal designated number of the Broomhill Bank School from 318 students to 490 students.

This assessment was re-examined, and no further or new issues have been identified.

7. Data Protection Implications

Any information that would have Data Protection implication was gathered by Broomhill Bank School and KCC. A consultation was conducted by the school and KCC. Any protected data will be managed by Broomhill Bank School and KCC.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

To be completed following consideration at Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 18 November 2025.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

KCC has considered whether other Special Schools in the North and West Kent areas are viable candidates for a permanent increase to their formal designated numbers. There is also a proposal to expand Parkwood Hall Co-operative Academy, but this alone will not produce sufficient places to meet current demand, as that expansion primarily relates to additional places for Primary age children. Therefore, Broomhill Bank School is the most appropriate and viable option to also increase its designated number.

By increasing their formal designated numbers through the expansion of Broomhill Bank School, which is a maintained provision, it protects the Local Authority from increased revenue costs, through needing to place students into high-cost independent settings.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

None.

....

signed date

This page is intentionally left blank

From:	Chris Palmer, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services Christine McInnes, Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education
To:	**Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee** –18th November 2025
Subject:	Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership (KSCMP) Annual Report 2024/25
Classification:	Unrestricted
Past Pathway of report:	Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership Executive Board – 19th May 2025 Lead Safeguarding Partners – 2nd July 2025
Future Pathway of report:	None
Electoral Division:	All

Is the decision eligible for call-in? *Yes / No – exempt*

Summary: The KSCMP Annual Report provides an overview of Partnership activities undertaken, key achievements, challenges addressed and impact made during the period April 2024 to March 2025.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **NOTE** the content of the Annual Report.

1. Introduction

1.1 The KSCMP Annual Report 2023-24 has been produced in-line with the statutory requirements set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'[1] (hereafter referred to as Working Together 2023). The Report focuses on key areas of activity and learning obtained over the period set out.

1.2 Working Together 2023 requires that Safeguarding Partnerships publish a yearly report by 30th September each year, which should include the following:

- What has been done as a result of the Partnership arrangements, including in relation to child safeguarding practice reviews.

[1] Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

- How effective the Partnership arrangements have been in practice.
- The contribution of each Safeguarding Partner to the functioning and structure of the arrangements.
- Any themes emanating from aggregated methods of scrutiny, for example, reviews, scrutineer activity and multi-agency audits.
- Evidence of the impact of the work of the Safeguarding Partners and Relevant Agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and families.
- Analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities.
- Analysis of learning from serious incidents.
- A record of key decisions and actions taken by the Safeguarding Partners in the yearly cycle, including in relation to implementing the recommendations from any local and national child safeguarding practice reviews and the impact this has had.
- Ways in which the Safeguarding Partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision.
- The financial contributions of individual partners.
- Evidence of how Safeguarding Partners are ensuring the adequate representation and input of education at both the operational and strategical levels of the arrangements.
- An overview of how data is being used to encourage learning within the arrangements and evidence of how information sharing has improved practice and outcomes.
- A review of the impact and learning from independent scrutiny arrangements to ensure leadership is strong and the arrangements are leading to the desired and necessary impact.
- Any updates to the published arrangements with the proposed timescale for implementation.
- Evidence that national reforms have been implemented.

2. Annual Report April 2024 to March 2025

2.1 The Report is compliant with Working Together 2023 regarding our new and amended responsibilities. As such, it summarises progress made following the introduction of the Lead Safeguarding Partner roles; introduction of the Delegated Safeguarding Partner role; introduction of the Partnership Chair role; and enhanced engagement of education at a strategic and operational level. The report also considers the role of Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise and childcare and sports organisations in the Partnership.

2.2 The Report includes an overview of the key activities undertaken during the 2024/25 financial year, alongside the Partnership's ambitions for the next 12 months. It includes an evaluation from the KSCMP Independent Scrutineer.

2.3 The Report particularly highlights several key activities progressed during the period, including:

- Review of the KSCMP architecture, leading to the establishment of the Child Exploitation Oversight Group.

- Work undertaken to enhance and embed education representation within the Partnership, which has been achieved through outreach activities; the development of dedicated communications; the enhanced work of the Education Safeguarding Group; and the appointment of two school leaders to the KSCMP Executive who ensure the voice of education informs Partnership strategic decision making.
- Development of a campaign designed to raise awareness of children inappropriately being considered protective factors for their parent/carer's mental health.
- Scoping of a targeted cannabis awareness campaign following the cannabis policies, procedures and guidance audit.
- Undertaking an Elective Home Education benchmarking audit and EatSafe impact survey.
- Further work on the Escalation Project.
- The launch of new multi-agency learning and training resources, including: training sessions; e-learning courses; factsheets; webinars; guidance and good practice examples.
- Strengthening of the Learning Improvement Group demonstrated through the use of the PowerBI tracker, which provides members with a real time account of their organisation's performance against actions agreed.
- Completion and publication of a number of Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and implementation of recommendations.
- Completion of the Section 11 statutory multi-agency self-assessment process.
- Tracking of Serious Incident Notifications and referrals to the National Panel.
- Enhanced use of the KSCMP data dashboards to monitor trends and performance.

2.4 The Report responds to the findings of the Department for Education's Safeguarding Children Partnerships Yearly Reports Analysis and complies with Government expectations regarding content and has been developed to better highlight the impact of the Partnership's activities.

2.5 The KSCMP Annual Report 2024/25 was agreed by the KSCMP Executive Board on 19th May 2025. It was subsequent signed-off by the Lead Safeguarding Partners. It was published on the KSCMP website on 14th July 2025.

3. Conclusions

3.1 The KSCMP has been established to fulfil the statutory duties placed on Kent County Council, NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board and Kent Police by virtue of the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017).

3.2 The Lead Safeguarding Partners and KSCMP Executive (Delegated Safeguarding Partners) will continue to discharge such responsibilities as defined in law and statutory guidance working in partnership with all relevant bodies and organisations in Kent.

3.3 The KSCMP Annual Report 2024/25 is presented for the information of the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **NOTE** the content of the Annual Report.

---

4. Background Documents

4.1 *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023: A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children*

5. Contact details *(please insert details below)*

Report Author: Jennifer Maiden-Brooks Job title: KSCMP System Improvement Manager Telephone number: 03000 416417 Email address: Jennifer.maiden-brooks@kent.gov.uk	Director: Sarah Hammond Job title: Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education Telephone number: 03000 411488 Email address: sarah.hammond@kent.gov.uk

Annual Report

April 2024 – March 2025

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Contents

Foreword	Page 3
Headlines	Page 4
Kent Safeguarding Context in Numbers	Page 5
Implementing Working Together 2023	Pages 6-9
Priorities	Pages 10-15
Scrutiny, Challenge & Assurance	Pages 16-21
What have we been doing?	Pages 22-23
Learning & Improvement	Pages 24-36
Conclusion	Page 37
Appendices	Pages 38-45
KSCMP Structure	Page 39
KSCMP Business Team Structure	Page 40
KSCMP Budget	Page 41
Financial Contributions	Page 42
Agencies within our Partnership	Pages 43-44
Kent Safeguarding Context data references	Page 45

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Foreword

KSCMP Executive (Delegated Safeguarding Partners)

This year has seen further evolution of the Partnership's foundations both in response to Working Together 2023 and in preparation of the upcoming transformation work that will be required to respond to the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, as well as other legislative and policy direction.

Working Together 2023 clarified responsibilities of Safeguarding Partners and the KSCMP. New or amended responsibilities included; introduction of the Lead Safeguarding Partner role, introduction of the Delegated Safeguarding Partner role, introduction of the Partnership Chair role, enhanced engagement of education at a strategic and operational level, and considering the role of Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise and childcare and sports organisations in the Partnership. We published our revised arrangements in late 2024 which respond to these requirements, a summary of the changes is outlined in this report, but as the KSCMP Executive we particularly welcome the addition of education representatives in the strategic leadership of the Partnership, as well as considering how we can engage the large education sector in Kent.

We have also seen demonstrable evidence of progress because of previous improvements the KSCMP has made. Our practice reviews are now focused on identifying new learning and making change, with the Learning and Improvement Group proving to be an effective mechanism for embedding learning. This report also outlines key examples of how the Partnership's work is shaping local and national change. Achievements regarding children with asthma and further early years policy changes that have been informed by local learning are important milestones.

Over the next year, we will revise our Partnership priorities to respond effectively to national developments and emerging insights. We have already begun multi-agency work to assess the scale of change needed and to establish shared principles that will guide our efforts to build a connected system of Family Help. As we look to establish Family Help Teams and Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams, we remain committed to maintaining a safeguarding system that protects the safety and wellbeing of children in Kent. We will also continue to adapt and improve based on new learning from our Partnership activities.



Sarah Hammond,
Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education, Kent County Council



Paul Lumsdon,
Chief Nursing Officer, NHS Kent & Medway



Simon Wilson,
Assistant Chief Constable, Kent Police



Susie Burden,
Executive Headteacher, Fulston Manor School



Debra Hines,
Executive Headteacher, Joy Lane Primary School

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Key headlines: April 2024 to March 2025

Key achievements

- Revised KSCMP arrangements
- Lead Safeguarding Partner meeting established
- Strategic representation from education identified
- 82% of Section 11 indicators fully met by Kent agencies

Practice improvement

- 7 Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews published
- 2 learning briefings published
- 61 practice review recommendations considered at LIG*
- 1 National Child Safeguarding Practice Review considered

Learning and development

- 69 trainer-led courses
- 1,181 training attendances
- 3 new recorded webinars launched
- 2,089 recorded webinar completions
- 43,307 e-learning completions
- Cumulative Harm seminar held

*Learning and Improvement Group

Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

Kent Safeguarding Context in Numbers

Decreasing	2024/25	Comparison to 2023/24
Under 16s living in poverty[2]	47,273	-10.4% from 52,752
Looked after children (unaccompanied asylum-seeking children) [3]	458	-9.2% from 500
Children with a child protection plan who have a disability[9]	102	-11.8% from 114
Young People in Youth Justice[10]	165	-16.4% from 192
Children with a child protection plan[11]	1,151	-5.3% from 1,212
Young people who had involvement with CSWS identified at high risk of child sexual exploitation[12]	497	-17.9% from 586
C and F assessments where a young carer was identified[13]	546	-8.1% from 590
Privately Fostered Children[14]	22	-18.2% from 26
Domestic Abuse – Child Domestic Violence[15]	2,626	-21.8% from 3,199
Domestic Abuse – Parent Domestic Violence[15]	5,986	-2.2% from 6,131
Other Domestic Violence[15]	2,034	-6.9% from 2,174

Increasing	2024/25	Comparison to 2023/24
Missing episodes[4]	6,018	+5.5% from 5,684
Ethnic minority pupils[6]	71,555	+4.6% from 68,270
Pupils with Special Education Needs[7]	44,874	+5.2% from 42,544
Children educated at home[8]	5,222	+22.0% from 4,073
Young people who had involvement with Early Help – CSE[12]	351	+12.3% from 308
Referrals to Family Group Conferencing – families[16]	1,449	+15.3% from 1,228
Referrals to Family Group Conferencing – individuals[16]	2,289	+16.3% from 1,915

Inline	2024/25	Comparison to 2023/24
Number of children aged 0-17 years[1]	348,300	+1.7% from 342,400
Looked after children (Kent Citizen) [3]	1,443	-1.4% from 1,463
Total referrals to NELFT[5]	22,488	+0.8% from 22,308

Please see appendix five for a list of data references.

Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

Implementing Working Together 2023

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Architecture Review

During spring and summer 2024 a second KSCMP architecture review was undertaken taking into consideration the time elapsed from the previous review in 2021 and national developments, such as the revised Working Together. The key areas of focus were: implementation of the 2021 review recommendations, Relevant Agency involvement in the Partnership, connectivity between the Executive and sub-groups, effectiveness of scrutiny and assurance through the Scrutiny and Challenge Group, role and efficacy of the Emerging Themes Group, current functioning of the health sub-group(s), Partnership connectivity and consideration of child exploitation at a strategic level, and, connectivity to other relevant strategic partnerships and forums.

Key findings included:

- In 2021 it was reported that the Partnership was not well understood, in this review it was found that whilst there has been significant improvement in the position of the KSCMP since that time, there remain challenges around the identity and 'brand' of KSCMP.
- Not all Relevant Agencies are engaged equitably across the Partnership, and expectations of those agencies are not understood by all. Additional social care providers were named as Relevant Agencies but not engaged in the Partnership.
- The first KSCMP Partnership Forum held in January 2024 was viewed as a positive step forward in providing a space for broader partners to hear from and feedback to the KSCMP Executive. There remains some feeling of a lack of connection between the Executive and sub-groups, with sub-group chairs not always clear on how their activity is reported and escalation routes to the Executive.
- The Scrutiny & Challenge Group had made significant progress since 2021, owing to the increased frequency of meetings, proactivity of the Chair, and development of robust assurance tools. There is some confusion about the role of members in providing accountability for their agencies and the sub-groups, rather than 'challenging' the KSCMP Executive. There is an opportunity to build on the group's momentum going forward.
- The Emerging Themes Group was established in 2022 to act as a horizon scanning function but has struggled to understand and realise its purpose. Members highlighted a lack of clarity and barriers to the group's efforts, including a lack of data or evidence from which conclusions can be drawn.
- There is a clear commitment and activity has already been commenced to establish dedicated strategic oversight of child exploitation in Kent, which aligns with the likely national direction and focus on this topic.

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Revised Partnership Arrangements

Lead Safeguarding Partners

In line with Working Together 2023, we have worked with our Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs) to establish bi-annual meetings and communication channels for them to undertake their joint responsibilities. The first LSP meeting took place in October 2024, at which the LSPs considered and endorsed the revised Partnership arrangements, current KSCMP priorities, the Kent Support Levels Guidance (threshold document), and heard from the Independent Scrutineer.

Revised Arrangements

As a result of both the second architecture review and the work to implement Working Together 2023, a range of actions and changes were agreed for the Partnership, culminating in the publication of revised KSCMP arrangements, Scrutiny and Assurance Framework and Practice Improvement Framework in December 2024. Relevant Agency partners were consulted on the revised arrangements via the Scrutiny, Assurance and Audit Sub-group.

Key changes outlined in the revised arrangements include:

- Introduction of the Partnership Chair role, which is rotated amongst the KSCMP Executive.
- The KSCMP Scrutiny and Challenge Group was renamed the Scrutiny, Assurance and Audit Sub-group (SAAS) and has a revised terms of reference which better reflects the group's role, including ownership of progressing recommendations from audits, governance of the KSCMP strategic plan, and oversight of the KSCMP sub-groups.
- The Emerging Themes Group was disbanded as a KSCMP sub-group. Activity to horizon scan from policy continues to be undertaken by the KSCMP Business Team and identification of emerging risks will continue to be an item at sub-group meetings, as well as occurring through the data dashboard performance reporting to SAAS. An ability to convene a dedicated working group in response to specific emerging themes has been retained.
- The geographic size of Kent means it is impractical to name all Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations, childcare and sports clubs in the Partnership arrangements. An existing action derived from an LCSPR will be taken forward to develop a communications strategy with third sector organisations, highlighting local pathways for guidance and referrals regarding safeguarding concerns. This work is anticipated to be undertaken in summer 2025.
- A KSCMP Child Exploitation Oversight Group has been established, with a remit including oversight of child exploitation across Kent, consideration of relevant exploitation related data and reporting, and monitoring the efficacy of strategies, tools and activities to respond to child exploitation in Kent. The group has held its first meeting in March 2025 and agreed terms of reference.

Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

Education representation in the Partnership

Representation in Partnership Leadership

In recognition of Working Together's emphasis on ensuring education representation within the strategic leadership of the Partnership, two school leaders have been established as representatives on the KSCMP Executive Board. They provide a 'voice of education' to the Executive when making decisions about the strategic direction of the Partnership and will also attend the Lead Safeguarding Partner meetings to offer a similar perspective.

Education Safeguarding Group

The KSCMP Education Safeguarding Group has met four times this year. Engagement in the meetings has been good. The group has discussed a range of topics linked to both practice reviews and the Partnership priorities, as well as having guest speakers from Ofsted and partner services. Members of this subgroup have also joined other relevant KSCMP sub-groups (such as the LIG) to provide a voice from education in broader Partnership activities. The group has also considered how it can contribute to the Partnership's priorities and benefit the Kent education sector as a whole. On page 12 detail can be found about a working group established to consider how settings can support the mental health and wellbeing of students.

Newsletter

KSCMP produce a quarterly education newsletter following each of the KSCMP Education Safeguarding Group meetings. These disseminate information from the meetings as well as highlighting other key information relevant for education, including policy and training.

Outreach

KSCMP Business Team members regularly attend other education Designated Safeguarding Lead network meetings to be able to share relevant updates and information from the Partnership. Headteacher briefing sessions were attended in winter 2024 to raise awareness of the Partnership and encourage more engagement with education.

What has the impact been?

The Education Safeguarding Group has provided a space to consider education perspectives on safeguarding system matters. KCC Integrated Children's Services was able to use the group as a consultative forum when considering changes to the Front Door consultation telephone line. Engagement with the group enabled sharing of challenges from the Front Door, as well as understanding of the value provided to education settings, leading to a revised model being implemented.

The Partnership is already beginning to see increased awareness and engagement with education. When a vacancy arose in the Education Safeguarding Group membership, multiple requests to join were received, whereas previously it had been a challenge to secure attendees.

The KSCMP Education newsletter consistently receives significant views: May 2024 – **779 views**, July 2024 – **546 views**, November 2024 – **475 views**, February 2025 – **630 views**.

Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

Priorities

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Partnership Priorities

The 2024-26 KSCMP priorities are:

- **Mental health of children and young people:** Children to be supported in their social and emotional wellbeing and attunement and receive early intervention in line with their needs.
- **Impact of parent mental health:** Children not to be unsafe due to parent mental health needs.
- **Effective multi-agency working:** Professionals to be courageous and confident in multi-agency working, being able to share information and risk effectively.
- **Online safety:** Children to be supported to be safe online and be able to access advice and support where needed.

The Strategic Plan sets out what activity the Partnership expects to undertake and how progress will be measured. Delivery of the plan is monitored via the Scrutiny, Assurance and Audit Sub-group (SAAS) quarterly as well as the priority data dashboard, which outlines key data sets associated with the priority themes.

The one-year 'check-in' of the Strategic Plan highlighted that of the 31 actions outlined, 15 have been achieved and 12 are in progress. A further 2 actions have been discontinued owing to national legislative change, and 2 are yet to commence.

The following pages provide an overview of key activities for each of the priorities.



Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Mental Health of Children and Young People

Education Mental Health and Wellbeing Group

The Education Safeguarding Group decided to complete a piece of work around wellbeing and mental health resources for education, as although many resources exist, settings often struggle to access them, particularly when trying to access support or resources at a time of crisis. A working group has been established to decide what signposting resources would be produced and in what format. The working group has met several times, and work is underway with trial resources produced for some themes. In March 2025, the working group began to seek feedback on the trial resources from relevant education network meetings. The feedback was essential in helping to understand whether the materials were suitable and which themes were most needed.

Training and resources

As part of the update to the KSCMP e-learning offer (see page 34) a new course 'Supporting wellbeing and emotional health in education' is available for multi-agency partners. A further Youth Mental Health First Aid course was held in 2024, and planning is underway to secure future provision of these courses in 2025/26. A new page has been added to the KSCMP website to signpost to services and resources to support children's mental health. A Young Carers factsheet was also developed which outlined the potential impact on children's mental wellbeing.

Support services and pathways

Prior to being disbanded, the Emerging Themes Group sought an overview of relevant mental health services for children in Kent delivered by the Kent and Medway NHS Integrated Care Board (KMICB), to ensure parity across the county. Separately, in response to learning identified in a Kent LCSPR, the Learning and Improvement Group is actively monitoring an action for all relevant agencies to ensure staff are aware of and using formal screening and referral pathways for Autism Spectrum Condition. Learning had been identified that older children may not be being referred and that this had a further effect on their mental health. KMICB will be providing an update on the neuro-developmental referral and assessment pathways transformation, following which LIG will consider further actions required.

What has the impact been?

Since becoming available on 1st September 2024, the 'Supporting Mental Wellbeing and Emotional Health in Education' elearning course has been completed **56 times.**

A further **9 professionals** completed Youth Mental Health First Aid training via KSCMP.

The Young Carer Awareness factsheet has been viewed **417 times.**

Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

Impact of Parent Mental Health

Children as protective factors campaign

In response to identified learning that in some cases children were being routinely recorded and considered as protective factors for their parent's mental health, leading to potential risks to the child(ren) being overlooked, work has been underway to develop an awareness campaign spearheaded by a video. Throughout 2024/25 the LIG have assisted and overseen development of the video script and in March 2025 the final video was completed. Planning is now underway to develop supporting resources and host a launch seminar in June 2025.

Considering wider family context in adult mental health services

In line with other actions set regarding this learning theme, Kent and Medway Partnership Trust (KMPT) undertook a significant piece of work internally with adult mental health services. The "Think Family" approach has been embedded to ensure that children's voices and lived experience are captured during contacts and child safeguarding is seen as a golden thread to professional's work. Activities included:

- Training KMPT champions to ensure "Think Family" is embedded at a local level.
- Provide consultation that support practitioners to "Think Family".
- Delivering supervision, case discussion, reflection and supported learning.
- Re-visit, consistent and persistent training, continuous discussion and reflection with a diverse and changing working force.
- A KMPT wide Patient Safety Learning Event with an external speaker addressing the issue of children not being seen as protective factors.
- An audit of adult safeguarding referrals to ascertain if impact of concerns on children is identified.

What has the impact been?

Plans are in place to measure the impact of the video and will be reported in the 2025/26 Annual Report.

Findings of the KMPT audit will be shared at a future LIG meeting.

Effective Multi-agency Working

Escalation

Escalation has continued to be noted as a learning theme in practice reviews. The second Escalation Project findings were discussed by the Policy and Procedure Group, to consider how assurance can be provided on the use of the policy. It was agreed the group will consider findings from the 2024 Section 11 audit on this topic, to inform what, if any, further work is required.

Information Sharing

Information sharing has also continued to be noted as a theme in practice reviews. The KSCMP website has a dedicated page regarding information sharing which has been updated to provide greater clarity on local information sharing protocols, as well as drawing on Working Together 2023. The KSCMP published an 'information sharing to safeguard children' factsheet which provides practical considerations for professionals.

Page 129

Difficult Conversations

In recognition that having difficult conversations has also been a frequent theme in practice reviews, the KSCMP developed and published a 'courageous and challenging conversations guidance and tool'. It is designed for practitioners and managers to assist them in understanding the importance of difficult conversations and approaches to them and provides a tool to aid planning for those conversations.

Good Practice Examples

In order to recognise good practice, as well as areas for improvement, a range of anonymised good practice examples of multi-agency working identified in practice review processes has been developed. This will be published on the KSCMP website and used to support training materials.

LCSPR protocol

The Partnership has developed an LSP and Executive LCSPR Protocol to ensure clarity in relation to the obligations, accountabilities and decision-making responsibilties incumbent to all parties during the practice review process.

What has the impact been?

The information sharing to safeguard children factsheet has been viewed **767 times.** Several other partnerships have requested permission to share or reference the KSCMP factsheet within their own local resources and networks.

The courageous and challenging conversations guide has been viewed **1,725 times.**

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Online Safety

Policy

In recognition of the Online Safety Act and other legislative change, the Policy and Procedures Group undertook a horizon scanning activity, to assess the range of change required to local policies and procedures. A series of policies have been updated to specifically reference implications of the Online Safety Act, for example the new cyber-flashing offence, and to ensure risks related to Artificial Intelligence technology are also considered. A revised Safer Professional Practice with Technology guidance, Responding to Nudes and Semi-Nude Image Sharing guidance, and Online Safety guidance have been published.

Members of the Policy and Procedures Group will be reporting on how they have shared these documents within their organisations, alongside an overview of if/how their internal policies and assessment templates reference talking to children about their online usage, in order that professionals can capture concerns and risks for the children they are working with. This follows learning in practice reviews which identified that risks to children through online activity were not well understood or captured. Understanding what expectations exist in current assessments will enable the Partnership to consider whether further guidance or improvement is required in response to this learning.

Training and resources

A further 5 sessions of the commissioned Online Safety training have been held for multi-agency professionals in this year as part of the Partnership Learning and Development programme. To mark Safer Internet Day 2025 the KSCMP produced a themed bulletin making use of the Safer Internet Day resources and launched a new webpage which provides links to a range of online safety resources for children and young people.

What has the impact been?

In 2024/25 **75 professionals** have attended the Online Safety training course. Of the attendees 65 have completed the course feedback form which indicates:

- **100%** of respondents said they either agreed or strongly agreed that course was **engaging and interesting**
- **100%** of respondents rated their level **of knowledge as a 3 or above** (in a scale where 1 is low and 5 is high) after attending the training.
- **100%** of respondents said they either agreed or strongly agreed that they **had improved knowledge** after attending the training.

Comments by respondents included:
"**The course covered very important topics and gave fresh perspective on supporting people**"

"**It was very interesting and made me think about how I approach situations**"

"**Excellent advice provided, which sadly I needed to put into practice the same week**"

Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

Scrutiny, Challenge and Assurance

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Independent Scrutineer Evaluation

Over the past year the KSCMP has built on the successes and recommendations outlined in the previous annual report, further refining its structures, strengthening its learning culture, and addressing new challenges posed by emerging legislation. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 defined the Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs) and this year saw their inaugural meeting. The Partnership undertook an architecture review measuring the impact of the structural changed embedded in previous years. The review involved engagement with the wider partners to understand what progress had been made and where further change is required. As a result key changes have already taken place to further streamline business and improve efficiency.

The Partnership continues to improve its strategic planning and governance structures, building on the streamlined approach adopted last year. Notable achievements include:

- Refined sub-group structure: as a result of the architecture review the removal of the Emerging Themes Group was agreed, as it was felt that this could be achieved alternatively, overseen by the Scrutiny, Assurance & Audit Sub-group. All the groups are now more purposeful and targeted. Their remits have been clarified further, allowing each to focus on specific safeguarding priorities (e.g. child exploitation, learning and improvement, education). This clarity has helped reduce overlap and strengthened accountability. The Health Safeguarding Group remains in abeyance, and this is an issue to resolve in the coming year. It is vital that the role of Health is clearly established within the Partnership, if not through their own group, then lines of communication and accountability must be agreed.

- Scrutiny and Challenge Group impact: this was identified as an area where further improvement could be achieved, leading to the evolution from Scrutiny and Challenge to the Scrutiny, Assurance and Audit Sub-group, providing a clear line of communication between the sub-groups and the Executive. Meeting regularly, this group has continued to examine key areas in depth, such as the accountability and progress of sub-groups, multi-agency audits, the assurance framework and critical operational matters such as the impact of other local area placements on sufficiency of placements for Kent children. The increased flow of data has enhanced the group's capacity to challenge the sub-groups and wider Partnership, and support the Executive, ensuring decisions are evidenced-based and timely. The strengthening of scrutiny and assurance will continue during the next reporting year.

- Executive Board meetings: the regular meetings have become more embedded over the last year, with time allocated for strategic discussions on particular themes. Attendance has improved and these meetings now facilitate comprehensive debate on priority issues. This has enabled the Partnership to dedicate more time to exploring how best to respond to emerging policy and legislative changes, including the National Framework and the Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams as set out in the draft Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill.

- Multi-agency audit programme: building on last year, the programme has been successfully embedded. Agencies are increasingly transparent about their performance, enable the Partnership to address gaps swiftly. Findings from audits have directly informed practice updates, demonstrating a tangible link between scrutiny and operational improvement. This was evident in the Section 11 audit carried out jointly with Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership at the end of 2024.

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Independent Scrutineer Evaluation (cont.)

- Data dashboards: these are now fully operational and allow both the Executive Board and SAAS to identify trends and patterns. This data-driven approach will lead to more proactive safeguarding strategies and quick adaptation to emerging risks.

The KSCMP has maintained its commitment to creative dissemination of lessons from LCSPRs. Campaigns such as the EatSafe initiative – originally developed after a tragic choking incident – have continued to receive positive local and national attention. Father Inclusive Practice has also remained a focal point, with ongoing training to support agencies in embedding this approach.

From the update to Working Together and the inclusion of education within the Executive, the Partnership has identified 2 strategic leaders from with education who sit on both the Executive Board and LSP meeting. The Education Safeguarding Group has stronger representation from early years, further education, and specialist providers. This broader engagement has facilitated richer discussions around issues such as elective home education, as well as the integration of updated statutory guidance. The group is well positioned to respond to the forthcoming Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill. The strengthening of the voice of education within the Partnership will be an area of focus for the coming year.

Whilst the Partnership has strengthened the involvement of children and families in LCSPRs, it is yet to establish a robust mechanism for capturing the perspectives of children and families at a strategic level. The updated Working Together emphasises the need for direct involvement of service users in shaping policy and practice. Developing a formal framework for gathering and integrating these views into strategic discussions should remain a priority that requires progression.

All agencies continue to face recruitment and retention pressures, which can undermine the consistency of safeguarding responses. The Partnership's risk register correctly identifies these staffing issues as a significant threat the effectiveness. Public sector funding constraints have intensified, and partner agencies are under growing pressure to make cost savings. These challenges risk reducing frontline capacity if not carefully managed. The Partnership must monitor the cumulative effect of budget cuts on safeguarding services, ensuring that vital functions are maintained.

The introduction of new elements in the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill reforms and potential further updates to Working Together require continued vigilance. Adapting policies, training, and multi-agency protocols to remain complaint will demand sustained commitment from all partners. Maintaining momentum on operational improvements while integrating these legislative changes will be critical.

Samantha Haspell, KSCMP Independent Scrutineer

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Section 11 Audit 2024

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a statutory responsibility on key agencies and organisations to have due regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in discharging their functions. Agencies are required to complete a full Section 11 (S11) self-assessment on a biennial basis. A total of 52 partners completed the full audit tool across Kent and Medway in 2024, with 39 being Kent partners.

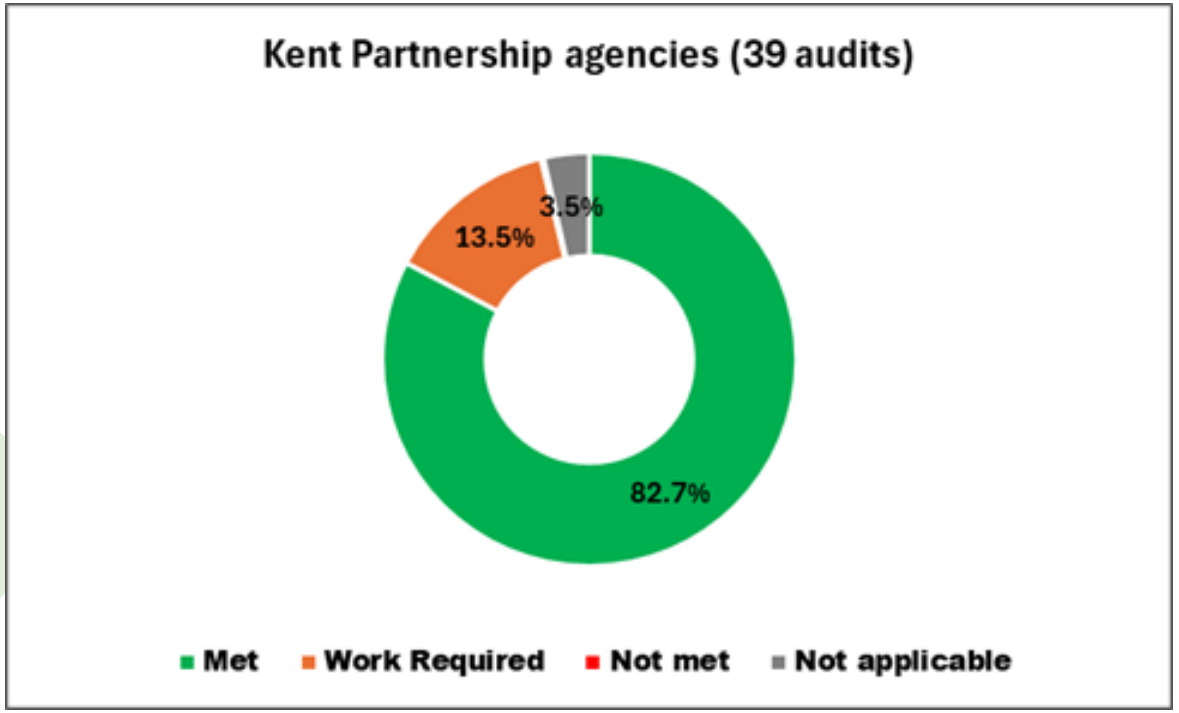
Following the 2022 Section 11, Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Partnerships carried out a joint review and implemented some changes. The proposed changes were included in the 2023/24 KSCMP annual report.

Alongside the audit, staff from partner agencies completed S11 surveys which allowed better triangulation of the information from the audits, surveys and panel meeting information. As in 2022, the S11 report included a detailed analysis of the self-assessment audit grading by geographical area, organisation type and standards level, as well as key findings and recommendations. An 'Emerging Themes and promising practice, Kent and Medway 2024' briefing was produced to help focus on good practice. It highlighted themes that were found to be weaker across the audits and signposted to relevant training and information.

The chart to the right shows overall completions of the S11 indicators in the 39 Kent agencies self-assessments.

Individual agencies retain responsibility for ensuring S11 compliance. Following the audit, each agency has an action plan to enable them to move forward with standards which were graded as not met or work required. Four key areas were highlighted for future development:

- Kent Escalation and Professional Challenge Policy and knowledge of procedures
- Safer Recruitment procedures and knowledge of the LADO
- Childs voice being included in service design (although this had improved since 2022)
- Assessing the impact of training, reviewing training and the recording/following up of outcomes regarding referrals.



What has the impact been?

- Understanding of common areas of need across the safeguarding children system in Kent.
- LADO training planned and shared with S11 partners.
- Opportunities for future discussions and work regarding escalation planned for 2025, linked to the KSCMP priority of effective agency working.
- The LIG has scheduled an item to look at findings related to Child's Voice to shape further work.

Page 33

Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

Multi-agency Audits

Cannabis policies, procedures and guidance audit

Following the findings from the KSCMP Harm to Under 2s study, where cannabis use was shown to have been a more prevalent factor in Kent than in national case learning, an audit of multi-agency policies and procedures relating to cannabis or working with parents who use cannabis was planned. The audit specifically aimed to identify which agencies had specific cannabis policies (rather than just wider substance misuse) and whether any agencies had procedures or guidance for professionals. The information was sought from partners and relevant agencies, but it became clear that no agencies in Kent have policies solely focused on cannabis use and very little was currently in place.

Many agencies who responded with information for the audit indicated that they would welcome guidance or policy and would be willing to implement anything KSCMP produced.

What has the impact been?

The learning from the audit both in terms of lack of existing policy and guidance, and willingness of agencies to engage regarding working with cannabis, has fed into the scope of a cannabis awareness campaign. A multi-agency working group has been established to develop better understanding of issues faced in practice and produce campaign messaging and resources.

Elective Home Education (EHE)

Following publication of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panels 'Safeguarding Children in Elective Home Education' report in May 2024, benchmarking was undertaken to identify common themes between Kent cases and the national picture. Despite the far small number of Kent cases, a similar picture was noted to the national in terms of proportion where there was parental ill health and domestic abuse, as well as of gender and age.

The EHE work in 2023/24 produced resources to improve awareness and in Spring 2024 an EHE recorded webinar was also produced. KSCMP carried out a follow up survey in November and December 2024, allowing time for the resources to be embedded, to see if there had been an impact on the knowledge of professionals.

The 2024 had 250 responses from a wide range of partners. It showed, as per previous surveys and the Child R Serious Case Review, that there remain misconceptions about EHE. Many people did not have a good understanding of the role of the KCC EHE Team, with some continuing to believe they have more power/authority that they do. Some respondents thought that if a child is electively home educated, they must be known to the local authority. Respondents who had access the KSCMP resources did have higher knowledge scores than those who had not, scoring 5.66 compared to 4.90.

What has the impact been?

Those that had accessed the KSCMP EHE resources had a higher knowledge than those who had not, however the survey showed that only 24% of respondents had accessed them. This shows more promotion is needed of the resources.

The SAAS considered the findings in March 2025 with a recommendation for single agencies to promote the materials.

Since publishing the EHE factsheet has been viewed **2758 times** and the EHE Guidance for Professionals **1889 times.** The recorded webinar has been completed **132 times** in 2024/25.

Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

Multi-agency Audits (cont.)

EatSafe survey

Following the launch of KSCMP's EatSafe campaign in 2023 work has been undertaken to gather feedback to inform evaluation of the effectiveness/reach of the campaign. A survey was carried out to obtain feedback from attendees of the EatSafe launch, those who have completed EatSafe training, and those who have downloaded or considered using the EatSafe resources.

113 responses were received to the survey of which 54.9% (62) respondents were from education settings, and 56.6% were aware of the campaign. 33 of the 64 respondents who were aware of the campaign had attended the launch and 100% found it helpful. 71.8% of those who where aware of the campaign had used the resources and listed many positive about them. The most used resource highlighted was the guidance for settings. Respondents were asked if they were likely to recommend the resources to someone else. Many respondents (61%) gave a 10 (extremely likely) to recommend, 88% gave a rating of 8 or higher.

Training Impact: Information Sharing & Triangulation

The purpose of the audit was to find out if KSCMP training had made a positive difference to practitioners who completed it and their practice. The focus of this audit was to understand whether practitioners felt the training had improved their knowledge relating to 6 key learning themes highlighted for development within our practice review work. The learning themes were; recording and storing information, cross-agency information, law and guidance regarding information sharing for child safeguarding, consent and information sharing, triangulation and professional curiosity, and, following up on referrals or outcomes.

Accurately assessing impact of our training has been a challenge. The proportion of training participants who complete feedback is small. For those audit a survey was sent to a number of participants who had completed selected courses, however the response rate was only 11.8% (28 respondents, making it hard to draw meaningful conclusions.

Responses were generally positive about the benefits of completing KSCMP training. For example, being able to meet other professionals, refreshing knowledge and increasing confidence.

Discussions have been held at SAAS about how more meaningful feedback and increased response rates can be gathered.

What has the impact been?

Respondents highlighted that the EatSafe resources had led to a change in their practice, a better awareness and understanding related to eating safely, and a chance to policies and procedures. Comments include:

"**It helps us know what age and what stage the child is at of eating. To keep them safe… We implemented a new safe eating policy and made changes to our settling in paperwork. We have developed our own eat safe policy for EYFS based on this training."**

"It has made the staff be more aware of how they are preparing snacks and the food that they are serving. It highlighted the need to be extra vigilant and sparked us to come up with some more exciting snacks we could prepare for the children who are in the very early stages."

What has the impact been?

85.7% of respondents said that KSCMP training had changed their practice for the better.

Some specific examples were given to how practice had been improved by attendees of the 'Learning from Baby T: Exploring Safer Sleep' training. These included being more conscious to ensure agency checks are undertaking and knowing the importance of checking a parents' understanding of what has been explained rather than assuming that because they have been given advice, it will be followed.

What have we been doing?

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Work of the Partnership

JTAI benchmarking: Serious Youth Violence & Exploitation

Following the publication of the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) framework to consider the response to serious youth violence and exploitation, the Partnership undertook a local benchmarking exercise to understand our own position. The benchmarking found that whilst locally there were clear structures for the response to serious youth violence, and good operational pathways for the recognition and response to child exploitation, there was a lack of clarity about strategic oversight of child exploitation. The findings of the benchmarking informed a line of enquiry for the KSCMP architecture review.

What has the impact been?

The KSCMP's strategic oversight of child exploitation was a key line of enquiry in the architecture review (page 7) and led to the establishment of the KSCMP Child Exploitation Oversight Group. The findings of the benchmarking have informed development of the terms of reference and scope of that sub-group.

JTAI benchmarking: Domestic Abuse

Following the publication of the JTAI framework to consider multi-agency response to child who experience domestic abuse, the Partnership has commenced a local benchmarking exercise to understand our own position. The work has been underway throughout early 2025 and is due to conclude in summer 2025, reporting into SAAS. The work has included collating a strategic overview of local processes, considering available data, and a multi-agency case audit.

Childs Voice Project

An initial project has been delivered to assess good practice and the various mechanisms that could be used to develop an approach that best works for children in Kent. A working group is being convened to triangulate statutory requirements, national, regional and local best practice and to 'stock take' current mechanisms at single agency disposal to obtain the Voice of the Child. The group will consider recommendations about steps that should be taken to address this gap based on the information gleaned.

Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

Learning and Improvement

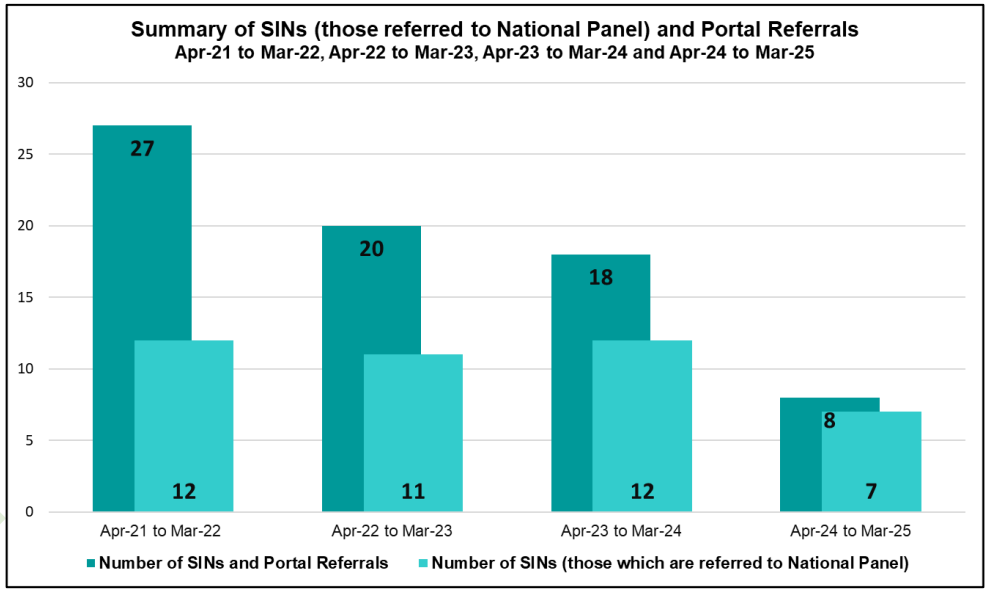
Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

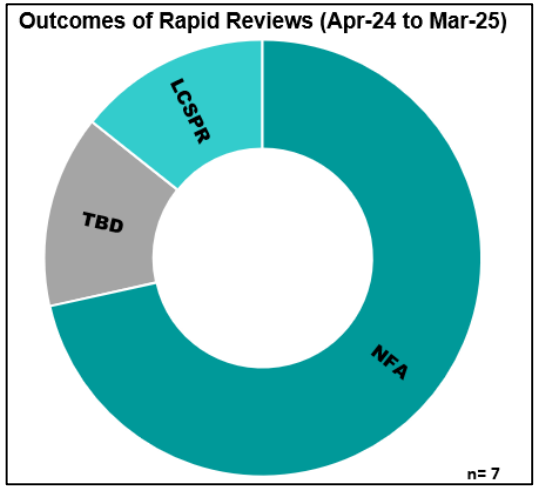
Serious Incident Notifications

The KSCMP continues to track portal referrals and Serious Incident Notifications (SINs). Portal referrals can be made by any agency wishing to highlight a serious incident for consideration of notification. SINs are those cases which are notified to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (CSPRP) and go on to have a Rapid Review. The summary chart to the right illustrates the numbers of each. It should be noted that a SIN or portal referral may be for more than one child but will be counted as only one notification/referral.

The yearly comparisons show that the total number of referrals were down in 2024/25 compared to the previous three years (8 compared to 18 in 2023/24, 20 in 2022/23 and 21 in 2021/22). 7 SINs were submitted to the CSPRP. 4 of the notifications came from the 8 referrals in 2024/25, however the 3 came from those that were referred in 2023/24.

The bottom chart shows the outcomes from rapid reviews for the 2024/25 reporting period. For all rapid reviews that do not progress to a LCSPR (noted as 'NFA' here) an action plan and learning summary is produced and the actions are tracked to completion. 1 rapid review whose notification was in March 2025 remains pending (at the time of writing). An extension was agreed due to the complexity of the circumstances and the number of partnership areas involved. There has also been a decrease in the proportion of rapid reviews proceeding to an LCSPR. Owing to 1) improved tracking of learning themes which avoids multiple leading to similar recommendations and 2) the increased quality and breadth of rapid reviews, meaning more detailed and better-quality learning is identified earlier, enabling the rapid review action plans to bring about required change, without the need for a LCSPR. This shift has enabled the Partnership to focus resources on implementing recommendations and learning.



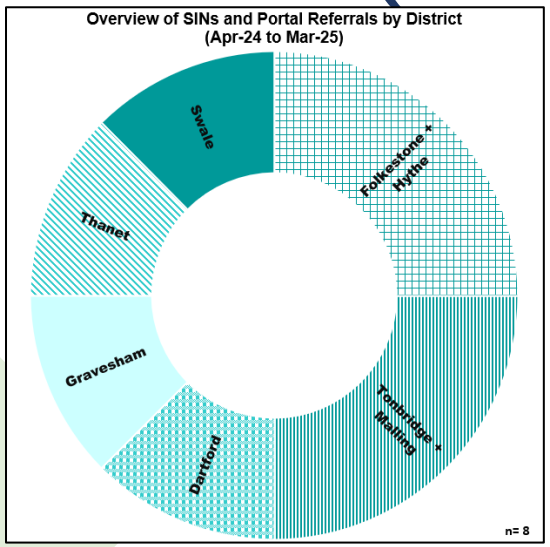


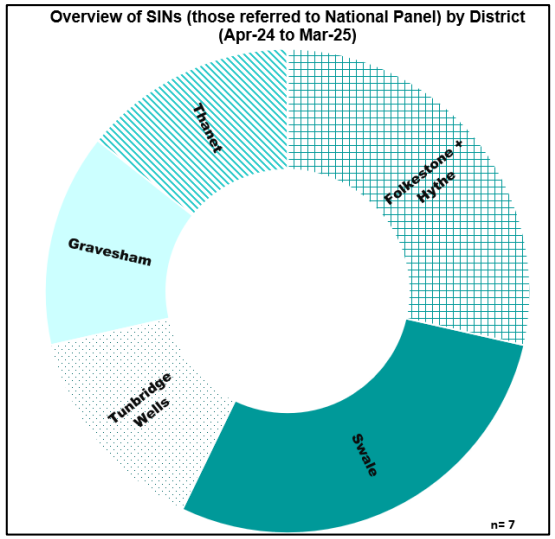
Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

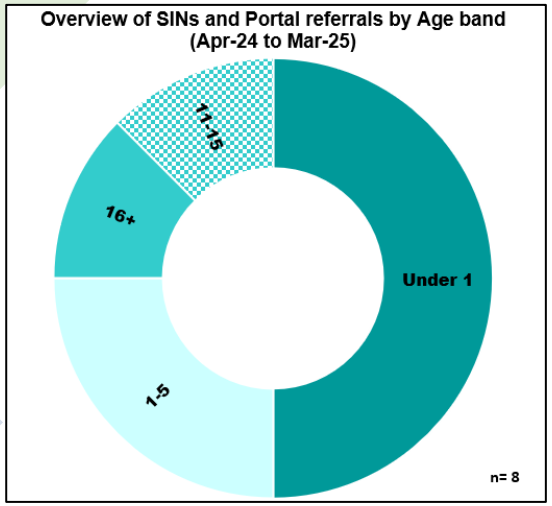
Serious Incident Notifications (cont.)

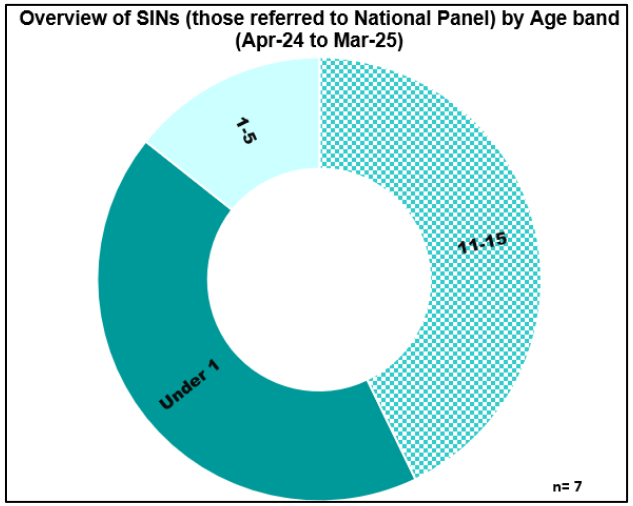
The top two charts show the geographic distribution of SINs, and overview of SINs and the portal referrals in total. Folkestone and Hythe, and Tonbridge and Malling had the most SINs and portal referrals during 2024/25. However, Folkestone and Hythe, and Swale had the most SINs made to the CSPRP in 2024/25 (this is partly due to those notifications which stemmed from referrals made in 2023/24).

The bottom two charts show the split of SINs and portal referrals by age band of the child involved. Where a SIN or portal referral had more than one child identified, the youngest age child has been represented in these charts. The age distribution of Kent SINs is similar to the national picture for 2024/25, with under 1s the most notified, and other notifications for 1–5-year-olds and 11–15-year-olds. Compared with 2023/24 there was an increase in the number of referrals for 1-5 year olds.









Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Between April 2024 and Marsh 2025 the KSCMP published 7 LCSPRs and 2 learning briefings.

Iman

Iman's review, involving 3 Partnership areas, focused on services provided to young parents with known vulnerabilities. Key themes include assessment of risk and decision making, cultural competence, and cross boundary communication and information sharing. It highlighted to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel the fragility of legislative support and local housing practice to support care leavers as they transition to independence.

Marshall

Marshall's pregnancy and birth were both concealed, and his death triggered a review considering the complexities of working with large families, father inclusive practice, response to concerns raised by family members, and working with individuals with a history of avoiding or misleading professionals. A learning briefing was also produced.

James

James died shortly after his birth at home. His LCSPR identified some multi-agency professionals lack knowledge and understanding around the differences between learning disability and learning difficult, how to confirm if either are identified, what it means for practice when they are, and how to access specialist support.

Jasper Red

Jasper Red completed suicide age 17 having experienced multiple forms of abuse and deterioration in his mental health. The 3 Partnership areas involved built a picture of cumulative harm, with recommendations for more effective safety planning, and consideration of children's vulnerabilities in the context of parental mental ill-health.

What has the impact been?

Frontline professionals involved in these reviews have shared that events encouraged them to consider other young people from different perspectives and has informed immediate reflection and change in their practice, including use of the Escalation and Professional Challenge policy.

The LCSPR process has highlighted where stronger links can be made with the Coroners' office and Child Death Review processes. A focus in the coming year is to explore and strengthen these links and information flow.

Jasper Red's review inspired a cumulative harm seminar (see page 33).

All reviews have informed the activity of the Learning and Improvement Group (see pages 31-32).

Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (cont.)

Anonymous LCSPR

KSCMP were supported by one of the children to understand their experience of family life and support from services prior to their sibling's death. The review explores how their lived experiences had been sought, understood and responded to, including when parents' declined intervention. It also considers the multi-agency response to a rapid deterioration in a child's mental health and to the impact of suicide upon friends, peers and the wider community.

George and Oliver

George and Oliver's review focuses on identification and response to controlling and coercive behaviours and parental alienation. It also considers exploration of parental mental health in the context of private law proceedings, and more broadly, professionals' understanding of private law and the impact on children, particularly when assessing risk following a court ordered change in care arrangements.

William

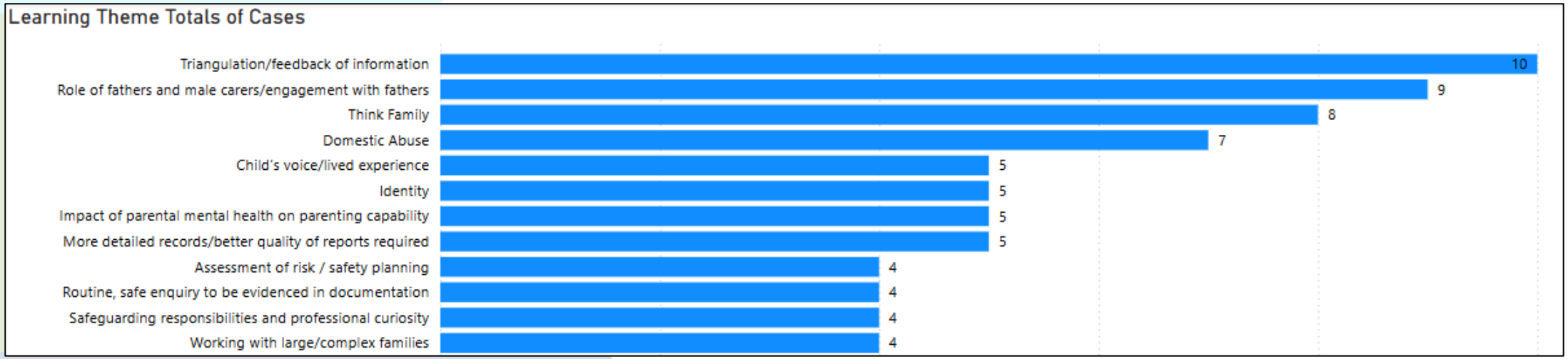
William's review completed in 2023 explores the effectiveness of multi-agency support offered to a young, single mother during the Covid-19 pandemic. Its recommendations include a piece on shared multi-agency understanding, expectations and effectiveness of risk and hazard flags on systems.

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Learning Themes

Learning Themes Dashboard

Learning themes are monitored, and new themes are added after a rapid review has occurred. The most common themes are looked at over time and the dashboard is being used to monitor impact when training or information sessions have been held relating to the identified themes. The most common learning themes (for rapid reviews since September 2022) can be seen in the chart to the below.



This shows that currently 'Triangulation/feedback of information' has been noted as a theme in 10 rapid reviews. 'Role of fathers and male carers/engagement with fathers' is the second most common theme and has been noted in 9 reviews since 2022. In June 2024 it appeared that there had been improvement in regard to the role of fathers' theme, as it had not occurred as a learning theme in the most recent quarterly reporting of this dashboard, however it has returned as a theme in more recent rapid reviews. The SAAS has considered this reporting and will be considering an impact audit on the father inclusive training in June 2025 to inform next steps.

Collaborative learning

The Partnership has worked in collaboration with Kent Community Safety Partnership and Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adult Board to understand learning themes which cross-over to children from Domestic Homicide Reviews/Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews.

In February 2025 KSCMP took part in a joint event "DHR and LCSPR Webinar – Parental Conflict and Domestic Abuse: Sharing the learnings with Kent and Medway's frontline practitioners".

Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

National Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

The KSCMP recognises the importance of considering and responding to learning from National Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, as well as our local reviews. We have agreed that in future LIG will be responsible for considering national reviews and coordinating a response to the learning and recommendations they set out in future, starting with the recently published national review into child sexual abuse within family environments.

Children with disabilities and complex needs in residential settings

In response to phase two of this national review, which asked that Partnerships considered a number of key points in their regular reviews of safeguarding arrangements, a matrix was developed to map the considerations which the Safeguarding Partner agencies provided a response to. The responses were collated to understand the local position and identify local challenges and was considered by SAAS in December 2024.

Key challenges identified included unfit legislation, joint funding arrangements, the impact of resource constraints on multi-agency working, a lack of neurodiversity expertise when arranging placements, and information sharing via the Kent and Medway Care Record. The primary issue identified however was insufficient placement capacity within Kent as a result of the high proportion of Other Local Authority (OLA) placements into Kent, which has an impact on the availability of placement for Kent children, as well as creating additional demand onto local services and resources.

Child Sexual Abuse within family environment

This recently published review was considered by the KSCMP Executive in early 2025, where it was agreed that LIG would coordinate the development of an action plan in response to the findings and recommendations. Given the findings in relation to professionals' knowledge and confidence to respond to child sexual abuse, this has also been included as a key theme in the ongoing Training Needs Analysis (TNA), to understand what our existing KSCMP offer is and what gaps may exist. Both the LIG response to the review and the TNA will be presented to the Executive later in 2025 for their oversight and assurance and reported in our 2025/26 annual report.

What has the impact been?

The SAAS recognised the significance of the issue of local placement sufficiency being impacted by OLA placements and escalated this to the KSCMP Executive. The KSCMP Executive considered this in January 2025 and will write to the Department for Education to outline the challenges being experienced.

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Learning and Improvement Group

The KSCMP Learning & Improvement Group (LIG) continues to ensure practice review learning is disseminated and embedded throughout the Partnership. Key agency representatives offer insight into how recommendations can be translated into action in a meaningful and achievable way for their organisation and commit to owning and following up implementation and measuring impact.

Updates and sign off are captured in the recently developed PowerBI tracker, providing members with a real time account of their organisation's performance against actions agreed. LIG has also developed and agreed the use of a case matrix, which assists in the prioritisation and timetabling of reviews for consideration. The matrix enables the Partnership to respond to learning of particular relevance at any given time, be it new and emerging themes, or repeat issues that previous work has not gone far enough to address.

In 2024/25 the group realised its commitment to increased meeting length, recognising its crucial role in Partnership activity relating to system change. This is evidenced by more than double the number of actions marked complete on the last year. The proactive culture and attitude of members was recognised by the Scrutiny, Assurance and Audit Sub-group, along with the LIG's contribution towards Partnership priorities.

What has the impact been?

During 2024/25 LIG considered **9 practice reviews** generating **61 recommendations**. Whilst **104 actions** were set, **96** were completed, many of which related to this year and some set previously.

The Learning Themes Dashboard supports the LIG to determine, what if any impact its action may have had. For example, data can be analysed in relation to prevalence of a particular theme at Rapid Reviews before and after any associated LIG actions are completed. This helps to provide assurance that action has been embedded and is supporting positive change.

Whilst our focus is always Kent children and the difference LIG activity has made to them, agency representatives have also reported benefits of group membership;

"Because of being part of LIG, I've met so many new people and made lots of connections in my own organisation I wouldn't have otherwise."

"Being a part of LIG has given me a much better understanding of how each part of the practice review process fits together."

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Acting on learning

Children with Asthma and Allergies

In response to learning and recommendations identified in the David LCSPR (reported in the 2023/24 KSCMP Annual Report), local health providers have made reviewed and made changes to the care of children with asthma and allergies. Three of the four relevant health providers are now using the Asthma and Lung UK asthma management template and all four have adopted use of the British Society for Allergy & Clinical Immunology (BSACI) allergy template. Going further than the LCSPR recommendations, colleagues from the Kent and Medway NHS ICB (KMICB) made the Asthma and Lung UK template available electronically on the EMIS system so patients can access their plan at any time.

A link to the Asthma Friendly Schools website was included in the KCC Education strategy.

Was Not Brought

In response to learning identified in the Lost in Plain Sight LCSPR (reported in the 2021/22 KSCMP Annual Report), Kent County Council's Integrated Childrens Services undertook an audit of Requests for Support (referrals to KCC's Children's Front Door) where there were concerns that a child 'Was Not Brought' to medical appointments. As a result of LIG, those cases reviewed were then identified to KMICB who liaised with the individual health providers to share learning from the audit back to them – effectively creating a feedback loop.

What has the impact been?

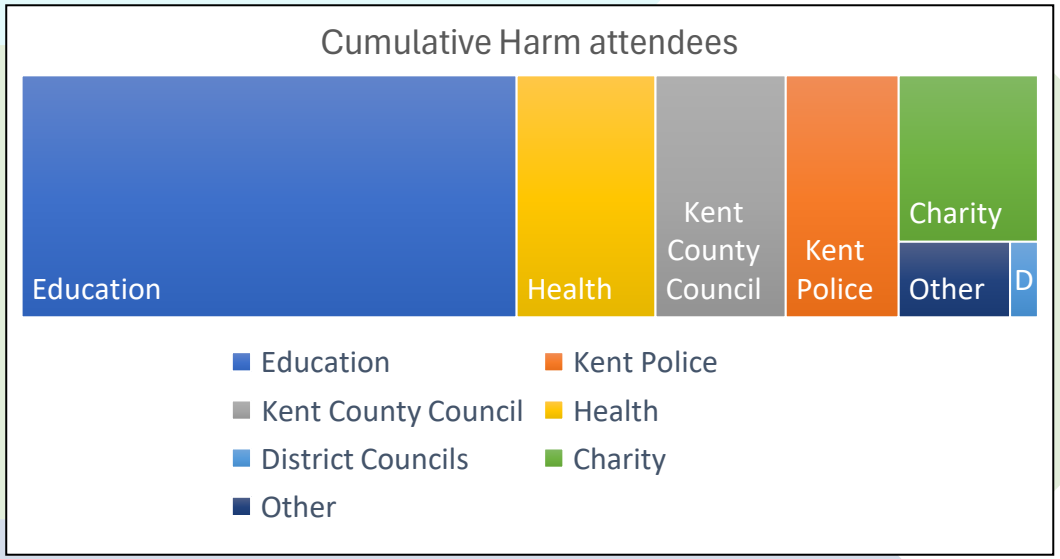
The Department for Education published a revised Early Years Foundation Stage framework which will come into effect from September 2025. The framework includes specific requirements and references to choking prevention and safe eating, informed by the Oliver Steeper LCSPR and EatSafe campaign (see 2023/24 Annual Report).

Other Partnership areas have sought KSCMP's experience and knowledge, including the resources established to support professionals engaged in practice review processes. One Partnership colleague shared feedback:
"…by far, Kent have the best suite of guidance documents and webinars in relation to LCSPRs that I have ever seen. They also hold excellent Author's Briefings so it's really clear what the expectation is of those writing reports."

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Cumulative Harm Seminar

On Wednesday 5th February 2025 a Cumulative Harm seminar was held, building on learning identified in the Jasper Red LCSPR and other practice reviews. In total 117 multi-agency professionals attended, an overview of attendance by organisation or sector can be seen in the chart to the below.



The seminar was organised as a result of an action set by LIG to disseminate important learning from the Jasper Red LCSPR, but also to capture feedback from a range of multi-agency partners about how cumulative harm is currently understood, recorded and assessed in practice. To achieve this the attendees were split into breakout rooms and given questions to discuss and provide written responses to via an online form. The aim was to gauge current levels of understanding regarding cumulative harm, what resources exist to support practitioners in identifying cumulative harm, and what practitioners would find helpful to support them identifying and responding to cumulative harm. The breakout discussion responses will be considered at a future LIG to inform further actions to ensure cumulative harm is understood, recognised and responded to.

What has the impact been?

A feedback form was sent to attendees after the event, to which 29 responses have been received. Key indications:

- **100%** of respondents rated the event as a 4 or 5 (on a scale where 1 is low and 5 is high)
- **97%** of respondents indicated they had learned something new to apply to their work

Multiple feedback comments highlighted the benefit of multi-agency events, with one commenting:

"**Always good to work with colleagues from different organisations and learn about their perspectives**."

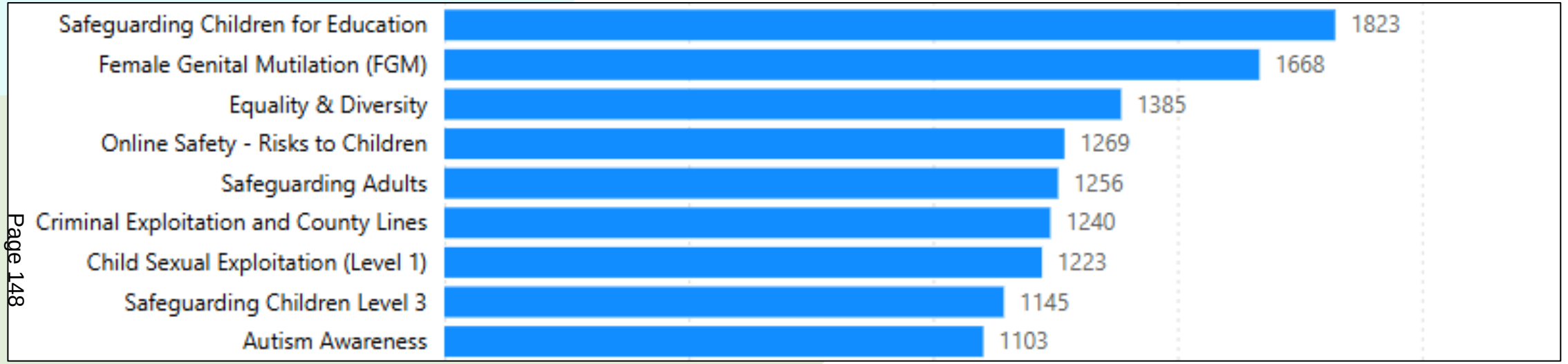
During the breakout discussions attendees were asked what they would do differently after attending the seminar, responses included:

- Adding further information to team safeguarding training
- Consider the whole family and their background history
- Read Practice Reviews
- Communicate and request more information to other professionals
- Better capture the voice of and included fathers
- Include more information within onward referrals and explicitly identify concerns related to cumulative harm
- Review the potential for cumulative harm within existing caseload
- Be more curious about the background and circumstances of children
- Change own thinking about resilience and what that means for children.

Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

Training – e-learning

In 2024/25, **43,307 e-learning courses** were completed by learners in Kent, a 2.9% increase on the 2023/24. The below chart shows the courses which have had over 1000 completions in this reporting year.



In conjunction with Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership, we reviewed our e-learning course offer in summer 2024, identifying courses which were underused or not specifically relevant to safeguarding children and replaced them with alternative courses aligned with the interests and needs of the Partnerships. As a result, 12 new e-learning courses have been included into the KSCMP training offer: ADHD Awareness, Conflict Management, Cultural Awareness in Safeguarding, Disability Awareness, Dysphagia Awareness, Having Difficult Conversations, Lead Professional, Learning Disabilities Awareness, LGBTQ+ Awareness, Sexual Harassment in Education, Supporting Mental Wellbeing and Emotional Health in Education, and Whistleblowing.

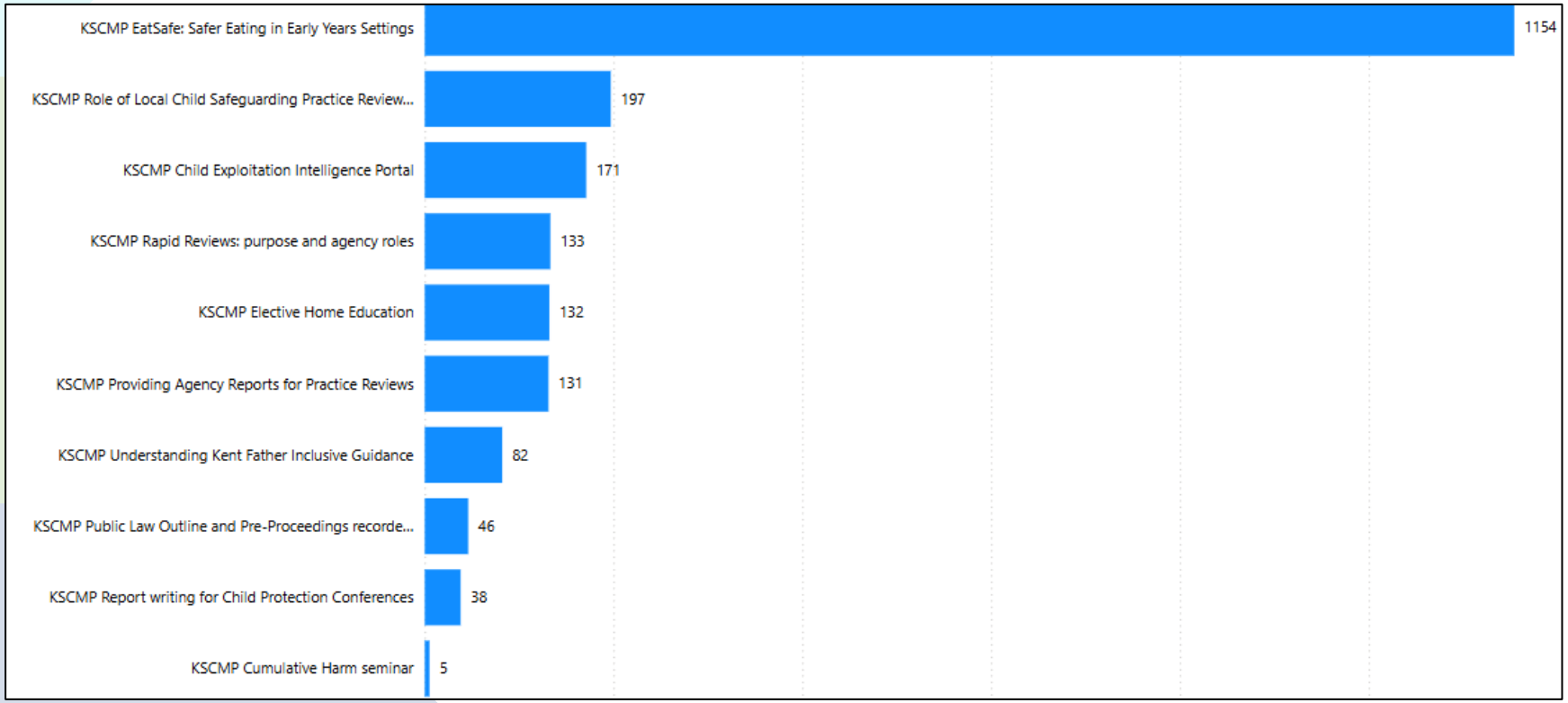
Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Training – Recorded webinars

The KSCMP has continued to develop it's recorded webinars, both those developed as standalone recorded webinars and recordings of live training events. In 2024/25, a further **3 courses** have been recorded and made available in this way, bringing the total number of courses to **10**. The new courses developed are:

- Elective Home Education
- Report writing for Child Protection conferences
- Cumulative Harm seminar

Recorded courses have been completed **2089 times** in the year. The chart to the right shows completions by course.



Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

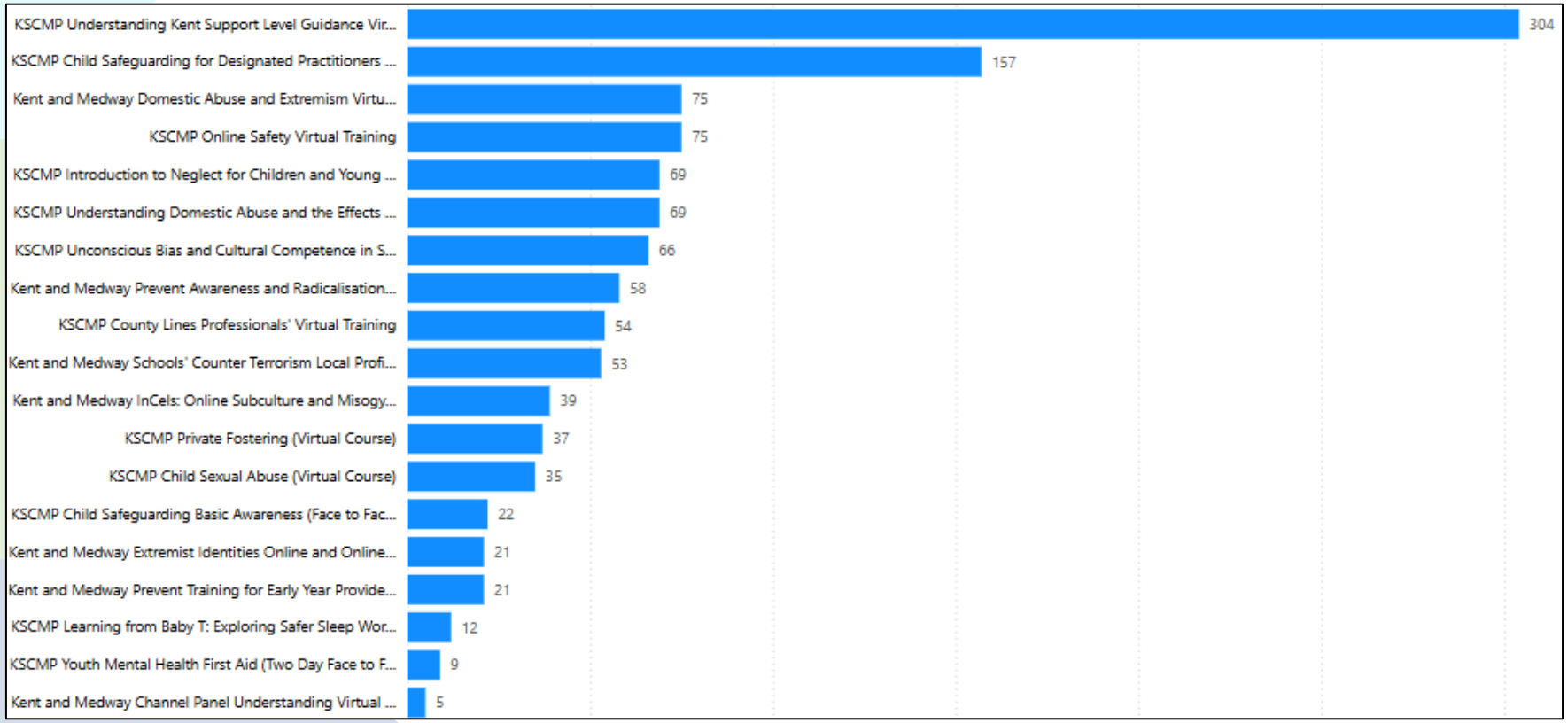
Training - delivered

Delivered courses continue to form a core part of KSCMP's learning and development programme, with further expansion in 2024/25. New courses made available in this year include:

- Understanding Domestic Abuse and the Effects on children and young people
- County Lines

In this year, KSCMP delivered courses have been attended **1,181 times.**

The chart to the right shows attendance breakdown by course.



Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Conclusion

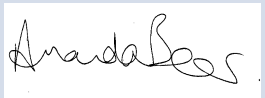
KSCMP Lead Safeguarding Partners

The revision of the KSCMP arrangements in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 has clearly defined the role and commitment as Lead Safeguarding Partners. In recognition of the requirements of us in Working Together 2023 we held our first meeting in autumn 2024 at which we provided oversight of the revised Partner arrangements, as well as a number of key Partnership documents including the KSCMP Priorities and Strategic Plan 2024-26, Kent Support Levels Guidance (threshold document), and KSCMP 2023/24 Annual Report. We are pleased to see the progress the KSCMP has made in engaging education and will invite representation in the LSP meetings moving forward, to ensure the voice of education is heard at all strategic levels of the Partnership. We do note that our revised arrangements highlight the need for further consideration to include the voices of children and families within the Partnership and whilst there has been progress through the Child's Voice Project, there remains work to be undertaken in the forthcoming year.

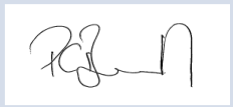
The Section 11 audit undertaken this year provides a benchmark as to how our agencies are delivering their safeguarding children responsibilities. Whilst there is assurance derived from the high percentage of indicators being met, we also recognise areas where there is more to be done.

The significant level of activity to learn and improve from practice reviews is clear in this report, with the Partnership beginning to see the longer term impact of its activities at both a local and national level. In future the KSCMP, through the LIG, will continue to build on capturing impact of its activities. A number of significant pieces of work, such as the cannabis awareness campaign and children as protective factors campaign, will be delivered in 2025/26, alongside the development of new priorities for the Partnership. It will be important for us to consider the impact we expect these to have and how we are able to measure this.

The next year will also see work to transform the way we work a system to safeguard children. It will be vital that we work together to deliver against the vision for one connected system for children and families, especially given other broader reform and change in all of our sectors. We are committed to continuing to fulfilling the LSP responsibilities throughout the upcoming year, particularly as the Partnership navigates the significant landscape of national change and transformation.



Amanda Beer,
Chief Executive,
Kent County Council



Paul Bentley,
Chief Executive,
NHS Kent & Medway



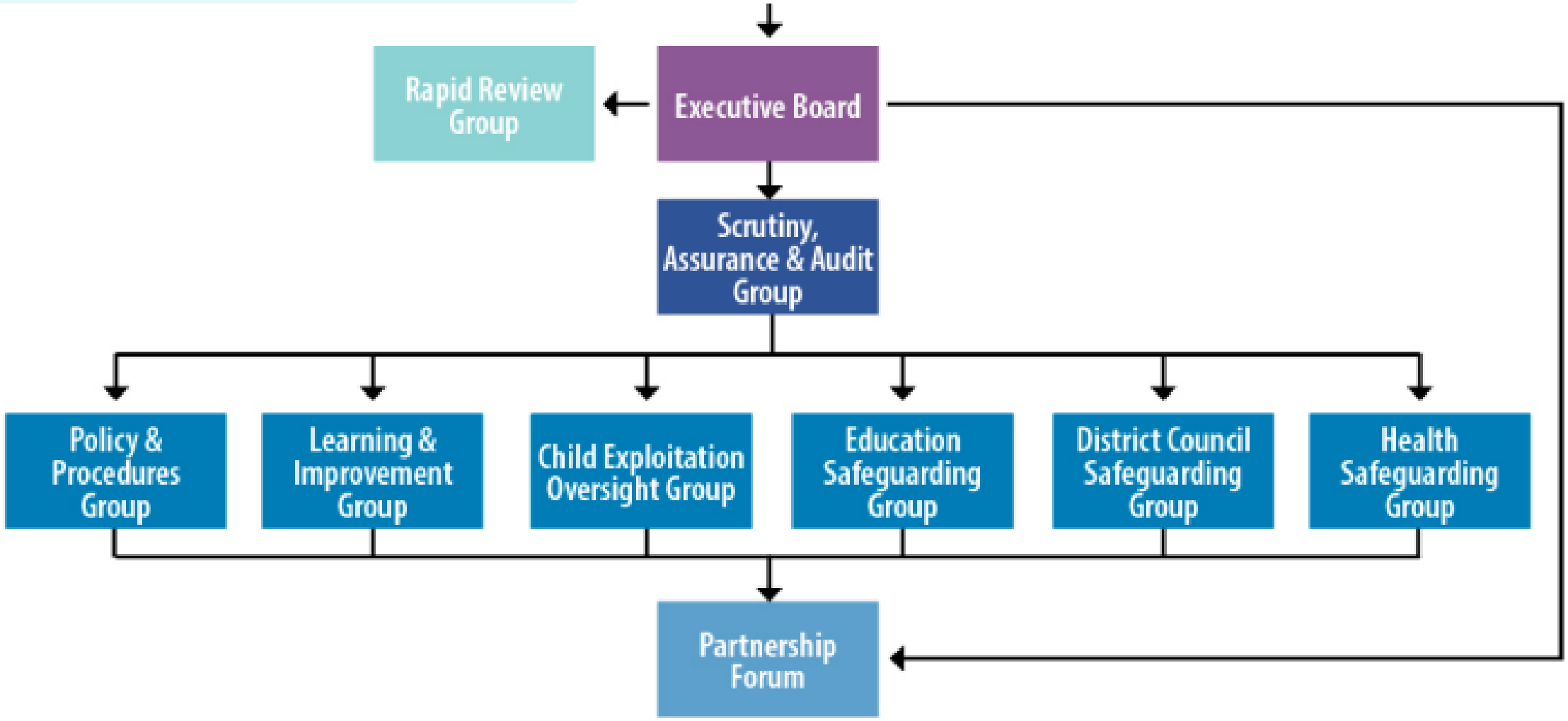
Tim Smith,
Chief Constable,
Kent Police

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Appendices

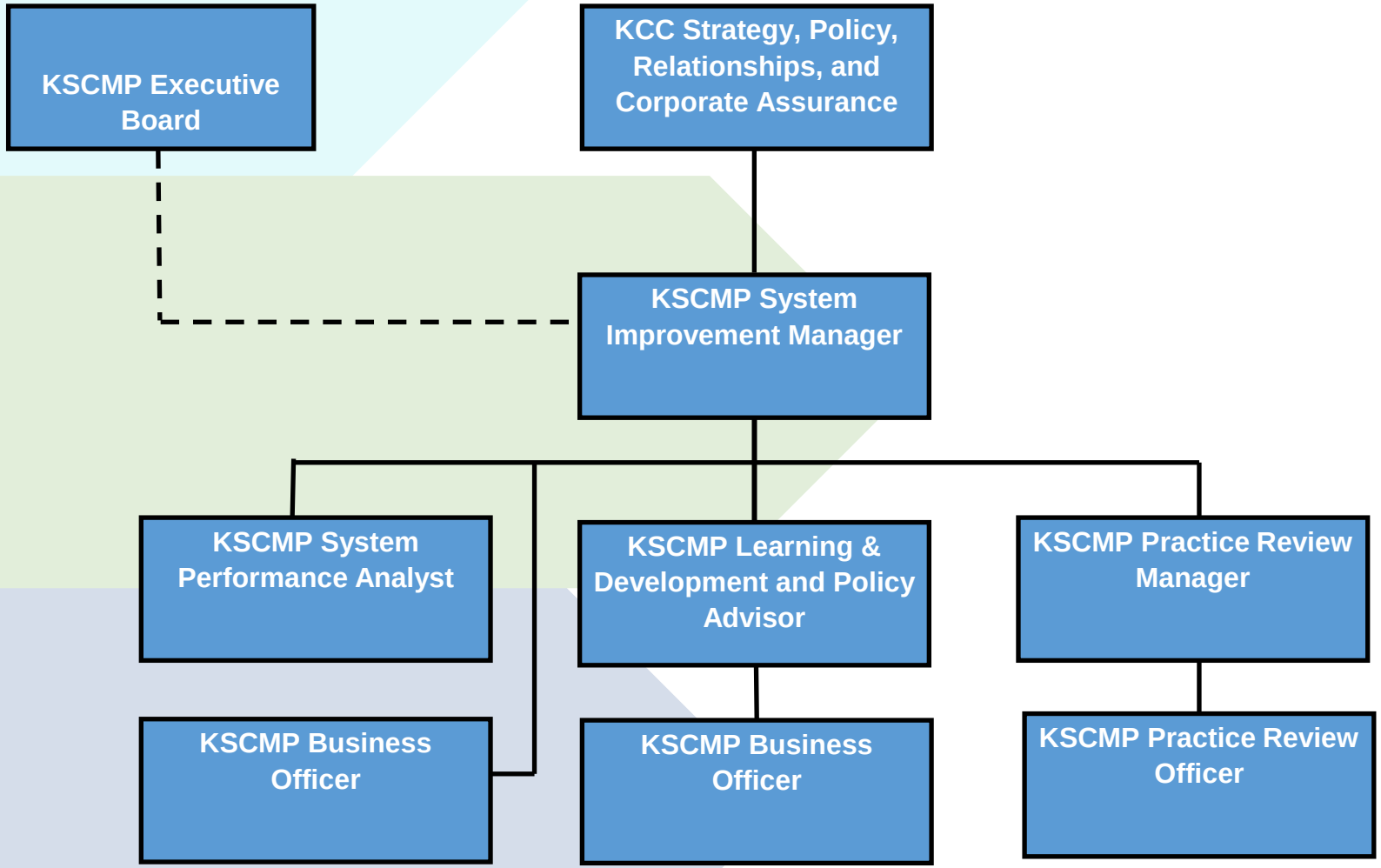
Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Appendix One – KSCMP Structure



Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Appendix Two – KSCMP Business Team Structure



Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

Appendix Three – Financial Contributions

Agency	Contributions 2024-25
Kent County Council	**£242,334.00**
Kent Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent	**£45,934.00**
Total Health Contributions	**£116,374.05**
Kent, Surrey and Sussex Probation Service	**£2910.40**
Kent Fire and Rescue Service	**£5000.00**
District/Borough Councils (each) x12	£1500.00
Total District/Borough Council Contributions	**£18,000.00**
TOTAL	**£430,552.45**

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Appendix Four – Agencies within our partnership

Safeguarding Partners
Kent County Council Kent and Medway NHS Integrated Care Board Kent Police
Education
The Education People 16-19 Academies Alternative provision academies Governing bodies of maintained schools Governing bodies of maintained nursery schools Governing bodies of pupil referral units Independent educational institutions Schools approved under section 342 of the Education Act 1996(e)- SEND Special post-16 institutions Governing bodies of institutions within the further education sector Governing bodies of English higher education providers Childminders
Health provider trusts
Kent Community Health Foundation NHS Trust (KCHFT) Kent and Medway Partnership NHS Trust (KMPT) North East London Foundation NHS Trust (NELFT) East Kent Hospital University Foundation NHS Trust (EKHUFT) Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW) Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAmbs)

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Appendix Four – Agencies within our partnership (cont.)

Additional social care
Registered providers of adoption support services Registered providers of fostering services Registered providers of children's homes Registered providers of residential family centres Registered providers and residential holiday schemes for disabled children
District councils
Ashford Borough Council Canterbury City Council Dartford Borough Council Dover District Council Folkestone and Hythe District Council Gravesham Borough Council Maidstone Borough Council Sevenoaks District Council Swale Borough Council Thanet District Council Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Other agencies
Kent, Surrey and Sussex Probation Service The Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (CAFCASS) Kent Fire and Rescue Service British Transport Police Port of Dover Police UK Border Force

Kent Safeguarding Children
multi-agency partnership

Appendix Five – Kent Safeguarding Context data references

1. 2023 Mid Year Population. Source: ONS, from Kent Analytics (KCC)
2. Children living in **relative** low income families (defined as a family in low income before housing costs in the reference year Source DWP (2022/23), from Kent Analytics (KCC)
3. Source: MIU, KCC Snapshot as at 31/3/2025
4. Number of missing episodes – open to CSW, EH, OLA or not open to CSWS (totalled). Source: MIU, KCC
5. Referrals are for the NELFT single point of access and include referrals to Kent Children and Young People's mental health service and the Neurodevelopmental diagnostic assessment service. (This figure includes Crisis, Neuro and Locality together.) NELFT are one of four providers of ND assessments in Kent, and provide them for 11+ in West and North Kent and 8+ in East Kent. Referral data is across Kent (excludes Medway) in the 12 months up to and including March 2025. Source: NELFT
6. Ethnic minority categories excluded are: White English, White British, Other White British, Scottish, Welsh, Cornish, Not obtained, refused and not stated. Ethnic Minority includes pupils classed as White Other. Source: January 2025 School census from MIU, KCC.
7. Source: January 2025 School Census from MIU, KCC
8. Source: MIU, KCC Snapshot as at 31/3/2025
9. Source: MIU, KCC Snapshot as at 31/3/2025
10. Breakdown of Youth Justice Caseload population (Snapshot). Source: MIU, KCC Snapshot as of Mar 2025
11. Source: MIU, KCC Snapshot as at 31/3/2025
12. Number of young people at high risk of child exploitation (number of YP who have had a risk of CSE identified Apr 24 to Mar 25) split by involvement with EH or CSWS. Source MIU, KCC
13. Number of C&F assessments where one of the factors identified was young carers (Apr 24 – Mar 25) Source: MIU, KCC
14. Source: MIU, KCC Snapshot as at 31/3/2025
15. Number of C&F assessments where domestic abuse was identified as a factor of the assessment, broken down into 3 categories (Domestic Violence – Child, Domestic Violence – Parent, Domestic Violence – Other) (Apr 24 – Mar 25) Source: MIU, KCC
16. Number of Referrals to Family Group Conferencing (now renamed to Social Connections Service, by families and individuals received between Apr 24 and Mar 25. Source: MIU, KCC

Kent Safeguarding Children multi-agency partnership

From: Beverley Fordham **–** Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Christine McInnes – Interim Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education

To: Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee – 18 November 2025

Subject: Commissioning and Procurement of a new framework contract for Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools

Decision no: 25/00065

Key Decision : Yes - It affects more than two Electoral Divisions and involves expenditure of more than £1m

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: All divisions and Members
https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?bcr=1

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary: This report sets out the background and rationale for commissioning and procurement of a new Framework contract for the placement of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) in Independent and Non Maintained Special Schools (INMSS). The new Framework will replace the current zero guaranteed spend, multiple provider Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) which has been extended to 31 August 2026. It is proposed that the new contract will commence on 1 September 2026 and aims to address challenges identified in the current contract, including improving quality of services, enabling a better approach to block contracting, and developing strategic provider relationships.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **ENDORSE,** or **MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS** to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on the proposed decision as detailed in the PROD.

1. Introduction

1.1 Kent County Council (KCC) has a statutory responsibility to provide suitable education for all children and young people under Section 13 of the Education Act 1996[1].

1.2 Following a Key Decision (Decision - 21/00049 - Non-Maintained and Independent Special School Commissioning Strategy), the current contract, which is a zero guaranteed spend, multiple provider Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for Non-Maintained Independent Special Schools (NMISS) was established in September 2022. The contract was for an initial period of three years, ending 31 August 2025. The contract contained three optional one year extension clauses, which if used in full, would result in the DPS contract ending on 31 August 2028.

1.3 A formal review of the contract was completed in February 2024. The review assessed the effectiveness and impact of the current contract, and aimed to understand how closely the contract had aligned with its original strategic objectives. It was determined that, while it had partially met these aims, there were several challenges that could not be resolved within the scope of the current contractual terms and conditions.

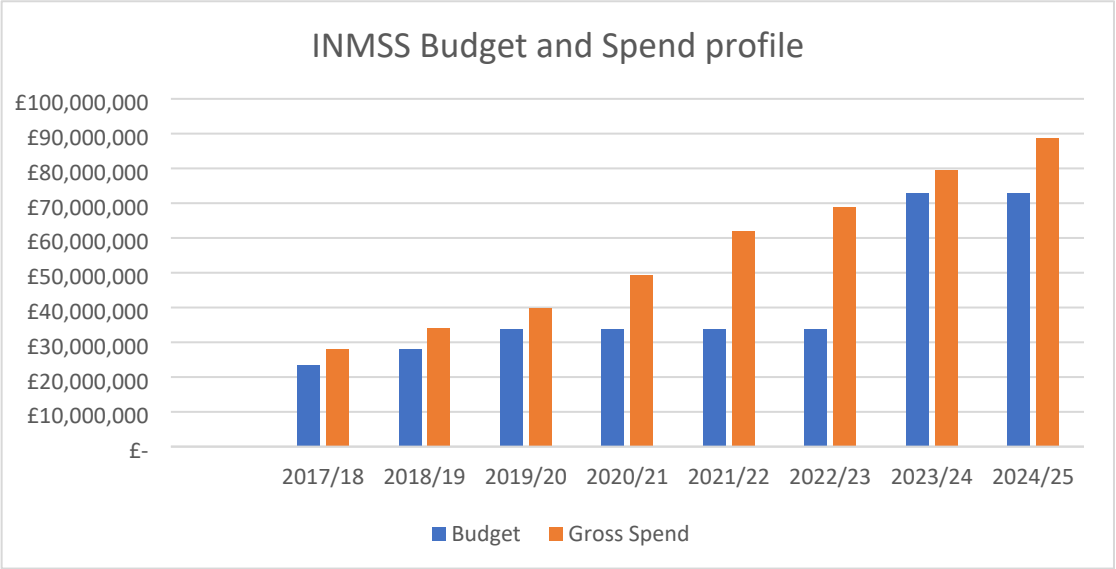
1.4 Consequently, the existing contract was extended by one year to end on 31 August 2026, with a view to commission a new multi provider framework, to commence from 1 September 2026. (Decision - 25/00007 - Non-Maintained Independent Special School (NMISS) Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) - Contract extension and re-procurement options).

1.5 The terms Non Maintained and Independent Special Schools (NMISS) and Independent and Non Maintained Independent Special Schools (INMSS) are used interchangeably by professionals in the sector. The terminology has changed from NMISS to INMSS to reflect current operational language.

2. Key Considerations

2.1 KCC's expenditure on placing children and young people in the INMSS sector has been growing year on year since 2017, as shown in the graph below:

[1] **Education Act 1996**



2.2 The formal review identified that the new Framework must focus on improving outcomes and contributing to a financially sustainable system for the future.

2.3 Reducing the overall number of children in INMSS, maximising the use of less costly maintained special schools and ensuring that INMSS placements are only used for children who require this level of support is a key focus of the Safety Valve agreement between KCC and Department of Education (DfE). This agreement requires KCC to reduce the overspend on its high needs funding budget and achieve a sustainable financial SEND budget by March 2028.

2.4 Spend in INMSS is the result of the number of children placed and the costs of these placements, therefore both must be successfully addressed in order to achieve a financially sustainable model in the future.

2.5 The new Framework for the placement of children and young people in INMSS must align with Kent's wider SEND transformation programmes. This includes supporting the ethos of 'right child in the right placement' making placements for children, guided by clear, evidence-informed criteria.

2.6 The Framework must also align to the implementation of the review of KCC Maintained Special Schools[2] by promoting inclusive, local provision, improving oversight through robust quality assurance, and managing system-wide demand to ensure specialist placements are reserved for those children with the most complex needs. Both approaches seek to prioritise reducing reliance on distant placements, enhancing educational and wellbeing outcomes, and engaging stakeholders to build confidence in local SEND provision.

2.7 The combined impact of the implementation of the Localities Model for Mainstream School Inclusion, development of Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) across the county and the implementation of the Special School Review, is expected to result in a smaller cohort of children and young people

[2] Report - Proposals for the Review of Maintained Special Schools 2024

requiring placements in the INMSS sector in the future. This is aligned with the Government direction of travel.

2.8 A key focus of the new framework will be improved commissioning of INMSS, further reduction of spot purchasing, achieving better value for money from contracts, and implementing a more clearly defined fee increase process, therefore avoiding the rising average cost. It also highlights the importance of developing a more strategic and collaborative relationship with the sector to foster a shared understanding of need, strengthen planning, and ultimately reduce reliance on INMSS. The overarching aim is to establish a more sustainable, needs-led, and child-centred model, that is affordable within the funding made available by DfE.

2.9 The future commissioning of INMSS must also strategically align with evolving national legislation and local priorities. In particular the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill (2025)[3] introduces a legislative framework that reinforces many of the ambitions set out in Kent's Strategy for the Future of Education in Kent 2025 to 2030[4] and SEND Strategy 2025 to 2028[5]. These synergies will inform both the design and delivery of INMSS under the new framework agreement being procured.

2.10 Local Government Reorganisation[6] must also be considered and planned for, especially in relation to the possible disaggregation of countywide contracts into new geographic footprints, and allow for each new area to take a different approach to managing SEND provision and placements. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity to align future planning with local priorities, ensuring that the model remains flexible and responsive to the evolving local government landscape.

3. Background

3.1 The key drivers to establishing the current Framework for education placements outside of the mainstream and maintained provision for children and young people with an EHCP was to enable KCC to monitor the quality of provision, improve outcomes for children and young people and ensure placements offer best value for money in a way that could not be achieved through the process of spot purchasing.

3.2 To support this, the initial focus of the NMISS DPS was to build capacity by encouraging broad participation from the INMSS providers. This approach aimed to ensure sufficient volume within the Framework, with greater oversight on quality assurance and value for money. In this respect, the NMISS DPS has been successful in establishing a more structured commissioning model.

3.3 However, a review conducted in 2024 identified several challenges that limit the overall effectiveness of the current DPS Framework. While the DPS has sufficient capacity, engagement from some higher quality providers has been

[3] Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill
[4] A Strategy for the Future of Education in Kent 2025-2030 | Let's talk Kent
[5] Kent SEND Strategy 2025-2028 | Let's talk Kent
[6] Local government reorganisation: Policy and programme updates - GOV.UK

lower than anticipated and this has contributed to variable quality of schools on the DPS, with some offering lower quality than non-contracted counterparts. This, in addition to parental preference and tribunal outcomes that can override operational decisions, can lead to increased placements in non-contracted (off DPS Framework) schools than would occurred based on KCC placement decisions alone, reducing the impact of the current DPS Framework.

3.4 In light of the challenges identified, a recommendation was made to extend the DPS Framework by one of the three permitted one-year extensions, to 31 August 2026. This allows time to develop and procure a new Framework that addresses the identified challenges and ensures future arrangements are robust, strategic, and fit for purpose.

4. Commissioning review and strategy

4.1 Robust financial and performance monitoring of placements within INMSS is providing increased insight into the use of this sector. As of 30 June 2025, and based on all known and agreed placements during 2025/26 financial year, KCC had placed 1,784 pupils in 110 INMSS services. These figures reflect the total number of children placed in INMSS at the time of the snapshot.

An overview of 'day provision'* in INMSS contracted (DPS) and non-contracted (non-DPS) services is provided in the below table:

' Excludes residential placements*	**DPS**	**Non-DPS**	**Total**
No. of schools	**22**	**88**	**110**
Percentage of schools	***20%***	***80%***	***100%***
No. of Placements Sampled	**1,094**	**690**	**1,784**
Percentage of placements	***61%***	***39%***	***100%***
Average Annual Cost per pupil	***£54,460***	***£58,656***	

4.2 The above table shows that whilst there are fewer DPS schools (22) compared to non DPS (88), a greater proportion of pupils are placed in DPS schools (61%) versus non DPS (39%). Data also indicates that, assuming a similar profile of child needs, DPS placements are more cost-effective with an average annual placement fee of £54,460 in DPS schools versus £58,656 in non DPS. An average cost difference of £4,196 per placement per year.

4.3 Data on the needs of children shows that Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) (52%), Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) (30%), and Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) (12%) are the most prevalent primary needs in INMSS placements and highlights a clear opportunity to align the Special School Review with targeted improvements in local SEND services and support.

4.4 Secondary education accounts for the highest number of placements in both DPS and non-DPS NMISS schools, with peaks in Year 9 and Year 10 representing the highest placement volumes overall.

4.5 Currently there are no DPS Framework schools in Dartford, Folkestone and Hythe, Sevenoaks, and Tonbridge and Malling districts. The absence of DPS schools in these districts means pupils requiring INMSS provision may need to travel to other districts for placement in a DPS school or attend non-DPS schools locally. The former scenario can lead to increased transport costs, longer journeys, and potential impacts on pupil wellbeing. It also raises concerns about equitable access to quality provision due to reliance on less efficient spot purchasing arrangements.

Commissioning intentions

4.6 The Procurement Act 2023 sets out certain areas that must be considered in relation to procuring a new framework contract, which include:

- Wider public benefit – this will be addressed by integrating Social Value into pre-market engagement, award criteria, evaluation and contract management.
- Reducing barriers for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sectors – this will be addressed by removing barriers that prevent these organisations from participating in the procurement.
- Conflict of interest – mandatory declarations and assessments are a core component of the procurement process maintaining transparency and integrity.
- Pre-market engagement – this allows early engagement with the market to shape the procurement into one where the market can deliver and wants to participate.
- Award criteria, evaluation methodology and Key Performance Indicators – in operating a fair and effective evaluation aligned with legislative and procurement policy objectives reflecting public benefit, environmental and social value, and be proportionate to encourage SME/VCSE participation and ensure effective contract performance mechanisms are in place.

4.7 It is proposed that the new INMSS Framework be established as an Open Framework under the Procurement Act 2023. This approach will enable KCC to drive system-wide improvements in the quality, cost-effectiveness, and transparency of placements for children and young people accessing INMSS services. The Options Appraisal, included as Appendix 1, outlines the procurement approaches considered with the Open Framework model (Option 3) within that appraisal as the recommended option.

4.8 The Framework is expected to be structured into two operational Lots, designed to reflect varying levels of provider quality and thereby support improved outcomes for children and young people. Specific details regarding this structure will be set out in the Contract Management Schedules, which will also define the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that schools will be required to report against. Consideration will be given into the merits of using the Framework as a Quality Mark, balanced with how we would communicate any sanctions or embargoes where quality slips below the required standards and improvement plans are in place.

4.9 The structuring of Lots is intended to balance the priorities of quality, flexibility, and placement sufficiency. It is designed to foster a sustainable and inclusive provider market capable of meeting the diverse and evolving needs of children and young people across Kent by removing some of the barriers that have prevented providers from previously engaging.

4.10 It is proposed that the top Lot will comprise providers who achieve higher quality scores in their tender submissions. These providers will be treated as strategic partners and considered for block contracting arrangements, subject to negotiation, reflecting their capacity to deliver consistently high-quality provision. The second Lot will include providers who meet the minimum quality threshold, offering additional flexibility and capacity within the market.

4.11 A standard approach to performance monitoring will be established across both Lots, including the use of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), market engagement events and contract monitoring and quality visits. The frequency and level of scrutiny applied will be proportionate to provider performance, and will be increased directly in response to areas of concern or evidence of underperformance.

4.12 A key benefit of the new Framework is the flexibility for KCC to award block contracts where Providers are assessed as offering better value. This approach will contribute to whole-system market development and be guided by demand forecasting and sufficiency planning, drawing on insights from Kent Analytics and the SEND Sufficiency Plan. While this is a feature of the current DPS, it was not enacted due to lack of clear and sufficient performance information.

4.13 Soft lotting will be applied, based on geographical boundaries. This provides flexibility for the contract to respond to any changes resulting from Local Government Reorganisation. Contracts awarded under this Framework will remain valid throughout any transition period, until either the natural expiry of the Framework, novation/assignment to any successor council, or termination in accordance with the contract terms, whichever occurs first.

4.14 The placement of children in INMSS is determined through established SEN processes, which are underpinned by statutory guidance and which remain unchanged regardless of the procurement route or type of contract selected. The new contract will act as a tool to support the placement of children in high quality, cost effective placements where the Council has assurances that appropriate quality provision and protocols are in place enabling placements to be made in schools capable of meeting children's needs, within a fiscally responsible framework.

4.15 It is proposed that the Open Framework will commence on 1 September 2026 and run for an initial period of four years, ending on 31 August 2030. The Authority may, subject to governance approval and written notice to the Providers, extend the Framework in one year increments, up to a maximum of four additional years. If all extension periods are exercised, the Framework will conclude on 31 August 2034. Following the termination or expiry of the Framework, placements made under existing call-off contracts may continue beyond the expiry of the framework.

4.16 An indicative procurement timeline is:

Activity	Indicative Timing
Specification Development and stakeholder engagement	November 2025
Tender Period	December 2025 – January 2026
Evaluation Period	March 2026 – May 2026
Contract Award	June 2026
Mobilisation	July 2026
Framework Start	September 2026

4.17 The Framework will open initially for provider applications between December 2025 and January 2026. Thereafter, it will reopen at set intervals throughout the contract term to allow new providers to join or existing providers to reapply for a different quality Lot. Providers joining the Open Framework after 1 September 2026 will enter into the Agreement for the remaining duration of the Agreement Term only, subject to any future decisions taken to extend the Framework.

4.18 The Open Framework model offers a balanced approach between competition and control. It enables the periodic admission of new providers under consistent contractual terms. This model also mitigates risks associated with non-compliance and limited transparency found in alternative procurement options.

4.19 The draft Strategic Statement “Reforming Kent 2025 to 2028” states at Point 6 of Aim 3, Supporting Residents that Need Help, that we will improve processes and outcomes for our SEND services while tackling the unsustainable growth in demand. This proposal aligns with that aim.

4.20 The new Framework will redefine value for money by prioritising transparency in pupil fee structures over simple cost reduction. This approach ensures fees are aligned with EHCP outcomes, supporting effective placements and a more accountable use of public funds, in line with the SEND Code of Practice.

Market and Stakeholder engagement activities

4.21 As part of the strategy to inform the development of the new INMSS framework, a comprehensive programme of stakeholder engagement has been undertaken. This has included a whole-market engagement event with INMSS providers, a four-week survey distributed to all INMSS schools, and four focus group sessions with parents and carers of children currently placed in INMSS settings. In addition, two INMSS schools hosted in-person focus groups directly with pupils to capture their lived experiences. Engagement with KCC teams that place children and provide ongoing case management has also taken place.

4.22 Feedback from the Assessment, Placement and Tribunal Team with KCC highlights key challenges in placing children in INMSS settings, including limited school capacity, high costs, funding delays, and logistical barriers. Parental expectations, additional costs for therapies and 1:1 support, outdated assessments, and slow consultation responses also contribute to placement difficulties.

4.23 Feedback from the KCC SEN Case Management meeting highlights workforce capacity as a critical issue. As seen in Kent and across many local authorities nationally, high vacancy rates within SEN Placement Teams have historically contributed to delays in updating EHCPs, coordinating placements, and maintaining effective communication with families and providers. While the use of agency staff has helped mitigate some of these pressures, sustained recruitment and retention of permanent staff remain essential. Successful implementation of the new Framework Agreement will depend on a consistent and coordinated approach across Placement Teams to ensure timely and effective placement decisions.

4.24 Additionally, some specialist schools do not consistently deliver the level of support expected, particularly for pupils with complex needs, behavioural challenges, or a history of disrupted education. This highlights the need for stronger quality assurance and clearer contractual expectations within the commissioning framework adopted.

4.25 The INMSS School Survey was published on KCC Let's Talk Kent website. The sector feedback underscores the need for a child-centred, flexible approach supported by integrated multi-agency collaboration. Schools highlighted the importance of early and inclusive parental involvement within a diverse, quality-assured offer. Respondents also called for financial sustainability, improvements to EHCP processes, and greater innovation in practice and use of resources. The school survey feedback summary is included in Appendix 2. Two further sector workshops are planned for October and December 2025 to outline the procurement process, timelines, and provide early-stage market support.

4.26 Parents and carers in INMSS focus groups described specialist provision as transformative, praising small classes, tailored curriculum, and nurturing environments that support wellbeing and life skills. They also highlighted challenges navigating the SEN system, securing placements, and accessing funding. Calls were made for stronger collaboration between mainstream and specialist schools, more consistent local authority support, and a commissioning approach that values holistic outcomes, emphasising that "children thrive when they are understood and supported".

4.27 The young people who took part in the focus groups said that they want learning to be flexible and based on their interests, with fun activities and personalised timetables. They value safe, welcoming schools with small classes, quiet spaces, and outdoor areas. Emotional and mental health support is important, including access to mentors, movement breaks, and staff who understand trauma and neurodiversity. They want to be involved in decisions about their support plans (EHCPs) and have their voices heard. Good communication with trusted staff is key, and schools should listen to feedback. Support with attendance should include help with things like tiredness and stress. Practical help, like transport and real-life learning experiences, also makes a big difference, along with celebrating each student's progress and individuality.

4.28 Stakeholder feedback gathered through surveys, focus groups, and engagement with internal teams has directly informed the development of the

service specification. A dedicated section within the specification outlines key themes raised by parents, carers, young people, schools, and professionals. This feedback has shaped the commissioning approach by embedding principles of flexibility, transparency, and child-centred practice. Specific measures include clearer quality expectations, and a stronger focus on holistic outcomes aligned with EHCPs. Planned workshops and ongoing engagement will continue to support implementation and ensure the Framework remains responsive to stakeholder needs.

Focus group feedback from parents/carers and young people is included in Appendix 3.

5. Options considered and discounted, and associated risk

5.1 With consideration to the above feedback and to support market development, an Options Appraisal exploring available routes to the market has been completed. The options appraised is attached in Appendix 1.

5.2 The following options were considered and discounted due to significant strategic, legal, and operational risks:

5.2.1 Option 1: Do Nothing: Allowing the current DPS to lapse without replacement would eliminate procurement and contract management costs, and introduces significant risks. These include non-compliance with the Procurement Act 2023, reputational damage, diminished financial oversight, and inconsistent terms and conditions. The absence of a structured procurement route would also restrict access for new providers and likely lead to inefficient and fragmented spot purchasing arrangements.

5.2.2 Option 2: Directly Award contracts to providers based on an assessment of provider quality and cost: While direct awards may appear to offer a quicker route to market, managing multiple awards would place a significant strain on resources without delivering the anticipated benefits. It lacks transparency, limits market competition, and does not align with the Council's long-term strategic procurement objectives. The use of Direct Awards can only be justified in accordance with specific criteria, none of which are applicable in this situation.

5.2.3 Option 3: Procure a new Open Framework contract as detailed in this report. This is the preferred option and has not been discounted.

5.2.4 Option 4: Dynamic Markets: Despite its flexibility and continuous supplier access, this model was dismissed due to its operational complexity, uncertainty around compliance with Light Touch Regime modifications, and its failure to mitigate risks associated with the current contract model. It also lacks a mechanism for awarding below-threshold contracts and offers limited assurance that quality improvements will be effectively embedded.

5.2.5 Option 5 (previously discounted): Extend the existing DPS Framework using its allowable extensions up until to 2028. This option was

considered and dismissed during the NMISS DPS contract extension process and remains so. The original NMISS DPS contract was awarded under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR), and no longer aligns with current commissioning requirements.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 The total net spend on INMSS placements for 2024/25 was £88.8m (prior to income from health and social care and specific grants and excluding specialist post 16 providers), which is expected to be fully funded from the High Needs Block of the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant provided by the DfE. Of this, £46.9m was spent on providers within the existing Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS).

6.2 In 2024/25, 920 placements of children and young people were made through the DPS out of a total of 1,690 placements funded during the year. The average cost of a DPS placement at this time was £50,977, compared to £51,956 for a non-DPS placement. Section 4.2 of the report sets out the latest snapshot of placement costs based on agreed placements in 2025/26. This shows the average cost of placements has increased to £54,460 in DPS and £58,656 in non DPS schools. This represents an average increase of 7% and 13%, respectively.

6.3 The INMSS Framework is a 'no volume, no spend guarantee' contract. The total number of placements, and therefore the associated value of the contract, is not governed by the Framework itself, but by placement decisions made by the SEN High Cost Placement Panel, phase transfer processes, and other routes managed by SEN operational teams.

6.4 However, there is a need to determine and publish the potential maximum value of the contract for the new Independent Non-Maintained Special Schools (INMSS) Framework.

6.5 Based on the assumption that the current number of placements in INMSS remaining static over the course of the contract, the upper limit value of the contract over eight years would total £876m.

6.6 This projection assumes a current average annual cost per placement of £59,801, that all current and future placements are made through the new contract, and includes an assumed 2% annual inflationary increase, although the exact annual uplift will depend on wider factors including state-funded special school uplifts and affordability along with providers evidencing reasonable financial pressures that cannot be mitigated by efficiencies (administered through the price uplift process)

6.7 However, if the number of children and young people in INMSS placements decreases as projected in the Kent Commissioning Plan, then, based on the same assumptions, the estimated total value of the new Framework over eight years would be approximately £484m.

6.8 Spend through the contract is, however, likely to be lower than this value as it is unlikely that 100% of providers will join the Framework, so the maximum contract value is unlikely to be reached.

6.9 In addition, a robust fee increase process has been a key factor in managing the cost of existing INMSS placements while ensuring quality provision. A structured and consistent approach has been implemented, which has delivered significant financial and operational benefits over the past two years, and has led to significant cost avoidance of £1,042,436 in 2024/25 and £1,026,716 in 2025/26.

6.10 The proposed recommendation is not expected to require additional staffing resources and will be delivered within existing capacity.

Block Contract Opportunities:

6.11 The new INMSS Framework presents a significant opportunity to explore block contract arrangements with selected providers. This approach offers a proactive way to manage both cost and sufficiency challenges, and has the potential to deliver substantial benefits:

- By agreeing fixed volumes and prices with providers, block contracts can offer greater budget predictability and reduce exposure to ad hoc fee increases.
- Negotiated block arrangements can secure preferential rates, particularly where providers are able to guarantee capacity over a sustained period.
- Block contracts can be aligned with the Kent Commissioning Plan, helping to shape the market and ensure availability of placements where they are most needed.
- Long-term agreements foster collaboration and stability, enabling providers to plan staffing and resources more effectively.
- While block contracts offer structure, they can be designed with flexibility to respond to changing needs and priorities.

6.12 Under the Framework, block contracts will be subject to individual negotiation, with terms tailored to provider capacity, quality of provision, and alignment with strategic commissioning goals. This model is expected to play a key role in delivering sustainable placements and maximising the impact of the Council's investment in this area, by managing costs and delivering good outcomes for children and young people placed there.

6.13 This proposal is intended to support the Council's aim to reduce the overspend on the Dedicated Schools Grant: High Needs Block (used to fund special educational needs). The Council is currently overspending on its High Needs Block by approximately £55m-£60m per year of which the use of more costly specialist provision such independent special schools, has been highlighted as a key contributing factor to this position. Whilst there is no direct revenue cost of this proposal to the General Fund, the Council is part of the Safety Valve Programme, a DfE initiative to support Local Authorities with the highest deficits, of which the Council has agreed to contribute a total of £82m between 2022/23 and 2027/28 to help reduce the accumulated deficit, alongside an extra £140m from DfE. The DfE funding is contingent on the development of plan to achieve value for money within the existing SEN regulatory framework and to

aim to reach an in-year breakeven position by the end of 2027/28. Ensuring value for money for our most costly education placement offer is a necessity to support the financial recovery plan.

7. Legal implications

7.1 KCC has a statutory responsibility when placing children and young people in the Independent and Non-Maintained Special School sector. These include:

- Education Act 1996 (Section 13)[7]: KCC has a statutory responsibility under the act to provide education for all children and young people until age 19 and to age 25 for those with EHC plans.
- Children and Families Act 2014 (Section 42)[8]: Requires KCC to secure the special educational provision in a child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), including placements in NMISS where appropriate.
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)[9]: Provides statutory guidance on working with families and providers to ensure suitable, high-quality placements.
  SEND and Alternative provision (AP) Improvement Plan[10](White Paper, expected Autumn 2025): Is likely to introduce national standards for commissioning, regional frameworks, and stronger accountability for SEND outcomes.

7.2 The procurement of a new open Framework, undertaken in compliance with the Procurement Act 2023 [11] and with appropriate legal advice will facilitate the discharge of KCC's statutory duties as outlined above.

8. Equalities implications

8.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed which indicates the recommended procurement model will offer significant positive impact across protected groups by improving access to quality assured specialist SEND provision in the independent sector, addressing gaps and promoting inclusion. Any negative impacts will be mitigated through robust, risk-based contract monitoring that embeds quality, safeguarding, and performance standards.

9. Data Protection Implications

9.1 The Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for the commissioning of the INMSS framework contract identifies and addresses key risks related to the collection, sharing, and retention of personal data. To mitigate these risks, data collection will be limited to what is necessary and proportionate, access to personal data will be restricted to authorised evaluation panel members who have completed mandatory Information Governance training, and data retention will follow KCC's structured policy and schedule. The Framework Agreement

---

[7] Education Act 1996
[8] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/section/42
[9] SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf
[10] SEND and AP Improvement Plan
[11] Procurement Act 2023

will also include appropriate data protection provisions. The DPIA has been reviewed and approved by the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education.

10. Other corporate implications

10.1 This report outlines how the proposed procurement aligns with the priorities detailed in the following strategic documents:

- Reforming Kent 2025 to 2028 (in draft at the point of publication of this report)
- Kent's Strategy for the Future of Education in Kent 2025 to 2030[12]
- KCC's SEND Strategy[13]
- Implementation of the review of KCC Maintained Special Schools[14]

11. Governance

11.1 Accountability for this service and contract sits with the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education and responsibility sits with the Director for Education and SEN.

12. Conclusions

12.1 The procurement of a new zero guaranteed spend, multiple provider, INMSS contract secured through an Open Framework, will enable KCC to drive system-wide improvements in quality, cost-effectiveness, and transparency in placing children and young people in INMSS services. This approach will strengthen the Council's relationship with the market, support better outcomes and be compliant with the Procurement Act 2023 and Spending the Council's Money.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **ENDORSE,** or **MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS** to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on the proposed decision as detailed in the PROD.

---

10. Background Documents

- *Equality Impact Assessment*
- *Data Protection Impact Assessment*

11. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Options Appraisal summary
Appendix 2 – School Survey feedback summary
Appendix 3 – Focus Group feedback from parents/carers and young people

---

[12] **A Strategy for the Future of Education in Kent 2025-2030 | Let's talk Kent**
[13] **Kent SEND Strategy 2025-2028 | Let's talk Kent**
[14] **Report - Proposals for the Review of Maintained Special Schools 2024**

12. Contact details

Report Author: Christy Holden Job title: Head of Children's Commissioning Telephone number: 03000 415356 Email address: Christy.holden@kent.gov.uk	Director: Christine McInnes Job title: Director of Education and SEN Telephone number: 03000 418913 Email address: Christine.mcinnes@kent.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NUMBER:
Beverley Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	25/00065

For publication *[Do not include information which is exempt from publication under schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972]*

Key decision: YES

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Commissioning and procurement of a framework contract for Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools (INMSS)

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree to:

1. APPROVE the commissioning and procurement of a new Open Framework contract for the placement of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans in Independent and Non Maintained Special Schools. The Framework contract to commence on 1 September 2026, for a duration of up to eight years, to include provisions to enable disaggregation, subject to any future Local Government Reorganisation.

2. DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education, or other Officer as instructed by the Corporate Director, to take relevant actions, including but not limited to negotiating and finalising the terms of, and entering into required contracts, extensions, variations or other legal agreements, as required to implement the decision, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.

Reason(s) for decision:

Kent County Council (KCC) has a statutory responsibility to provide suitable education for all children and young people under Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 .

There is currently a zero guaranteed spend Framework contract in place for Independent Non-Maintained Special Schools with multiple providers to comply with procurement legislation and Spending the Council's Money. Through **Decision - 25/00007 - Non-Maintained Independent Special School (NMISS) Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) - Contract extension and re-procurement options**, the contract is due to end on 31 August 2026.

The proposal sets out the commissioning and procurement activity to establish a new Open Framework contract, compliant with the Procurement Act 2023 for the placement of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) in Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools (INMSS). The new contract, commencing on 1 September 2026, is designed to

improve the quality of provision, enable block contracting, and strengthen strategic relationships with providers.

Reforming Kent Strategy

The draft Strategic Statement "Reforming Kent 2025 to 2028" states at Point 6 of Aim 3, Supporting Residents that Need Help, that we will improve processes and outcomes for our SEND services while tackling the unsustainable growth in demand. This proposal aligns with that aim..

Financial Implications

The total net spend on INMSS placements for 2024/25 was £88.8m, which is expected to be fully funded from the High Needs Block of the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant provided by the Department for Education. Of this, £46.9m was spent on providers within the existing Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)

In 2024/25, 920 placements of children and young people were made through the DPS out of a total of 1,690 placements funded during the year. The average cost of a DPS placement at this time was £50,977, compared to £51,956 for a non-DPS placement. Based on agreed placements in 2025/26, the average cost of placements has increased to £54,460 in DPS and £58,656 in non DPS schools. This represents an average increase of 7% and 13%, respectively.

The INMSS Framework is a 'no volume, no spend guarantee' contract. The total number of placements, and therefore the associated value of the contract, is not governed by the Framework itself, but by placement decisions made by the SEN High Cost Placement Panel, phase transfer processes, and other routes managed by SEN operational teams.

However, there is a need to determine and publish the potential maximum value of the contract for the new Independent Non-Maintained Special Schools (INMSS) Framework:

- Based on the assumption that the current number of placements in INMSS remaining static over the course of the contract, the upper limit value of the contract over eight years would total £876m. This projection assumes a current average annual cost per placement of £59,801, that all current and future placements are made through the new contract, and includes an assumed 2% annual inflationary increase although the exact annual uplift will depend on wider factors.
- However, if the number of children and young people in INMSS placements decreases as projected in the Kent Commissioning Plan, then, based on the same assumptions, the estimated total value of the new Framework over eight years would be approximately £484m.
- Spend through the contract is, however, likely to be lower than this value as it is unlikely that 100% of providers will join the Framework, so the maximum contract value is unlikely to be reached.

In addition, a robust fee increase process has been a key factor in managing the cost of existing INMSS placements while ensuring quality provision. A structured and consistent approach has been implemented, which has delivered significant financial and operational benefits over the past two years, and has led to significant cost avoidance of £1,042,436 in 2024/25 and £1,026,716 in 2025/26.

The proposal is intended to support the Council's aim to reduce the overspend on the Dedicated Schools Grant: High Needs Block, by ensuring value for money, and support the delivery of the plan under the Safety Valve Programme. Whilst there is not direct cost to the General Fund, as

independent school places are funded from the High Needs Block Grant, the Council is contributing a total of £82m by 2027/28 towards the accumulated High Needs deficit.

Legal Implications

KCC has a statutory responsibility when placing children and young people in the Independent and Non-Maintained Special School sector. These include:

- Education Act 1996 (Section 13): KCC has a statutory responsibility under the act to provide education for all children and young people until age 19 and to age 25 for those with EHC plans.
- Children and Families Act 2014 (Section 42): Requires KCC to secure the special educational provision in a child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), including placements in NMISS where appropriate.
- SEND Code of Practice (2015): Provides statutory guidance on working with families and providers to ensure suitable, high-quality placements.
- SEND and Alternative provision (AP) Improvement Plan (White Paper, expected Autumn 2025): Is likely to introduce national standards for commissioning, regional frameworks, and stronger accountability for SEND outcomes.
- The procurement of a new Open Framework, undertaken in compliance with the Procurement Act 2023, and with appropriate legal advice, will facilitate the discharge of KCC's statutory duties as outlined above.

Equalities Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed which indicates the recommended procurement model will offer significant positive impact across protected groups by improving access to quality assured specialist SEND provision in the independent sector, addressing gaps and promoting inclusion. Any negative impacts will be mitigated through robust, risk-based contract monitoring that embeds quality, safeguarding, and performance standards.

Data Protection Impact Assessment

The Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for the INMSS Framework contract identifies and addresses key risks related to the collection, sharing, and retention of personal data. To mitigate these risks, data collection will be limited to what is necessary and proportionate, access to personal data will be restricted to authorised evaluation panel members who have completed mandatory Information Governance training, and data retention will follow KCC's structured policy and schedule. The DPIA has been reviewed and approved by the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

The following options were considered and discounted due to significant strategic, legal and operational risks:

1. Do Nothing

2. Direct Award contracts to providers based on an assessment of provider quality and cost
4: Procure using a Dynamic Markets

Previously dismissed options include: developing in-house and extending the existing contract for one or two years.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

....

signed date

Changes in Procurement Regulations

The **Procurement Act 2023 (PA23)** introduces significant changes to public procurement and is a departure from **Public Contract Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015)**. A key change is the move away from Most Economically Advantageous Tender to Most Advantageous Tender, in a bid to enable wider considerations in tender evaluations. There is also the requirement under the new act for an additional number of transparency notices throughout the life of a contract, including contract management, performance related and contract end notices.

In terms of routes to market new options have been introduced, such as Dynamic Markets and Open Frameworks. These are considered the most similar to the previous Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) used by Kent County Council in the Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools (INMSS) Sector. However, we are able to design comparable alternatives under the Light Touch Regime but CPD are exploring the extent of flexibility available as part of this (see Light Touch Regime section).

Additional Considerations under Procurement Act 23

Spot-Purchasing Rules: The Procurement Act 2023 providers additional transparency over spot-purchased spend and is designed to minimise it where possible.

Central Digital Platform: The Central Digital Platform is an online system established under the Procurement Act 2023. Suppliers will be required to register for this to access opportunities within the public sector. It serves as a central hub for UK public procurement, facilitating the publication of required notices and documents. The platform enhances the existing Find a Tender service, making it easier for suppliers to find and bid for contracts, and for buyers to meet their transparency commitments (detailed below).

Transparency Notices: Under the Procurement Act 2023, transparency notices are mandatory publications that ensure openness and accountability throughout the procurement lifecycle. These notices include various stages such as pre-procurement, tendering, and contract management. A significant aspect of these notices is the obligation to publish Key Performance Indicator (KPI) returns and other contract management details. Contracting authorities must regularly update and publish KPI returns to provide insights into the performance and management of contracts. This requirement aims to enhance transparency, allowing stakeholders to monitor contract execution and ensure compliance with agreed terms.

Enabling SME Opportunities:

There is also a duty for Purchasing Organisations to have regard to, and where appropriate, remove barriers to Small, Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and new providers. Based on this and our experiences with market engagement additional considerations might need to be given (where possible) to the following:

- **Accessibility:** Ensure procurement opportunities are widely advertised and accessible to SMEs.
- **Financial Considerations:** Reduce financial thresholds for participation and offer flexible payment terms.
- **Support and Guidance:** Provide clear guidance and support to SMEs on how to participate in procurement processes.

- **Division of Contracts:** Divide larger contracts into smaller lots to make them more accessible to SMEs.
- **Proportionate Requirements:** Set proportionate selection criteria that do not unnecessarily exclude SMEs.

The act also introduces a debarment list and authorities are obligated to monitor this list and their contracts over their lifespan to potentially remove suppliers who are added to the list.

Light Touch Regime: Commercial and Procurement, with legal support, would need to explore the potential to create a mechanism under the Light Touch Regime that allows for the assessment of only new bids without reconsidering older bids, streamlining the process and reducing the evaluation burden. Furthermore, we are exploring the possibility of Pseudo-Dynamic Markets or an Open Framework under the Light Touch Regime to work similarly to a DPS. This would enable us to award below-threshold work packages in the same way that we currently operate for the NMISS DPS.

Evaluation Options: Under the Procurement Act 2023, we have additional evaluation options available and it allows greater flexibility for procurements to be designed around the needs of service users and the market. This could include additional possibilities such as site visits, audits and negotiations. Authorities are encouraged to use market engagement sessions to select and shape these processes. In these instances, additional consideration must be given to resource allocation, as evaluators and commercial officers may need to conduct site visits, which could impact overall resource availability. Therefore, we need to think about the implications of this for SEND, Commissioning and Commercial.

Appendix 1: Options Appraisal

Routes to market for INMSS

Commissioning did explore the option of utilising the remaining two one-year extension clauses to prolong the existing DPS. However, this approach was discounted as it would not enable the Council to address the limitations of the current contract, nor offer the flexibility required to respond to the evolving education and SEND landscape across Kent.

Therefore, for the routes to market for the INMSS procurement we identified the following options:

Aspect	**Do Nothing**	**Direct Award**	**Open Framework**	**Dynamic Markets**
Description	Allow the DPS to terminate without replacement	Direct contract award without competition, permitted under specific conditions (e.g. Light Touch Regime, extreme urgency (e.g. urgent placements) or when only one supplier is capable of providing).	Allows for the periodic admission of new suppliers throughout their term, maintaining competitiveness and adaptability. Reopening an open framework effectively constitutes retendering, thereby demonstrating ongoing market testing and competition.	Allows for the continuous admission of suppliers, providing a flexible and open system for a wide range of goods, services, and works.
Benefits	- No cost of procurement - No contract management costs incurred for implementation of the service	- Fast and efficient - Low administrative burden - Enables continuity of service	- Reduced administrative burden by utilising consistent terms and conditions across the Framework - Ability to adapt to changing market conditions through periodic refresh of providers and allow us to amend thresholds in line with the wider system changes - Enable periodic improvements to be made to T&Cs over lifetime of contract - A structured Framework	- Increased flexibility - Broader supplier base - Continuous competition driving better value for money - Consistent terms and conditions - Highest access opportunity for new Providers – particularly for SMEs

			improves the contract management tools and KPI consistency - More tools available to KCC for market management and encouragement of early engagement for any new or potential providers	
Risks	- Spot purchasing arrangements will likely be required - Non-compliance with Procurement Act 23 and Spending Council's Money - Lack of value for money with no competitive procedure - Reputational risks for non-compliance - Terms and conditions of placements will be varied - Reduced opportunity for new providers	- Legal challenge risk if not compliant award - May reduce transparency and competition - Lack of or limited responsiveness/ less adaptable	- Managing the periodic admission process could be resource intensive - Ensuring all suppliers meet the required standards consistently through Contract Management - Could 'lock' the market during the framework period which could be problematic if we do not receive sufficient bids that meet our requirements this means that more placements will be made on spot purchased arrangements and associated risks - Suppliers may choose to reapply, which could increase resource and capacity requirements - New schools are unable to apply during any periods the Framework is 'locked' - Where parents want to place in a non-contracted school, there is a risk that they go	- Potential complexity in managing a larger pool of suppliers - Ensuring compliance with ongoing transparency requirements and notices - Uncertainty regarding the extent to which the Light Touch Regime permits modification of the Call-Off process to enable Direct Awards.- Does not allow us to address the risks associated with the current contract model - Allowing schools to apply or reapply with a quick turnaround provides limited assurance that feedback and learning related to quality have been effectively embedded.

Appendix 1: Options Appraisal

			through other channels to place CYP, such as tribunal appeals	
Strengths	- Speed (Remove one step in placement process) - No resource implications for CPD or Commissioning	- Speed - Simplicity - Useful for urgent or specialist needs	- Flexibility in this approach, to adapt the Terms and Conditions based on National Legislation and local need - Can include multiple lots to ensure competitiveness - Clearly defined bidding periods which help resource planning and time management - Allows Direct Award for individual CYP placements	- Open all of the time for continuous supplier addition - Can include multiple lots to ensure competitiveness
Weaknesses	- Not suitable for strategic, long-term procurement - Supplier management will be complicated and resource intensive - The Council will have a lack of power - Lack of value for money with no competitive procedure, potential cost implications - No quality assurance of provision	- Limited to specific circumstances - Not suitable for strategic, long-term procurement - Managing multiple direct awards will be resource intensive	- Resource-intensive to reopen and evaluate the Framework - Providers can rebid on an open framework which could increase resource requirements	- Resource-intensive to monitor costs of placements made to ensure compliance with PA23 thresholds - More complex to manage due to its unpredictability in applications - Currently, there is no direct provision for awarding below-threshold contracts. This could affect any placements where the aggregate spend is below the relevant threshold, £663,540 for Light Touch contracts or £213,477 for standard services contracts (including VAT).

Appendix 1: Options Appraisal

Outcome	**Dismissed** – This option would not comply with SCM or the Procurement Act 2023 and does not align with the Council's strategic objectives.	**Dismissed** – This option does not support the Council's strategic aims, is limited to only specific circumstances which do not apply in this situation and this approach would be resource-intensive to manage.	**Recommended** – This is a compliant route under PA23 and SCM, supports quality assurance, aligns with strategic goals, market management, incorporates learning from current DPS to contract management and offers flexibility through lotting arrangements.	**Dismissed** – Without provision for awarding below-threshold contracts, this model is unsuitable. The model also presents challenges around compliance, complexity in supplier management, and limited assurance that quality improvements are embedded. These factors make it unsuitable for the Council's strategic and operational needs.

Summary of recommendation:

- An **Open Framework** is recommended as the preferred procurement route. This approach is fully compliant with the Procurement Act 2023 and aligns with the Council's Spending the Council's Money (SCM) policy. It also supports key strategic aims including quality assurance, flexibility, and adaptability particularly through the use of lotting arrangements.

- The Open Framework model offers a balanced approach between competition and control, enabling periodic supplier admission and consistent terms. It avoids the rigidity of traditional frameworks and mitigates the risks of non-compliance and limited transparency associated with other options.

- Other options (Do Nothing, Direct Award, Dynamic Markets) were dismissed due to legal non-compliance, lack of strategic alignment, or operational impracticalities, such as the inability to award below-threshold contracts or manage long-term supplier relationships effectively.

Appendix 1: Options Appraisal

Lotting

Aspect	Description	Benefits	Risks
No Grouping	A single framework without dividing into groups, covering all geographical areas, need types, and quality levels.	• Simplified procurement process • Easier contract management	• May not address specific needs of different areas or types • Risk of excluding specialised providers • Potential lack of flexibility and adaptability
Group by Geographical Area (Recommended to include as soft-lotting)	Divide the framework into groups based on geographical regions.	• Allows for targeted service delivery in specific areas • Encourages local providers participation • Facilitates better alignment to regional needs. • Best fit for what we know of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)	• Potential quality variation across regions • Potentially higher administrative burden to manage multiple regions. • Risk of regional disparities in service provision.
Group by Need Type (Recommended to include as soft-lotting)	Divide the contract into groups based on SEND needs categories.	• Supports specialised service delivery • Encourages providers with specific expertise to participate. • Facilitates better matching of services to individual requirements.	• Complex contract management • Potentially higher administrative burden to ensure consistency across groups. • Risk of fragmentation in service provision.
Group by Quality (Two Tiers) (Recommended for Lotting)	Divide the contract into two tiers based on quality thresholds: Strategic Partners and Approved Providers	• Prioritises high quality provision . • Allows for onboarding of providers that need development to meet demand on capacity • Facilitates quality improvement over time. • Reduce off-contract spend. • Peer support for approved providers delivered by Strategic partners. • Familiarity for the market.	• More complexity managing different quality levels. • Potentially higher administrative burden to monitor quality standards. • Risk of low quality provision in the Approved provider Lot.

Appendix 1: Options Appraisal

Aspect	Description	Benefits	Risks
Group by Quality (Three Tiers)	Divide the contract into three tiers based on quality thresholds: Strategic partners, Emerging partners and Development partners. The low threshold is for onboarding providers who do not yet meet requirements but require development. Clear exit or improvement criteria must be established for Tier C providers.	• Ensures high-quality providers are prioritised. • Supports market development and inclusion of SMEs. • Facilitates a structured approach to quality improvement through peer support and targeted contract management • Reduce the likelihood of off-contract spend.	• Greater complexity in managing different quality levels. • Higher administrative burden to monitor quality standards. • Risk of substandard provision within the lowest tier during the contract management and quality review cycle. Potential reputational risk if standards are not upheld – particularly against those that KCC continues to use and do not join the framework

General Considerations

Strategic Fit: Lotting by Need Type and Quality aligns with KCC's SEND service goals, promoting specialisation and continuous improvement.

Operational Delivery: Lotting by Geographical Area may be beneficial for localised delivery but requires robust oversight to ensure consistency.

Risk Management: Introducing quality thresholds helps mitigate off-contract spend and supports provider development, but demands strong governance

Additional lots: Another option to think about is using '*soft lotting'*. In addition to dividing the contract into lots, as above, we could keep it as a single framework but still apply some internal structure when it comes to how you actually use it. For example, we could group providers by region or specialism, this can support placements with higher quality provision. This gives the flexibility to respond to different needs and can complement the construction of more formalised lots.

The current DPS operates using lotting by quality (with two thresholds) and applies *soft lotting* by recording the primary need types supported and the geographical areas covered by each provider. Our placement model then interacts with these soft lots through a preference-based approach, prioritising suppliers on the higher quality threshold who can meet the identified needs and are located within a specified radius.

Lotting Recommendation: Lot by Quality (Two Tiers) with soft-lotting (Geographic location and Need type)

Adopting a Group by **Quality (Two Tiers)** approach offers a balanced and strategic framework that supports both quality assurance and market development. This model divides providers into *Strategic Partners* and *Approved Providers*, based on quality thresholds, and is already familiar to the market, making it more likely to encourage engagement and ensure sufficient supplier coverage on the Open Framework.

This approach prioritises high-quality provision while also enabling the onboarding of providers who may not yet meet the highest standards but show potential for development. Strategic Partners will be expected to support Approved Providers through peer-led improvement mechanisms, helping to raise overall standards across the framework. This not only strengthens the quality of provision but also reduces reliance on off-contract spend, ensuring more placements are made under agreeable terms to KCC.

To support placement decisions, we will work with Legal to explore the feasibility of using ***soft-lotting*** to collect information during the application process. Providers will be asked to specify:

- The need types they support
- The geographical locations of their schools

This mirrors Kent County Council's current approach under the DPS model and will feel familiar to existing providers. It will also ensure that children are placed in geographically appropriate settings where their specific needs can be met. Placement decisions will be guided by:

- The provider's declared capability and location
- Their quality tier, with priority given to those with stronger quality assurance

By maintaining this structure, we can ensure that:

- Strategic Partners are leveraged to support improvement across the market
- Approved Providers are given a pathway to develop and contribute meaningfully
- Children and young people are placed in suitable, high-quality settings close to home

This page is intentionally left blank

INMSS School Survey

11 June 2025 – 9 July 2025

Summary Analysis

Let's talk Kent



Appendix 2

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 2

Survey Overview 2

Key findings for Service Specification….....3

Appendix 1: Data Tables and Graphs …….5



Executive Summary

This report presents the findings from the Independent and Non-Maintained Special School (INMSS) sector survey conducted by Kent County Council. It identifies key themes including attendance, off-site provision, fee structures, environmental considerations, and collaborative practices. These insights are intended to inform the development of a future service specification and contracting framework.

Survey Overview

A survey was published on the Kent County Council Let's talk Kent website[1] seeking views of schools in the INMSS sector to help shape a service specification for a new contract for placement of Kent's children and young people with significant and/or complex needs

The survey was launched on 11 June 2025 and closed on 9 July 2025.

In total 22 responses were received in that period. This report provides a summary of responses collated which have been grouped into thematic categories. A breakdown of the number of responses is provided in Appendix 1.

The next section outlines the key findings from the survey responses.

[1] Non-Maintained Independent Special Schools - Market Engagement | Let's talk Kent

Key findings for Service Specification

1. Child-Centred, Flexible Provision

- Prioritise individualised approaches tailored to each pupil's needs, especially for those with SEND.
- Avoid rigid thresholds (e.g., 40% off-site limits) that may not suit complex cases.
- Enable bespoke interventions including therapy, alternative timetables, and off-site learning.

2. Integrated Multi-Agency Support

- Strengthen collaboration between education, health, and social care to address root causes of absence.
- Ensure timely and coordinated responses to emerging needs.
- Promote shared responsibility across agencies for complex learners.

3. Parental Engagement and Voice

- Respect and incorporate parental preferences in placement and EHCP decisions.
- Simplify communication using accessible, jargon-free language.
- Provide early and inclusive involvement in planning and reviews.

4. Diverse and Quality-Assured Off-Site Provision

- Support a wide range of off-site options: work experience, therapeutic services, outdoor learning, and alternative education providers.
- Ensure all provision is monitored, quality-assured, and aligned with EHCP outcomes.
- Recognise school-led and supervised off-site provision as part of the educational offer.

5. Financial Fairness and Sustainability

- Acknowledge financial pressures on independent schools (e.g., VAT, loss of reliefs).
- Avoid blanket fee reductions; instead, adopt tiered or outcome-based funding models.
- Provide funding for new initiatives where schools are expected to deliver additional services.

6. Systemic and Structural Improvements

- Reform the EHCP process to ensure accuracy, timeliness, and collaboration.
- Assign named LA contacts to schools for consistency and relationship-building.
- Establish a Strategic Collaboration Framework (e.g., Kent-Independent Schools SEN Alliance).

7. Innovation and Resource Efficiency

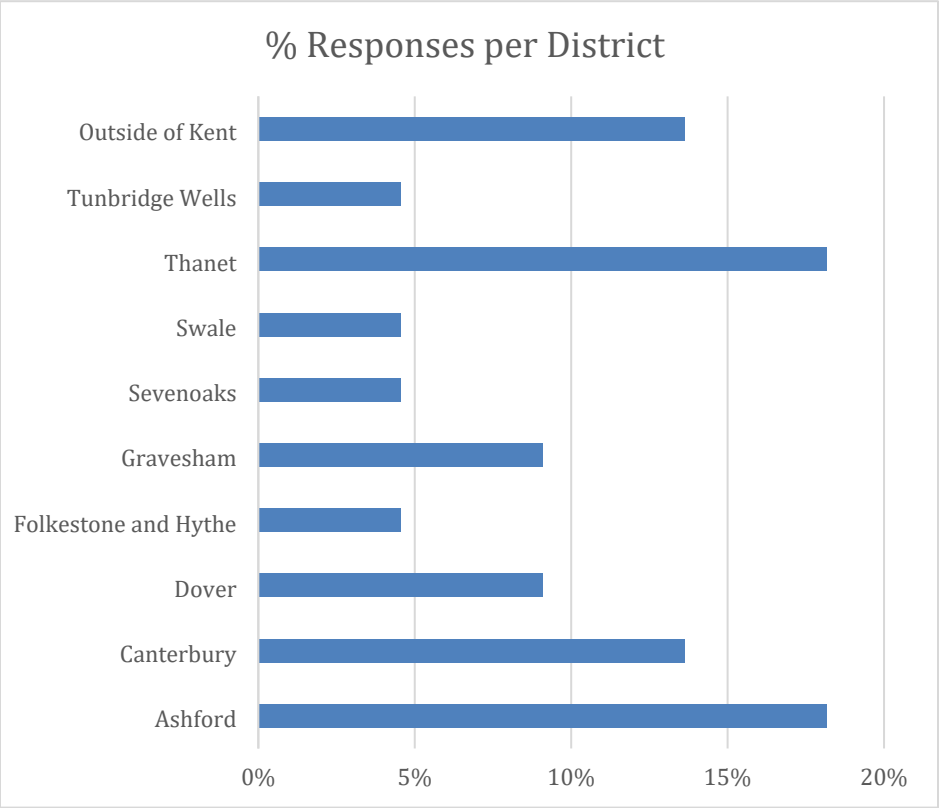
- Encourage cost-effective practices: resource sharing, energy efficiency, and effective use of staff skills.
- Support digital tools like a “Pupil Passport” for real-time tracking and early intervention.
- Promote community partnerships and outreach to extend impact.

8. Accountability and Responsiveness

- Improve response times for placement decisions and funding confirmations.
- Track and update caseworker information regularly.
- Ensure transparency and feedback loops in all interactions with schools and families.

Appendix 1: Data Tables and Graphs

Total number of responses – By district (including Schools Outside Kent)



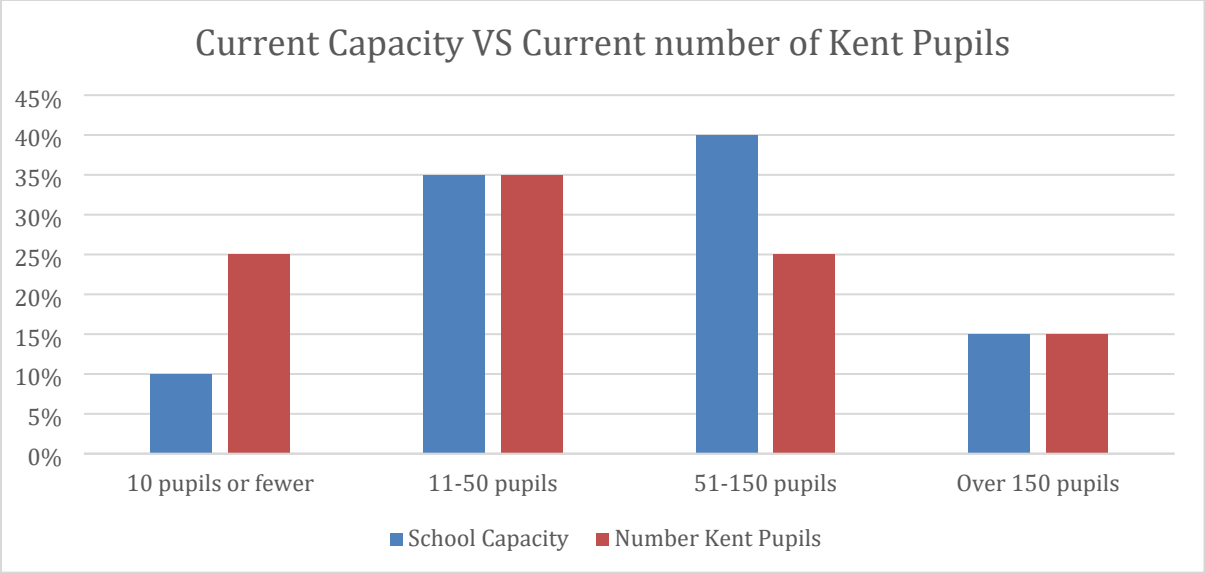
District	Number	%
Ashford	4	18%
Canterbury	3	14%
Dover	2	9%
Folkestone and Hythe	1	5%
Gravesham	2	9%
Sevenoaks	1	5%
Swale	1	5%
Thanet	4	18%
Tunbridge Wells	1	5%
Outside of Kent	3	14%
Total	22	

Total number of responses - by school capacity and current number of Kent pupils

What is the current capacity of your school?		
10 pupils or fewer	2	10%
11-50 pupils	7	35%
51-150 pupils	8	40%
Over 150 pupils	3	15%

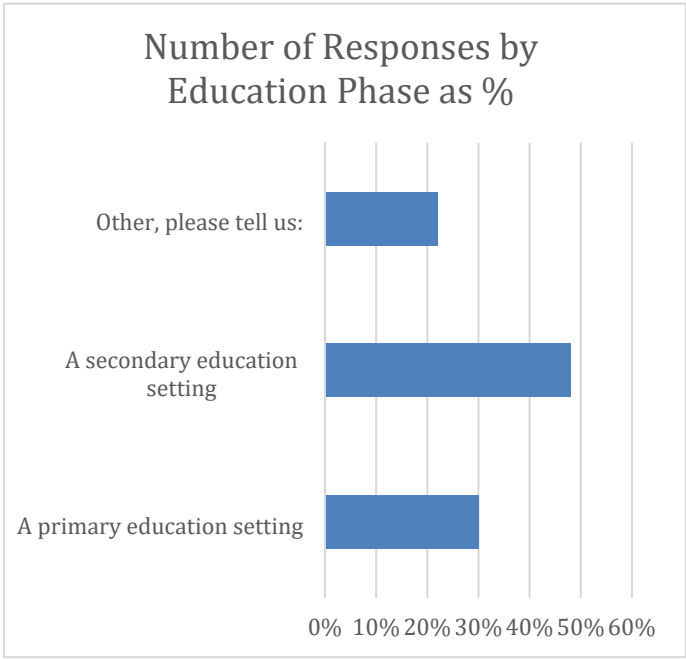
What is the current number of Kent pupils at your school?		
10 pupils or fewer	5	25%
11-50 pupils	7	35%
51-150 pupils	5	25%
Over 150 pupils	3	15%

Appendix 2



Total number of responses - by Education Phase

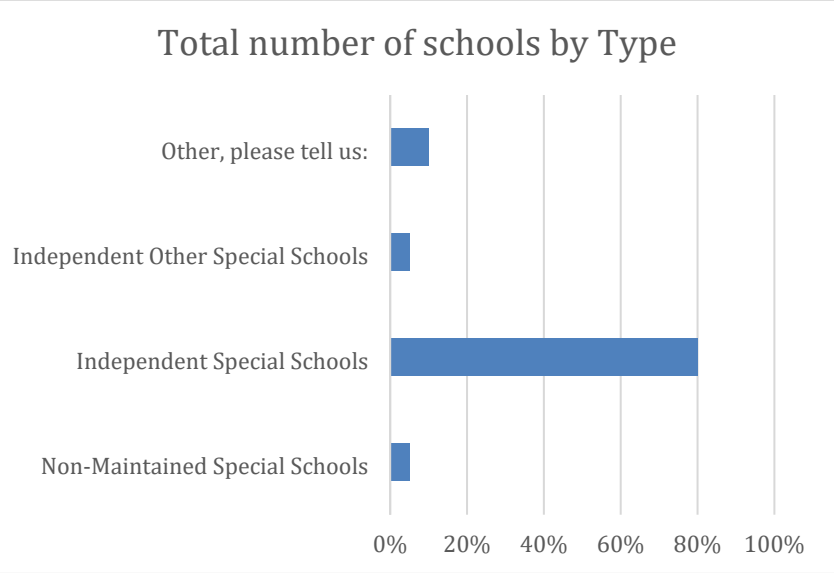
Are you a professional working in / with:		
A primary education setting	8	30%
A secondary education setting	13	48%
Other, please tell us:	6	22%



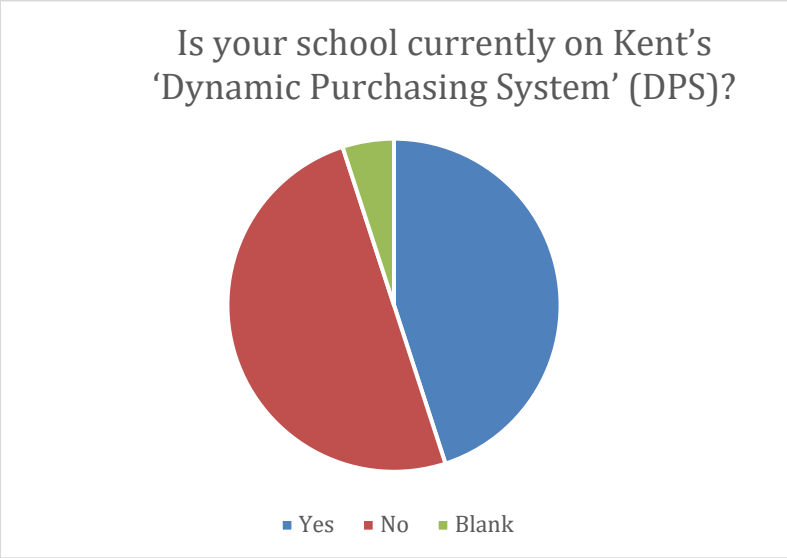
Appendix 2

Total number of responses - by School Type

Total number and percentage by School Type		
Non-Maintained Special Schools	1	5%
Independent Special Schools	16	80%
Independent Other Special Schools	1	5%
Other	2	10%



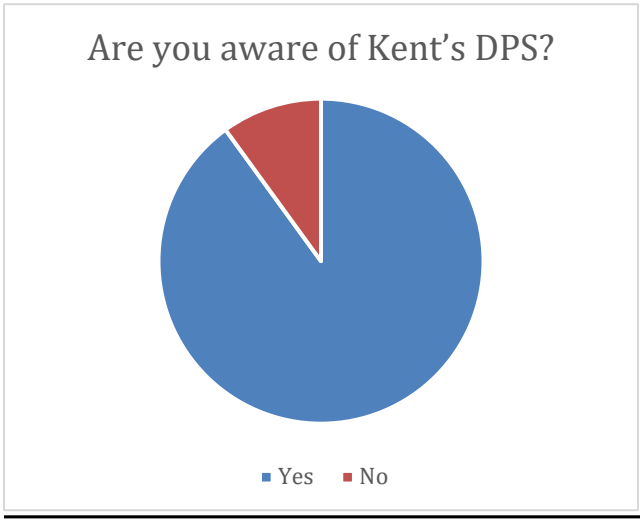
Total Number of responses - Breakdown by DPS/ non DPS



Is your school currently on Kent's 'Dynamic Purchasing System' (DPS)?		
Yes	9	45%
No	10	50%
Blank	1	5%

Appendix 2

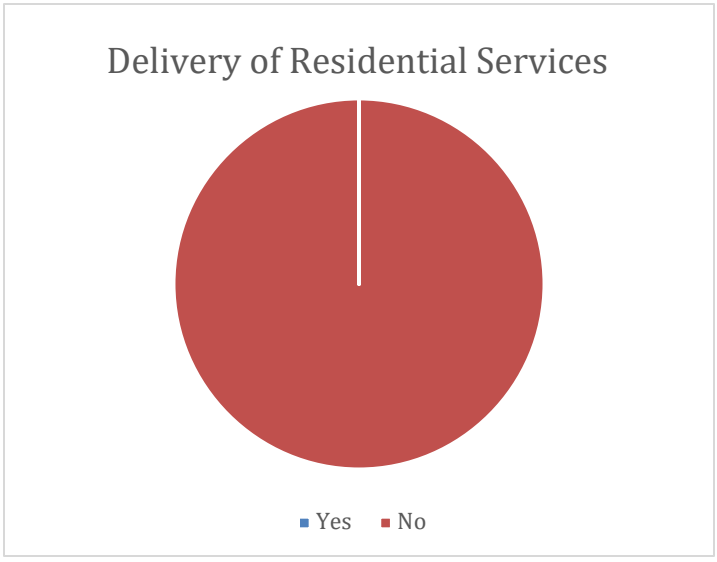
Summary of responses regarding schools' awareness of the Kent DPS Framework



Are you aware of Kent's DPS?		
Yes	9	90%
No	1	10%

Number and percentage of respondents that deliver residential services

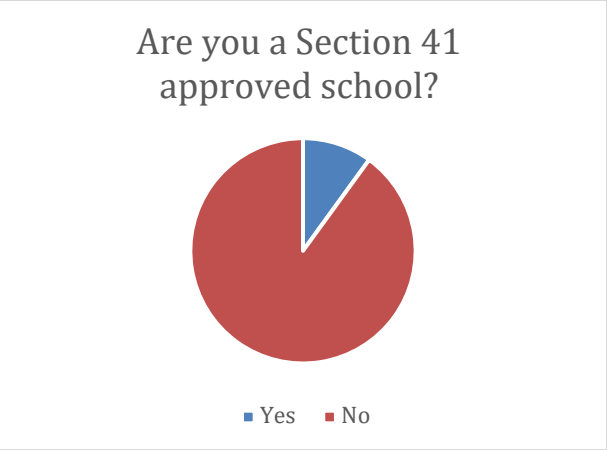
Delivery of Residential Services		
Yes	0	0%
No	20	100%



Appendix 2

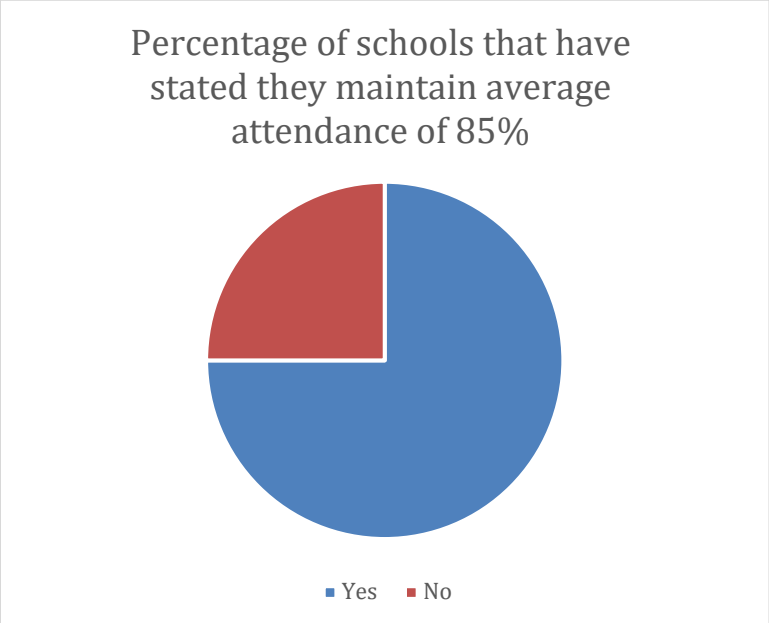
Respondent Breakdown: Section 41 vs Non-Section 41 Schools

Are you a Section 41 approved school?		
Yes	2	10%
No	18	90%



Number and Proportion of Schools Maintaining 85% Average Attendance

Do you currently maintain an average attendance of a minimum of 85% for the cohort of children and young people that you support?		
Yes	15	75%
No	5	25%

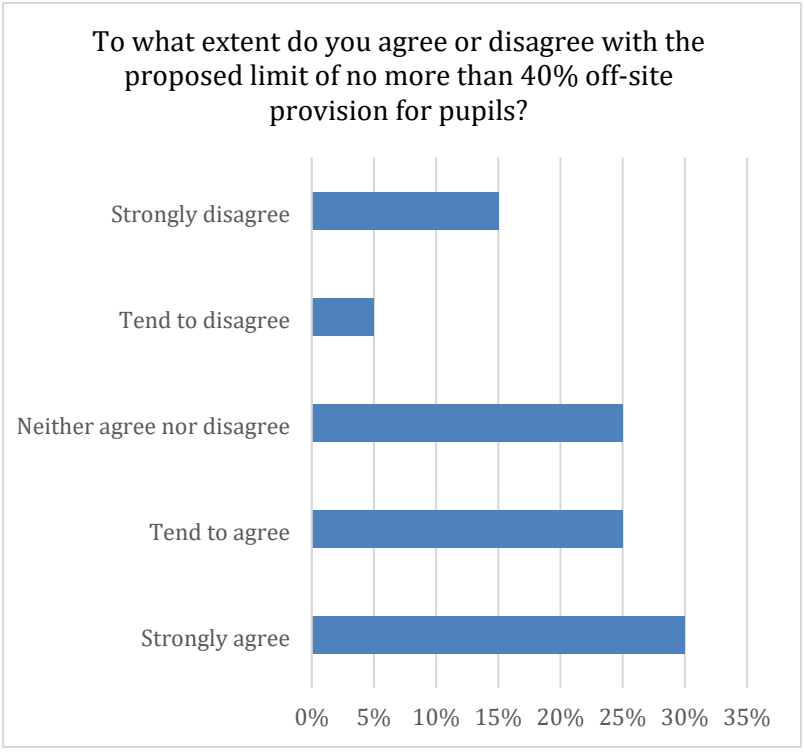


Appendix 2

Attendance Trends for Learners with Less Than 85% Attendance

Average Attendance
83%
73.79%
78%
79.2
0% - No pupils enrolled.

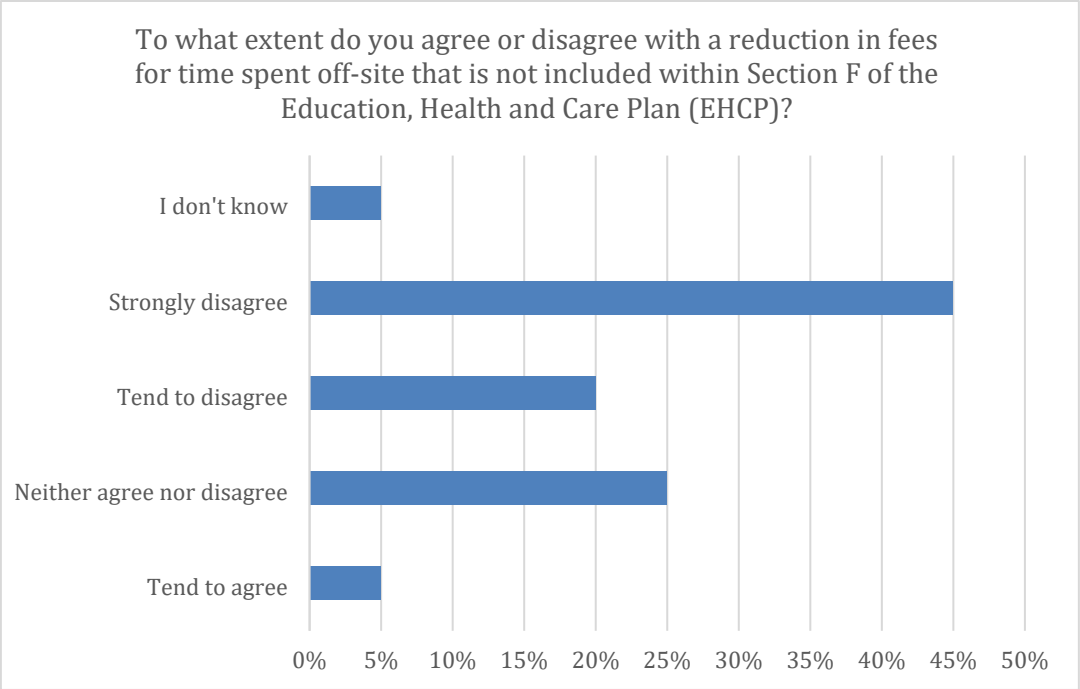
Stakeholder Views on the 40% Cap for Off-Site Pupil Provision

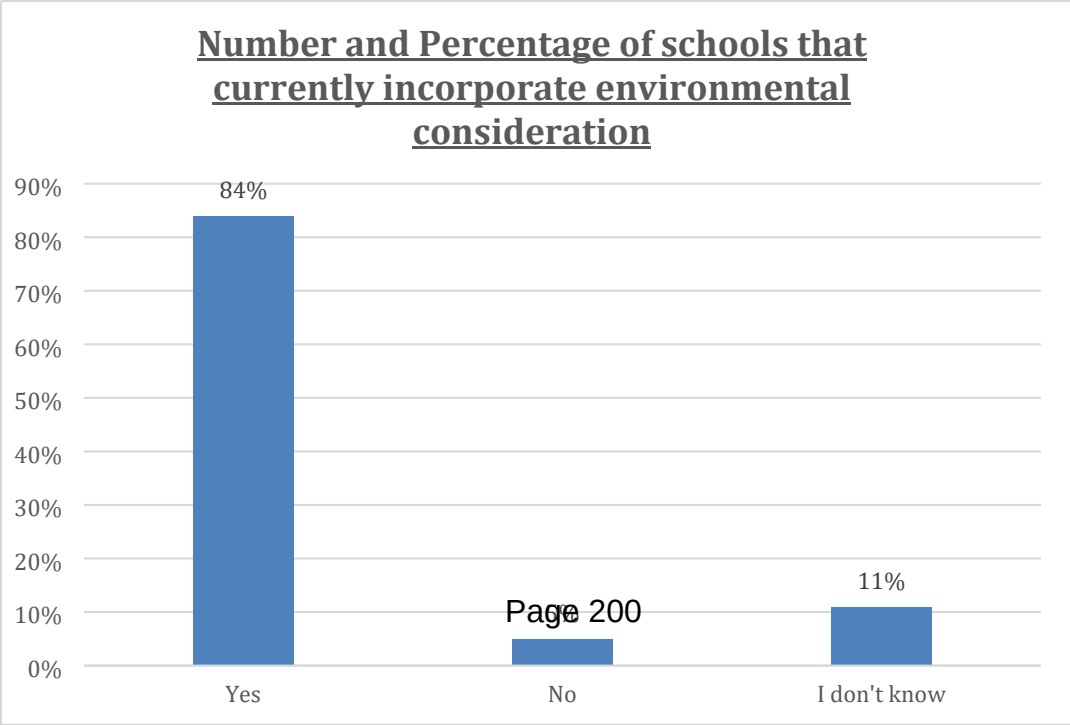


To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed limit of no more than 40% off-site provision for pupils?		
Strongly agree	6	30%
Tend to agree	5	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	5	25%
Tend to disagree	1	5%
Strongly disagree	3	15%

Appendix 2

Range of Opinions on Fee Reductions for Off-Site Support Not Included in Section F of EHCP



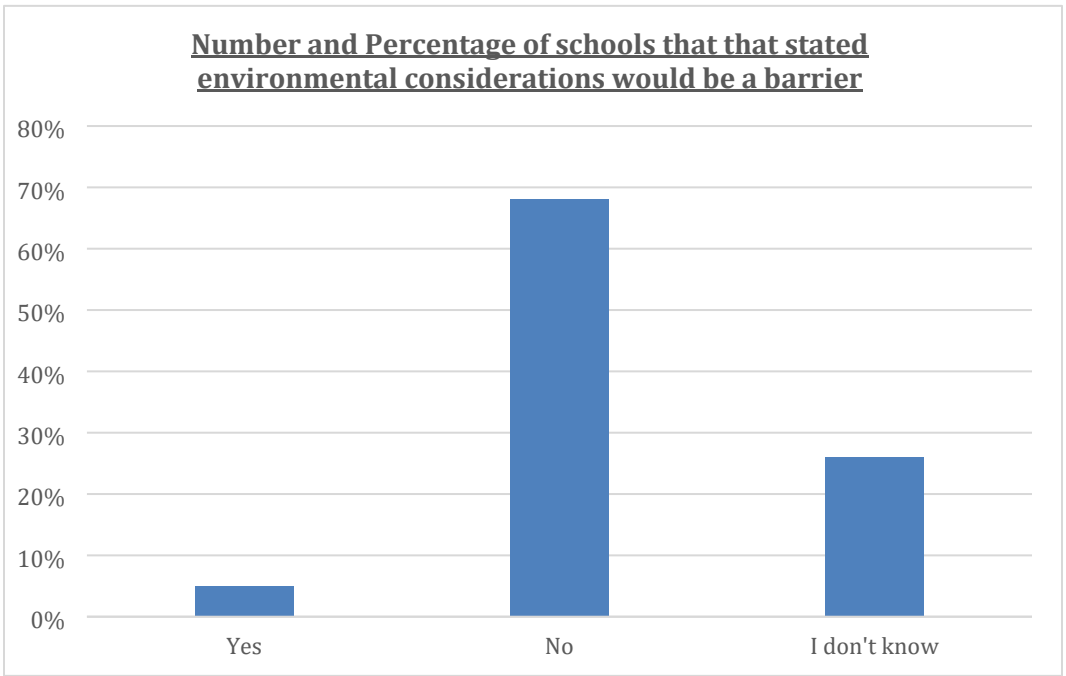


Pro por tio

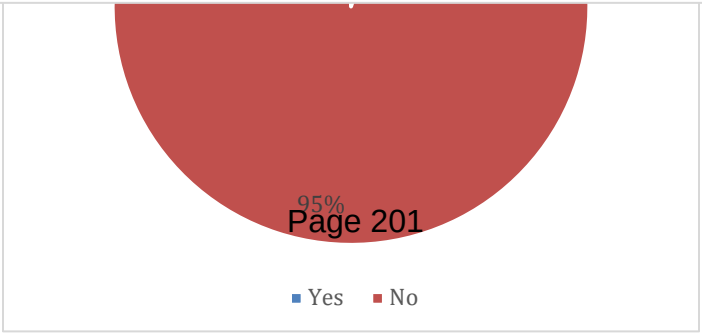
Appendix 2

n of Schools Incorporating Environmental Considerations

Proportion of schools that stated environmental considerations would be a barrier



responses to regarding

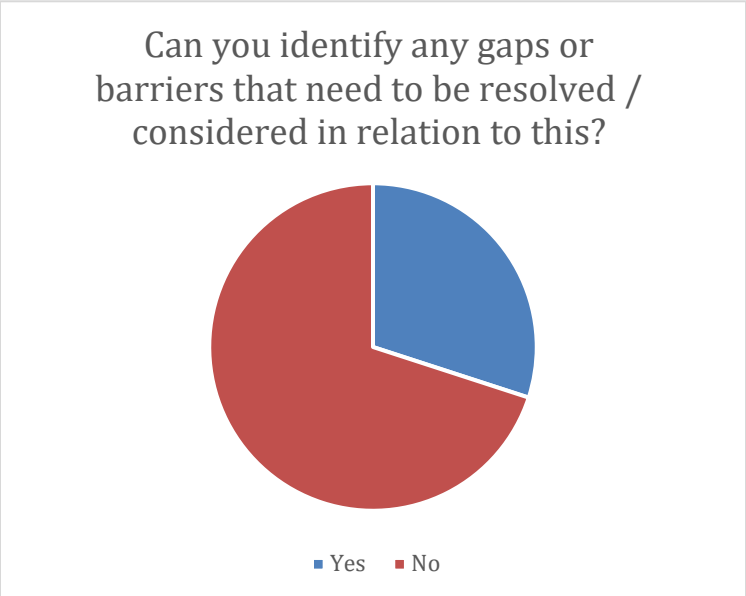


Proportion of the question

circumstances under which following the SEND Code of Practice cannot be applied

Extent to Which Respondents Identified Challenges in Following the SEND Code of Practice

Can you identify any gaps or barriers that need to be resolved / considered in relation to this?		
Yes	6	30%
No	14	70%



Blank Page

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 3

INMSS Stakeholder Engagement

Parent/Carer Focus Groups

and

Children and Young People Focus group

July 2025

Summary Feedback

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 2

Parent/Carer Focus Groups..... 2

Children and Young People's Outcomes Framework……..2

Children and Young People Focus Groups ……3

Key findings to inform Service Specification.....4

Primary Challenges ...……....5

Appendix 1: Table of Key Recommendations …….....6

Appendix 2: Stakeholder Engagement Facilitators ..……7

Executive Summary

This report presents insights from focus groups and interviews conducted with parents and carers of children attending Non-Maintained and Independent Special Schools (NMISS), as well as focus groups with a number of children and young people hosted at two independent special schools in Kent.

Whilst the findings highlights key issues and systemic challenges for these children and their families, it also highlights how supportive environments, personalised learning, with the right emotional and therapeutic support and meaningful engagement can help children with complex and significant needs to thrive and benefit from an inclusive education that meets their needs. These findings are intended to inform the development of a future service specification and contracting framework.

Parent/Carer Focus Groups

Parents/carers were invited to attend focus groups to discuss their experiences accessing services for their children at Non-Maintained and Independent Special Schools (NMISS) in Kent. Participant information was shared beforehand as well as a power point presentation providing background information about the research and why parents/carers were being invited to contribute their views and discuss NMISS services. This provided an opportunity for any questions or concerns to be addressed.

Five parents/carers participated in two focus groups, and three were interviewed individually. Discussions covered a range of topics including the Children and Young People’s Outcomes Framework, attendance, curriculum, communication, and access to SEND therapies. Participants shared detailed accounts of their children’s educational journeys, highlighting both positive experiences and systemic challenges.

Children and Young People’s Outcomes Framework

Parents identified several key aspects from the Children and Young People's Outcomes Framework as important for their children's education and positive school experience. Some parents initially struggled to select the most important items from the framework, stating that they were all key and very much age dependent. This response reflects a nuanced understanding of the interconnectedness of these factors in a child's educational and developmental journey. However, by considering their own perspectives, parents were able to prioritise them in the following way:



Parents/carers overwhelmingly emphasised the importance of their children's safety, happiness and quality of life. While other aspects of the framework were mentioned, such as learning and future prospects, these were secondary, with parents/carers explicitly stating their top priority was their child's happiness and wellbeing, even above academic achievements such as GCSEs.

Children and Young People Focus Groups

Focus groups were conducted at Small Haven School (Ramsgate) and Meadows School (Tunbridge Wells) on 17 and 21 July 2025. Participants included 31 young people aged 8 to 17. The discussions explored their experiences of school life, challenges, EHCP processes, and their vision for ideal education settings.

Key findings to inform Future Service Specification:

Based on the insights gathered from both focus groups, the following unified recommendations are proposed for the service specification:

1. **Plan for High Attendance**
   - Include strategies to address burnout, sleep issues, and lesson engagement.
   - Promote positive reinforcement, peer support, and family involvement.
2. **Curriculum**
   - Personalised, Flexible Learning
   - Pupil-led enrichment and flexible timetabling.
   - Include hobby-based learning and interest-driven curriculum options.
3. **Communication**
   - Maintain open and responsive channels of communication
   - Embed mechanisms for pupil and voice to be heard (e.g., feedback loops, student councils).
   - Include standards for pupil involvement in EHCP reviews and transparent communication.
   - Require schools to track and report how pupil voice influences EHCP implementation.
4. **SEN Therapies**
   - Integrated and proactive support/ therapies at point of need
   - Access to movement breaks, safe spaces, time-out strategies, and 1:1 mentoring.
   - Staff to be trained in trauma-informed and neurodiverse-friendly practices.
5. **Collaboration not isolation**
   - Effective collaboration and partnerships with external services (e.g., occupational health) enhance therapeutic outcomes.

Primary Challenges

1. **Exclusion from Mainstream Education**
    - **Negative Experiences**: Parents described mainstream schools as rigid, punitive, and lacking understanding of complex needs. Issues included reduced timetables, suspensions, and "shame-based" systems like traffic light behaviour charts.
2. **Finding Suitable Placements**
    - **Placement Uncertainty**: Securing appropriate post-16 education was a source of stress, compounded by personal challenges such as homelessness and health issues.
3. **Funding for SEN Therapies**
    - **Resource Gaps**: Parents reported delays and financial burdens in accessing diagnoses and therapies (e.g., for dyslexia, dyspraxia), with schools often stepping in to fill gaps.
4. **Navigating the SEN System**
    - **Emotional Toll**: The process of securing support was described as "stressful" and "emotionally draining," affecting pupils and parents alike.

Appendix 1: Table of Key Recommendations with direct quotes

1	**Small class size**	*"Small classes so that staff to pupil ratio is greater, so they can really know the children."*
2	**Location with outdoor space**	*"Small, rural settings. There's usually a forest school available or access to things like horse riding and animal therapy."*
3	**Shorter/flexible school day**	*"Shorter school days, functional curriculum."*
4	**Functional curriculum & child-led learning**	*"Flexible learning, but also an agile response on a daily basis, nurture groups as just part and parcel of how they do things."* *"Stage not age."*
5	**SEND staff training**	*"Expert SEMH skills and behaviour management."* *"The schools are able to pick it up and deliver some kind of support on the SLT side."*
6	**Whole family approach:**	*"And we had a conversation and then we put like little mini plans of action into place. So we're all [the family and the school] working holistically and on the same way to support him. So there's that consistency."* *"It's the nurturing family-like environment that's been really life-changing for her".*
7	**Knowledge sharing between provisions**	*"And for value for money…. If KCC really wants some benefit, they really need to look at the in-reach outreach with these specialist settings. They've got the knowledge they could engage with them more if they wanted to, but they just need the impetus to just go out and do it if they really want to do inclusion properly. And they really want to try and support more children in the classroom, and they need to get that specialist knowledge and share it with mainstreams."*

Appendix 2: Stakeholder Engagement Facilitators

Facilitator Name	Team	Engagement Type
Hannah Parathian	Kent Analytics	Parents/Carers Engagement
Mhairi Tynan	Children, Young People and Education Commissioning	Parents/Carers Engagement
Jamie Freeman	Participation and Engagement Team	Young People Engagement
Sarah Haigh	Participation and Engagement Team	Young People Engagement
Amy Nichols	Participation and Engagement Team	Young People Engagement
Claire Tanton	Participation and Engagement Team	Young People Engagement

DECISION REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER

From: Sarah Hammond, Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education

To: Beverley Fordham, Member for Education and Skills

Subject: Closure of current KCC CLS Apprenticeship Programme

Decision no: 25/0005

Key Decision: It affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: All

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary

This report outlines the proposal for the future of the apprenticeship function of Community, Learning and Skills given the continual financial losses being incurred. Also requested are the delegated authority to close the programme and seek alternative provision to ensure continuity for the learners currently engaged in their apprentices. Historical background explaining how this situation has culminated together with alternative options explored are included.

Recommendation(s):

That the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills consider the following proposal:

(a) Approve the closure of the KCC Community Learning and Skills (CLS) Apprenticeship Programme.
(b) Delegate authority to the Director of Education and SEN to finalise and implement the staffing and service delivery model required to support the closure of the KCC Community Learning and Skills (CLS) Apprenticeship Programme and ensure continuity of support for apprentices during the transition.
(c) Delegate authority to the Director of Education and SEN to take other necessary actions, including but not limited to finalising, entering into, concluding or managing any relevant contracts or other legal agreements, as required to implement this decision.

---

1. Introduction

1.1 The KCC Community Learning and Skills (CLS) Kent Training and Apprenticeships (KT&A) Apprenticeship provision works as a training provider with employers and apprentices to support completion of their apprenticeship. The Apprenticeship provision is funded separately to the Adult Skills Fund, through a mix of Levy funds held by the government and employer support, depending on the size of the business and the age of the apprentice

1.2 Whilst the quality of the provision is now graded good by Ofsted and it is achieving required standards in all areas on the DfE benchmarking portal, the service continues to deliver at a financial loss. As of 28th August 2025, there are only 36 apprentices on programme, 18 of whom are due to complete by the end of the calendar year, and it is expected to deliver at a direct loss of £90k during this financial year.

1.3 The proposed decision is to close the current provision and endeavour to relocate apprentices to other providers.

1.4 This proposal will not impact the KCC Levy or KCC's ability to use its Levy to support the completion of apprenticeships with other training providers. This will also not impact the 16-19 Study Programme provision.

2. Background

2.1 KCC's Community Learning and Skills (CLS) service has undergone significant changes following reforms to the Adult Skills Fund (ASF) by the Department for Education (DfE), effective from 1 August 2024, with further funding reductions of £521k confirmed from 1 August 2025. These changes prompted a strategic review of CLS services to ensure continued delivery of core skills to Kent residents within the revised funding framework, while maintaining financial viability.

2.2 As part of this response, a key decision (24/00046) was taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills in July 2024. That decision approved changes to the CLS delivery model to align with the new Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) contract arrangements. It focused specifically on services funded through the Adult Skills Fund and did not include the apprenticeship programme, which is funded separately.

2.3 The current proposal to close the CLS Apprenticeship Programme has been brought forward in light of ongoing financial losses and the increasing pressure that this non-statutory provision places on the wider CLS budget. The apprenticeship programme has not demonstrated financial viability and is now

being considered for closure to protect the sustainability of other essential CLS services.

2.4 The KCC CLS, Kent Training and Apprenticeships (KT&A), Apprenticeship Team has been acting as a training provider for over 30 years, supporting employers and their apprentices to achieve their apprenticeship. However, the service has not demonstrated financial viability in recent years with direct costs outweighing income.

2.5 The volume of frameworks and standards offered has significantly reduced over this period from offering over 30 programmes to the current offer of 6 apprenticeship standards in Business Administrator, Customer Service, Teaching Assistant and Early years.

2.6 A restructure of CLS Apprenticeships was undertaken in 2021, following December 2019 Ofsted inspection grading CLS apprenticeship provision as 'requires improvement'. The provision was also not meeting required minimum standards for success rates.

2.7 Following this Ofsted grading, an independent consultant provided detail on the areas that required improvement, however, due to the Covid pandemic the implementation of formal changes was delayed.

2.8 The consultation for restructure was entered into during August 2021 and had two key focuses; improve the quality of the apprentice's journey to ensure a timely achievement and reduce the number of programmes offered allowing focus and manageable caseloads.

2.9 To facilitate these changes, an apprentice recruitment freeze was implemented. Although this quality improvement focus has been successful with achievement rates and timely achievements significantly improved, recruitment of the volumes of apprentices required to maintain financially viable was impacted.

2.10 Further financial losses were reported in subsequent financial years triggering the decision to enter into a further consultation in September 2023.

2.11 This consultation had two key aims: to ensure the viability of the team including all staff associated costs and to bring the management of the sales team to within the Apprenticeship team management. The implementation of the new structure was intended to move the delivery of the programme to a position of small surplus from 2024/25 however, unforeseen workforce capacity constraints within the small in-house KCC CLS team have significantly impacted delivery.

2.12 As a result, deficits of £118k and £103k were reported for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years respectively. This trend is projected to continue in 2025/26 with losses of £89k forecast, raising concerns about the ongoing viability of the apprenticeship provision.

2.13 These deficits formed part of the CLS overspend in both 2023-24 and 2024-25 which has been funded from the Council's General Fund. The Council budgets to not subsidised the CLS service, expecting the service to be fully funded through the use of Government Grants or fees from courses.

2.14 In the current market, with the ongoing delays in roll-out of the Government funding changes across the apprenticeship provision and the savings being expected to be made across CLS to ensure this is not an ongoing cost to the Council's General Fund; it is no longer a workable option to continue to carry the financial burden of the KCC CLS apprenticeship scheme.

2.15 There are currently 36 active apprentices on programme, of which 4 are in their Apprenticeship Assessment and a further 20 are within their last 6 months of their apprenticeships.

Apprentices at 28 August 2025

Standard	Level	Total Number of Apprentices	Number due to enter assessment by 31/12/25	Number due to enter assessment after 1/1/26
Business Administrator	3	13	7	6
Customer Service Practitioner	2	10	7	3
Teaching Assistant	3	3	2	1
Early Years Practitioner	2	4	2	2
Early Years Educator	3	6	2	4
	TOTAL	36	20	16

3.18 Roles impacted within the apprenticeship team:

Roles		**FTE Total**
CEM Apprenticeships	KSJ	1FTE
AEM Employer Focused and Apprenticeships Ofsted Contact	KSG	1FTE
Tutors – Business Skills	KSF	2.2FTE
Tutors – Early Years & Schools	KSF	2.0FTE
Tutor – Wider Curriculum Resources	KSF	0.6FTE
Employer Adviser	KSE	1FTE
	Total	**7.8FTE**

3 Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

Option 2 – Scale down delivery team to current level of apprentices and regrow over time:
Reduce staff numbers through the diminution process to enable us to have sufficient staff to cover the current number of learners only and investigate the regrowth of the

provision in due course, reviewing the potential for future hiring using permanent relief contracts to create flexibility in staffing. This would enable us to retain a progression pathway for Supported Interns within the apprenticeships that we offer. There would be a real challenge if any staff were absent or left as there would be no capacity to pick up their work. With the number of apprentices on programme continuing to reduce and two apprenticeship restructures having already been undertaken to shape Apprenticeships effectively without bringing about the required outcome, the risks associated with a further restructure required were considered too great.

Option 3 - Do nothing:
CLS Apprenticeships continue to deliver the apprenticeship programmes, whilst exploring opportunities to deliver other apprenticeship standards and Work Based Training programmes or associated employer focussed delivery with ASF Core and Tailored learning funding. This would not be viable as it would require financial support from other streams of income for CLS/KCC. A decision to reduce focus on other CLS ASF delivery has already been approved and is presently being consulted on.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 The Apprenticeship programme is funded by a contract from the DfE on an earnings per learner basis. KCC CLS is expected to deliver within the funding provided by central government contracts and fees, aiming for at least breaking even, and not being subsidised by the Council's General Fund.

4.2 Due to recent changes to the contract rules and reductions in the contract value, the service has had to review all its services to ensure future financial sustainability within the confines of the central government funding conditions.

4.3 Attempts to ensure the apprenticeship programme can be delivered within the grant funding available (in 2024-25 this totalled £157k) has not been possible, and a shortfall is expected to continue in future years.

4.4 In the past, KCC CLS had subsidised the ongoing running of this apprenticeship service from the fees that the service has been able to charge but due to wider changes in adults skills funding this is no longer possible and so it has now become a pressure on the Council's General Fund.

4.5 During the 24/25 academic year, CLS has drawn funding of £157k for apprenticeship delivery. The direct costs of delivery are detailed below:

Cost heading	**25/26 Budget £**
Tutor/Assessors/IQA	172,020
Area Education manager	4,271
Employer advisor	39,515

Exams	26,000
Non-pay	5,000
TOTAL direct costs	**£246,806**

4.6 Whilst a decision to cease delivering the apprenticeship programme would reduce direct costs by £247k, the loss of the income earned from the programme of £157k creates a net avoided cost or saving of £90k.

4.7 Additionally, it is anticipated that this would also contribute towards releasing capacity and improve efficiency of teams that work across the whole service.

4.8 These savings are likely to be staged whilst alternative solutions are found for on-programme learners as staff will need to be retained to teach and support learners whilst the programme is wound down.

4.9 There will be one off cost-of-change expenditure in relation to redundancy payments and premature retirement charges which are payable directly by KCC CLS. These are estimated to be approximately £78k redundancy and £59k premature retirement. These costs effectively remove the savings made in year one but enable the savings in future years.

5 Legal implications

5.1 There is no statutory obligation for the council to deliver an Apprenticeship scheme and it is therefore deemed to be a discretionary service. The Council's statutory obligation is to ensure compliance with the duty provided by s. 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This obligation is an "have regard to" duty for what is a public function. So, the Council must consider, identifying protected characteristics, assess any disproportionate impact on individuals or groups with protected characteristics, demonstrate due regard, provide justification and consider any reasonable adjustments.

6 Equalities implications

6.1 The EqIA conducted by CLS, has identified that the closure of the apprenticeship programme will have a number of impacts on those with protected characteristics. These have been identified as:

- Change to provider offering the apprenticeship. Mitigation would be to outrun apprenticeship if a suitable alternative couldn't be identified.
- Fewer opportunities to undertake apprenticeships. Mitigation would be provided by signposting to alternative learning providers (e.g. colleges / independent training providers) and the promotion of other learning opportunities such as Foundation Apprenticeships for those aged 16-19, Bootcamps, Advanced Learner Loans and Work-based Learning to those aged 19+
- With 91% of CLS's apprentices being aged 23 years or younger at the start of their programme, younger people will be more affected by the changes

proposed. There should, however, be other opportunities available through other providers in the County.

- On average 24% of our apprentices are male, therefore those identifying as female would be greater impacted by the changes suggested. There should, however, be opportunities available through other providers across the County.

6.2 The positive impacts of the closure include:

- Reduce the financial reliance on other funding streams to fund gaps in income and therefore reduce potential Adult Skills Fund funding rules breach.
- Less competition amongst Kent training providers supporting better joined-up working.

7 Data Protection Implications

7.1 There are no data protection implications arising directly from the decision requested within this paper. However, in the event that apprentices transfer to an alternative training provider, data sharing agreements will be instigated to ensure that learner data is protected.

8 Other corporate implications

8.1 Virtual Schools Kent - Kent Training and Apprenticeships offer apprenticeships to a small number of care leavers. The first of these learners has recently completed achieving distinctions across all assessments. Other appropriate apprenticeship provision will have to be found to support care leavers in future.

9 Governance

9.1 Delegate authority to the Director of Education and SEN to finalise and implement the staffing and service delivery model required to support the closure of the KCC Community Learning and Skills (CLS) Apprenticeship Programme and ensure continuity of support for apprentices during the transition.

9.2 Delegate authority to the Director of Education and SEN to take other necessary actions, including but not limited to finalising, entering into, concluding or managing any relevant contracts or other legal agreements, as required to implement this decision.

10 Conclusions

The proposed decision is to close the current KCC CLS Apprenticeship Provision. This recommendation is based on sustained financial losses, which KCC CLS is no longer able to absorb. Continuing the delivery of the apprenticeship programme is not financially viable and closure is therefore the necessary course of action to ensure responsible financial management.

Recommendation(s):

That the Cabinet Member consider the following proposal:

(a) Approve the closure of the KCC Community Learning and Skills (CLS) Apprenticeship Programme.
(b) Delegate authority to the Director of Education and SEN to finalise and implement the staffing and service delivery model required to support the closure of the KCC Community Learning and Skills (CLS) Apprenticeship Programme and ensure continuity of support for apprentices during the transition.
(c) Delegate authority to the Director of Education and SEN to take other necessary actions, including but not limited to finalising, entering into, concluding or managing any relevant contracts or other legal agreements, as required to implement this decision.

10. Background Documents

DfE Funding Rules 2025/26. *Please note these are the 25/26 rules but have the wrong title on DfE website*: **Apprenticeship funding rules 2023 to 2024**

11. Appendices

1) EqIA

12. Contact details

Report Author: Jude Farrell Job title: Head of Community Learning and Skills Telephone number: 07786 191551 Email address: jude.farrell@kent.gov.uk	Director: Christine McInnes Job title: Director of Education and SEN Telephone number: 03000 418913 Email address: Christine.McInnes@kent.gov.uk

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NUMBER:
Beverley Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	25/00056

For publication

Key decision: Yes

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Closure of current KCC CLS Apprenticeship Programme

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree to:

(a) Approve the closure of the CLS apprenticeship programme.
(b) Delegate authority to the Director of Education and SEN to finalise and implement the staffing and service delivery model required to support the closure of the KCC Community Learning and Skills (CLS) Apprenticeship Programme and ensure continuity of support for apprentices during the transition.
(c) Delegate authority to the Director of Education and SEN to take other necessary actions, including but not limited to finalising, entering into, concluding or managing any relevant contracts or other legal agreements, as required to implement this decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

Community, Learning & Skills (CLS) has seen significant funding changes to the Adults Skills Fund (ASF) by the Department for Education (DfE) from 1st August 2024, followed by confirmation of funding cuts of £521k from 1st August 2025. These changes have required CLS to undertake significant review of its services so as to ensure it continues to deliver vital core skills to the residents of Kent within the new terms of its funding contract with the DfE and at the same time to remain financially viable. The apprenticeship programme was not part of this initial review as it had focussed on changes to meet the new 'Adult Skills Fund' requirements. However, following the more recent funding cuts as above, the programme has now been reviewed.

KCC CLS Apprenticeship programme has been subject to two separate restructures over the last 5 years, the first following an Ofsted 'Requires Improvement' grade in 2019, with a second trying to move the apprenticeship provision to a financially viable position by restructuring the staff and reducing the offer. Whilst the quality of the provision is now graded good by Ofsted and is achieving required standards in all areas on the DfE benchmarking portal, the service continues to deliver at a financial loss. At present there are 36 apprentices on the programme, and it is expected to deliver at a loss of £89k during this financial year.

Whilst this area was not previously prioritised as an area of further change, current financial pressures require revised consideration of how best to allocate limited resources. Continuing this service without an ongoing commitment by the Council to subsidise this non-statutory service is not sustainable without it potentially impacting on other essential areas/ services within CLS.

Opportunities to move existing apprentices to complete their apprenticeships with other local providers is in the process of being explored. CLS has seen a growth in external training providers to meet demand. Initial conversations with other Medway Authority and the 3 Kent FE colleges have been undertaken and Kent Association of Training Organisations has also been approached to identify suitable Independent Training Providers. If suitable alternative provision cannot be found individual apprentices will be outrun through CLS.

The proposed decision is to close the current provision and endeavour to relocate apprentices to other providers.

This will not impact the KCC Levy or KCC's ability to use its Levy to support the completion of apprenticeships with other training providers. This will also not impact the 16-18 Kent Training and Apprenticeships Study Programme provision.

Background

A restructure of CLS Apprenticeships was undertaken in 2021, following 2019 Ofsted inspection grading CLS apprenticeship provision as 'requires improvement'. The provision was also not meeting required minimum standards for success rates.

During this restructure, a number of Apprenticeship Standards were removed from the offer with the main areas retained being Early Years, Teaching Assistant, Customer Services and Business Administration. All of these are also offered by other quality providers across Kent.

The implementation of the new structure was intended to move the delivery of the programme to a position of small surplus in years 2024-2025 and onwards, however due to multiple factors, delivery volumes have been significantly impacted. As a result, a deficit of £103,446 was recorded in 2024/25, with a projected shortfall continuing in 2025/26, raising concerns about the ongoing viability of the apprenticeship provision. These deficits formed part of the CLS overspend in 2024-25 and have been funded from the Council's General Fund. The Council has previously not subsidised the CLS service, expecting the service to be fully funded through the use of Government Grants or fees from courses.

In the current market, with the ongoing delays in roll-out of the Government funding changes across the apprenticeship provision and the savings being expected to be made across CLS to ensure this is not an ongoing cost to the Council's General Fund; it is no longer a workable option to continue to carry the financial burden of the KCC CLS apprenticeship scheme.

Over the last 12 months, recruitment of new apprentices has been too slow, showing a continued downward trend in numbers on programme, a total of 26 against a target of 48. Additionally, funding from the DfE for apprenticeships has not kept pace with rises in costs. The total number of KCC staff directly involved in the apprenticeship programme is 7.80 FTE. Increases to the funding of apprenticeship standards are expected with the first £2,000 per learner increase being seen for the Teaching Assistant and Early Years Educator Standards, but the awaited uplift for Business Administrator and Customer Service Practitioner are long overdue. The Customer Service Practitioner attracts funding of £3,500 per learner, and it has been static since 2017. With the increase in staffing costs since its inception, this barely breaks even to allow for the level of support required for this vital stepping stone apprenticeship into customer-based organisations. The long-awaited Level 2 Assistant Administration has also been delayed further due to the changes implemented in this year's funding rules and is now anticipated to commence in the Autumn of 2025.

The proposed decision is to close the current CLS Apprenticeship Provision due to sustained financial losses. CLS is unable to continue to cover the losses due to changes to the Adult Skills Fund and cuts to their available funding.

How the proposed decision supports Framing Kent's Future

The changes will support KCC's ambitions by:

- Ensuring that CLS funding is utilised to support key priorities including Study Programmes for young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) including those with Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs) and Family Learning.
- Ensuring that current apprentices are either supported by CLS until their achievement or by transferring them to other training providers for future support.

How the proposed decision supports Securing Kent's Future

Implementing the proposals will contribute towards Objective 3 of Securing Kent's Future:

Implementing the proposals will contribute towards Objective 3 of Securing Kent's Future:

- The closure of the apprenticeship provision of KCC CLS service, will aim to support the service to return to a self-funded model of delivery within 2 years and achieve financial sustainability in the longer term (recognising there will be a short-term pressure whilst this transformation takes place).

Financial Implications

The Apprenticeship programme is funded by a contract from the DfE on an earnings per learner basis.

KCC CLS is expected to deliver within the funding provided by central government contracts and fees, aiming for at least breaking even, and not being subsidised by the Council's General Fund. Due to recent changes to the contract rules and reductions in the contract value, the service has had to review all its services to ensure future financial sustainability within the confines of the central government funding conditions. Attempts to ensure the apprenticeship programme can be delivered within the grant funding available (in 2024-25 this totalled £157k) has not been possible, and a shortfall is expected to continue in future years.

In the past, KCC CLS had subsidised the ongoing running of this apprenticeship service from the fees that the service has been able to charge but due to wider changes in adults skills funding this is no longer possible and so it has now become a pressure on the Council's General Fund. During the 24/25 academic year, CLS has drawn funding of £157k for apprenticeship delivery. The direct costs of delivery are detailed below:

Cost heading	**25/26 Budget £**
Tutor/Assessors/IQA	172,020
Area Education manager	4,271
Employer advisor	39,515
Exams	26,000
Non-pay	5,000
TOTAL direct costs	**£246,806**

Whilst a decision to cease delivering the apprenticeship programme would reduce direct costs by £247k, the loss of the income earned from the programme of £157k creates a net saving of £90k. Additionally, it is anticipated that this would also contribute towards releasing capacity and improve efficiency of teams that work across the whole service. These savings are likely to be staged whilst

alternative solutions are found for on-programme learners as staff will need to be retained to teach and support learners whilst the programme is wound down.

The proposal is intended to avoid an ongoing requirement of funding from the Council's General Fund to subsidise the programme. There will be one off cost-of-change expenditure in relation to redundancy payments and premature retirement charges which are payable directly by KCC CLS. These are estimated to be approximately £78k redundancy and £59k premature retirement. These costs effectively remove the savings made in year one but enable the savings in future years.

Legal Implication

There is no statutory obligation for the council to deliver an Apprenticeship scheme, and it is therefore deemed to be a discretionary service. The Council's statutory obligation is to ensure compliance with the duty provided by s. 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This obligation is an "have regard to" duty for what is a public function. So, the Council must consider, identifying protected characteristics, assess any disproportionate impact on individuals or groups with protected characteristics, demonstrate due regard, provide justification and consider any reasonable adjustments.

.**Equalities Implications**

The EqIA conducted by CLS, has identified that the closure of the apprenticeship programme will have a number of impacts on those with protected characteristics. These have been identified as:

- Change to provider offering the apprenticeship. Mitigation would be to outrun apprenticeship if a suitable alternative couldn't be identified.
- Fewer opportunities to undertake apprenticeships. Mitigation would be provided by signposting to alternative learning providers (e.g. colleges / independent training providers) and the promotion of other learning opportunities such as Foundation Apprenticeships for those aged 16-19, Bootcamps, Advanced Learner Loans and Work-based Learning to those aged 19+
- With 91% of CLS's apprentices being aged 23 years or younger at the start of their programme, younger people will be more affected by the changes proposed. There should, however, be other opportunities available through other providers in the County.
- On average 24% of our apprentices are male, therefore those identifying as female would be greater impacted by the changes suggested. There should, however, be opportunities available through other providers across the County.

The positive impacts of the closure include:

- Reduce the financial reliance on other funding streams to fund gaps in income and , therefore, reduce potential Adult Skills Fund funding rules breach.
- Less competition amongst Kent training providers supporting better joined-up working.

DPIA

There are no data protection implications arising directly from the decision requested within this paper. However, in the event that apprentices transfer to an alternative training provider, data sharing agreements will be instigated to ensure that learner data is protected.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

Any alternatives considered:

Option 2 – Scale down delivery to current level of apprentices and regrow over time:
Reduce staff numbers through the diminution process to enable us to have sufficient staff to cover the current number of learners only and investigate the regrowth of the provision in due course, reviewing the potential for future hiring using permanent relief contracts to create flexibility in staffing. This would enable us to retain a progression pathway for Supported Interns within the apprenticeships that we offer. With the number of apprentices on programme continuing to reduce and two apprenticeship restructures having already been undertaken, the risks of further future reductions being required were considered too great.

Option 3 - Do nothing:
CLS Apprenticeships continue to deliver the apprenticeship programmes, whilst exploring opportunities to deliver other apprenticeship standards and Work Based Training programmes or associated employer focussed delivery with ASF Core and Tailored learning funding. This would not be viable as it would require financial support from other streams of income for CLS/KCC. A decision to reduce focus on other CLS ASF delivery has already been approved and is to be consulted on from early September.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

.....
signed

.....
date

This page is intentionally left blank

EQIA Submission – ID Number
Section A

EQIA Title
CLS Kent Training and Apprenticeships - Apprenticeship Provision

Responsible Officer
Janice Denyer - CY EDSEN

Approved by (Note: approval of this EqIA must be completed within the EqIA App)
Jude Farrell - CY EDSEN

Type of Activity

Service Change
Service Change

Service Redesign
No

Project/Programme
No

Commissioning/Procurement
No

Strategy/Policy
No

Details of other Service Activity
No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate
Children Young People and Education

Responsible Service
Community Learning and Skills

Responsible Head of Service
Jude Farrell - CY EDSEN

Responsible Director
Christine McInnes - CY EDSEN

Aims and Objectives

Funding changes by the Department for Education (DfE) / Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) came into effect from 1st August 2024 with a subsequent cut in CLS funding of £521k announced in March 2025 and implemented from 1st August 2025. These changes have required CLS to undertake significant reform to ensure it continues to deliver vital core skills to the residents of Kent and remain within the new terms of the funding contract and to remain financially viable. The apprenticeship programme was not included in previous reform which focussed on the funding changes to the 'Adult Skills Fund' provision.

KCC CLS Apprenticeship provision has been subject to two restructures over the last 5 years, the first following an Ofsted 'Requires Improvement' grade, with a second trying to move the apprenticeship provision to a viable position. Whilst the quality of the provision is now good in all areas, the department continues to deliver at a loss. At present there are 44 apprentices on programme and it is expected to deliver at a loss of £76160k during this financial year.

Whilst this area was not previously prioritised as an area of further change, current pressures require revised consideration of how best to allocate limited resources. Continuing to provide a non-viable, non-statutory service is no longer sustainable without it impacting other essential areas/ services
Opportunities to move existing apprentices to complete their apprenticeships with other local providers

will be explored.

The proposed decision is to close the provision and endeavour to relocate apprentices to other providers.

Closing the Apprenticeship provision would require the exploration of other external provisions who would be able to accept partially completed apprentices. Staff costs could be reduced in the short-term through diminution, but this runs the usual risk of staff leaving in the meantime.

The EQIA will review the impact on both current staff, employers and apprentices.

Section B – Evidence

Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?

Yes

It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?

Yes

Is there national evidence/data that you can use?

No

Have you consulted with stakeholders?

No

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?

Whilst we have not consulted specifically regarding the closure of the current provision, as we would not wish to cause stress or panic, we have engaged with tutors and employer adviser regarding viability and increasing new employer engagement over the past 18 months.

Tutors – engaged through conversation regarding viability and requesting input and suggestions to increase employer engagement.

Employer Adviser – engaged through conversations to increase the number of employer partnerships over the past 18 months

Skills England– regarding the proposed increase in funding bands for apprenticeships and the introduction of a new Level 2 Administration Assistant Apprenticeship Standard.

Employers - to engage regarding their potential future needs and how these can be accommodated.

Department of Education - regarding the reduction in provision and how the roll-off of apprenticeships will be managed.

Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?

Yes

Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?

Yes

Section C – Impact

Who may be impacted by the activity?

Service Users/clients

Service users/clients

Staff

Staff/Volunteers

Residents/Communities/Citizens

Residents/communities/citizens

Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?

Yes

Details of Positive Impacts

- Reduce the financial reliance on other funding streams to fund gaps in income and , therefore, reduce potential Adult Skills Fund funding rules breach.
- Less competition amongst Kent providers supporting better joined-up working.

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions

19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age

Are there negative impacts for age?

Yes

Details of negative impacts for Age

•Staff - whilst data has not been available due to the small levels of staffing and the potential of identifying individuals, I can confirm that the team's ages range from early 30's to early 70's with some staff continuing to work past the State Pension Age, which could cause difficulties in locating suitable redeployment.

Apprentices -

Age	16-18	19-23	24+
% of provision	43.59%	47.44%	8.97%

Moving to a new provision mid-Standard can be disruptive for the individual due to the lack of consistency across the different provisions. This may impact different-aged apprentices in different ways. In experience it is often the youngest and oldest apprentices that struggle with change.

Employers - unknown

Mitigating Actions for Age

Staff - there are other training providers and educational settings across the County where staff can transfer their skills

Apprentices - apprentices will be reviewed on an individual basis to ensure they are offered the best support to ensure a positive achievement of their apprenticeship.

Employers - some employers have worked with us for many years; we will support them in locating new provisions.

Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age

Janice Denyer

20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability

Are there negative impacts for Disability?

Yes

Details of Negative Impacts for Disability

Staff - whilst data has not been available due to the small levels of staffing and the potential of identifying individuals, I can confirm that approximately 12% of the team consider to have a disability and 36% of the team have reasonable adjustments in place, which could impact on them finding suitable employment

Apprentices -
19% consider themselves to have a disability
81% do not consider themselves to have a disability

Adjusting to a new tutor and training provider could have a negative impact on their ability to achieve a successful apprenticeship outcome.

Employers – unknown

Mitigating actions for Disability

Staff - support will be implemented to prepare for a change in employment

Apprentices - apprentices will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to ensure the correct decision is made on whether they complete with KTA or a new provider.

Employer - unknown

Responsible Officer for Disability

Janice Denyer

21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex

Are there negative impacts for Sex

Yes - Add details of the negative impacts and mitigations.

Details of negative impacts for Sex

Staff - whilst data has not been available due to the small levels of staffing and the potential of identifying individuals, I can confirm that approximately 22% of the team identify as male. Therefore, those identifying as female would be more greatly impacted by the changes suggested.

Apprentices - 77% of the apprentices identify as being female, indicating that females will be impacted more.

Mitigating actions for Sex

Opportunities should be available through other providers across the County

Responsible Officer for Sex

Janice Denyer

22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender

Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender

No. Note: If Question 22a is "No", Questions 22b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval

Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender

Not Completed

Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender

Not Completed

Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender

Not Completed

23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race

Are there negative impacts for Race

No. Note: If Question 23a is "No", Questions 23b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval

Negative impacts for Race

Not Completed

Mitigating actions for Race

Not Completed

Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race

Not Completed

24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief
No. Note: If Question 24a is "No", Questions 24b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Religion and belief
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief
Not Completed
25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
No. Note: If Question 25a is "No", Questions 25b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Completed
26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
No. Note: If Question 26a is "No", Questions 26b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Completed
27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
No. Note: If Question 27a is "No", Questions 27b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Completed
28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
Yes - Add details of the negative impacts and mitigations.
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
Staff - KCC offer flexible working and the ability to manage own diary around working from home, which may not be available in other work settings.
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
None
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities

From: **Christine McInnes, Interim Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education**

To: **Beverley Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills**

Subject: **Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026-30**

Decision Number and Title **– 25/00099**

Key decision:

- *It involves expenditure or savings of maximum £1m*
- Affects two or more Electoral Divisions

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: N/A

Summary: This report provides the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee with the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026-30 for consideration.

Recommendation(s):
The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills for proposed decision (25/00099**)** Proposed Decision as set out in Appendix A.
.

1. Introduction

1.1 Kent County Council (KCC), as the Local Authority (LA), has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places are available. The County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026-30 (KCP) is a five-year rolling plan which is updated annually. It sets out our future plans as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision across all types and phases of education in Kent.

1.2 The Plan sets out how we will carry out our responsibility for ensuring there are sufficient high quality places, in the right locations for all learners, while at the same time fulfilling our other responsibilities to raise education standards and promote parental preference. The Plan details the expected future need for education provision, thereby enabling parents and education providers to put forward proposals as to how these needs might best be met.

1.3 Plan reflects the dynamic and ongoing process of ensuring there are sufficient places for Kent children in schools, and other provisions. It is subject to regular discussion and consultation with schools, district/borough councils, KCC Elected Members, the diocesan authorities, and relevant others. The content of this Plan reflects those discussions and consultations.

2. Key Considerations and Background

The Demographic Context

2.1 Information from the Office for National Statistics shows that in 2005 there were 15,613 live births in Kent (excluding Medway). The number of births rose each year up to 2012 when there was a peak in births of 18,147 children. Since this time, birth numbers have fallen to 15,791 in 2024. KCC will continue to monitor this data and forecast its impact over time.

2.2 The number of children on the rolls of Kent schools is driven by the size of the school-aged population in the county but is also influenced by the number of children resident outside of Kent on the rolls of the county's schools, the take-up of state funded school places and other factors such as the pace and type of new housing. One further factor to monitor during the lifetime of this KCP is the level of displacement of children from independent schools into the maintained sector arising from the Government's decision to impose VAT on independent school fees. Due to these additional factors, a change in the overall school-aged population in the county does not on its own necessarily translate into the same change in the number of children on the rolls of schools in Kent. Additionally, changes in the overall school age population at County or district level do not necessarily mirror changes in population at smaller geographic levels, such as planning groups

Our Commissioning Intentions

2.3 The KCP 2026-30 identifies the need for additional permanent and temporary mainstream school and specialist places each year as follows. Additional provision will be secured through a combination of expanding existing schools and opening new ones.

2.4 Within the individual district/borough sections we break down the expected surplus/deficit of places into smaller planning groups. This enables us to identify in more detail where and when provision may need to be added or removed. The pupil growth generated by new homes is forecast to produce significant demand for school places in specific planning groups over and above underlying demographic trends. This is particularly apparent in earlier years of the Plan within a number of primary planning groups impacted by substantial planned house building. The longer-term impact of this house building is also represented by the forecast need for significant additional secondary places in the latter period of the Plan.

2.5 Additional provision will be secured through a combination of expanding existing schools and opening new ones. The overall county commissioning intentions are shown below:

Primary School Commissioning Intentions:

By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
0 FE	3 FE	2 FE	2.6 FE	14 FE 10 Year R temp places	11 FE

A total of 32.6FE across the Plan period and up to 10 temporary Year R places

Secondary School Commissioning Intentions

By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
1 FE 240 Year 7 temp places	2 FE 240 Year 7 temp places	6 FE 225 Year 7 temp places	10 FE 105 Year 7 temp places	7 FE	6 FE

A total of 32FE across the Plan period and up to 810 temporary Year 7 places

SEND Commissioning Intentions:

Total Potential Additional Special School Places	Places Added By Year				
	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
664	162	56	214	102	130

Planned New/Expanded Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs)	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
889	212	308	262	102	5

3. Alternative Options

3.1 The KCP sets out the principles by which we determine proposals, and it forecasts the need for future provision. It also sets out in more detail plans to meet the commissioning needs which arise in each district and borough in Kent during the next five years.

3.2 The KCP provides an overarching framework for determining when and where education may be needed in the future. It sets out the forecast number of children and young people in Kent and breaks this down to smaller geographical areas (districts and planning groups) to show where there may be a need for more or fewer places. It sets out the principles which will be used to consider and evaluate individual proposals which might come forward (be commissioned) to address any identified shortage or surplus of places in a locality.

3.3 Each individual scheme that is brought forward will have a rigorous feasibility stage that is completed prior to the scheme formally being commissioned, through the appropriate democratic pathway. An integral part of this process is

to identify the most suitable option to provide the additional places. Consideration is given to:

- where the additional places would be best located from an education point of view
- the physical capacity of the existing school sites and the practicality of delivery (including geographical and Highways constraints).
- providing the best value for money for the proposed scheme.

3.4 The options considered will then be detailed in the Options section of the individual committee papers associated with each decision.

3.5 Local authorities in England are not legally required to publish a strategic school place planning document as a standalone statutory obligation. However, they do have a statutory duty under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that there are sufficient school places available for children of compulsory school age in their area.

3.6 While publication is not mandated by law, the Department for Education (DfE) strongly encourages local authorities to produce and share strategic school place planning documents. These are expected to include medium-term forecasts, rationale for expansions or contractions, and underpinning data. This is part of a broader framework for collaborative and transparent planning with academy trusts, dioceses, and the DfE's Regions Group; the Kent Commissioning Plan achieves these aims and the option of not producing a strategic plan would not, it has therefore been rejected.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 The costs associated with delivering the commissioning intentions outlined in the plan include both capital and revenue costs.

Capital Costs

4.2 Capital costs are associated with the construction of additional school accommodation and revenue costs include providing schools with Growth Funding. The General Fund is Kent County Council's main account for financing a wide range of local services, such as social care, highways `and libraries, using income from council tax, business rates, and government grants. The general principle is neither the capital nor revenue costs associated with delivering these future commissioning intentions within the plan are expected to be funded from the General Fund. The possible exception is the borrowing costs (which are meet from the General Fund) from the ongoing use of prudential borrowing that was previously agreed to meet estimated shortfalls in the basic need programme historically.

4.3 Capital Costs for mainstream provision are funded through Basic Need Capital Programme, which is made up from a range of sources including Basic Need Grant, Developer Contributions, Prudential Borrowing (originally agreed to fund shortfalls in historic schemes) and other specific grants (such as schools rebuild programme). The Basic Need Grant is the largest contributor to the programme and is provided by the DfE to support local authorities fulfil their statutory duty to ensure there are enough school places for children aged 5 to 16 in their area. The grant is allocated annually, based on local authorities' own pupil forecasts

and school capacity data, which they submit through the School Capacity Survey. The funding is primarily intended to support the creation of new school places - either by expanding existing schools or building new ones to meet projected demand.

4.4 Capital costs for any schemes outlined in the SEND section of the KCP, are funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA) Grant. HNPCA is paid to local authorities to support the expansion or improvement of places for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and those pupils requiring alternative provision (AP). Of the available funding nationally, 50% is distributed in proportion to LAs' population (as determined by the School Census) and the remaining 50% is distributed in proportion to LAs' population, weighted to reflect LAs' pupil to capacity ratio for pupils in specialist provision.

4.5 The Education capital programme is continuously reviewed, with projects entering and leaving the programme regularly in response to demand and project completions. The current programme includes projects commissioned in previous years alongside those identified within the 2025-29 KCP. This means the funding associated with the programme also includes elements of Basic Need grant provided to KCC in previous years. The total estimated cost of the plan for additional mainstream places is £135m.The Basic Need programme for current and future schemes has a budget of circa £153m (in addition to further grant funding of £31m up to 27-28), and the value of projects that are currently committed is circa £141m. The current balance of circa £43m will be used to meet the cost of any new schemes identified in the 2026-30 KCP, alongside future DfE Basic Need Grant allocations, new developer contributions and other external grants. To ensure all schemes are prioritised appropriately and expenditure is controlled within available funding, any new scheme included in the programme, first needs to be considered and agreed by Education Asset Board, before being progressed through the formal governance processes.

4.6 In respect of HNPCA, this programme has been running since 2020-21, with a total combined budget of just under £109m, of which £30m has been spent in previous year leaving the total funding available in the current programme at circa £79m, and the value of projects that are currently committed is circa £37m. The current balance of circa £42m, alongside future grant allocations, will be used to meet the cost of any new schemes identified in the 2026-30 KCP. The total estimated cost of this plan for High Needs provision is circa £34m, In the same way as the Basic Need programme is managed, to ensure all schemes are prioritised appropriately and expenditure is controlled within available funding, any new scheme included in the programme, first needs to be considered and agreed by Education Asset Board, before being progressed through the formal governance processes. The estimated costs includes £20m for SRPs, where a separate decision (25/00085) is requesting prioritisation of the HNPCA to expedite the development of this provision in line with this plan.

Revenue Costs

4.7 The additional revenue costs associated with the Plan for primary and secondary basic need are largely incurred through Growth Funding which is intended to ensure that schools have the resources needed to manage the school-based costs of an expansion, such as increased staffing costs, before

the standard funding arrangements (based on pupil numbers from the previous year) are updated to reflect the increased roll. This funding can also be used to support the revenue costs of schools removing or re-purposing places for example: to support inclusive practice. In Kent the fund has been extended to support set up costs for special schools The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is a ring-fenced grant from the DfE that can only be used for education purposes, including funding schools, early years, and special educational needs provision. Growth Funding is funded through the DSG and not the General Fund.

4.8 The ongoing revenue cost of additional places in primary and secondary schools will be met by the schools through the annual school budget funded by DfE via the DSG. It is the responsibility of maintained schools, academy trusts and free schools to manage their budget in response to a growing or falling roll. There is no expected cost to the General Fund. This plan identifies over 1,500 additional places in SRPs and Special Schools between 2026 and 2030. The Council is responsible for the annual commissioning of these places, normally by paying a pre-agreed rate per place. The funds the revenue costs form the High Needs Block of the DSG, a specific ring-fenced grant from the DfE. The total annual cost of these places would be circa £42m, when fully occupied. In contrast, by securing more state-funded provision, alongside the wider inclusion strategy it is expected to avoid the independent special school places with an estimated cost of circa £83m. Leading to a net future annual saving circa £40m.

4.9 This plan is intended to support the Council's aim to reduce the overspend on the DSG: High Needs Block (used to fund special educational needs). The Council is currently overspending on its High Needs Block by approximately £55m-£60m per year of which the use of more specialist provision such as state-funded or independent special schools, rather than supporting children to remain more locally in their mainstream or special school, has been highlighted as a key contributing factor to this position. Whilst there is no direct revenue cost of this plan to the General Fund, the Council is part of the Safety Valve Programme, a DfE initiative to support Local Authorities with the highest deficits, of which the Council has agreed to contribute a total of £82m between 2022-23 and 2027-28 to help reduce the accumulated deficit, alongside an extra £140m from DfE. The DfE funding is contingent on the development of plan to achieve value for money within the existing SEN regulatory framework and to aim to reach an in-year breakeven position by the end of 2027-28. Reducing the Council's reliance on specialist education placements is a key part of the strategy to achieve this. In addition, enabling children to be supported more locally will also reduce the cost of school transport, which is a direct cost to the General Fund

5. Legal implications

5.1 Each project identified in the KCP will be subject to a separate consultation and decision-making process. The legal implications of each proposal will be identified at that time.

5.2 The general and relevant legal obligations includes ensuring there are "sufficient" school places (Education Act 1996), as far as possible, complying with the preferences expressed by parents (School Standards and Framework Act 1998), increasing opportunities for parental choice (Education and

Inspections Act 2006, provide fair access to educational opportunity) (Education and Inspections Act 2006, keep its SEND provision under review and consider if it is sufficient to meet the needs of children and young people in its area (Children and Families Act 2014).

5.3 Pursuant to the Equality Act 2010, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions have due regard to the need to: 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not".

6. Equalities implications

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed for the KCP. The screening found no evidence that the KCP will impact negatively on pupils from Protected Groups or lead to them being treated less favourably.

7. How the proposed decision supports the Council's strategic statement

7.1 The KCP supports improved efficiency and timeliness in SEND services with plans to expand Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) and increase mainstream inclusion capacity.

7.2 Section 7 of the KCP: Commissioning Statutory School Provision by Districts, details district-level responses to housing growth and demographic pressures, seeking to ensure housing growth is sustainable.

7.3 The KCP supports value for money through Section 5: Capital Funding, which outlines the use of developer contributions, Basic Need funding, and cautious capital investment strategies. The plan also promotes in-house provision where financially viable and reducing reliance on independent placements.

8. Consultation and Views

8.1 Individual consultations will be undertaken on each proposal outlined in the KCP as required and the views of Local Members on individual school consultations in their Divisions will be sought as they come forward.

9. Conclusions

9.1 The commissioning intentions outlined in the KCP are planned to ensure there are sufficient schools places, in the right locations and at the right time in order to fulfil our legal responsibility to offer an appropriate school place to all who require one. At the same time, we are committed to reducing the budget shortfall, but without compromising on the high-quality provision our children and young people deserve.

11. Recommendation(s):

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills for proposed decision (25/00099**)** Proposed Decision as set out in Appendix A.

12. Background documents

- Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2025-29 & 2026-30
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Sufficiency Plan
- EqIA

13. Appendices

13.1 Appendix A – PRoD

14. Contact details

Report Author:

Nick Abrahams
Assistant Director Education – West Kent
Telephone number
03000 410058
Email address
nicholas.abrahams@kent.gov.uk

Relevant Director:

Christine McInnes
Director of Education
Telephone number
03000 418913
Email address
Christine.mcinnes@kent.gov.uk

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NUMBER:
Beverley Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	25/00099

For publication

Key decision: YES

The decision will:

a) result in savings or expenditure in excess of £1,000,000
b) be significant in terms of its effects on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions

Subject Matter / Title of Decision
Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026-30

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree to:

the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026-30 and agree to note the annual review of the SEND Sufficiency Plan.

Reason(s) for decision:

Kent County Council (KCC), as the Local Authority (LA), has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places are available. The County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026-30 (KCP) is a five-year rolling plan which is updated annually. It sets out our future plans as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision across all types and phases of education in Kent.

The Plan sets out how we will carry out our responsibility for ensuring there are sufficient high quality places, in the right locations for all learners, while at the same time fulfilling our other responsibilities to raise education standards and promote parental preference. The Plan details the expected future need for education provision, thereby enabling parents and education providers to put forward proposals as to how these needs might best be met.

This Plan reflects the dynamic and ongoing process of ensuring there are sufficient places for Kent children in schools, and other provisions. It is subject to regular discussion and consultation with schools, district/borough councils, KCC Elected Members, the diocesan authorities, and relevant others. The content of this Plan reflects those discussions and consultations.

Financial Implications
The costs associated with delivering the commissioning intentions outlined in the plan include both capital and revenue costs. Capital costs are associated with the construction of additional school accommodation and revenue costs include providing schools with Growth Funding.

Capital Costs for mainstream provision are funded through Basic Need Capital Programme, which is made up from a range of sources including Basic Need Grant, Developer Contributions, Prudential Borrow and other specific grants (such as schools rebuild programme). The Basic Need Grant is the

largest contributor to the programme and is provided by the DfE to support local authorities fulfil their statutory duty to ensure there are enough school places for children aged 5 to 16 in their area. The grant is allocated annually, based on local authorities' own pupil forecasts and school capacity data, which they submit through the School Capacity Survey. The funding is primarily intended to support the creation of new school places - either by expanding existing schools or building new ones to meet projected demand.

Capital costs for any schemes outlined in the SEND section of the KCP, are funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA) Grant. HNPCA is paid to local authorities to support the expansion or improvement of places for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and those pupils requiring alternative provision (AP).

The Education capital programme is continuously reviewed, with projects entering and leaving the programme regularly in response to demand and project completions. The current programme includes projects commissioned in previous years alongside those identified within the 2025-29 KCP. This means the funding associated with the programme also includes elements of Basic Need grant provided to KCC in previous years. The total estimated cost of the plan for additional mainstream places is £135m. The Basic Need programme for current and future schemes has a budget of circa £153m (in addition to further grant funding of £31m up to 27-28), and the value of projects that are currently committed is circa £141m. The current balance of circa £43m will be used to meet the cost of any new schemes identified in the 2026-30 KCP, alongside future DfE Basic Need Grant allocations, new developer contributions and other external grants. To ensure all schemes are prioritised appropriately and expenditure is controlled within available funding, any new scheme included in the programme, first needs to be considered and agreed by Education Asset Board, before being progressed through the formal governance processes.

In respect of HNPCA, this programme has been running since 2020-21, with a total combined budget of just under £109m, of which £30m has been spent in previous year leaving the total funding available in the current programme at circa £79m, and the value of projects that are currently committed is circa £37m. The current balance of circa £42m, alongside future grant allocations, will be used to meet the cost of any new schemes identified in the 2026-30 KCP. The total estimated cost of this plan for High Needs provision is circa £34m, In the same way as the Basic Need programme is managed, to ensure all schemes are prioritised appropriately and expenditure is controlled within available funding, any new scheme included in the programme, first needs to be considered and agreed by Education Asset Board, before being progressed through the formal governance processes. The estimated costs includes £20m for SRPs, where a separate decision (25/00085) is requesting prioritisation of the HNPCA to expedite the development of this provision in line with this plan.

The additional revenue costs associated with the Plan for primary and secondary basic need are largely incurred through Growth Funding which is intended to ensure that schools have the resources needed to manage the school-based costs of an expansion, such as increased staffing costs, before the standard funding arrangements (based on pupil numbers from the previous year) are updated to reflect the increased roll. This funding can also be used to support the revenue costs of schools removing or re-purposing places for example: to support inclusive practice. In Kent the fund has been extended to support set up costs for special schools The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is a ring-fenced grant from the DfE that can only be used for education purposes, including funding schools, early years, and special educational needs provision. Growth Funding is funded through the DSG and not the General Fund.

Additional SRP and Special School Places will incur an ongoing revenue cost, however this is intended to be more than offset by the expected avoid of independent special school places leading to a net annual saving of circa £40m when all places are fully occupied. These costs and savings will be met from the Dedicated Schools Grant: High Needs Block. This plan is intended to support the Council's aim to reduce the annual overspend on the High Needs Block which currently forecast to

be circa £55m-60m per year. This commissioning plan supports the intentions of the Safety Valve Programme. Whilst there is no direct revenue cost of commissioning the additional places outlined in this plan to the General Fund, supporting children more locally is also expected to reduce the cost school transport, which is a direct cost to the General Fund.

Legal Implications
Each project identified in the KCP will be subject to a separate consultation and decision-making process. The legal implications of each proposal will be identified at that time.

The general and relevant legal obligations includes ensuring there are "sufficient" school places (Education Act 1996), as far as possible, complying with the preferences expressed by parents (School Standards and Framework Act 1998), increasing opportunities for parental choice (Education and Inspections Act 2006, provide fair access to educational opportunity) (Education and Inspections Act 2006, keep its SEND provision under review and consider if it is sufficient to meet the needs of children and young people in its area (Children and Families Act 2014).

Pursuant to the Equality Act 2010, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions have due regard to the need to: 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not".

Equalities implications
An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed for the KCP. The screening found no evidence that the KCP will impact negatively on pupils from Protected Groups or lead to them being treated less favourably.

Data Protection implications
N/A

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

To be completed following consideration at 18 November 2025 Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

The KCP sets out the principles by which we determine proposals, and it forecasts the need for future provision. It also sets out in more detail plans to meet the commissioning needs which arise in each district and borough in Kent during the next five years.

The KCP provides an overarching framework for determining when and where education may be needed in the future. It sets out the forecast number of children and young people in Kent and breaks this down to smaller geographical areas (districts and planning groups) to show where there may be a need for more or fewer places. It sets out the principles which will be used to consider and evaluate individual proposals which might come forward (be commissioned) to address any identified shortage or surplus of places in a locality.

Each individual scheme that is brought forward will have a rigorous feasibility stage that is completed prior to the scheme formally being commissioned, through the appropriate democratic pathway. An integral part of this process is to identify the most suitable option to provide the additional places. Consideration is given to:

- where the additional places would be best located from an education point of view
- the physical capacity of the existing school sites and the practicality of delivery (including geographical and Highways constraints).

- providing the best value for money for the proposed scheme.

The options considered will then be detailed in the Options section of the individual committee papers associated with each decision.

Local authorities in England are not legally required to publish a strategic school place planning document as a standalone statutory obligation. However, they do have a statutory duty under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that there are sufficient school places available for children of compulsory school age in their area.

While publication is not mandated by law, the Department for Education (DfE) strongly encourages local authorities to produce and share strategic school place planning documents. These are expected to include medium-term forecasts, rationale for expansions or contractions, and underpinning data. This is part of a broader framework for collaborative and transparent planning with academy trusts, dioceses, and the DfE's Regions Group; the Kent Commissioning Plan achieves these aims and the option of not producing a strategic plan would not, it has therefore been rejected.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

....

signed date

Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent

2026 -2030













Kent County Council

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. **Contact Details** 4
2. **Foreword** 5
3. **Introduction and Executive Summary** 6
4. **Principles and Planning Guidelines** 13
5. **Capital Funding** 16
6. **Commissioning Statutory School Provision** 19
7. **Commissioning Statutory School Provision by Districts** 32
   - 7.1 **Ashford** 32
   - 7.2 **Canterbury** 39
   - 7.3 **Dartford** 47
   - 7.4 **Dover** 56
   - 7.5 **Folkestone and Hythe** 63
   - 7.6 **Gravesham** 69
   - 7.7 **Maidstone** 77
   - 7.8 **Sevenoaks** 85
   - 7.9 **Swale** 92
   - 7.10 **Thanet** 101
   - 7.11 **Tonbridge and Malling** 107
   - 7.12 **Tunbridge Wells** 114
8. **Commissioning Special Education Needs** 121
9. **Commissioning Early Years Education and Childcare** 131
10. **Commissioning Plan Post-16** 135
11. **Appendices** 139

1. Contact Details

The responsibility for the commissioning, planning and delivery of new school places in Kent is vested in the Director of Education, and the team of four Assistant Directors whose contact details are below.

Christine McInnes
Director of Education
Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone ME14 1XQ
Tel: 03000 418913

EAST KENT	SOUTH KENT
Robert Veale Assistant Director Education Canterbury, Swale and Thanet Brook House, Reeves Way, Whitstable CT5 3SS Tel: 03000 418794 Lorraine Medwin Area Schools Organisation Officer Tel: 03000 422660	**David Adams** Assistant Director Education Ashford, Dover and Folkestone and Hythe Kroner House, Eurogate Business Park, Ashford TN24 8XU Tel: 03000 414989 Lee Round Area Schools Organisation Officer Tel: 03000 412309
NORTH KENT	**WEST KENT**
Ian Watts Assistant Director Education Dartford, Gravesham and Sevenoaks Worrall House, 30 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill ME19 4AE Tel: 03000 414302 Mary Rigden Area Schools Organisation Officer Tel: 03000 422920	**Nick Abrahams** Assistant Director Education Maidstone, Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone ME14 1XQ Tel: 03000 410058 Paul Wilson Area Schools Organisation Officer Tel: 03000 415650

2. Foreword

As the newly appointed Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I am pleased to introduce this year's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent. This document sets out how Kent County Council will meet its statutory duty to ensure sufficient, high-quality school places are available across the county.

I bring to this role not only a commitment to public service, but also personal experience from my time teaching in a further education college. That experience has shaped my understanding of the challenges faced by educators and the importance of inclusive, well-planned provision that meets the diverse needs of learners.

I take on this role at a time of significant change. While the fundamentals of our responsibility remain constant, our approach must evolve to reflect the needs of Kent's communities, the pressures on public services, and the aspirations of our children and young people.

We recognise the challenges ahead: demographic shifts, rising demand for specialist provision, and the need to ensure that every child can access a good local school.

The scale of the challenge is clear, it is forecast that over the next four years primary school rolls will reduce by more than two thousand pupils and secondary rolls will rise by over four thousand pupils. The profile of change in school rolls will vary across the County, with some local areas requiring additional places to meet demand.

To meet need in specific localities, and to reflect demand generated by housing development, we are seeking to commission 7.6 forms of entry (FE) of permanent Year R primary provision and 19 FE of secondary provision and 810 temporary Year 7 places for the academic years 2026-27 to 2029-30. The County Council will continue to monitor the impact of any displacement of children into state maintained schools arising from the Government's decision to apply VAT to independent school fees.

This Plan is not just a technical document - it is a statement of intent. It reflects our commitment to advocate for Kent's children through working collaboratively with schools, trusts, communities, and central government to deliver provision that is responsive, equitable, and future-proofed. We will continue to monitor delivery closely and adapt where necessary, ensuring that decisions are evidence-led and in the best interests of Kent's children.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all school and education staff across Kent—teachers, support staff, leaders, governors, and officers—for their continued dedication. Your work is vital, and deeply appreciated.

Beverley Fordham - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

3. Introduction and Executive Summary

3.1 Purpose

The County Council is the Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision in Kent. This Commissioning Plan sets out how we will carry out our responsibility for ensuring there are sufficient high quality places, in the right places for all learners, while at the same time fulfilling our other responsibilities to raise education standards and promote parental preference. The Plan details the expected future need for education provision, thereby enabling parents and education providers to put forward proposals as to how these needs might best be met.

This Plan reflects the dynamic and ongoing process of ensuring there are sufficient places for Kent children in schools, and other provisions. It is subject to regular discussion and consultation with schools, district/borough councils, KCC (Kent County Council) Elected Members, the diocesan authorities, and others. The content of this Plan reflects those discussions and consultations.

3.2 The Kent Context

Kent is a diverse County. It is largely rural with a collection of small towns. Economically our communities differ, with economic advantage generally in the West, and disadvantage concentrated in our coastal communities in the South and East. Early Years education and childcare are predominantly provided by the private and voluntary sectors. Our schools are a mix of maintained and academies and include infant, junior, primary, grammar, wide ability comprehensive, all-through, single sex and faith based. Post-16 opportunities are available through schools, colleges and private training organisations.

3.3 What We Are Seeking to Achieve

Our vision is that every child and young person should go to a good or outstanding early years setting and school, have access to the best teaching, and benefit from schools and other providers working in partnership with each other to share the best practice as they continue to improve. Commissioning education provision from good or better providers can assist in securing this vision. To address the commissioning needs outlined in this Plan we welcome proposals from existing schools, trusts, the three dioceses and new providers; those proposals should be aligned to the commissioning requirements set out in the Plan.

3.4 Principles and Guidelines

The role of the Local Authority is set within a legal framework of statutory duties which are outlined in the relevant sections of the Plan. We also have a set of principles and planning guidelines to help us in our role as the Commissioner of Education Provision (Section 5). It is important that the Local Authority is transparent and clear when making commissioning decisions or assessing the relative merits of any proposals it might receive.

3.5 Kent's Demographic Trends

Information from the Office for National Statistics shows that in 2005 there were 15,613 live births in Kent (excluding Medway). The number of births rose each year up to 2012 when there was a peak in births of 18,147 children. Since this time, birth numbers have fallen to 15,791 in 2024. KCC will continue to monitor this data and forecast its impact over time.

The number of children on the rolls of Kent schools is driven by the size of the school-aged population in the county but is also influenced by the number of children resident outside of Kent on the rolls of the county's schools, the take-up of state funded school places and other factors such as the pace and type of new housing. One further factor to monitor during the lifetime of this KCP is the level of displacement of children from independent schools into the maintained sector arising from the Government's decision to impose VAT on independent school fees. Due to these additional factors, a change in the overall school-aged population in the county does not on its own necessarily translate into the same change in the number of children on the rolls of schools in

Kent. Additionally, changes in the overall school age population at County or district level do not necessarily mirror changes in population at smaller geographic levels, such as planning groups, these are explored in Section 7.

3.6 Capital Funding

The pressure on the County's Capital Budget continues, particularly as demand for secondary and specialist places grows. The cost of delivering school places is currently met from Basic Need grant from the Government, prudential borrowing by the County Council, Section 106 property developer contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Government funding for 'Basic Need' is allocated on a formula based upon information provided by local authorities concerning forecast numbers of pupils and school capacity.

The Department for Education's (DfE) Free Schools Programme is another way to deliver some of the school provision Kent needs. We have encouraged promoters to submit bids to Waves 13 and 14, with some success, but this programme is not a significant contributor to places overall and does have financial risks.

KCC also secures developer contributions to the capital programme. The budget gap between what is needed for KCC to meet its statutory duties as school place commissioner and what is available is significant. All avenues are being explored to reduce the risks, but inevitably difficult decisions will have to be made to prioritise KCC's investment of the capital budget. The cost of construction has risen considerably since 2020 and is likely to continue during the Plan period. We will continue to manage and mitigate this as far as we are able to, however, pressure from inflation may become a constraint to our commissioning strategy.

3.7 Kent's Forward Plan – Commissioning Summary

Detailed analysis, at district level, of the future need for primary and secondary school places is contained in Section 7 of this Plan. Figures 3a to 3e provide a summary of the need for additional places, both permanent and temporary, identified within the Commissioning Plan:

Figure 3a: Summary of the commissioning proposals for primary schools by district/borough

District	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Ashford				0.3 FE	4 FE	
Canterbury		1 FE			1 FE	3 FE
Dartford and Swanley		1 FE		2 FE	2 FE	
Dover				0.3 FE	1 FE	4 FE
Folkestone and Hythe						2 FE
Gravesham		1 FE				
Maidstone					2 FE	
Sevenoaks						
Swale			1 FE		2 FE	
Thanet						2 FE
Tonbridge and Malling					2 FE	
Tunbridge Wells			1 FE		Up to 10 Year 7 temp places	
Totals	**0 FE**	**3 FE**	**2 FE**	**2.6 FE**	**14 FE 10 Year R temp places**	**11 FE**

Total of 32.6 FE of additional provision across the forecast period and up to 10 temporary Year R places

Figure 3b: Summary of the commissioning proposals for secondary schools by planning group

Non-Selective Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Ashford South						2 FE
Ashford North	1 FE		Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places		2 FE
Canterbury City		Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places		
Dartford and Swanley						
Dover						2 FE
Faversham					1 FE	
Gravesham and Longfield				3 FE		
Isle of Sheppey	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	2 FE				
Maidstone District	Up to 90 Year 7 temp places	Up to 90 Year 7 temp places	Up to 120 Year 7 temp places	6 FE		
Sevenoaks and Borough Green						
Sittingbourne	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	2 FE			6 FE	
Thanet	Up to 60 Year 7 temp places	Up to 90 Year 7 temp places	Up to 45 Year 7 temp places	Up to 45 Year 7 temp places		
Selective Planning Group	**By 2026-27**	**By 2027-28**	**By 2028-29**	**By 2029-30**	**Between 2030-33**	**Post 2033**
Canterbury and Faversham		0.5 FE				
Maidstone and Malling				1 FE		
Gravesham and Longfield and North West Kent			6 FE			
West Kent	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places	Up to 30 Year 7 temp places				
Total secondary commissioning	**1 FE 240 Year 7 temp places**	**2 FE 240 Year 7 temp places**	**6 FE 225 Year 7 temp places**	**10 FE 105 Year 7 temp places**	**7 FE**	**6 FE**

Total of 32 FE across the forecast period and 810 temporary Year 7 places

Figure 3c: Summary of commissioning intentions for Additional Special School Provision in Kent

District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Canterbury	120	0	0	48	28	44
Sevenoaks/ Tunbridge Wells	172	112	30	30	0	0
Sevenoaks	322	32	8	122	74	86
Swale	50	18	18	14	0	0
Total	**664**	**162**	**56**	**214**	**102**	**130**

Figure 3d: Summary of Planned New/Expanded Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) in Kent

District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Ashford	116	34	42	34	6	0
Dover	69	23	27	19	0	0
Folkestone & Hythe	20	10	10		0	0
Swale	130	21	44	41	24	0
Thanet	140	30	46	46	18	0
Canterbury	70	0	23	23	24	0
Gravesham	45	6	15	14	10	0
Sevenoaks	85	20	27	28	10	0
Dartford	40	8	8	9	10	5
Maidstone	102	34	39	29	0	0
Tunbridge Wells	72	26	27	19	0	0
Total	**889**	**212**	**308**	**262**	**102**	**5**

Figure 3e: Agreed and Planned Alternative Provision in Kent

District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
		2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Canterbury	30	30	0	0	0	0
Swale	40	0	40	0	0	0
Total	**70**	**30**	**40**	**0**	**0**	**0**

3.8 Special Educational Needs

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Sufficiency Plan sits under the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent and its purpose is to strategically inform SEN educational place planning in the medium to long term The Sufficiency Plan has been updated for 2025 and is appended to the KCP (See Appendix 11.3 in separate document).

Kent is part of the DfE Safety Valve programme which began in 2022-23 and it is set to run for five years. This financial agreement, which provides £140 million of additional funding aims to support us, as a local authority, to reform our High Needs systems and SEND services for children and young people whilst ensuring those services are sustainable. We have also contributed £82 million for this work.

The Kent Local Area received an Improvement Notice following its inspection in 2019. Significant transformation continues as the Local Area works to address the weaknesses and improve the provision and support for children with SEND. A summary of some of the key headline which influence our future actions are listed in 8.2 of the Commissioning SEN section to follow.

The impact of these key headlines is significant for families, schools, the authority and the taxpayer. There remains a systemic need to better meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. Kent's Strategy for children with special educational needs and disabilities sets out the key areas of transformation.

A significant educational change programme is ongoing with the aim of improving the capacity of mainstream school SEND inclusion in Kent. This will enable staff to be increasingly skilled, confident and able to educate and support more children with EHCPs in mainstream provisions. This realignment will be supported by the inclusive practices included in the Countywide Approach To Inclusive Education (CATIE), the Accessibility Strategy, Services to Schools, the Section 19 Framework, Co-Production Charter and Transition Charter.

We acknowledge that special schools play an important role in our continuum of education provision. However, we have to address the imbalance we have in Kent regarding the proportion of children and young people with EHCPs in mainstream education, when comparing to the rates for England. One focus will be increasing places in SRPs to successfully support more children and young people with SEND. This is likely to mean the overall size of Kent's maintained special schools (including the new schools agreed with the Department for Education) remains stable, whilst we reduce our reliance on independent and non-maintained special schools. The sizes of individual schools will change over time to reflect the local demographics and policy changes.

From the data, we are seeing the impact of our transformation:

- In England in between January 2024 and January 2025 there was a 10.8% rise in the number of EHCPs amongst the 0-25 year old cohort. In Kent the rise was 6.8%.
- Kent accounted for 3.23% of England's EHCPs in 2024/25, down from 3.37% in 2023/24.
- In 2023/24 35% of pupils with EHCPs were in mainstream schools in Kent; this increased to 36% in 2024/25. Correspondingly, the percentages in special schools reduced from 41% to 39%.

3.9 Early Education and Childcare

Early Education and Childcare in Kent is available through a large, diverse and constantly shifting market of maintained, private, voluntary, independent and school-run providers, childminders and academies, all of which operate as individual businesses and are therefore subject to market forces.

The local authority is required to produce an 'Annual Report on Childcare Sufficiency', showing the supply of, and demand for, early years and childcare provision across the County, including where there might be over supply and particularly a deficit in provision. The Annual Report on

Childcare Sufficiency for the 2025-2026 academic year makes use of the DfE analysis by using its estimated demand for childcare for 9 month to 36 month-olds combined with the population forecast based demand for childcare for 3 and 4 year olds. The supply of childcare places in Kent is derived from the number of available places that early education and childcare providers state in the annual childcare sufficiency audit.

Across the county as a whole, there are forecast to be sufficient childcare places for 0-4 year olds. However, the Sufficiency Report indicates that there are deficits of places in specific planning groups. The Education People's Early Years and Childcare Service will work with providers and potential providers to encourage the establishment of additional provision where it is required.

The supply of Free Entitlement places for 9 months to four year olds will be kept under review as planned new housing developments are built and potentially increase the demand for places. Where housing developments are proposed in school planning areas where there is an indicative deficit of places or where the size of a development means that it will require new provision, KCC will engage in discussions with developers to either seek funding to provide nursery provision which may include securing community rental or leasehold accommodation availability for private, voluntary or independent sector providers of 0-4 year old childcare.

When a new school is delivered according to the ESFA Baseline Design, a nursery space is now included in the design. As new schools are planned, KCC will work with the sponsor to identify early years provision and the most appropriate way to deliver this.

3.10 Post-16 Education and Training in Kent

The academic year 2024/25 has been a difficult one for young people progressing into post-16 education with more young people than ever not achieving the entry criteria for their own 6th forms, consequently the number of students in 6th forms shrank for the first time.

The 16-18 cohort grew by over 2,000, with provision for young people needing to study at L2 and below or in specialist settings filling very quickly despite the colleges offering an additional 1,500 places. Consequently, the weeks after GCSE results day were very difficult for learners as many did not have viable alternatives. Our NEET numbers are also significantly higher than previous years. In June 2025 1,625 young people were NEET compared to 1,355 in June 2024, an increase of 20%.

The choice of lower level qualifications for learners outside college has continued to shrink. The number of providers decreased from 18 in in 2023/24 to 16 in 2024/25. The number of places shrank slightly from 733 to 720 over the same period.

The work of Pathways for All, the county's 16-19 review, has continued to move on. The board and the local Collaborative Partnership Areas are very aware of the situation for those transitioning onto post-16 and there has been a focus on improving this. This was the first year of the 2024 priority document "No young person left behind" and the focus was on identifying the cold spots in provision and support for young people. The Focus in 2025/26 will be to develop plans to resolve these cold spots.

Notable successes on 2024/25 have been:

- The development of a clearing system on the KentChoices website for learners to see which courses still have places available after GCSE results day.
- Collaborative events in some areas for young people to explore all the post-16 options available to them.
- Collaborative approaches across education providers to support vulnerable learners in the post-16 transition.

4. Principles and Planning Guidelines

4.1 What We Are Seeking to Achieve

Our Principles and Planning Guidelines underpin our commissioning decisions. This is further supported by a suite of key strategies including, but not limited to:

- Kent SEND Strategy 2025–2028
- Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education (CATIE) 2023 – 2028
- Kent 16 to 19 Review - Pathways For All

In the national policy context, the Local Authority is the Commissioner of Education Provision and providers come from the private, voluntary, charitable and maintained sectors. The role of the Local Authority is set within a legal framework of statutory duties; the duties for each phase or type of education in Kent are shown under the relevant section in this Plan. Within this framework, the Local Authority continues to be the major provider of education by maintaining most Kent schools and it also fulfils the function of "provider of last resort" to ensure new provision is made if no other acceptable new provider comes forward.

Education in Kent is divided into three phases, although there is some overlap between these. These three phases are:

- Early Years: primarily delivered by private, voluntary and independent pre-school providers, accredited child-minders, and schools with maintained nursery classes.
- 4-16 years: "compulsory school age" during which schools are the main providers.
- Post-16: colleges and schools both offer substantial provision, with colleges as the sole provider for young people aged 19-25 years.

The Local Authority also has specific duties in relation to provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs, pupils excluded from school or pupils unable to attend school due to ill health.

4.2 Principles and Guidelines

It is important that the Local Authority is open and transparent in its role as the Strategic Commissioner of Education. To help guide us in this role we abide by clear principles and consider school organisation proposals against our planning guidelines. We stress that planning guidelines are not absolutes, but a starting point for the consideration of proposals.

4.3 Over-Arching Principles

- Every child should have access to a local, good or outstanding school, which is appropriate to their needs.
- All education provision in Kent should be financially efficient and viable.
- We will consider the needs and aspirations of the local community.
- We will recognise parental preference.
- We recognise perceptions may differ as to benefits and detrimental impacts of future proposals. We will ensure our consultation processes capture the voice of all communities, but to be supported proposals must demonstrate overall benefit to the whole community.
- The needs of Children in Care and those with SEN and disabilities will be given enhanced consideration in any commissioning decision.
- We will also give priority to organisational changes that create environments better able to meet the needs of other vulnerable children, including those from minority ethnic communities and/or from low income families.
- Any educational provision facing difficulties will be supported and challenged to recover in an efficient and timely manner. Where sufficient progress is not achieved, we will seek to commission alternative provision or another provider.
- If a provision is considered or found to be inadequate by Ofsted, we will seek to support the DfE with the commissioning of an alternative provider.

- In areas of housing growth, we will require developer contributions to fund or part fund new and additional school provision.
- In areas of high surplus capacity, we will take actions where possible to reduce the surplus and will seek to work with schools and own admission authorities to minimise the impact of surplus.[1]

4.4 Planning Guidelines – Primary

- The curriculum is generally delivered in Key Stage specific classes. Therefore, for curriculum viability, primary schools should be able to operate at least four classes.
- We will actively promote opportunities for small primary schools to work together.
- Where possible, planned Published Admission Numbers (PANs) will be multiples of 30, but where this is not possible, multiples of 15 are used.
- We believe all-through primary schools deliver better continuity of learning as the model for primary phase education in Kent. When the opportunity arises, we will seek to amalgamate separate infant and junior schools into a single primary school. However, we will have regard to existing local arrangements and seek to avoid leaving existing schools without links on which they have previously depended.
- At present primary school provision is co-educational, and we anticipate that future arrangements will conform to this pattern.
- Over time we have concluded that a minimum of 2FE provision (420 places) is preferred in terms of the efficient deployment of resources.

4.5 Planning Guidelines – Secondary

- PANs for secondary schools will not normally be less than 120 or greater than 360. PANs for secondary schools will normally be multiples of 30.
- Over time we have concluded that the ideal size for the efficient deployment of resources is between 6FE and 8FE.
- Proposals for additional secondary places need to demonstrate a balance between selective and non-selective school places.
- We will encourage the formation of all-aged schools (primary through to secondary) if this is in the interests of the local community.

4.6 Planning Guidelines - Special Educational Needs

- We aim to build capacity in mainstream schools by broadening the skills and special arrangements that can be made within this sector to ensure compliance with the relevant duties under SEN and disability legislation.
- For children and young people for whom mainstream provision is assessed not to be appropriate, we seek to make provision through Kent based, state funded special schools. For young people aged 16-19 years, provision may be at school or college. For young people who are aged 19-25 years, provision is likely to be college based.
- We will support children and young people to benefit from living within their local community where possible and we will seek to provide them with day places unless residential provision is specifically needed for social care or health reasons. In such cases, agreement to joint placement and support will be sought from the relevant KCC teams or the Health Service. This agreement will be preceded by the relevant health or social care assessments.
- We will aim to reduce the need for children to be transported to schools far away from their local communities by developing local provision to meet need.

4.7 Planning Guidelines - Expansion of Popular Schools and New Provision

- We support diversity in the range of education provision available to children and young people. We recognise that new providers are entering the market, and that parents and communities are able to make free school applications.

[1] Actions might include re-classifying accommodation, removing temporary or unsuitable accommodation, leasing spaces to other users and promoting closures or amalgamations. We recognise that, increasingly, providers will be responsible for making such decisions about the use of their buildings, but we believe we all recognise the economic imperatives for such actions.

- As the Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision, we welcome proposals from existing schools and new providers that address the needs identified in this Plan, this includes new provision to meet increased demand.
- In order for us to support any such proposal, they must meet an identified need and should adhere to the planning principles and guidelines set out above.

4.8 Small Schools

KCC defines small schools as 'those schools with fewer than 150 pupils on roll and/or a measured capacity of fewer than 150 places'. We have over 100 primary schools that fit this criterion.

We value the work of our small schools and recognise the challenges faced. We continue to work with partners to maximise the resilience of small schools to deal with the challenges they face in terms of leadership and management, teaching and learning, and governance and finance so that they can enable their pupils to grow up, learn, develop and achieve, and continue to play a valued role in their communities.

KCC and its partners, in particular the dioceses, will ensure that:

- Support is given to small schools seeking to join appropriate multi-academy trusts, or take other steps on such a pathway.
- All such partners will work closely together to support the protection and maintenance of the distinctive character and ethos of small Church of England schools in future collaborative arrangements.

4.9 Families of Schools

KCC has encouraged schools to work collaboratively together for many years. Such collaborations take many forms in the current education landscape, such as being a church school within Canterbury, Rochester or Southwark's purview, forming a collaboration with neighbouring schools to work jointly on shared school improvement objectives, formally federating or joining a shared schools trust, or academising within a MAT. All these options are important in ensuring no school becomes isolated.

The national direction of travel, through successive Governments, has been towards high quality, inclusive education to be provided through families of schools within strong multi-academy trusts. This is underpinned by the ability of strong trusts to deliver rapid and sustainable school improvement, excellent support for teachers and teaching, strategic leadership and governance, and effective financial management. We support these principles and encourage those Kent schools not currently benefitting from such collaborative arrangements to explore their options to join or form a multi-academy trust.

5. Capital Funding

5.1 Introduction

The Local Authority as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision has a key role in securing funding to provide sufficient education provision in the County, particularly in schools.

The cost of providing additional school places is met from Government Basic Need Grant, prudential borrowing by KCC and developer contributions. It continues to be clear through the County Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan that KCC is not in a position to undertake prudential borrowing to support new provision. To do so would place undue pressure on the revenue budget in what are already challenging times for the Authority. The prospect of having to meet the growth in demand for places through additional borrowing confronts the County Council with a dilemma between delivering its statutory duty on school places and maintaining its financial soundness. Members and officers continue to lobby Ministers and officials within the DfE over this critical issue. Delivery of the additional school places needed in the County will rely more than ever on an appropriate level of funding from Government and securing the maximum possible contribution from housing developers.

5.2 Basic Need

Basic Need funding is allocated by Government on the basis of a comparison of school capacity (not pupil admission numbers) against forecast mainstream pupil numbers from reception year to year 11 uplifted to provide a 2 per cent operating margin. Where capacity is lower than forecast, the DfE provides funding towards the gap.

The combined allocation for the 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 financial years are based upon the projected need for new places by September 2028 (the start of academic year 2028/29); Kent has been allocated £60,759,977.66. The 'lumpy' nature of establishing new school provision means that the County Council incurs the majority of the capital costs at the outset of mitigating a forecast place deficit, e.g. expanding a school by a whole FE; whereas the Basic Need formula does not account for this and provides the Council with funding for places in an incremental way over a longer period of time.

5.3 Free Schools Programme

One funding option which can assist with or overcome the challenges of forward funding new schools is the Free Schools programme. We encouraged promoters to submit bids to Waves 13 and 14, with some success. However, as the free school programme has become more restrictive, being targeted to certain geographical areas of the Country in relation to mainstream schools, and of limited number for special schools and alternative provisions, it will not be the answer to all our needs. Additionally, it is not risk free for the Local Authority. Delays in delivery can require the Authority to put in place temporary provision with the resultant unplanned expense.

5.4 Developer Contributions

Each of the 12 districts in Kent are planning significant housing growth, it is essential that this growth is supported by sufficient education provision that is well integrated within the areas of growth and established at the right time. The cost of providing school places in response to housing growth is significant, the County Council seeks developer contributions towards mitigating this cost. Developer contributions for education are secured either through Section 106 (s106) agreements or through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

S106 agreements are secured from housing developers at the time that planning permission is granted, they are intended to ensure development proposals are acceptable in planning terms. When securing a s106 agreement KCC will outline the additional impact the development would have on local schools, where we would need to add additional provision in response and the cost of doing so. Whilst district authorities, as the relevant Local Planning Authority, are the decision

maker on whether contributions towards education provision should be made or not, once a s106 agreement is in place the housing developer becomes legally obligated to pay KCC contributions at specified points.

We will continue to seek developer contributions at every opportunity allowed through legislation and apply funding secured to the most appropriate project in order to mitigate development. Where additional secondary school places are required in order to mitigate development we will seek to secure funding towards both selective and non-selective places on the basis of 25% of the additional demand being within the selective sector; this will not preclude future residents of the development being able to apply for and access a school place in the same way as all other residents in Kent and does not impact the commissioning approach in an area which is based on the forecast need.

Five districts in Kent have adopted CIL, which has largely replaced s106 agreements in those areas. The levy is a tariff-based system where developers are charged a set rate per square metre of development. There is no direct link between the development's impact on local infrastructure and the amount it pays. All CIL funding is paid to the relevant district or borough, which then determines how it will be spent once it is received; there is no funding ring-fenced for education provision and KCC will usually be required to 'bid' to the Borough for a share of the funding. This provides KCC with no security that development charged under CIL will contribute to the cost of new school provision at the time planning permission is granted. Under CIL the amounts collected for community infrastructure are typically lower than could be secured through s106 and the spending of CIL is entirely at the discretion of the District Authority and not KCC, which places the County Council at significant risk moving forward.

The County Council is keen to work with the Government to ensure that reforms to developer contributions are effective in securing the necessary infrastructure to support growth. The new Government has confirmed that they do not intend to implement the introduction of the Infrastructure Levy within the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023; whilst this may be positive in some ways, there still remains a significant level of uncertainty.

5.5 Value for Money

In drawing up options for providing additional places, in addition to the Principles and Planning Guidelines set out in Section 5, the Local Authority consider a range of practical issues, such as:

- The condition and suitability of existing premises.
- The ability to expand or alter the premises (including arrangements whilst works progress).
- The works required to expand or alter the premises.
- The estimated capital costs.
- The size and topography of the site.
- Environmental considerations.
- Future proofing.
- Road access to the site, including transport and safety issues.

Kent is committed to securing value for money when providing additional school accommodation, in line with the DfE's baseline designs, and output performance specification. The construction method for new accommodation will be that which is the most appropriate to meet the needs of provision, e.g. temporary or permanent provision and that which represents good value for money.

One of the key benchmarks against which we will be monitoring all Basic Need projects is the 'cost per pupil'. This benchmark divides the construction cost of the project by the number of pupils that the facility will accommodate to provide a project cost per pupil.

This table provides high level findings of a comparison between KCC costs on major capital projects delivered between 2020 and 2024 and the DfE Scorecard. The DfE Scorecard shows the national average for England and the average cost rebased for the South East with the South East being traditionally more expensive to build in. KCC's average cost of delivering additional places is higher than the national average which is to be expected as the DfE Scorecard for the Sout East is also higher. KCC has delivered additional pupil places in the primary below the average for the South East. Primary new build and secondary expansions are higher are both slightly above the regional averages and are driven by a greater degree of abnormal costs.

Figure 5a: Average costs - National and Kent

Primary Education Phase:

Type	National DfE School Delivery Average Costs	South East DfE School Delivery Average Costs	KCC Average Costs
Expansion and Refurbishment	£20,450	£23,340	£20,699
New Build	£24,416	£28,230	£28,688

Secondary Education Phase:

Type	National DfE School Delivery Average Costs	South East DfE School Delivery Average Costs	KCC Average Costs
Expansion and Refurbishment	£28,127	£31,783	£31,131
New Build	£29,579	£33,424	No data

6. Commissioning Statutory School Provision

6.1 Duties to Provide for Ages 4-16 Years

The law requires local authorities to make provision for the education of children from the September following their fourth birthday to the end of the academic year in which their sixteenth birthday falls. Most Kent parents choose to send their children to Kent schools. Some parents choose to educate their children independently, either at independent schools or otherwise than at school (i.e. at home); others will send their children to maintained schools outside Kent (Kent maintained schools also admit some children from other areas). Kent will offer a school place to any resident child aged between 4-16 years.

A minority of young people aged 14-16 years old are offered college placements or alternative curriculum provision, usually through school links. Some children are educated in special schools or non-school forms of special education provision because of their special educational needs.

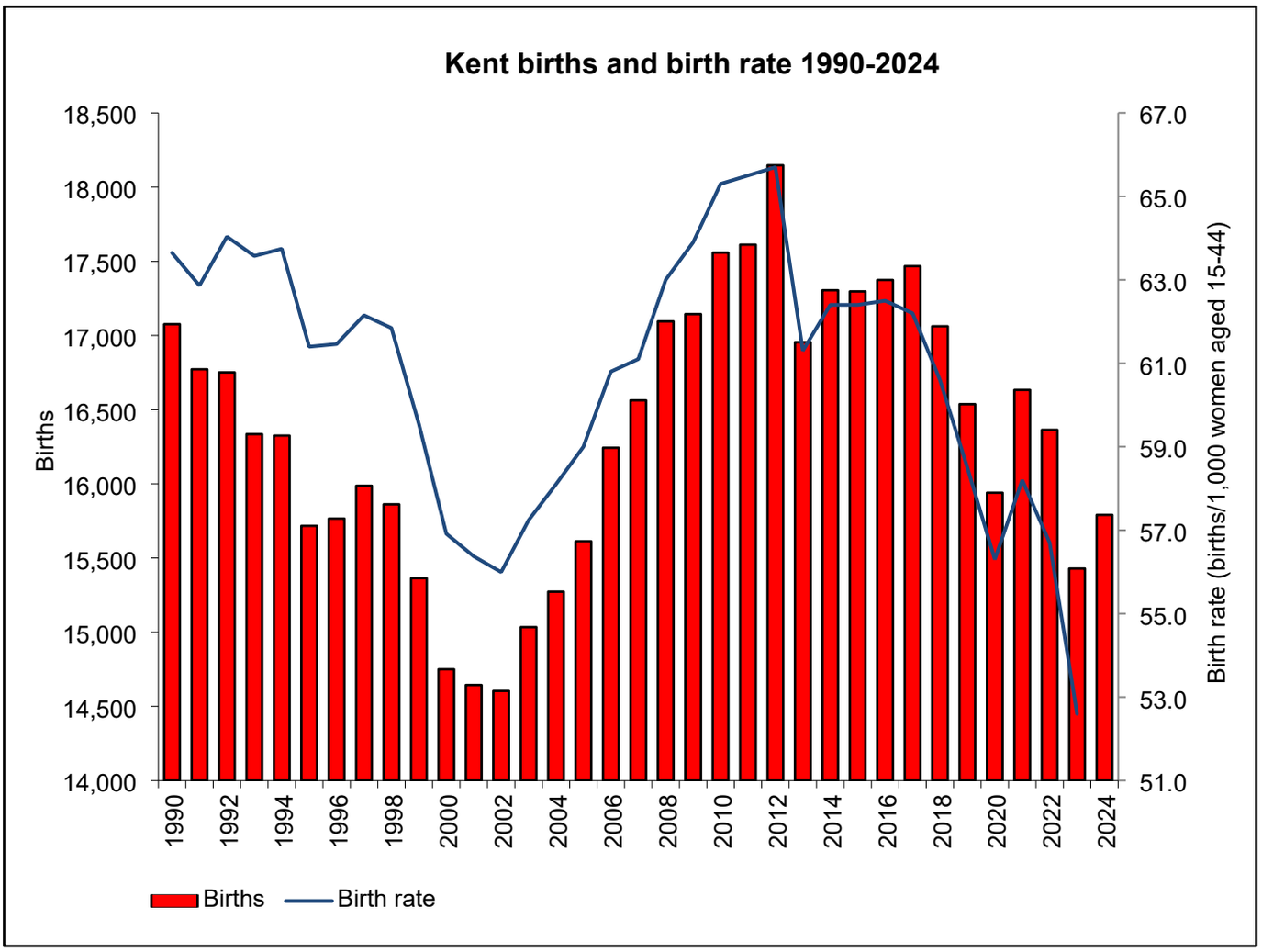
The local authority has a statutory duty to provide full time education for pupils “not in education by reason of illness, exclusion or otherwise” which is appropriate to individual pupil needs. This duty is discharged through pupil referral units, alternative provision commissioned by secondary schools and the Rosewood School.

6.2 Kent-Wide Summary

Detail on the requirement for additional school places is contained in the district/borough commentaries which follow. For 2026-27 and 2027-28 many projects are already in progress. For later years, the need for expansion in planning groups has been noted, but specific schools may not have been identified. For projects beyond 2027-28 the commissioning proposals may be dependent on the pace of planned housing development being realised. A Countywide summary of the proposals for primary, secondary and SEN school places in each district/borough are set out in Section 3.7.

Figure 6a shows the Kent birth rate and the number of recorded births as published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS). Births recorded by the ONS provide a consistent way of measuring and demonstrating changes in births over the last 30 years; it should be noted that the quantum of school places needed is not solely driven by the number of births and our forecasting takes into account those children resident in the county that were born elsewhere, and the forecast inward migration led by housing growth and other factors. Overall, Kent birth figures indicate a significant fall in the number of births from 2017 to 2020, with a slight upturn in 2021 before dropping back again in recent years.

Figure 6a: Kent births and birth rates 1990-2024



***Source: Office for National Statistics, 2022**

Figure 6b: Housing completions and future housing supply 2001-26

	Completions*				Period 2024-29			
District	**2004-09**	**2009-14**	**2014-19**	**2019-24**	**Extant**	**Allocations**	**Total**	**Grand total 2004-29**
Maidstone	3,742	3,177	5,196	6,463	1,630	2,842	4,472	23,050
Dartford	2,688	1,861	4,742	3,055	774	4,289	5,063	17,409
Swale	3,359	2,166	3,116	4,183	4,334	0	4,334	17,158
Canterbury	4,218	2,299	1,840	2,961	1,646	4,166	5,812	17,130
Ashford	3,028	2,110	3,580	3,936	2,858	849	3,707	16,361
Tonbridge & Malling	4,306	2,164	3,709	2,300	3,742	73	3,815	16,294
Thanet	2,876	2,234	1,656	2,908	3,946	1,569	5,515	15,189
Tunbridge Wells	2,129	608	2,342	2,925	2,483	240	2,723	10,727
Dover	1,715	1,140	2,389	2,781	1,359	1,098	2,457	10,482
Folkestone & Hythe	2,250	890	1,888	2,208	1,842	917	2,759	9,995
Gravesham	1,739	1,085	1,100	2,106	2,279	0	2,279	8,309
Sevenoaks	1,437	1,033	1,558	1,358	2,484	196	2,680	8,066
Kent	**33,487**	**20,767**	**33,116**	**37,184**	**29,377**	**16,239**	**45,616**	**170,170**

Source: Housing Information Audit (HIA) 2023-24, Kent Analytics, KCC

Notes:
(1) Housing data relates to financial year (i.e. 2023-24 is the year up to 31st March 2024)
(2) Housing data is shown net of losses i.e. gains - losses = net
(3) The first four 5-year time periods between 2004-24 show actual housing completions
(4) The period 2024-29 shows expected housing completions (extant permisisons and allocations)

*Completions - Dwellings completed; Extant- Dwellings with planning permission but construction not yet completed; Allocations - Dwellings within an area designated for future housing development but not yet with planning permission

Figure 6b outlines the historic and forecast house building by district/borough. All districts/boroughs are planning for significant house building, each district/borough is at a different stage of adopting their Local Plan. The figures above incorporate housing numbers from adopted Local Plans, not every district currently has a Local Plan covering the period 2024-29, however our school-based forecasts incorporate all consented housing whether that housing was allocated within a Local Plan or not.

On average 5,425 dwellings were built annually in the ten-year period up to 31st March 2014. This increased significantly to 7,030 dwellings per year in period 2014-24. A long-term yearly average of around 9,100 dwellings per year is anticipated for the period 2024-29.

We need to ensure we are planning for the education infrastructure required. How we plan to provide for new housing is outlined in the individual district/borough sections. It is important to note that additional demand for school places from proposed housing plans that do not yet have planning permission or form part of a Borough's adopted Local Plan are not incorporated within the forecasts presented in Figures 6c to 6h. It is equally important to recognise that while surplus places might exist in districts, these will not always be in the right place to support demand generated by new housing.

6.3 Forecast Pupils in Mainstream Primary/Secondary Schools

For Kent primary schools we have seen a steady rise in the overall number of pupils since 2009-10 to 2019-20, rising from 106,097 to 126,251. However, in 2020-21 the total primary roll saw a slight drop to 125,939, before increasing again 2021-22 to 126,768. In recent years, the total has fluctuated, but has been relatively stable, with 127,081 in 2024-25.

Figure 6c provides a breakdown of expected surplus or deficit capacity in Year R by district/borough across the ten-year period to 2033-34. The forecast indicates that there will be surplus places across the county for the Plan Period. However, in the individual district/borough sections we break down the expected surplus/deficit into smaller planning groups. This enables us to identify in more detail where and when provision may need to be added or removed at more local geography.

Figure 6c: School-based surplus/deficit capacity summary (Year R) if No Further Action is Taken

District	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/24 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Ashford	1,715	225	210	192	297	226	224	228	233	233	233	237	1,646
Canterbury	1,559	227	146	135	207	214	186	199	218	240	261	279	1,500
Dartford	1,785	202	152	133	184	242	220	231	242	259	281	302	1,815
Dover	1,332	269	256	197	260	335	274	273	276	285	295	305	1,330
Folkestone & Hythe	1,288	291	199	209	268	264	246	249	251	249	246	247	1,248
Gravesham	1,506	152	109	60	98	100	74	64	51	39	28	18	1,456
Maidstone	2,184	147	153	71	113	197	131	132	137	156	187	219	2,154
Sevenoaks	1,467	296	186	174	263	227	181	161	131	111	99	94	1,392
Swale	2,015	297	246	180	202	234	201	175	146	122	111	99	1,965
Thanet	1,635	219	239	156	202	205	170	171	165	155	150	151	1,515
Tonbridge & Malling	1,743	260	158	130	223	205	119	86	62	48	42	41	1,653
Tunbridge Wells	1,301	122	164	175	190	183	157	142	131	128	139	152	1,321
Kent	**19,530**	**2,707**	**2,219**	**1,813**	**2,506**	**2,632**	**2,181**	**2,112**	**2,044**	**2,026**	**2,072**	**2,144**	**18,995**

Source: Management Information, Children, Young People and Education, KCC

The overall number of pupils in Kent secondary schools has risen since 2014-15, from 77,931 pupils to 93,883 in 2024-25, an increase in excess of 20% over a ten-year period. This has been driven by larger Year 6 cohorts entering the secondary sector and demand generated by housing development. We anticipate that the Year 7 rolls will continue to increase during the Plan Period. This level of need for Year 7 places will require significant further investment in the secondary estate to maintain sufficiency of places and will continue to represent a major challenge to the Council and its commissioning partners in the years to come.

Figures 6d and 6e provide a breakdown of expected surplus or deficit capacity in Year 7 by non-selective and selective planning groups, across the 10-year period to 2034-35. Many districts/boroughs are showing a need for additional non-selective Year 7 places at some point in the forecast period. Within the selective sector we forecast (Figure 6e) a similar pattern of deficits of Year 7 places throughout the forecast period for the many of planning groups. In part this has been due to selective schools accepting over PAN for a number of years rather than cohorts growing significantly.

The need for additional places can in-part be managed through existing schools increasing the number of places offered on a temporary or permanent bases, but not all of the pressure can be managed this way, consequentially there will be a need for new schools or satellites of existing schools. The individual district/borough sections break down the expected surplus/deficit of places into smaller planning for both selective and non-selective.

Figure 6d: Non-selective school-based surplus/deficit capacity summary (Year 7) if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Ashford North	965	965	-10	8	-37	-60	-87	-94	59	-42	0	-11	70
Canterbury City	680	680	4	10	-5	-55	-61	-57	-69	-52	-77	-84	-59
Canterbury Coastal	618	618	61	56	41	25	66	35	36	100	78	85	123
Tenterden and Cranbrook	360	360	95	72	5	2	-1	-5	8	4	-5	4	15
Dartford and Swanley	1,260	1,260	10	123	175	132	154	176	174	211	184	146	205
Dover	450	450	57	18	-1	-20	-11	12	32	52	44	7	32
Deal and Sandwich	435	435	95	69	25	15	5	0	39	21	29	2	37
Folkestone and Hythe	625	625	10	-26	-9	-57	-37	0	-54	43	-9	-5	39
Faversham	210	210	9	32	20	-3	6	5	-9	4	-11	-16	-40
Gravesham and Longfield	1,370	1,370	32	-3	-34	-78	-113	-74	-71	-75	-97	-126	-103
Maidstone District	1,530	1,530	-25	-80	-93	-124	-179	-237	-173	-164	-144	-221	-175
Malling	543	543	28	57	68	21	24	21	50	29	57	39	50
Romney Marsh	180	180	6	-7	15	15	1	10	13	23	20	26	39
Sevenoaks and Borough Green	610	610	-3	29	6	13	27	19	30	74	32	52	118
Isle of Sheppey	360	360	11	3	-1	-12	-3	-12	-9	17	31	30	29
Sittingbourne	765	765	-3	-37	-8	-97	-69	-66	-90	-21	-29	-57	5
Thanet District	1,099	1,099	-36	-75	-68	-82	-38	-127	-14	-22	27	26	65
Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells	1,645	1,645	197	169	91	95	88	56	117	126	129	147	178
Kent	**13,705**	**538**	**418**	**190**	**-270**	**-227**	**-337**	**69**	**329**	**259**	**44**	**628**	**13,798**

Source: Management Information, Children, Young People and Education, KCC

Figure 6e: Selective school-based surplus/deficit capacity summary (Year 7) if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Ashford	420	-3	15	-4	-13	-22	-29	21	-11	-2	-2	18	420
Canterbury and Faversham	645	-8	15	0	-47	-28	-30	-42	-7	-30	-34	-28	645
North West Kent	720	-7	-23	-32	-48	-57	-53	-52	-24	-21	-43	-5	720
Dover District	440	4	20	0	6	5	4	19	22	17	9	11	440
Folkestone & Hythe District	330	-15	20	18	23	18	19	21	20	22	25	25	330
Gravesham and Longfield	420	-13	-29	-41	-58	-70	-59	-59	-66	-73	-87	-84	420
Sittingbourne and Sheppey	300	6	24	32	5	19	12	8	33	32	24	44	300
Thanet District	345	-1	21	23	21	25	9	23	25	26	30	37	345
Maidstone and Malling	815	-15	17	16	-8	-32	-56	-27	-32	-20	-52	-21	815
West Kent	1,264	-41	-2	-14	-13	11	10	39	75	84	99	165	1,294
Cranbrook	90	0	19	12	5	7	5	4	10	2	8	11	90
Kent	**5,789**	**-93**	**97**	**12**	**-126**	**-123**	**-169**	**-44**	**45**	**37**	**-24**	**174**	**5,819**

Source: Management Information, Children, Young People and Education, KCC

6.4 Travel to School Flows

Figures 6f and 6g outline the travel to school flows for selective and non-selective provision in Kent districts. There are big differences between both the scale of travel to school flows and the direction of flows between districts; for example, Sevenoaks has a net outflow of circa 3,500 pupils across the selective and non-selective sectors combined (excluding out of county pupils), whereas Maidstone has a net inflow of over 800 pupils. Dartford had the highest number of out of county pupils with over 1,500 traveling from adjacent boroughs. Tunbridge Wells has a high flow of pupils into the District particularly to access both non-selective denominational provision and selective provision. Tonbridge and Malling has high flows into and out of the District for both selective and non-selective provision.

Figure 6f: Travel to school flows for non-selective pupils (years 7-11) in Kent mainstream schools (Autumn 2024)

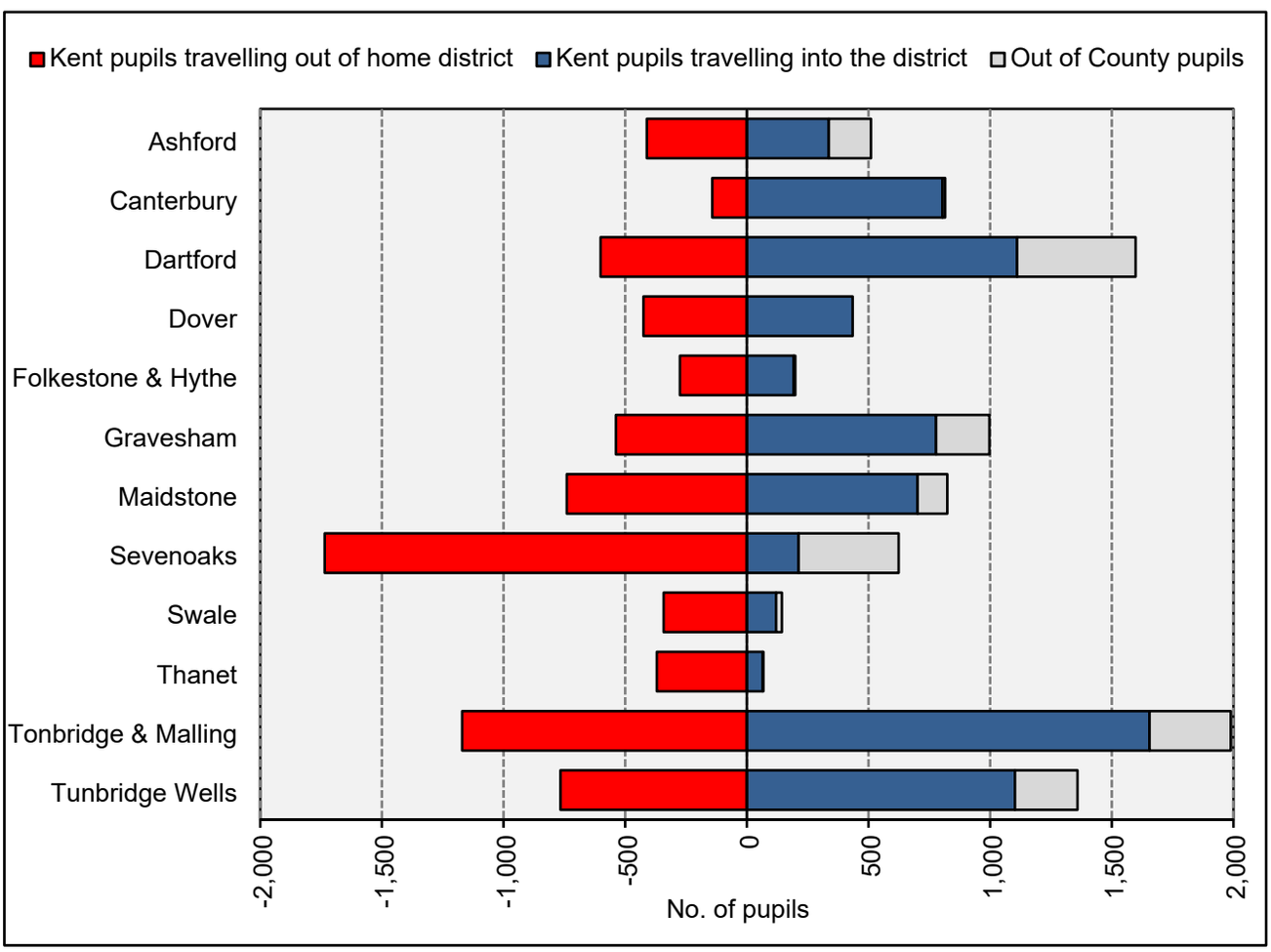
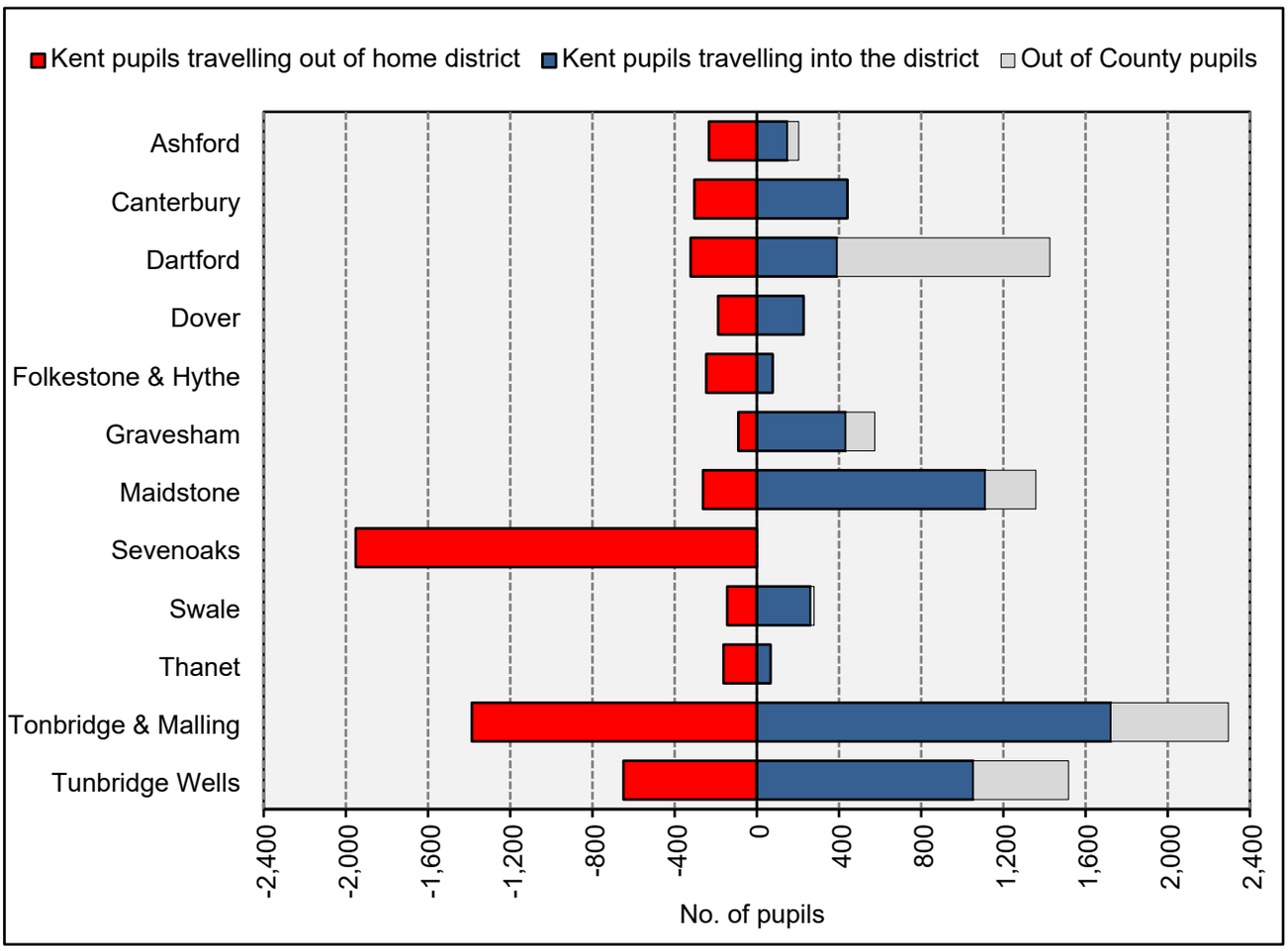


Figure 6g: Travel to school flows for selective grammar pupils (years 7-11) in Kent mainstream schools (Autumn 2024)



Source: Management Information, Children, Young People and Education, KCC

Notes:

(1) Actual roll data 2024/25 - Schools Census, Autumn 2024

(2) Data excludes Duke of York's Royal Military School, Dover

(3) The Sevenoaks Annex of Weald of Kent Grammar School is treated as being located in Tonbridge & Malling

(4) The Sevenoaks Annex of Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys is treated as being located in Tunbridge Wells

6.6 Migration into Kent

Figure 6h, 6i and 6j set out the net migration by pre-school, primary school and secondary school ages for 2023 and 2024. This table indicates a reduction in the annual inwards migration for the pre-school, but a notable increase in both primary and secondary migration.

Figure 6h: Pre-school (0-3 year olds) net migration year ending 30th June 2024

	2023					2024				
District	**Kent districts**	**Medway**	**London**	**Elsewhere in the UK**	**Total**	**Kent districts**	**Medway**	**London**	**Elsewhere in the UK**	**Total**
Ashford	-8	6	109	6	112	-3	-4	41	-34	0
Canterbury	50	10	82	-9	134	40	9	82	-24	107
Dartford	-111	-47	192	-103	-70	-107	-25	203	-71	1
Dover	26	-1	9	-10	25	13	5	27	-5	40
Folkestone & Hythe	17	3	54	-13	62	38	-3	55	0	91
Gravesham	18	-28	124	-40	74	-39	-13	87	-43	-8
Maidstone	30	27	110	-51	116	8	37	136	-40	141
Sevenoaks	-17	9	207	-21	178	-38	-4	162	-61	59
Swale	-40	36	91	-9	78	40	61	94	0	196
Thanet	-3	1	61	-16	43	25	0	92	-11	105
Tonbridge & Malling	41	27	134	-34	168	18	27	116	-14	147
Tunbridge Wells	-3	7	162	-23	143	5	6	123	-35	99
Kent	**0**	**50**	**1,336**	**-323**	**1,063**	**0**	**97**	**1,219**	**-338**	**978**

***Source: Office for National Statistics, Table IM2022-24**

Figure 6i: Primary (4-10 year olds) net migration year ending 30th June 2024

	2023					2024				
District	**Kent districts**	**Medway**	**London**	**Elsewhere**	**Total**	**Kent districts**	**Medway**	**London**	**Elsewhere**	**Total**
Ashford	44	7	95	32	178	-9	11	60	-56	6
Canterbury	73	17	81	-36	135	50	23	118	-22	168
Dartford	-166	-60	369	-85	58	-114	-73	464	-61	216
Dover	60	-3	42	27	126	53	3	50	-18	88
Folkestone & Hythe	-5	1	74	-10	60	32	0	56	23	111
Gravesham	5	-41	216	-34	146	-20	-46	223	-81	75
Maidstone	41	38	234	-53	260	35	69	191	-19	276
Sevenoaks	-103	-7	217	-58	49	-30	1	267	-44	195
Swale	16	50	172	10	248	29	26	147	-25	177
Thanet	-44	7	111	-51	22	-55	8	77	-29	1
Tonbridge & Malling	74	34	168	-7	269	-61	5	134	-15	63
Tunbridge Wells	7	7	197	-21	189	90	5	157	1	254
Kent	**0**	**51**	**1,976**	**-287**	**1,740**	**0**	**31**	**1,945**	**-347**	**1,630**

***Source: Office for National Statistics, Table IM2022-24**

Figure 6j: Secondary aged (11-15 year olds) net migration year ending 30th June 2024

	2023					2024				
District	**Kent districts**	**Medway**	**London**	**Elsewhere**	**Total**	**Kent districts**	**Medway**	**London**	**Elsewhere**	**Total**
Ashford	22	4	30	13	69	3	10	32	-32	12
Canterbury	66	19	77	0	162	36	13	78	-11	116
Dartford	-86	-27	185	-37	35	-71	-37	205	-7	90
Dover	33	1	69	39	142	1	1	47	8	57
Folkestone & Hythe	-3	1	15	-32	-19	-18	3	13	-26	-28
Gravesham	18	-18	99	-32	68	1	-22	107	-47	38
Maidstone	37	23	106	-14	152	65	41	97	7	209
Sevenoaks	-68	3	108	-32	11	-61	-7	122	-21	33
Swale	-23	35	82	-34	60	27	57	92	-36	139
Thanet	-24	-10	10	-40	-64	-9	12	41	-29	16
Tonbridge & Malling	31	-11	93	-28	85	-8	16	91	22	121
Tunbridge Wells	-4	3	117	31	147	35	3	106	19	163
Kent	**0**	**23**	**992**	**-167**	**848**	**0**	**90**	**1,029**	**-154**	**966**

Across the County as a whole, any fluctuation in migration may only have a small proportional impact on pupil numbers. However, at a district/borough level the fluctuation from one year to the next can be significant requiring the LA to respond swiftly to ensure sufficient school places.

7. Commissioning Statutory School Provision by Districts

7.1 Ashford

Borough Commentary

- Birth rates nationally have fallen by 25% between 2011 and 2023. The trends in Ashford mirrors this, although the birth rate of the Borough continues to exceed both Kent and National rates. Indications are the downwards trend reversed in England, Kent and Ashford in 2024 with increases in birth rates. Comparable published data is awaited.

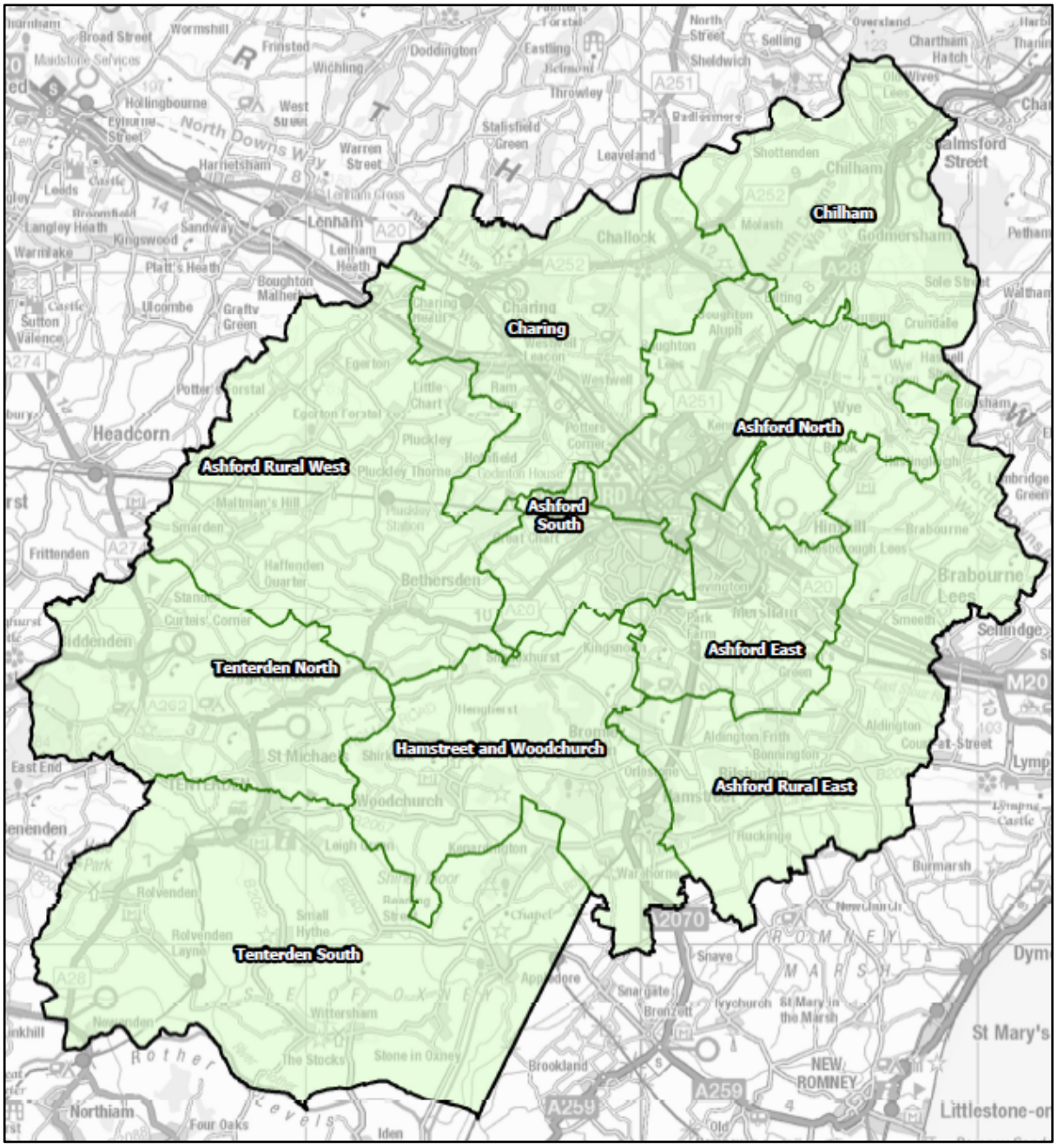
- Despite the falling birth rate, birth numbers in Ashford have not consistently declined in recent years. Future Year R cohorts (births in 2020 and on) vary in size from 1350 births to 1435 (a 3 FE difference). 2024 saw 33 additional births to 2023.

- Primary school rolls are expected to stabilise over the forecast period, as Year R cohorts of broadly comparable size join schools. In the short term rolls still continue falling as larger cohorts move through to secondary school. There will be localised pressures as house building resumes following delays in sites coming forwards due to 'nutrient neutrality' planning issues.

- Forecasts suggest a deficit of Year 7 places from 2026/27 and throughout the Plan period with the exception of 2030/31 and 2034/35. The addition of 30 places per year at Wye Free School (NS – Ashford North) will address the deficit in part.

- The Local Plan (up to 2030) was adopted in the first quarter of 2019. Within the Plan, the Borough Council have identified that up to 13,544 new homes could be delivered by 2030. This equates to an average of 1,129 new homes per annum. During the period 2014/15 to 2023/24 an average of 752 homes were completed per annum (Kent Analytics Statistical Bulletin April 2024).

Map of the Ashford Borough primary planning groups



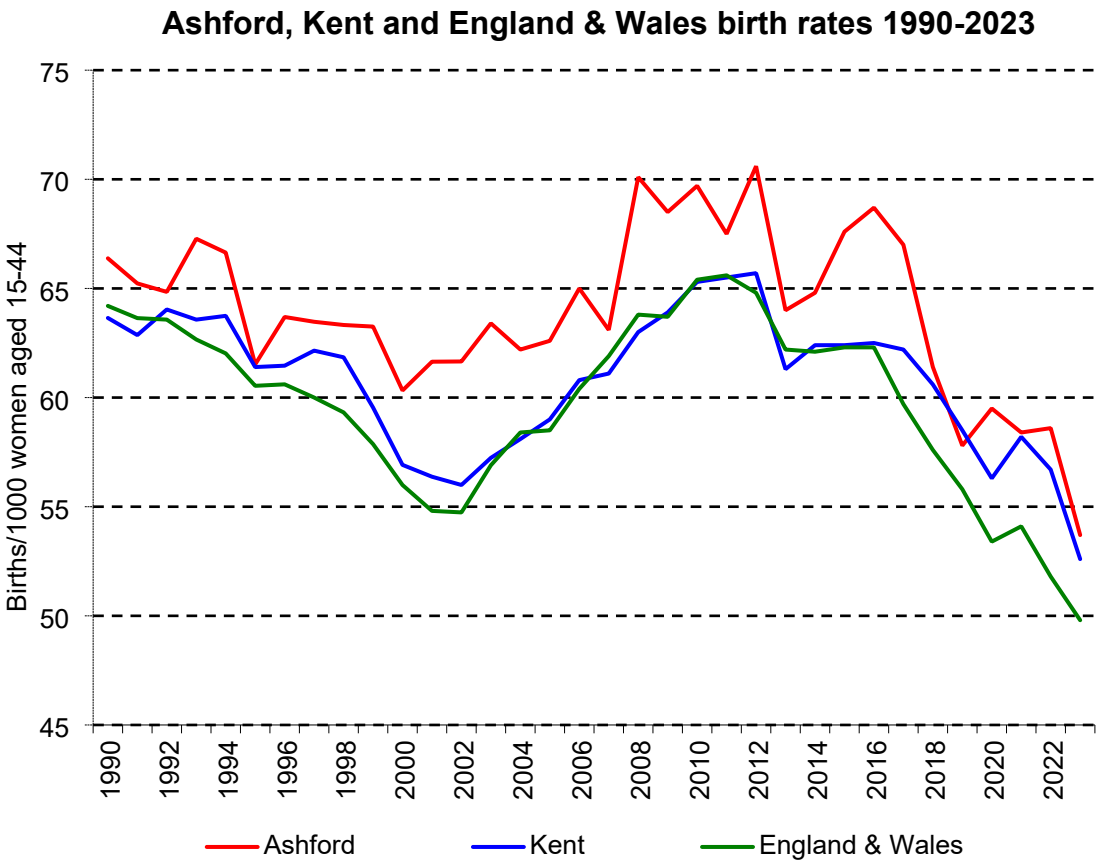
Ashford primary schools by planning group

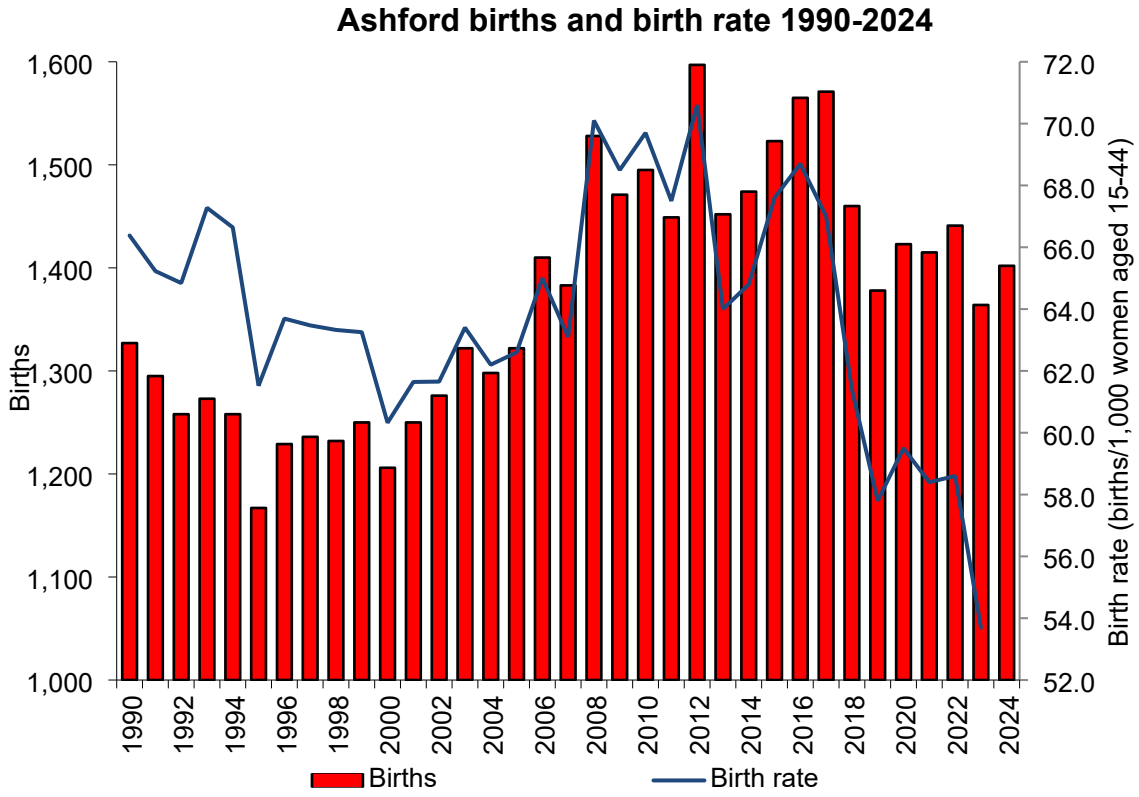
Planning Groups	School	Status
Chilham	St. Mary's CE Primary School (Chilham)	Voluntary Controlled
Charing	Challock Primary School	Foundation
	Charing CE Primary School	Academy
Ashford North	Downs View Infant School	Community
	Goat Lees Primary School	Foundation
	Godinton Primary School	Academy
	Kennington CE Academy	Academy
	Lady Joanna Thornhill Endowed Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Phoenix Community Primary School	Foundation
	Repton Manor Primary School	Foundation
	St. Mary's CE Primary School (Ashford)	Voluntary Aided
	St. Teresa's RC Primary School	Academy

Planning Groups	School	Status
	Victoria Road Primary School	Community
Ashford Rural East	Aldington Primary School	Foundation
	Brabourne CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Brook Community Primary School	Foundation
	Smeeth Community Primary School	Foundation
Ashford East	East Stour Primary School	Academy
	Finberry Primary School	Academy
	Furley Park Primary Academy	Academy
	Kingsnorth CE Primary School	Academy
	Mersham Primary School	Foundation
	Willesborough Infant School	Foundation
	Willesborough Junior School	Foundation
Ashford South	Ashford Oaks Primary School	Community
	Beaver Green Primary School	Academy
	Chilmington Green Primary School	Free
	Great Chart Primary School	Community
	John Wallis CE Academy	Academy
	John Wesley CE and Methodist Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. Simon of England RC Primary School	Academy
Ashford Rural West	Bethersden School	Community
	Egerton CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Pluckley CE Primary School	Academy
	Smarden Primary School	Academy
Hamstreet and Woodchurch	Hamstreet Primary Academy	Academy
	Woodchurch CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Tenterden North	High Halden CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	John Mayne CE Primary School	Academy
	St. Michael's CE Primary School	Academy
Tenterden South	Rolvenden Primary School	Academy
	Tenterden CE Junior School	Academy
	Tenterden Infant School	Academy
	Wittersham CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided

Birth rate and births analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the Borough and the number of recorded births.





Ashford Forecasts

Primary - Year R surplus/deficit capacity if no further action is taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Chilham	15	3	5	3	5	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	15
Challock and Charing	50	0	-2	4	2	6	-3	-4	-5	-6	-8	-10	50
Ashford North	450	23	3	37	57	49	34	33	34	35	34	34	420
Ashford Rural East	80	12	13	6	21	11	13	13	13	12	12	12	80
Ashford East	420	54	76	10	34	15	32	36	39	39	38	39	380
Ashford South	390	62	74	70	113	78	86	90	93	98	103	108	390
Ashford Rural West	80	17	3	7	6	5	3	2	1	0	0	-1	80
Hamstreet and Woodchurch	71	15	13	13	19	16	15	14	14	14	13	14	71
Tenterden North	65	13	8	7	14	9	11	10	10	9	9	9	65
Tenterden South	94	26	18	36	27	31	29	28	28	27	26	27	95
Ashford	**1,715**	**225**	**210**	**192**	**297**	**226**	**224**	**228**	**233**	**233**	**233**	**237**	**1,646**

Secondary - Forecast Year 7 surplus/deficit capacity if no further action is taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
NS - Ashford North	965	-10	8	-37	-60	-87	-94	59	-42	0	-11	70	938
NS - Tenterden and Cranbrook	360	95	72	5	2	-1	-5	8	4	-5	4	15	300
SG - Ashford	420	-3	15	-4	-13	-22	-29	21	-11	-2	-2	18	420

Primary Borough Commentary

Across the District we forecast 14.4% surplus Year R places by the end of the forecast period. Across the whole primary cohort, forecasts predict 6.6% surplus capacity growing to 9.8%. In the short to medium term, we will collaborate with schools to manage the levels of surplus Year R places to help maintain high quality, sustainable provision. In line with Government policy, surplus may also be used for nursery provision to deliver the extension of government funded places, or to provide more specialist SEN places.

Charing and Challock Planning Group
Forecasts suggest a small deficit of primary school places throughout the forecast period.

The expansion of Charing CE Primary School continues to be the strategic solution for additional primary school places. The expansion of the school will be driven by local consented housing developments. Those developments have as yet not been able to progress, therefore it is not expected school places will be required until the end of the decade or later.

Ashford North Planning Group
Forecasts suggest surplus places throughout the forecast period. In the longer term, planned new developments north of the M20 between Kennington, Willesborough and Eureka Park will increase demand. To address the need for primary school places to support new housing in and around the planning group, the Local Plan makes provision for a new 2FE primary school to be incorporated into the 'Conningbrook Park' development. This development has only just started. The primary school land is expected to be available from 2027 at the earliest. The school is likely to be required in the next decade.

Ashford East Planning Group
Although forecasts suggest a level of surplus Year R places across the forecast period additional provision may be required to support housing development as this comes forward. This includes: Finberry, Waterbrook, Park Farm, Court Lodge, Pound Lane and Willesborough Lees.

The Local Plan makes provision for a new 2FE primary school to be incorporated into the 'Court Lodge' development area, to meet the longer-term primary education needs driven by that development. We would not expect the new primary school to be available until the 2030's.

Ashford South Planning Group
Forecasts suggest increasing surplus Year R places across the forecast period from 2027 onwards. The surplus capacity will reduce when delivery of consented houses within Chilmington Green increases.

Secondary Borough Commentary
There are three planning groups which are within Ashford Borough or which cross the Borough boundary (See appendix 13.2 for the non-selective and selective planning group maps). Two planning groups are non-selective (Ashford North, Tenterden and Cranbrook), one selective. The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

Ashford North Non-Selective Planning Group
There are five existing schools in the Ashford North non-selective planning group: John Wallis Church of England Academy, The North School, The Towers School and Sixth Form Centre, Wye School and Chilmington Green Secondary School.

Forecasts suggest a deficit of Year 7 places from 2026/27 in all but two years of the forecast period. The addition of 30 places per year at Wye Free School will address the deficit in part and in the short to medium term, we will collaborate with existing schools to ensure that there are

sufficient Year 7 places for all who require one. In addition, developer contribution sought to expand Chilmington Geen Secondary School by 2FE, will support planned housing development.

Tenterden and Cranbrook Non-Selective Planning Group
Forecasts indicate a fluctuation between a very small surplus of and a very small deficit of Year 7 places annually through the forecast period. This can be managed via admissions criteria.

Ashford Selective Planning Group
There are two selective schools in the Borough: Highworth Grammar School and The Norton Knatchbull Grammar School. Forecasts suggest that there will be a small deficit of Year 7 places throughout the forecast period with the exception of 2030/31 and 2034/35. We will work with the existing schools to manage this, with temporary expansions if necessary.

Planned Commissioning – Ashford

Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Ashford East					2FE of new provision at Court Lodge	
Ashford North					2FE New provision at Conningbrook Park	
Charing				0.3FE Charing CEPS		
Ashford South						2FE of new provision at Chilmington Green
Ashford North Non-Selective	1 FE Wye Free School		30 Year 7 places	30 Year 7 places		2FE Expansion of Chilmington Green

7.2 Canterbury

District commentary

- The Canterbury district birth rate differs to Kent and the national picture as it is significantly lower, reflecting the large student population. The birth rate has had a downward trend since the 1990s. However, following a sharp fall in 2020, Canterbury's birth rate and the number of births rose again in 2021, before falling back slightly in 2022, 2023 and 2024.

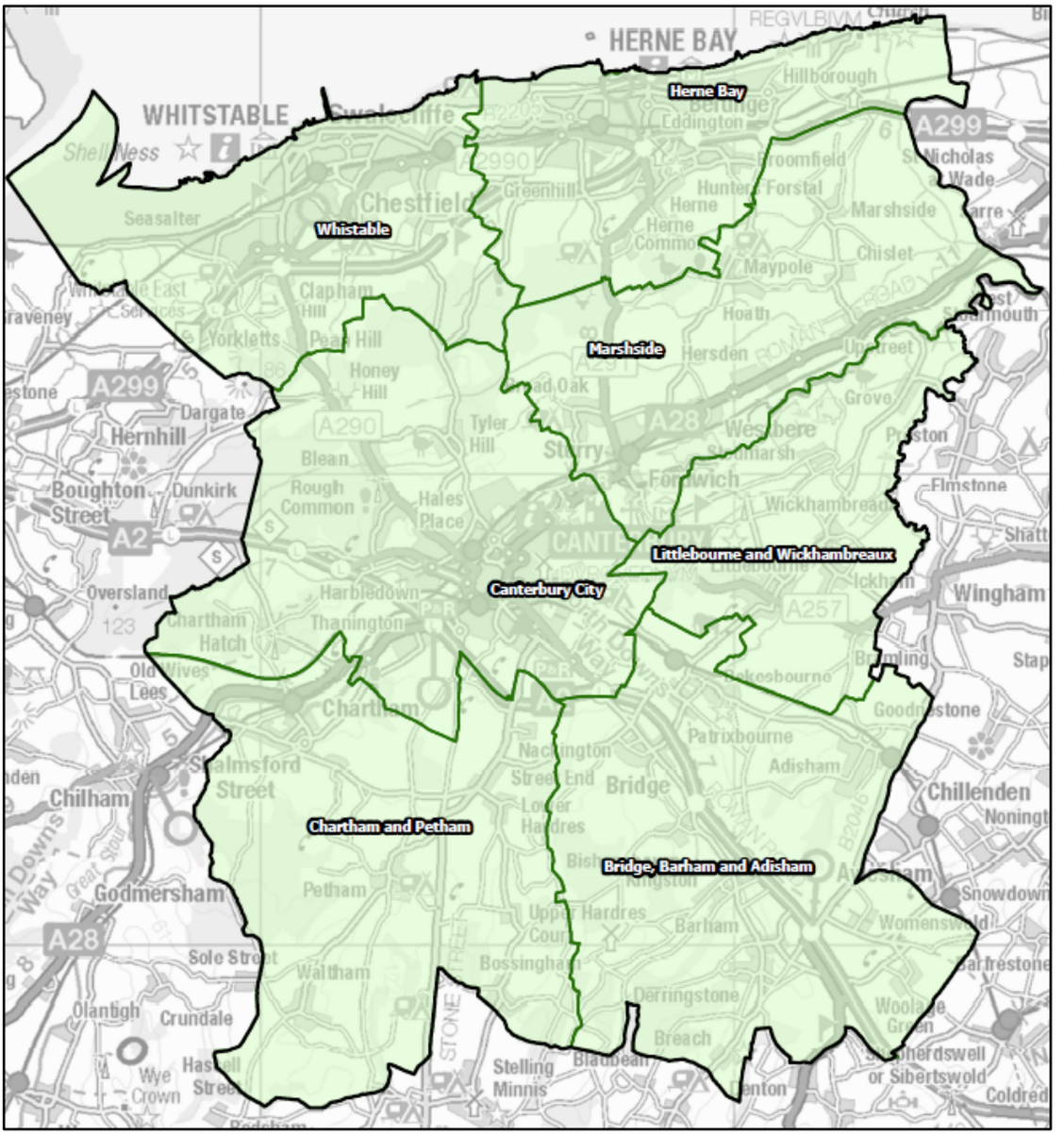
- We forecast surplus primary school places across the District throughout the forecast period, however there are significant differences in the planning groups.

- Within the secondary sector, we forecast pressures on capacity for non-selective Year 7 places in Canterbury City planning group but capacity in the Canterbury Coastal planning group. For selective places there is surplus capacity until 2027/28. After this date, a pressure on places is forecast.

- Canterbury City Council's current Local Plan, adopted on 13 July 2017, proposed a total of just over 16,000 new homes during the Plan period up to 2031. This equates to an average of 925 dwellings per annum. During the 2014/15 to 2023/24 a total of 4919 houses were completed (NET) with an average of 492 per year.

- Canterbury City Council (CCC) is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan for the district which will set out the blueprint for development up to 2042/43. Following previous consultations in 2020, 2021 and 2022, CCC consulted on a revised Regulation 18 draft Local Plan in Spring 2024. CCC is currently reviewing the representations received to the consultation and will be running a focused Regulation 18 consultation on specific policies in 2025. A Regulation 19 Local Plan will be prepared for consultation in 2026, before the plan is examined by an inspector and a final decision is made.

Map of the Canterbury Primary Planning Groups



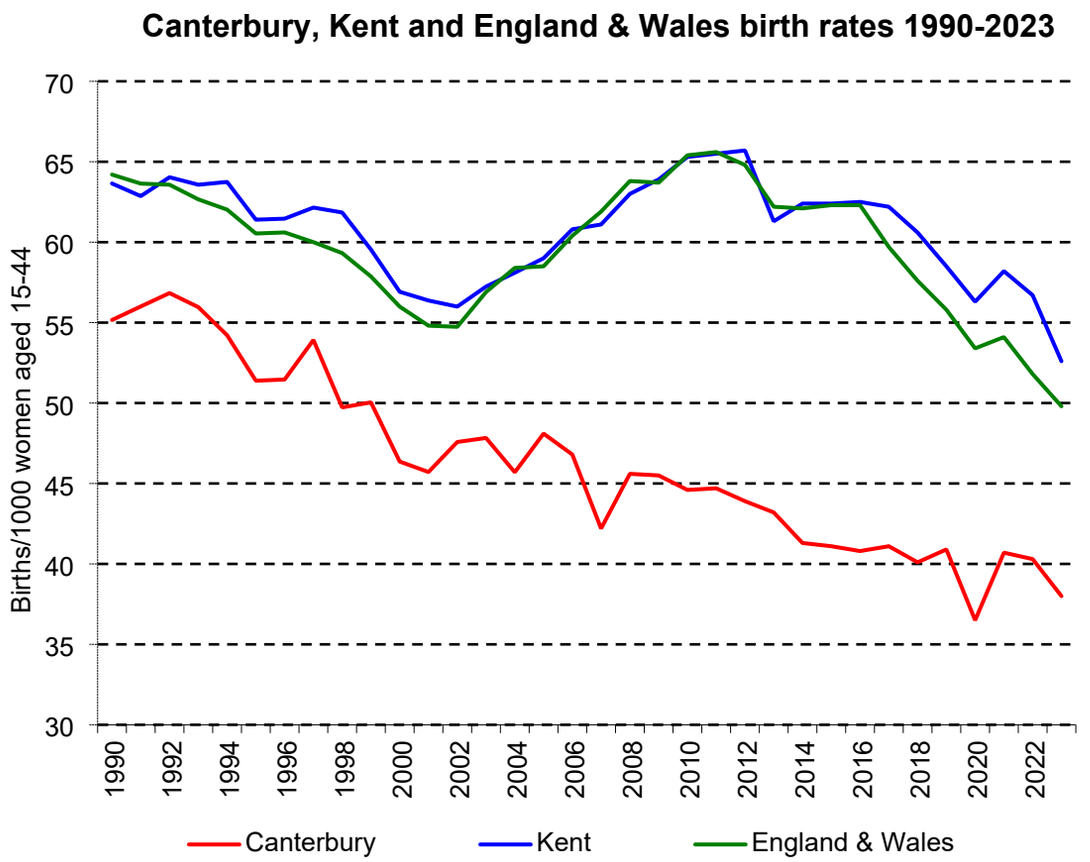
Canterbury Primary Schools by Planning Group

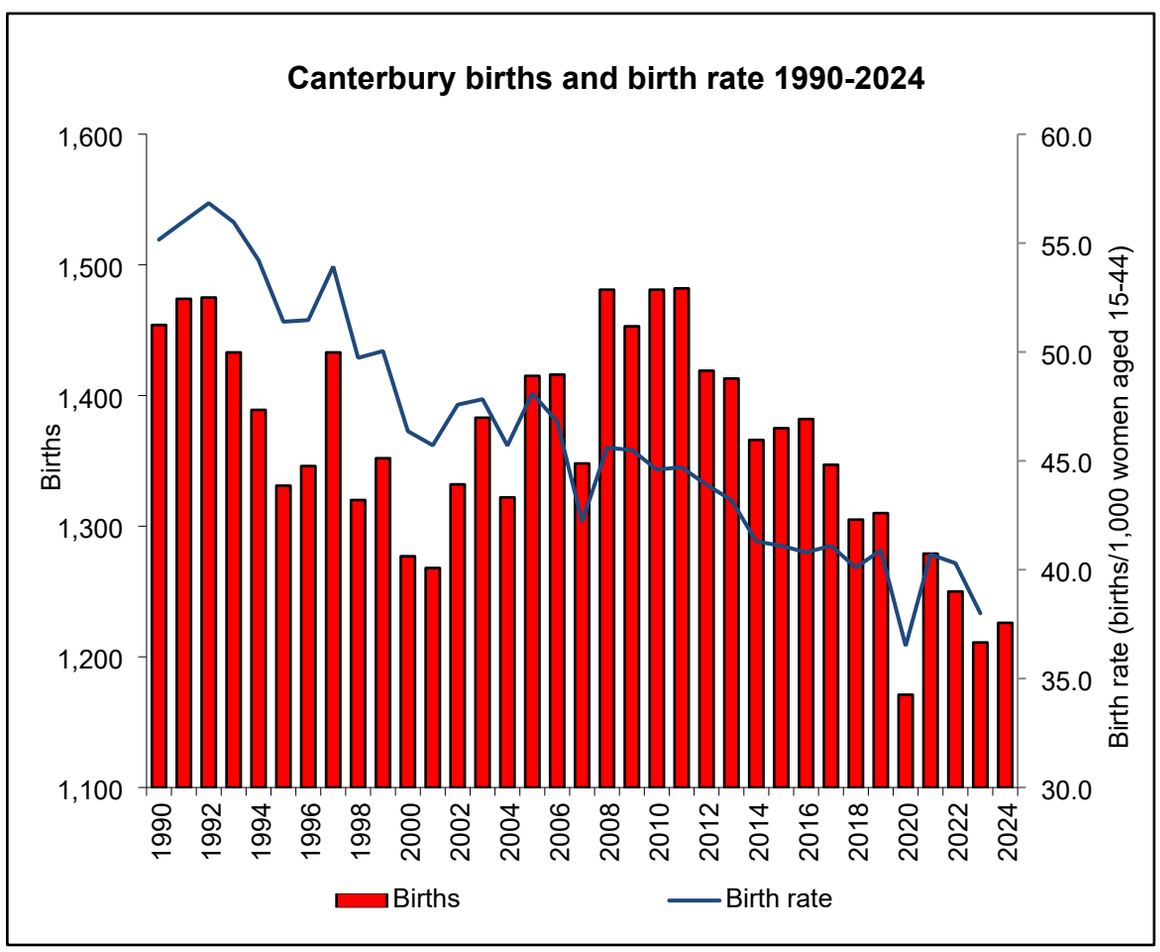
Planning Group	School	Status
Canterbury City	Blean Primary School	Community
	Canterbury Primary School	Academy
	Parkside Community Primary School	Foundation
	Pilgrims' Way Primary School	Academy
	St. John's CE Primary School (Canterbury)	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Peter's Methodist Primary School (Canterbury)	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Stephen's Infant School	Academy
	St. Stephen's Junior School	Academy
	St. Thomas' RC Primary School (Canterbury)	Voluntary Aided
	Wincheap Foundation Primary School	Foundation
Marshside	Chislet CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Water Meadows Primary School	Academy
	Hoath Primary School	Community
	Sturry CE Primary School	Academy
Bridge, Barham and Adisham	Adisham CE Primary School	Academy
	Barham CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Bridge and Patrixbourne CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled

Planning Group	School	Status
Littlebourne and Wickhambreaux	Littlebourne CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Wickhambreaux CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Chartham and Petham	Chartham Primary School	Academy
	Petham Primary School	Academy
Whitstable	Joy Lane Primary School	Foundation
	St. Alphege CE Infant School	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Mary's RC Primary School (Whitstable)	Academy
	Swalecliffe Community Primary School	Foundation
	Westmeads Community Infant School	Community
	Whitstable and Seasalter Endowed CE Junior School	Voluntary Aided
	Whitstable Junior School	Foundation
Herne Bay	Thornden Wood Primary School	Academy
	Hampton Primary School	Academy
	Herne Bay Infant School	Community
	Herne Bay Junior School	Foundation
	Herne CE Infant School	Voluntary Controlled
	Herne CE Junior School	Voluntary Aided
	Reculver CE Primary School	Academy

Birth Rate and Birth Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the district and the number of recorded births.





Canterbury Forecasts

Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Canterbury City	480	34	19	21	33	21	32	43	57	72	91	114	480
Marshside	119	12	19	3	1	-2	6	6	8	9	9	7	120
Bridge, Barham and Adisham	105	1	-2	4	2	4	3	3	4	5	7	8	105
Littlebourne and Wickhambreaux	30	3	-1	3	1	3	2	2	3	3	4	4	30
Chartham and Petham	75	19	20	12	21	27	21	22	23	24	25	26	75
Whitstable	360	101	56	79	105	107	86	85	83	82	80	75	330
Herne Bay	390	57	36	13	44	54	35	37	40	44	46	45	360
Canterbury	**1,559**	**227**	**146**	**135**	**207**	**214**	**186**	**199**	**218**	**240**	**261**	**279**	**1,500**

Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Canterbury City Non-Selective	680	4	10	-5	-55	-61	-57	-69	-52	-77	-84	-59	680
Canterbury Coastal Non-Selective	618	61	56	41	25	66	35	36	100	78	85	123	618
Canterbury and Faversham Selective	645	-8	15	0	-47	-28	-30	-42	-7	-30	-34	-28	645

Primary District Commentary

Forecasts indicate that across Canterbury district there will be surplus capacity for Year R places. The surplus for Year R fluctuates throughout the forecast period from 4.5FE surplus for 2026/27 to 199 (6.6FE) for 2030/31 with significant variations across the different Planning Groups. The lower rate of housebuilding combined with the decline in birth rate has resulted in surplus primary places across the planning groups with significant surplus of places in Herne Bay and Whitstable.

Canterbury City Planning Group
Forecasts indicate a surplus of places in the planning group of between 0.7FE for Year R in 2026/27 increasing to 1.4FE in 2030/31. However, the first phase (1FE) of the new 2FE Saxon Fields primary school in Thanington will be established to serve the new housing development of 750 homes in the planning group. This phased approach will prevent overcapacity in the planning area and help to realign historical travel patterns.

Marshside Planning Group
Forecasts indicate an increasing surplus of capacity from 0.1FE in 2026/27 to 0.2FE in 2030/31. Later in the forecast period, we will expand Water Meadows Primary Academy by 1FE to serve the housing development in this planning group.

Littlebourne and Wickhambreaux Planning Group and Bridge, Barham and Adisham
Forecasts indicate that there will be a slight growing pressure for Year R places within the planning groups. This is due to the significant number of families who traditionally travel into the planning groups for places. Later in the forecast period, dependent on new housing being brought forward in the planning group, a 0.5FE expansion of Littlebourne Primary School will be commissioned.

Whitstable Planning Group
Forecasts indicate a sustained surplus of Year R places from 2.6FE in 2026/27 to 2.8FE in 2030/31. Discussions will take place with schools in the planning group to manage this surplus.

Herne Bay Planning Group
Forecasts indicate surplus capacity of between 0.4FE in 2026/7 to 1.2FE in 2030/31 of for Year R places. If new housing developments are delivered in line with the Local Plan, additional capacity will be required in the plan period. Dependent on the order in which developments are built out, this could be delivered through a 1FE expansion of Thornden Wood Primary School or the phased establishment of a new 2FE primary school on the Hillborough development.

Secondary District Commentary

There are three planning groups within Canterbury district, or which cross the Borough boundary (See appendix 13.2 for the non-selective and selective planning group maps). Two planning groups are non-selective (Canterbury City and Canterbury Coastal), and one selective (Canterbury and Faversham). The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

Canterbury City Non-Selective Planning Group
There are four schools in the Canterbury City non-selective planning group: Archbishop's School, Barton Manor, Canterbury Academy, and St Anselm's Catholic School.

Forecasts indicate a pressure of 0.1FE from 2026/27 which increases to 2.3FE in 2030/31. The historical trend of students travelling from the Coastal planning group to Canterbury city schools place pressure on the Canterbury City planning group. The surplus capacity in the Coastal planning group will help offset these pressures in Canterbury city schools and will realign students to the coastal schools near to where they live. Any additional pressures within Canterbury City planning group will be met by temporary or permanent expansions.

Canterbury Coastal Non-Selective Planning Group
There are three schools in the Canterbury Coastal non-selective planning group: The Whitstable School, Herne Bay High School and Spires Academy.

Year 7 forecasts indicate a fluctuating surplus of places between 1.3FE in 2026/27 to 1.2FE in 2030/31. The historical trend of students travelling from the coast to Canterbury city is starting to change and the surplus capacity in the coastal schools will help offset the pressures in Canterbury City planning group.

Canterbury and Faversham Selective Planning Group
There are four schools in the Canterbury and Faversham selective planning group: Barton Court Grammar School, Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School, Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys and Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School.

Forecasts indicate sufficient capacity in the planning group until 2027. From 2027/28 the forecast indicates a fluctuating pressure of up to 1.5FE. We will be working with existing school within the planning group to meet this need.

Planned Commissioning - Canterbury

Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Canterbury City		1FE of new School in Thanington – Saxon Fields Primary School				1 FE Saxon Fields Primary School
Marshside					1FE expansion of Water Meadows	1FE of new provision in Sturry/ Broad Oak
Herne Bay						1FE expansion of Thornden Wood PS or 1FE new provision in Herne Bay
Canterbury City Non- Selective		Up to 1FE temporary places	Up to 1 FE temporary places	Up to 1 FE temporary places		
Canterbury and Faversham Selective		0.5FE expansion of Simon Langton Girls School				

7.3 Dartford

Borough Summary

- The Dartford birth rate continues to fall, although it remains significantly higher than the Kent and National averages.

- Primary forecasts indicate surpluses of 4.5FE in the first year of the Plan but increases to a peak of 8FE during the remainder of the Plan period. Over the next year, KCC is supporting a school to reduce their PAN; through In Year Variation. This reduction is not reflected in the forecasts, but the reduction would reduce the amount of capacity in Dartford by 15 Year R places per year. We need to be mindful that there is still significant house building scheduled in Dartford over the period of the Borough's recently adopted Local Plan, and much of that housing has not been consented, so is not included in the forecasts. However, KCC will continue to monitor the situation, and should schools begin to experience issues in respect of their financial viability, officers will work with them to assess whether further PAN reductions are required.

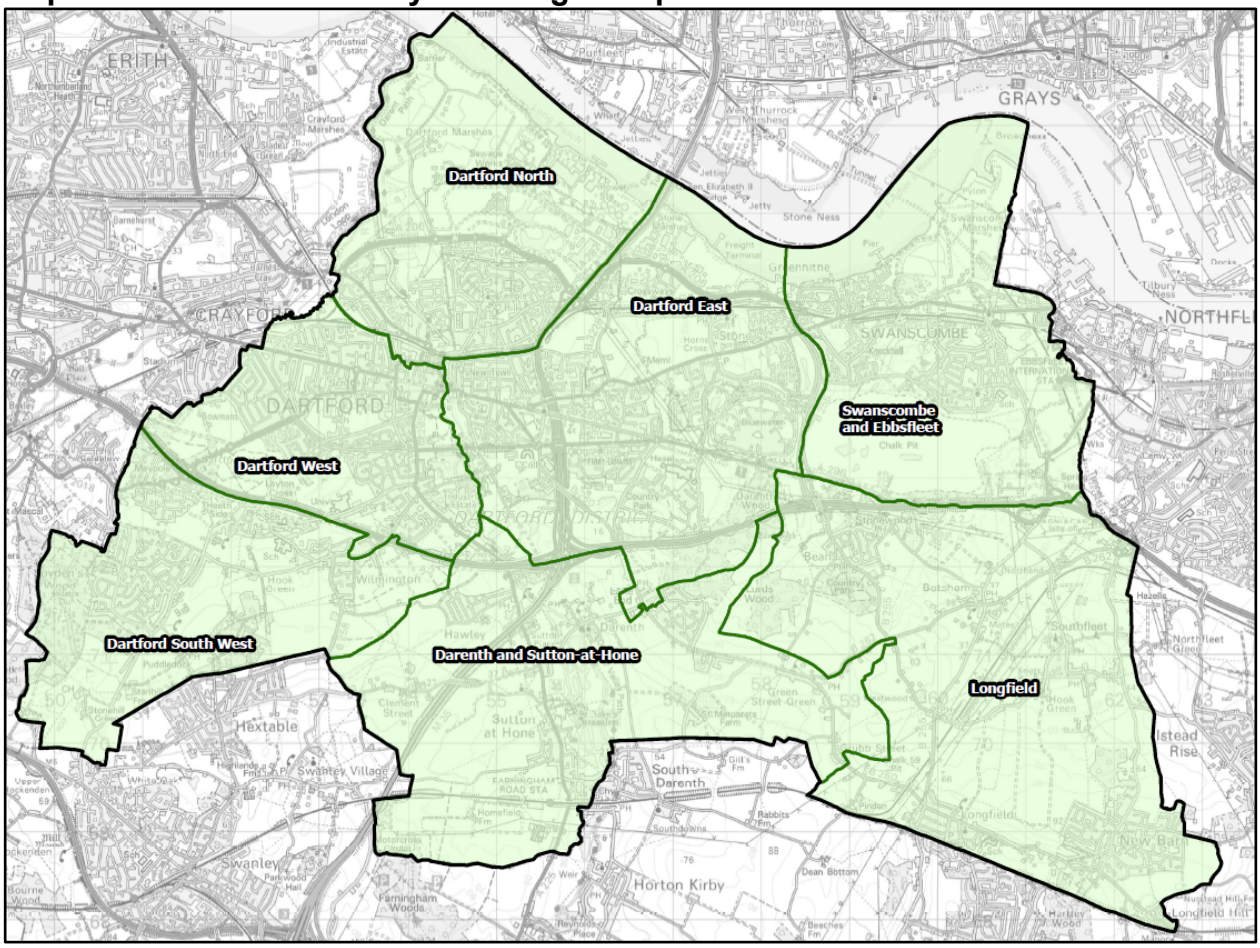
- Over the Plan period in the Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective Planning Group, forecast surplus fluctuates between just over 4.5FE to 7FE. The Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group shows a deficit from the outset for all of the Plan period. The deficit increases year on year, peaking at just over 3.5FE for September 2028, before reducing to 2.5FE in September 2030 and peaking again in September 2033 with a deficit of just over 4FE. Extensive work has been undertaken in recent years with all schools in the Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group to introduce additional places and so further expansion opportunities are extremely limited. Therefore, until Gravesham's new Local Plan is produced and adopted, cross border working will need to be employed to ensure sufficiency of school places in the locality.

- Selective demand in both the Gravesham and Longfield Selective and North West Kent Selective Planning Groups are under pressure throughout the whole Plan period. With the deficit peaking in the Gravesham and Longfield Selective Planning Group at just under 3FE for September 2033 and in the North West Kent Selective Planning Group at 2FE for September 2028. Any options for creating additional selective capacity will be extremely challenging and KCC may only be able to ensure that the Local Authority statutory duty to provide sufficient secondary places, of any type, is met. However, KCC continues to work with all selective Schools in the wider North Kent Area to identify possible options for further expansion of provision.

- Dartford Borough Council (DBC) and the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) had estimated that up to 2026, approximately 17,300 new homes would be built. The build trajectory to achieve that had slipped due to covid but continues to move at pace.

- More recently, the EDC has confirmed that a total 15,000 homes will be built in their area of responsibility alone, with a considerable number already completed. However, there is a significant proportion of that housing still to be produced. Not all of the anticipated housing has been consented, and so it will not appear in the forecasts. KCC is working in collaboration with DBC and EDC to ensure that sufficient places are available to accommodate the children from the new housing, even if it does not feature in the forecasts.

Map of the Dartford Primary Planning Groups



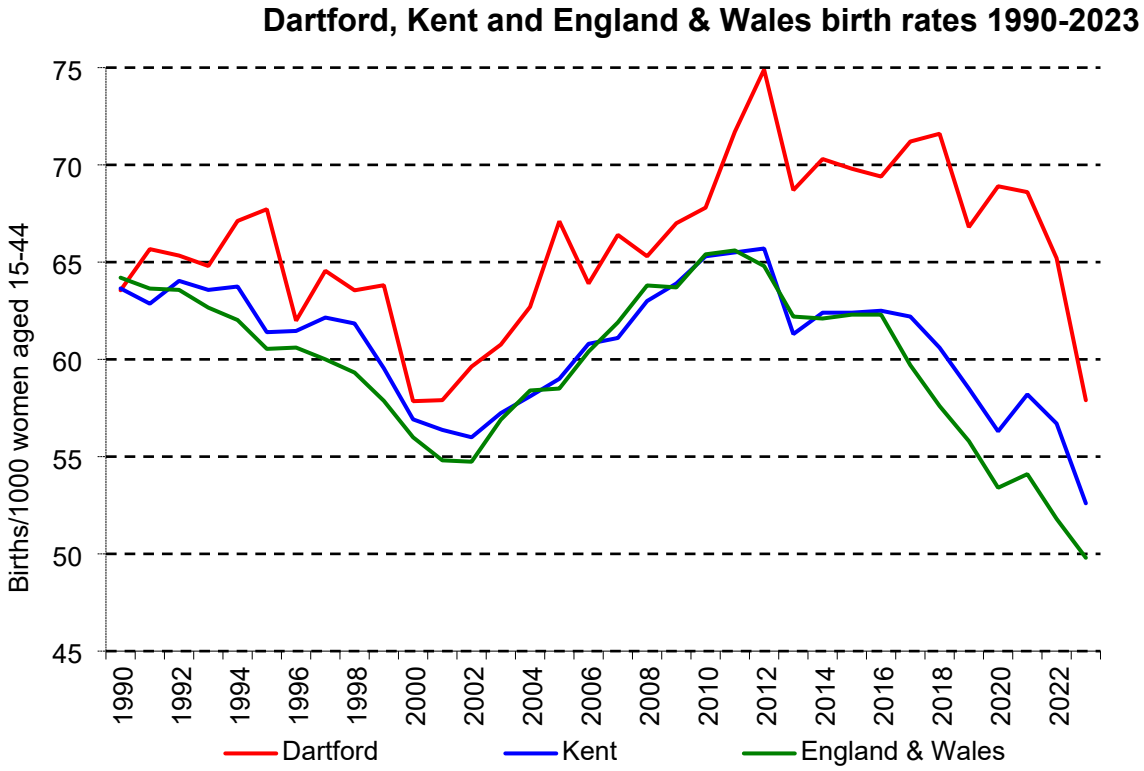
Dartford Primary Schools by Planning Group

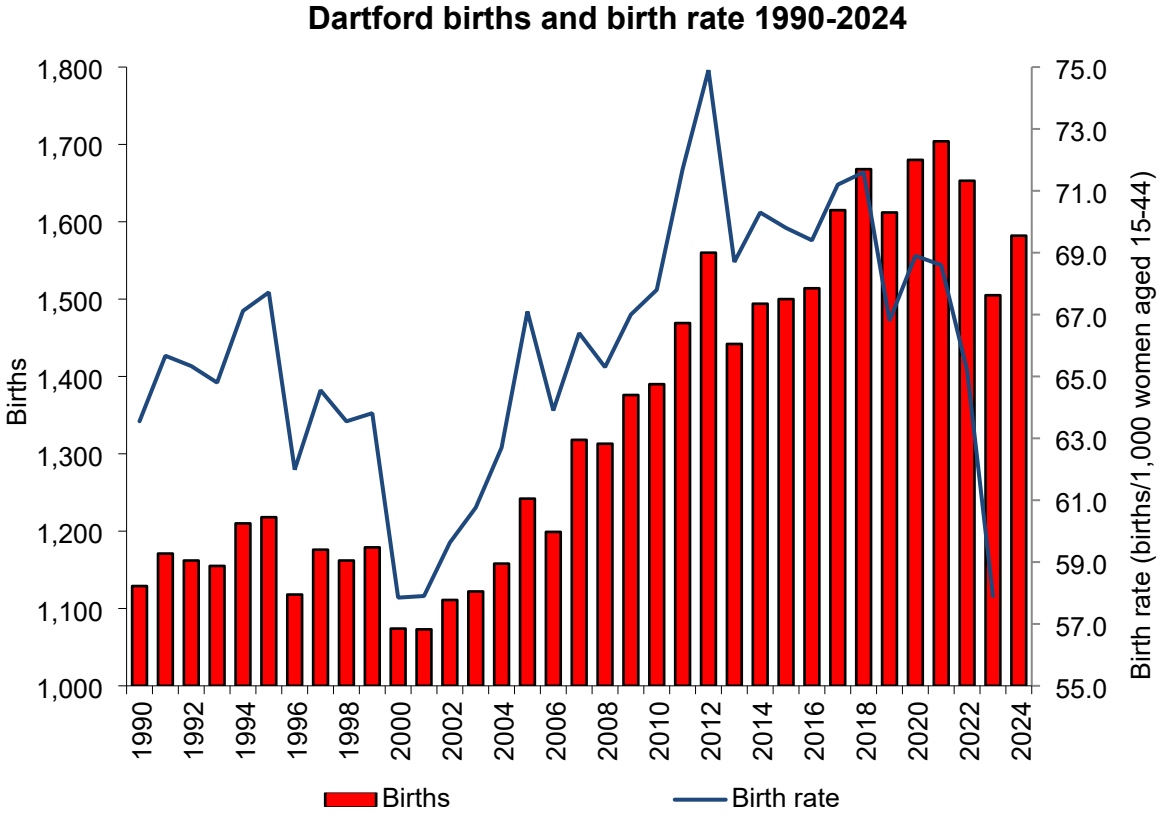
	School	Status
Dartford North	Dartford Bridge Community Primary School	Academy
	Holy Trinity CE Primary School (Dartford)	Voluntary Aided
	River Mill Primary School	Free
	St. Anselm's RC Primary School	Academy
	Temple Hill Primary Academy	Academy
Dartford West	Oakfield Primary Academy	Academy
	Our Lady's RC Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Wentworth Primary School	Academy
	West Hill Primary Academy	Academy
	Westgate Primary School	Academy
Dartford East	Brent Primary School	Academy
	Leigh Academy Dartford	Academy
	Fleetdown Primary School	Academy
	Gateway Primary Academy	Academy
	Stone St. Mary's CE Primary School	Academy
Dartford South West	Joyden's Wood Infant School	Academy
	Joyden's Wood Junior School	Academy
	Maypole Primary School	Academy
	Wilmington Primary School	Academy
Darenth and Sutton-at-Hone	Greenlands Primary School	Academy
	Sutton-at-Hone CE Primary School	Academy
Swanscombe and	Alkerden C of E Academy (from September 2026)	Academy

	School	Status
Ebbsfleet	Leigh Academy Cherry Orchard	Academy
	Craylands School	Community
	Ebbsfleet Green Primary School	Free
	Knockhall Primary School	Academy
	Manor Community Primary School	Academy
Longfield	Bean Primary School	Community
	Langafel CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Sedley's CE Primary School	Academy

Birth Rate Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the Borough and the number of recorded births.





Dartford Forecasts

Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Dartford North	330	40	50	49	68	99	71	78	84	91	97	103	330
Dartford West	315	18	38	6	30	22	23	23	22	21	22	23	315
Dartford East	390	3	8	-1	18	21	15	17	19	22	27	33	390
Dartford South West	180	49	35	41	63	55	48	47	46	46	46	45	180
Darenth and Sutton-at-Hone	90	25	16	23	21	25	21	20	20	20	20	21	90
Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet	390	51	-8	3	-31	6	30	35	41	48	58	67	420
Longfield	90	16	12	13	14	14	12	11	11	10	10	10	90
Dartford	**1,785**	**202**	**152**	**133**	**184**	**242**	**220**	**231**	**242**	**259**	**281**	**302**	**1,815**

Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective	1,260	10	123	175	132	154	176	174	211	184	146	205	1,560
Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective	1,370	32	-3	-34	-78	-113	-74	-71	-75	-97	-126	-103	1,389
Gravesham and Longfield Selective	420	-13	-29	-41	-58	-70	-59	-59	-66	-73	-87	-84	420
North West Kent Selective	720	-7	-23	-32	-48	-57	-53	-52	-24	-21	-43	-5	720

Primary Borough commentary

Forecasts, for the Borough as a whole, indicate a range of 4.5FE - 8FE surplus for the first three years of the main Plan period for Year R. From September 2031 the surplus increases steadily from 8FE - 10FE over the remainder of the longer term planning period. Forecasted demand comes from the Dartford East Planning Group and the Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet Planning Group.

Dartford remains one of the fastest growing boroughs. Although, the recent fall in birth rate has created this surplus of forecasted places resulting in no action likely to be needed. However, it may be necessary to consider temporary PAN reductions of some schools to maintain financial viability. In addition to the forecast identified above, plans for further housing across the borough will increase the need for school places. Over and above the current planned housing numbers, Dartford Borough Council have a new Local Plan that describes an additional 7000 units.

Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet Planning Group

This planning group is significantly impacted by the Ebbsfleet Garden City development area. A new primary school was established on the Ebbsfleet Green development in 2020-21 which opened with 1FE. The increased demand for year R places due to the pace of housebuilding, necessitated that it be expanded to its capacity of 2FE ahead of the projected timeline.

Due to increased pupil yields from new housing, the demand has been such in the planning group that a need to commission additional Year R places at Ebbsfleet Green Primary School was identified. The school offered bulge classes for 2024 and for 2025 only.

As the Garden City development progresses, a new 2FE primary provision will be provided at the Alkerden all-through school, opening with 1FE from September 2026 and expanding to 2FE from September 2028. However, this 1FE expansion may be considered to be brought forward a year to September 2027 in order to meet the deficit forecast for September 2027/2028. This new provision has been commissioned and is already included in the current forecasts.

In the longer term, should housing be delivered at expected rates, two further new primary schools (Ashmere and Ebbsfleet Central) will be required in addition to the establishment of the primary provision at Alkerden. This will provide a total of 6FE of new primary provision across the Plan period. The additional schools at Ashmere and Ebbsfleet Central will only be commissioned when the requisite number of new dwellings have been consented.

Secondary Borough Commentary

There are two non-selective and two selective planning groups that cover Dartford Borough or which cross the Borough boundary. See appendix 13.2 for the secondary planning group maps.

Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective Planning Group

There are eight schools in the Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective Planning Group: Alkerden C of E Academy, Dartford Science and Technology College, Ebbsfleet Academy, Leigh UTC, Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy, Stone Lodge School, Leigh Academy Wilmington and Orchards Academy. All the schools are in Dartford Borough, except for Orchards Academy which is in Sevenoaks District.

Demand is manageable without any intervention for the duration of the Plan period.

To manage the demand that will be derived from the additional housebuilding, the new secondary provision at the Alkerden C of E Academy, will be expanded to its full capacity of 8FE, in the coming years that is included within the current forecast. For 2025 the school has opened in temporary accommodation admitting 5FE of Year 7 students. For 2026 Alkerden C of E Academy will be admitting 6FE of Year 7 students.

Also included in the forecasts is the 2FE that KCC have commissioned at Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy.

Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group

There are seven schools in the Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group: Longfield Academy, Meopham School, Northfleet Technology College, Northfleet School for Girls, Thamesview School, Saint George's CE School and Saint John's Catholic Comprehensive School.

The planning group is in deficit for the duration of the Plan period, fluctuating between 1FE and 4FE deficit for the whole of the main Plan period. The deficit of just over 1FE for September 2026 increases to just under 4FE for September 2028. The deficit then decreases to 2.5FE and remains steady for a three-year period before increasing to a second peak of just over 4FE for September 2033.

KCC have recently commissioned an additional permanent 1FE at Northfleet Technology College, which has been included in the forecasts.

By 2027, another 3FE of provision will appear to be required. However, as previously stated, demand will need to be met through cross border working in the medium term. In the meantime, KCC will work with the schools in the planning group and Gravesham Borough Council to identify options for increasing existing provision or introducing new schools, whilst acknowledging that any work to expand an existing school will be very expensive and logistically challenging.

Longer term, KCC will definitely need to consider new secondary provision based on the publication of the Gravesham Local Plan. KCC will monitor the forecasts as the new Gravesham Local Plan becomes clear. During the local plan consultation, KCC notified GBC that there is a deficit and so any new housing needs to come with land for a new, non-selective secondary school or schools.

North West Kent Selective Planning Group

There are four schools in the North West Kent Selective Planning Group: Wilmington Grammar School for Girls, Wilmington Grammar School for Boys, Dartford Grammar School and Dartford Grammar School for Girls.

Forecasted demand for selective places in the North West Kent Selective Planning Group indicates that the planning group will now be in deficit for the duration of the Plan period.

For 2026, the deficit is forecast to be 1FE and will likely be manageable within existing provision. The deficit then increases to 2FE for September 2028. The deficit continues to fluctuate between 1FE and 2FE for the remainder of the Plan period.

All four Grammar schools have been assessed for whether an expansion is possible. The two schools in Wilmington would be very challenging to expand, due to local traffic concerns. In Dartford, the two schools are on extremely constrained ground. However, KCC is working with the boys Grammar school to see whether a small expansion is possible. A project that would provide 0.5FE has been identified and feasibility work is underway.

In addition, KCC has worked with Dartford Grammar School to amend their admission criteria so that the school offers more places to students who are Kent residents. This had the effect of guaranteeing access to 40 more year 7 places for students who are Kent residents, from September 2025, without any physical changes to the buildings.

Nevertheless, there remain small pockets of Dartford where obtaining a Grammar school place is challenging due to the home to school distance being too far. KCC may only be able to ensure that the Local Authority statutory duty to provide sufficient places, of any type, is met.

As stated in previous iterations of the KCP, if additional Grammar school places are to be provided, the only feasible option is to look holistically at selective provision across the wider North Kent area. The most efficient use of resources would be to introduce new satellite provisions, similar to those introduced in Sevenoaks. This is because current Government legislation prohibits the introduction of new selective schools.

However, options to do this would be logistically and politically challenging. The key constraints would be identifying both boys and girls Grammar schools willing to operate a satellite provision on a shared site, identifying land to accommodate the provisions, obtaining DfE approval and obtaining the requisite capital funding. An estimate of cost can be made by looking at the cost of a new 6FE school. This would indicate a cost of c£40m to introduce a 3FE boys, and a 3FE girls Grammar satellite, plus the capital cost of obtaining at least four hectares of land. Any smaller than 3FE and a satellite becomes financially unviable for the host school to manage.

KCC will pursue every avenue to try and identify a solution that provides the selective provision required. This provision is included in the planning matrix at the end of this section, but it needs to be borne in mind that this entry is predicated on whether such a provision is even achievable.

Gravesham and Longfield Selective Planning Group

There are two schools in the Gravesham and Longfield Selective Planning Group: Gravesend Grammar School and the Mayfield Grammar School.

The planning group is in deficit for the whole of the planning period. For September 2026, the deficit is 1.5FE. This deficit increases to 2FE - 3FE for the duration of the Plan period.

Following expansions to both Mayfield Grammar School and Gravesend Grammar School, both Gravesham Grammar Schools are at their capacity and cannot be expanded further. Therefore, this demand will need to be managed across Borough boundaries or by expansion to existing schools by using satellites.

If additional Grammar school places are to be provided, the only feasible option is to look holistically at selective provision across the wider North Kent. The most efficient use of resources would be to introduce new satellite provisions, similar to those introduced in Sevenoaks. This is because current Government legislation prohibits the introduction of new selective schools.

However, options to do this would be logistically and politically challenging. The key constraints would be identifying both boys and girls Grammar schools willing to operate a satellite provision on a shared site, identifying land to accommodate the provisions, obtaining DfE approval and obtaining the requisite capital funding. An estimate of cost can be made by looking at the cost of a new 6FE school. This would indicate a cost of c£40m to introduce a 3FE boys, and a 3FE girls Grammar satellite, plus the capital cost of obtaining at least four hectares of land. Any smaller than 3FE and a satellite becomes financially unviable for the host school to manage.

Due to the constraints around providing further selective provision, KCC will seek to ensure that there is sufficient capacity, even if that provision is non-selective.

Planned Commissioning - Dartford

Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Swanscombe and Ebbsfleet		Possible additional 1FE at Alkerden C of E Academy		2FE provision at Ashmere	2FE provision at Ebbsfleet Central	
Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective				3FE permanent expansion		
North West Kent Selective And Gravesham and Longfield Selective			6FE selective permanent provision			

7.4 Dover

District commentary

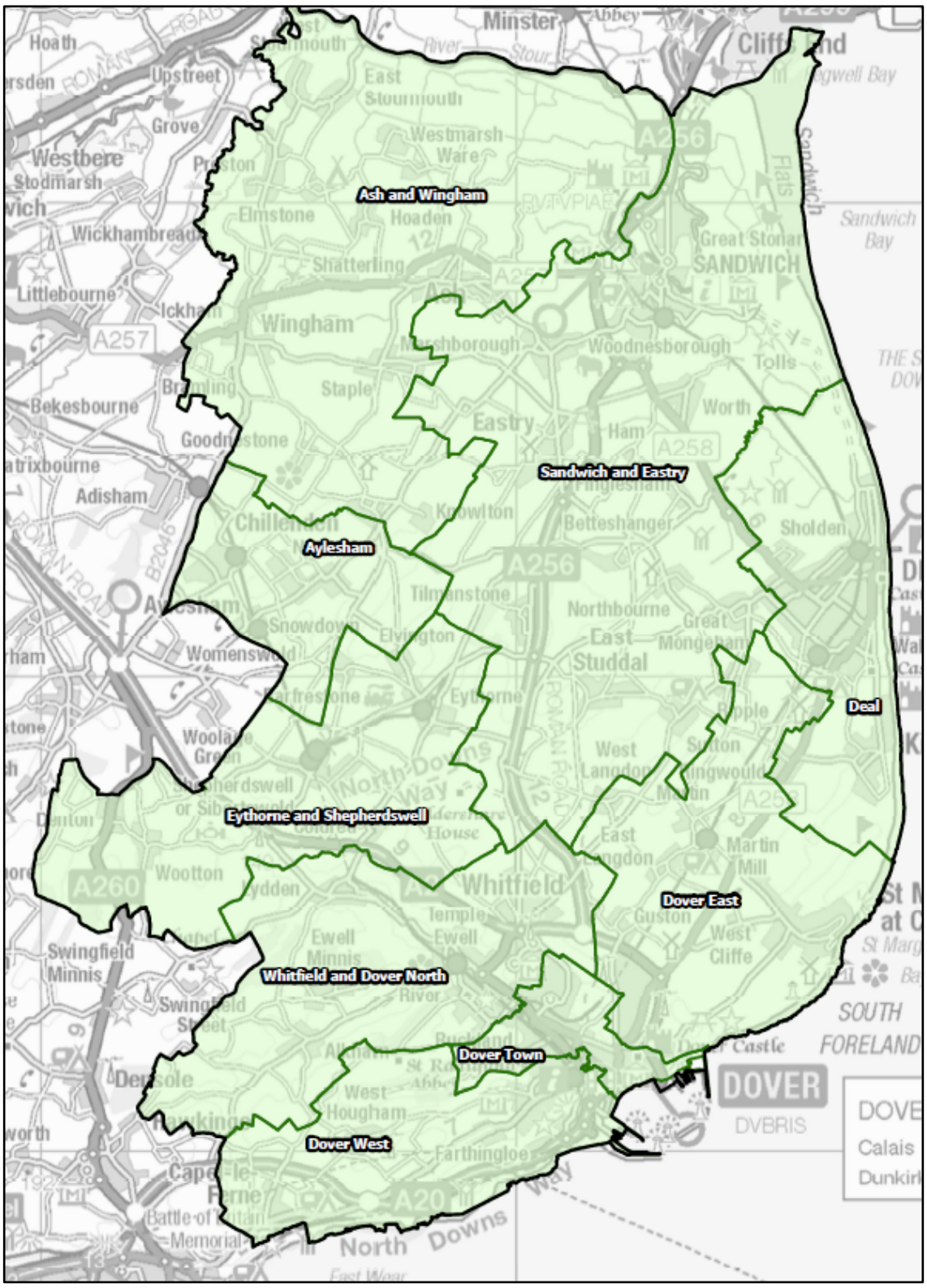
- The Dover District birth rate has been on a downwards trend since a high point in 2012. The rate for Dover is above the National average but dipped below the Kent average in 2023. The number of births in Dover have followed a similar trend before rising by 57 births between 2023 and 2024. Indications are the downwards trend reversed in England, Kent and Dover in 2024 with increases in birth rates. Comparable published data is awaited.

- We forecast around 20% of Year R places will be surplus across the District for the majority of the forecast period.

- Across the District we generally forecast there will be sufficient secondary school places throughout the forecast period. The impacts of planned house building may need to be mitigated at some point, dependent on the rate of delivery.

- Dover District Council's new Local Plan for the period 2020-2040 was adopted in October 2024. We continue to work with Dover District Council Officers to ensure any required school places to meet the demands generated by new housing can be delivered at the right time.

Map of the Dover primary planning groups

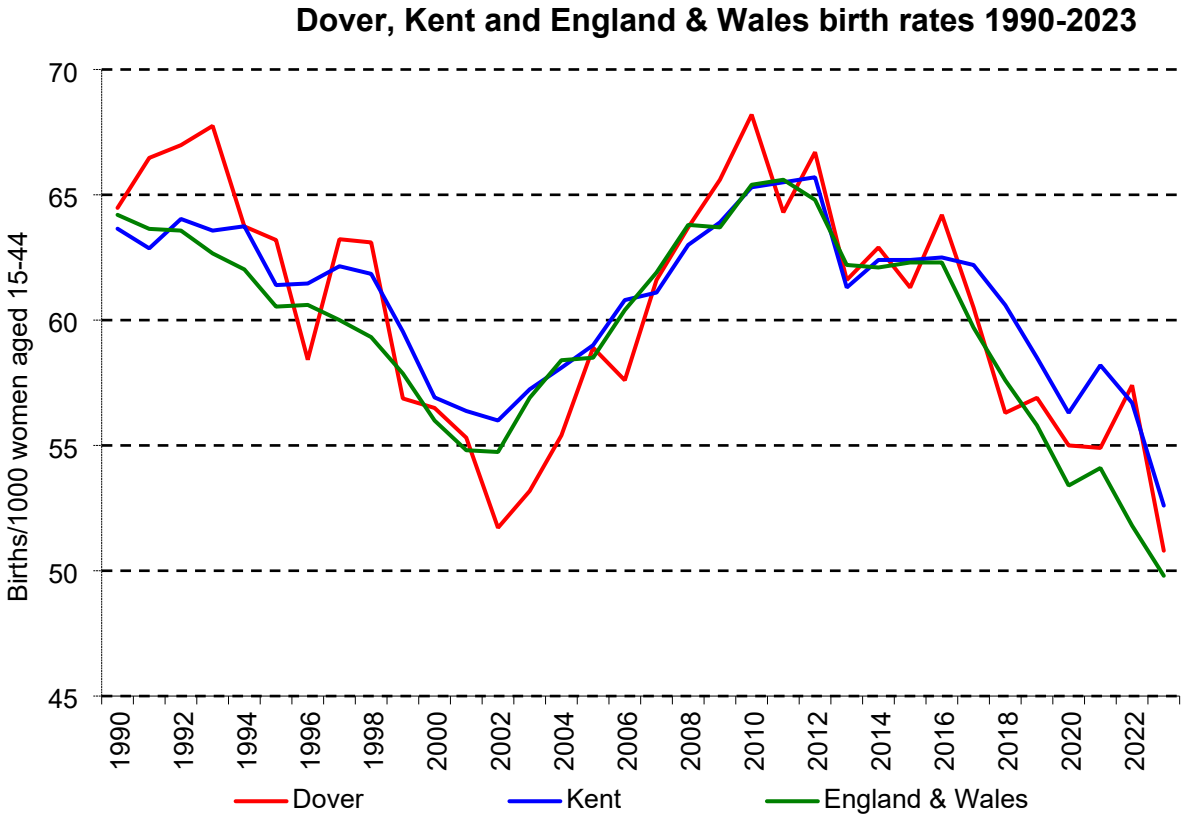


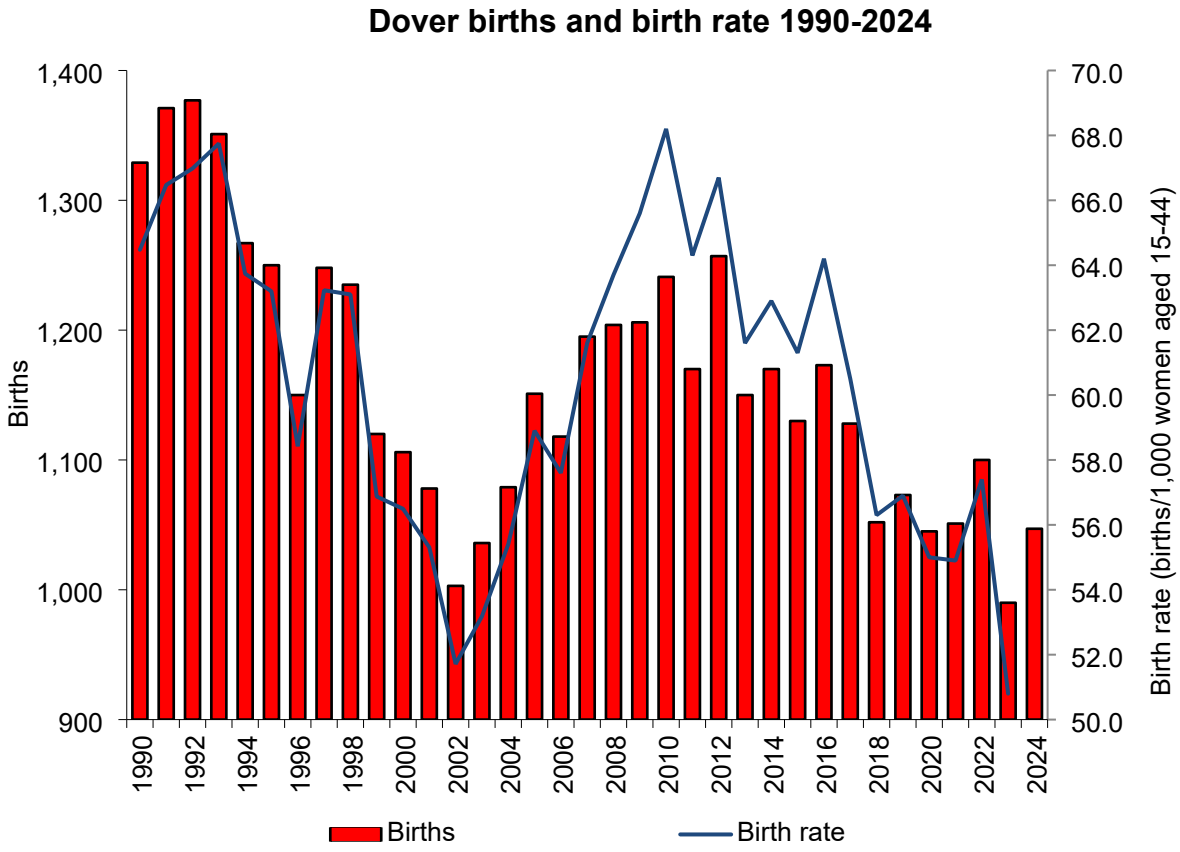
Dover primary schools by planning group

Planning Group	School	Status
Dover Town	Barton Junior School	Academy
	Charlton CE Primary School	Academy
	Green Park Community Primary School	Community
	Shatterlocks Infant School	Academy
	St. Mary's CE Primary School (Dover)	Voluntary Aided
	St. Richard's RC Primary School	Academy
	White Cliffs Primary College for the Arts	Academy
Whitfield and Dover North	Lydden Primary School	Community
	River Primary School	Community
	Temple Ewell CE Primary School	Academy
	Whitfield Aspen School	Community
Dover West	Aycliffe Community Primary School	Community
	Capel-le-Ferne Primary School	Community
	Priory Fields School	Academy
	St. Martin's School (Dover)	Academy
	Vale View Primary School	Academy
Dover East	Guston CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Langdon Primary School	Community
	St. Margaret's-at-Cliffe Primary School	Community
Deal	Deal Parochial CE Primary School	Academy
	Downs CE Primary School	Academy
	Hornbeam Primary School	Academy
	Kingsdown and Ringwould CE Primary School	Academy
	Sandown School	Academy
	Sholden CE Primary School	Academy
	St. Mary's RC Primary School (Deal)	Academy
	Warden House Primary School	Academy
Sandwich and Eastry	Eastry CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Northbourne CE Primary School	Academy
	Sandwich Infant School	Academy
	Sandwich Junior School	Community
	Worth Primary School	Academy
Ash and Wingham	Ash Cartwright and Kelsey CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Goodnestone CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Preston Primary School	Community
	Wingham Primary School	Community
Aylesham	Aylesham Primary School	Academy
	Nonington CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Joseph's RC Primary School (Aylesham)	Academy
Eythorne and Shepherdswell	Eythorne Elvington Community Primary School	Community
	Sibertswold CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled

Birth rate and birth analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the District and the number of recorded births.





Dover District Forecast

Primary - Year R surplus/deficit capacity if no further action is taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Dover Town	240	40	41	30	34	64	46	47	49	52	56	59	240
Whitfield and Dover North	182	27	26	-3	2	29	17	18	19	20	22	24	182
Dover West	170	56	63	58	59	72	62	62	63	65	66	67	170
Dover East	67	16	5	3	12	12	9	9	9	9	9	9	65
Deal	315	55	57	64	72	79	69	65	62	61	60	59	315
Sandwich and Eastry	116	28	30	12	22	21	21	21	22	23	25	27	116
Ash and Wingham	90	10	9	11	13	10	13	14	15	17	19	22	90
Aylesham	102	27	20	21	32	32	28	28	28	29	29	30	102
Eythorne and Shepherdswell	50	10	5	1	13	15	9	8	8	8	8	8	50
Dover	**1,332**	**269**	**256**	**197**	**260**	**335**	**274**	**273**	**276**	**285**	**295**	**305**	**1,330**

Secondary - Year 7 surplus/deficit capacity if no further action is taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Dover Non-Selective	450	57	18	-1	-20	-11	12	32	52	44	7	32	420
Deal and Sandwich Non-Selective	435	95	69	25	15	5	0	39	21	29	2	37	395
Dover District Selective	440	4	20	0	6	5	4	19	22	17	9	11	440

Primary District Commentary

Across the District we forecast c20% surplus Year R places during the forecast period. Across the whole primary cohort, forecasts predict 12.5% surplus capacity growing to 17.8%. There is no pressures for places in any year group. In the short to medium term, we will collaborate with schools to manage the levels of surplus Year R places to help maintain high quality, sustainable provision. In line with Government policy, surplus may also be used for nursery provision to deliver the extension of government funded places, or to provide more specialist SEN places.

Whitfield and Dover North Planning Group
We forecast a deficit of places in the 2026/27 academic year and a very small surplus in 2027-28. This will be managed through the admissions process.

Much of this planning group comprises the area designated as the Whitfield Urban Expansion (WUE). The WUE has outline planning consent for 5,750 new homes to be delivered over the next 20 years. To provide sufficient primary school places the provision of three 2FE primary schools were included within the Master Plan. The expansion of Whitfield Aspen on to a satellite site at Richmond Way currently provides 1FE of this new schools' provision.

It has been around 13 years since the WUE masterplan was adopted. The latest evidence shows that new housing in Dover is generating a higher number of primary aged pupils then was the case a decade and a half ago. Additionally, a further 600 dwellings have been allocated within the Local Plan. We are working with Dover District Council officers to plan for the impact of the DfE pupil yield and the additional 600 dwellings to identify the impact on the number of pupil places that the development will need to mitigate and when school places will need to be added.

Sandwich and Eastry Planning Group
Surplus Year R places are forecast throughout the forecast period. However, consented and allocated developments in Sandwich and the neighbouring villages together account for over 1,000 new homes. Should housing come forward as identified in the Local Plan, up to an additional 1FE of provision in Sandwich may be required.

Ash and Wingham Planning Group
Current forecasts are showing a surplus of Year R places which reduces across the forecast period. Developer contributions have been agreed which will support the expansion of primary school places when this be required.

Aylesham Planning Group
Forecasts suggest consistent surplus Year R places in the planning group. However, significant development continues in Aylesham and developer contributions are secured to support the expansion of provision in the planning group if and when required. This is anticipated to be no sooner than 2029-30 currently, however, we will continue monitor pupil numbers.

Secondary District Commentary

There are three secondary planning groups within Dover District. Two planning groups are non-selective (Dover, Deal and Sandwich) and one selective. The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

Dover Non-Selective Planning Group
There are three Schools in the Dover non-selective planning group: Astor College of the Arts, Dover Christ Church Academy and St. Edmunds RC School. The Whitfield Urban Expansion will, over time, increase the pressure on local secondary schools. When additional places are required, it is expected this will be via the expansion of Dover Christ Church Academy as the local school.

The forecast pressure for Year 7 places between 2026/27 and 2029/30 will be managed within existing schools.

Deal and Sandwich Non-Selective Planning Group
There are two Schools in the Deal and Sandwich non-selective planning group: Goodwin Academy and Sandwich Technology School. Forecasts suggest sufficient Year 7 places throughout the forecast period. Consented and proposed developments in Sandwich, and the neighbouring villages, account for over 1,000 new homes. Additional land is being secured through the local plan process to support additional secondary school places at Sandwich Technology College as and when required.

Dover Selective Planning Group
Three schools provide selective provision: Dover Boys Grammar, Dover Girls Grammar and Sir Roger Manwood's Grammar. There is forecast to be sufficient places in this sector throughout the forecast period.

Planned Commissioning – Dover

Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Whitfield and North Dover					Expansion of Whitfield Aspen by 1FE	New 2FE primary school in Whitfield
Aylesham				up to 0.3FE expansion of existing provision		
Sandwich and Eastry						1FE Sandwich planning group
Dover Non-selective						Up to 2FE at Dover Christ Church Academy

7.5 Folkestone and Hythe

District commentary

- The birth rate in Folkestone and Hythe continued the downward trend which commenced in 2011. The rate remains below the County average, but is comparable to the National rate. The number of recorded births rose by 48 between 2023 and 2024. Indications are the downwards trend in birth numbers reversed in England, Kent and Folkestone and Hythe in 2024 with increases in birth rates. Comparable published data is awaited.

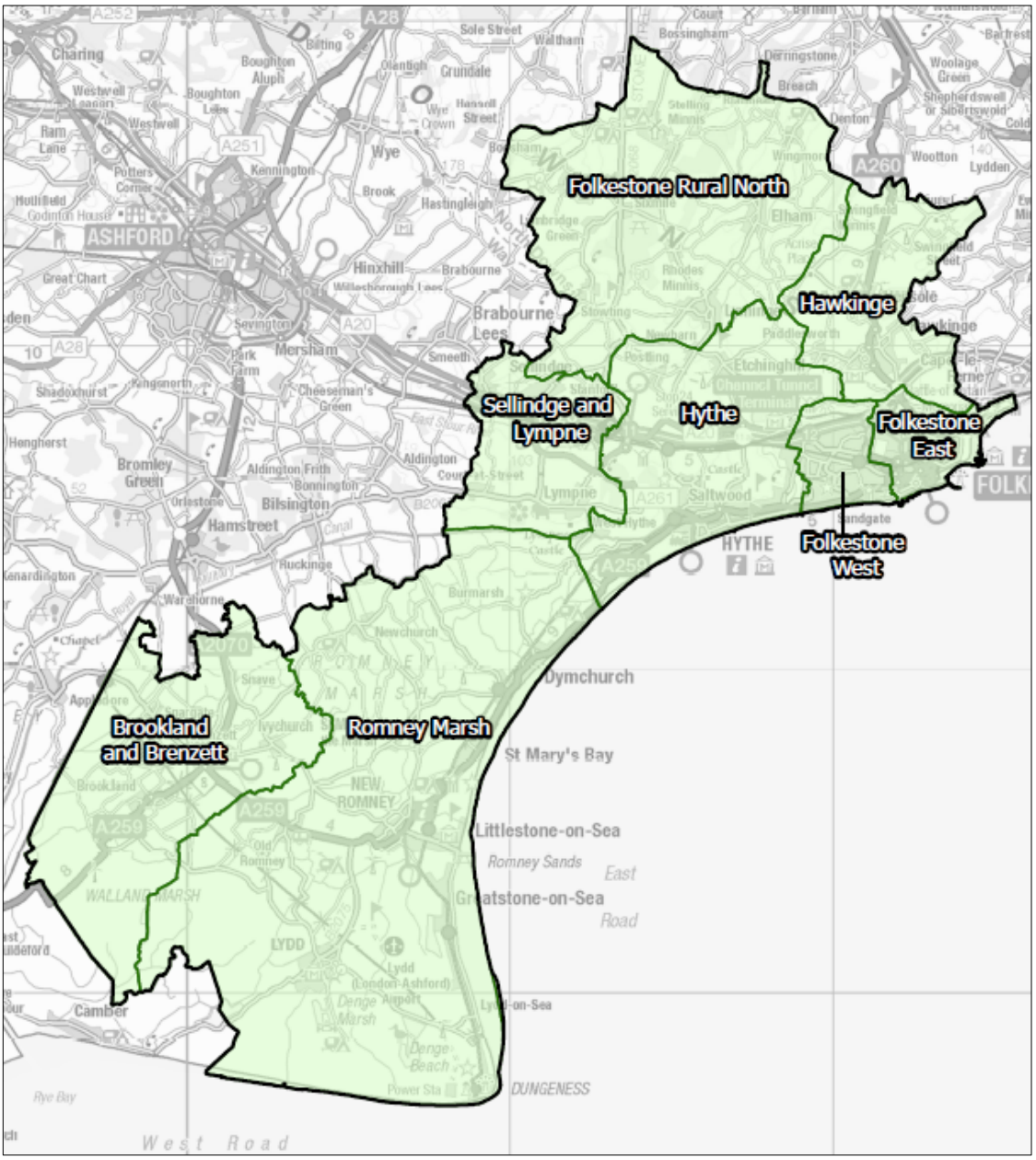
- We forecast around 20% of Year R school places will be surplus across the District throughout the Plan period.

- Within the secondary sector, we forecast a deficit of non-selective secondary school places in Folkestone and Hythe. Generally, this is offset by places in other planning groups within the District. We will work with existing schools to ensure there are sufficient non-selective places for all who require one.

- The adopted Core Strategy (2022) sets out a long-term vision for the District from 2019/20 to 2036/37. The indicative housing trajectory in the Core Strategy suggest that 13,407 new dwellings could be delivered in the period 2019/20 to 2036/37, with Otterpool Park accounting for 5,593 of these dwellings. This would be an average of 745 per annum. During the period 2014/15 to 2023/24 an average of 410 homes were completed per annum (Kent Analytics Statistical Bulletin May 2025).

- Plans for the Garden Village at Otterpool Park continue to progress. The level of development would require significant educational infrastructure across not only primary and secondary phases, but also Early Years and specialist sector. We continue to work with the District Council and the promoter of the site to identify the extent and when new provision will be required.

Map of the Folkestone and Hythe primary planning groups



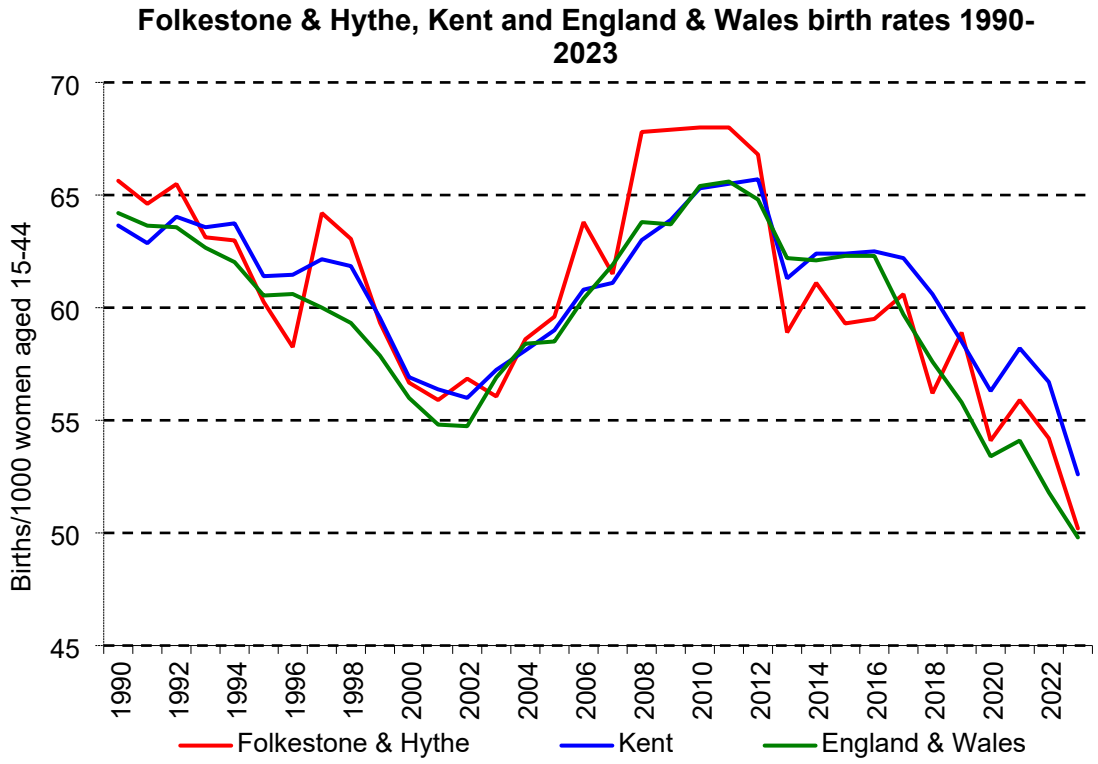
Folkestone and Hythe primary schools by planning group

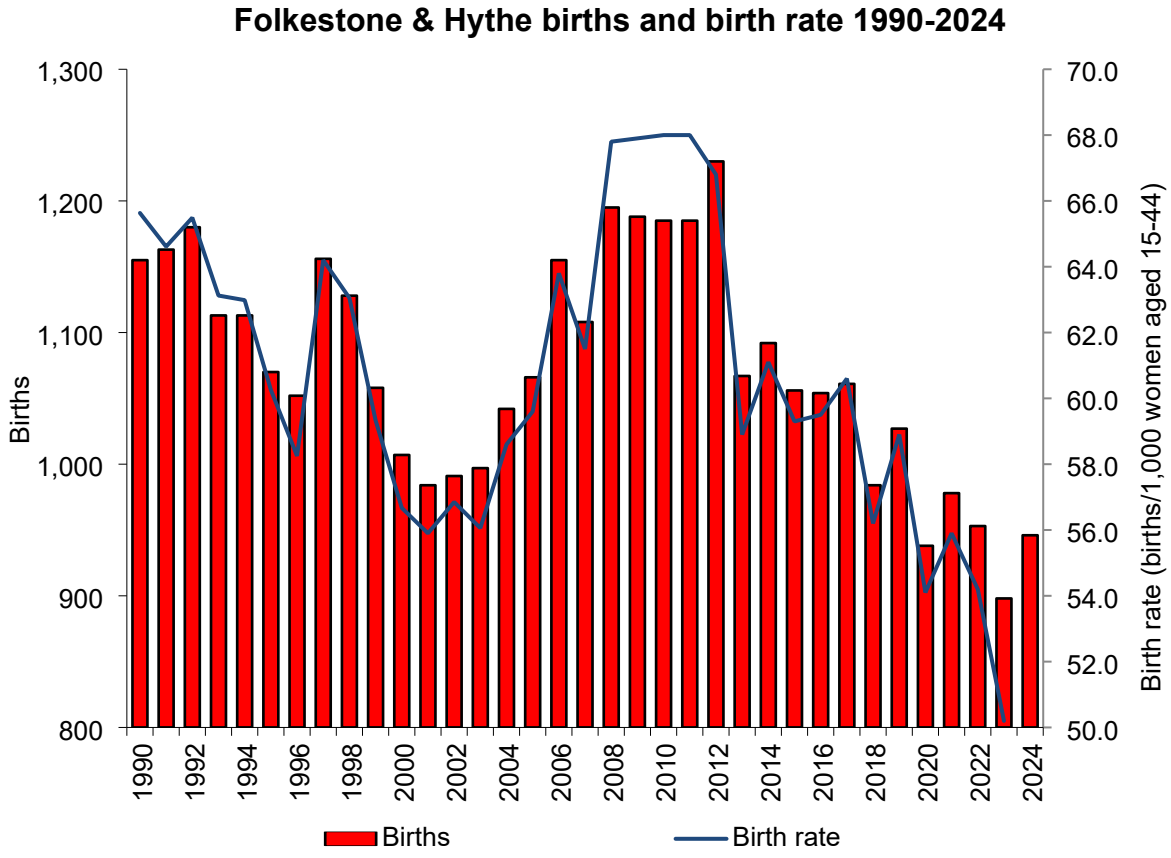
Planning Groups	School	Status
Folkestone East	Castle Hill Community Primary School	Community
	Christ Church CE Academy	Academy
	Folkestone Primary Academy	Academy
	Martello Primary School	Academy
	Mundella Primary School	Academy
	St. Eanswythe's CE Primary School	Academy
	St. Mary's CE Primary Academy (Folkestone)	Academy
	St. Peter's CE Primary School (Folkestone)	Voluntary Controlled
	Stella Maris RC Primary School	Academy
Folkestone West	All Souls' CE Primary School	Academy
	Cheriton Primary School	Foundation
	Harcourt Primary School	Foundation
	Morehall Primary School	Academy
	Sandgate Primary School	Community

Planning Groups	School	Status
	St. Martin's CE Primary School (Folkestone)	Voluntary Controlled
Hawkinge	Churchill School (Hawkinge)	Academy
	Hawkinge Primary School	Foundation
	Selsted CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Folkestone Rural North	Bodsham CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Elham CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Lyminge CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Stelling Minnis CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Stowting CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Hythe	Hythe Bay CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Palmarsh Primary School	Community
	Saltwood CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Seabrook CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Augustine's RC Primary School (Hythe)	Academy
Sellindge and Lympne	Lympne CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Sellindge Primary School	Community
Romney Marsh	Dymchurch Primary School	Academy
	Greatstone Primary School	Foundation
	Lydd Primary School	Academy
	St. Nicholas CE Primary Academy	Academy
Brookland and Brenzett	Brenzett CE Primary School	Academy
	Brookland CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled

Birth rate and birth analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the District and the number of recorded births.





Folkestone and Hythe Analysis

Primary - Year R surplus/deficit capacity if no further action is taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Folkestone East	373	69	55	90	91	93	81	84	86	86	86	86	373
Folkestone West	255	31	23	21	36	20	30	31	33	35	38	41	255
Hawkinge	135	47	24	27	27	39	31	32	33	34	34	34	135
Folkestone Rural North	93	26	22	6	18	17	16	16	17	17	17	17	85
Hythe	150	54	36	24	47	36	38	37	36	34	33	32	140
Sellindge and Lympne	60	6	3	-3	-6	-2	-3	-4	-7	-10	-13	-15	60
Romney Marsh	187	57	32	42	49	53	47	47	47	46	45	44	165
Brookland and Brenzett	35	1	4	2	6	8	6	6	7	7	7	7	35
Folkestone & Hythe	**1,288**	**291**	**199**	**209**	**268**	**264**	**246**	**249**	**251**	**249**	**246**	**247**	**1,248**

Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Folkestone and Hythe Non-Selective	625	10	-26	-9	-57	-37	0	-54	43	-9	-5	39	595
Romney Marsh Non-Selective	180	6	-7	15	15	1	10	13	23	20	26	39	180
Folkestone & Hythe District Selective	330	-15	20	18	23	18	19	21	20	22	25	25	330

Primary District Commentary

Folkestone and Hythe District Analysis - Primary

Across the District we forecast c20% of Year R places will be surplus throughout the forecast period. Across the whole primary cohort, forecasts predict 12.6% surplus capacity growing to 16.6%. There is no pressures for places in any year group. We will collaborate with schools to manage the levels of surplus primary school places to help maintain high quality, sustainable provision. In line with Government policy, surplus may also be used for nursery provision to deliver the extension of government funded places, or to provide more specialist SEN places.

Folkestone West Planning Group

Forecasts suggest sufficient Year R capacity throughout the forecast period. Land and developer contributions remain available for a new 2FE primary school at Shorncliffe Heights. This will not be required in this decade.

Sellindge and Lympne Planning Group

Current forecasts are showing a deficit of Year R places from 2026-27 onwards growing to 0.5FE by the end of the forecast period. Further development is expected in the village which will need to be mitigated. Developer contributed land and funding has been agreed which will enable Sellindge Primary School expand as and when required.

Secondary District Commentary

Folkestone and Hythe Non-Selective Planning Group

There are three schools in the Folkestone and Hythe non-selective planning group: Brockhill Park Performing Arts College, Folkestone Academy and The Turner Free School.

We forecast a deficit of non-selective secondary school places in Folkestone and Hythe. In part this is due to Folkestone Academy reducing is published admissions number from 210 to 180 from September 2025, with some of the accommodation being used to provide a specialist resourced provision for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Conditions. The deficit is generally offset by places in other planning groups within the District. We will work with existing schools to ensure there are sufficient non-selective places for all who require one.

Romney Marsh Non-Selective Planning Group

There is one non-selective school in the planning group: The Marsh Academy. Forecasts suggest sufficient places across the forecast period.

Folkestone and Hythe Selective Planning Group

There are two selective schools in the District: Folkestone Girls Grammar and Harvey Grammar. Forecasts suggest there will be sufficient Year 7 places available throughout the forecast period.

Planned Commissioning – Folkestone and Hythe

Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Folkestone West Primary						2FE new provision in Shorncliffe

7.6 Gravesham

Borough Summary

- The Gravesham birth rate and number of births have fallen sharply since 2019, but remain above the county and national figures. Following a small increase in 2022, the rate dropped again in 2023 and then rose slightly in 2024, but not to rate seen in 2022

- Forecasts indicate that there is a manageable surplus of Year R places across the Primary planning groups.

- Small pockets of primary deficits are forecast in just two Gravesham planning groups but these can be covered as required, following the relocation and expansion of Rosherville Primary School in Northfleet. The school currently has a PAN of 20 and will be able to accommodate 2FE in the future.

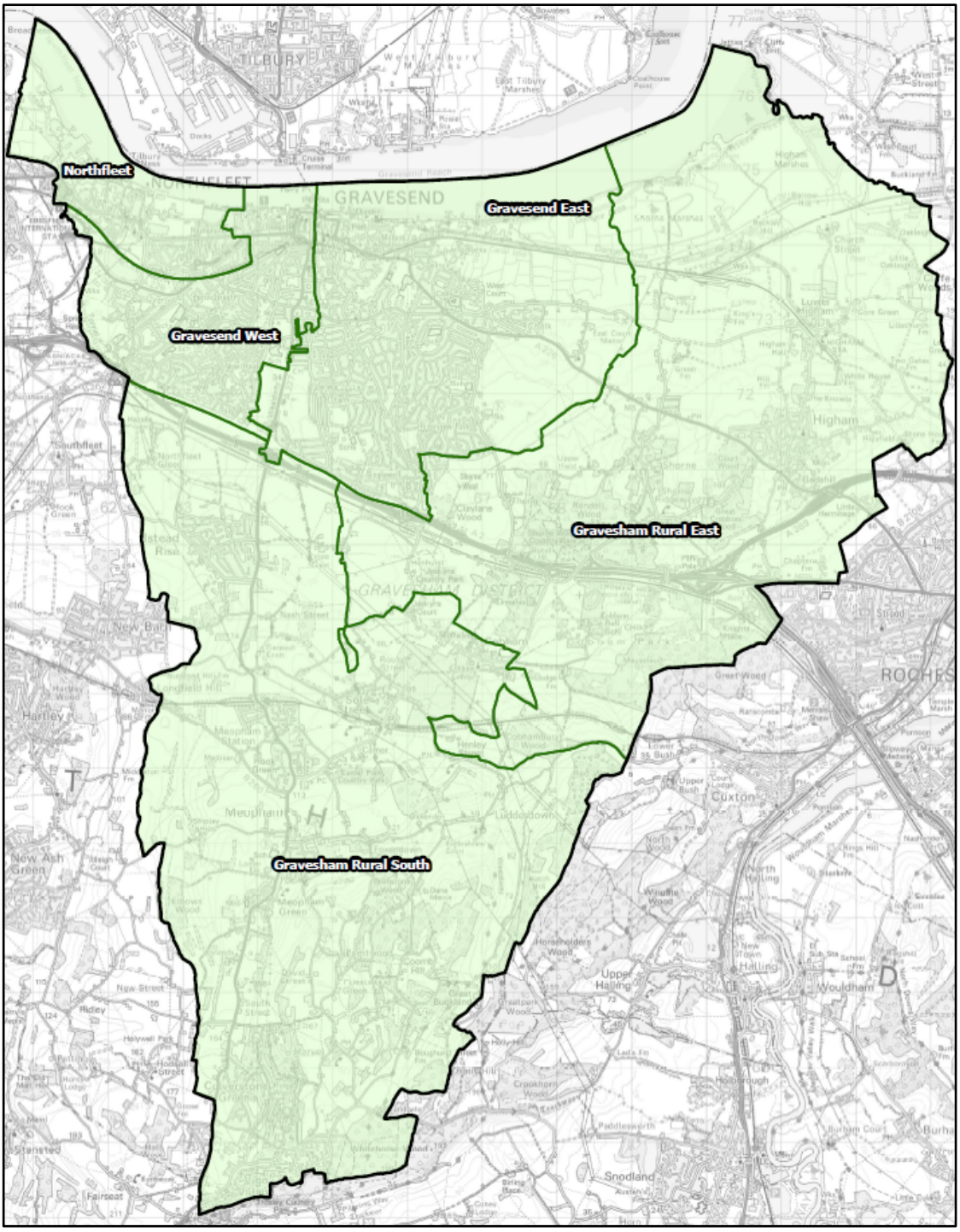
- The Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group shows a deficit from the outset for all of the Plan period. The deficit increases year on year, peaking at just over 3.5FE for September 2028, before reducing to 2.5FE in September 2030 and peaking again in September 2033 with a deficit of just over 4FE. Extensive work has been undertaken in recent years with all schools in the Gravesham and Longfield Planning Group to introduce additional places and so further expansion opportunities are extremely limited. Therefore, until Gravesham's new Local Plan is produced and adopted, cross border working will need to be employed to ensure sufficiency of school places in the locality.

- The Gravesham and Longfield Selective Planning Group forecast shows a deficit of about 2.5FE for September 2028. Any options for creating additional selective capacity will be extremely challenging and KCC may be only able to ensure that the Local Authority statutory duty to provide sufficient places, of any type, is met.

- The current Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) Local Plan, adopted in September 2014, states an intention to build 6,170 dwellings between 2011 to 2028. Gravesham's emerging Local Plan and Site Allocations Document will cover the period up to 2042, and aims to address the required delivery of 11,492 new dwellings. KCC will work closely with GBC to ensure that sufficient school places are available. It is already clear that any options for further expansion of existing secondary schools will be both extremely limited and logistically challenging, so sufficient land for new school sites will need to be provided to ensure the sufficiency of Secondary School places over the longer term.

- Migration from urban centres in Greater London to locations such as Gravesham Borough continues to affect place planning. We are regularly seeing this in the Junior aged cohort, as families move into the area to place themselves in a more favourable position of gaining a place for their child in the Secondary School of their choice.

Gravesham Primary Schools by Planning Group

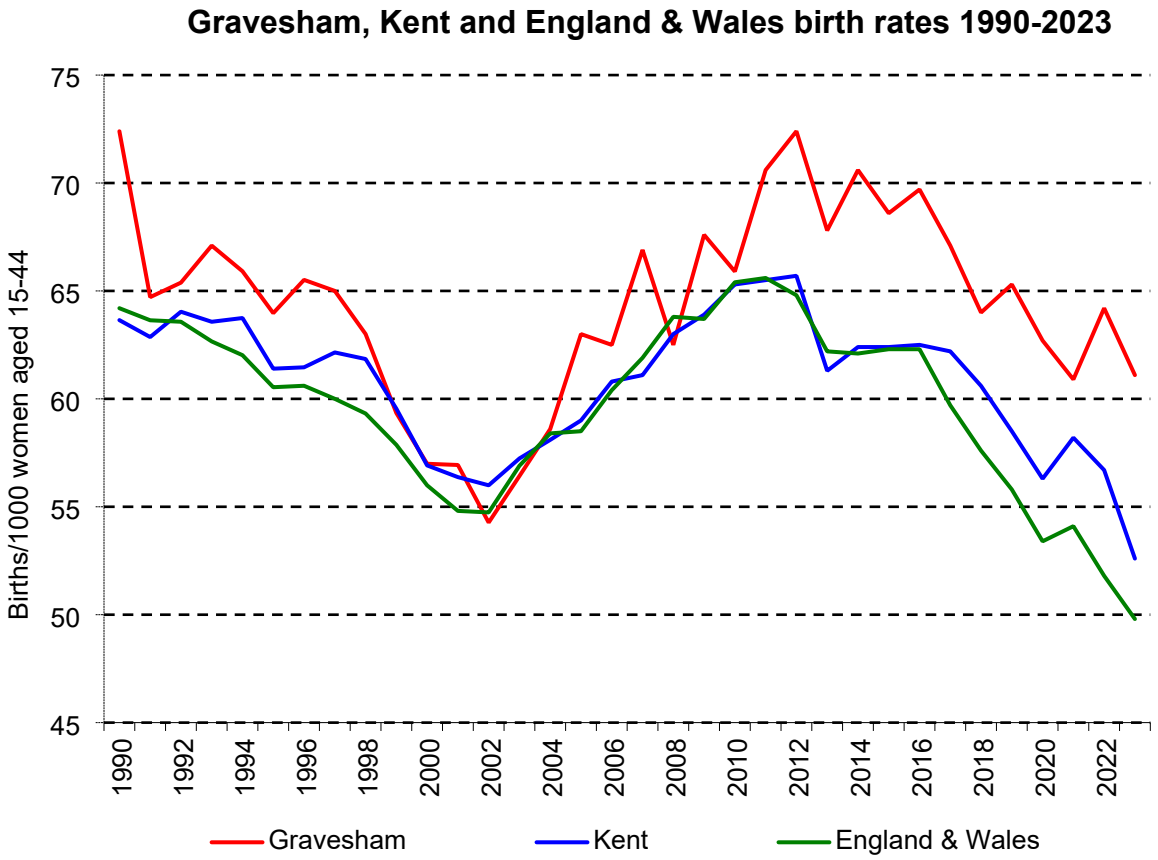


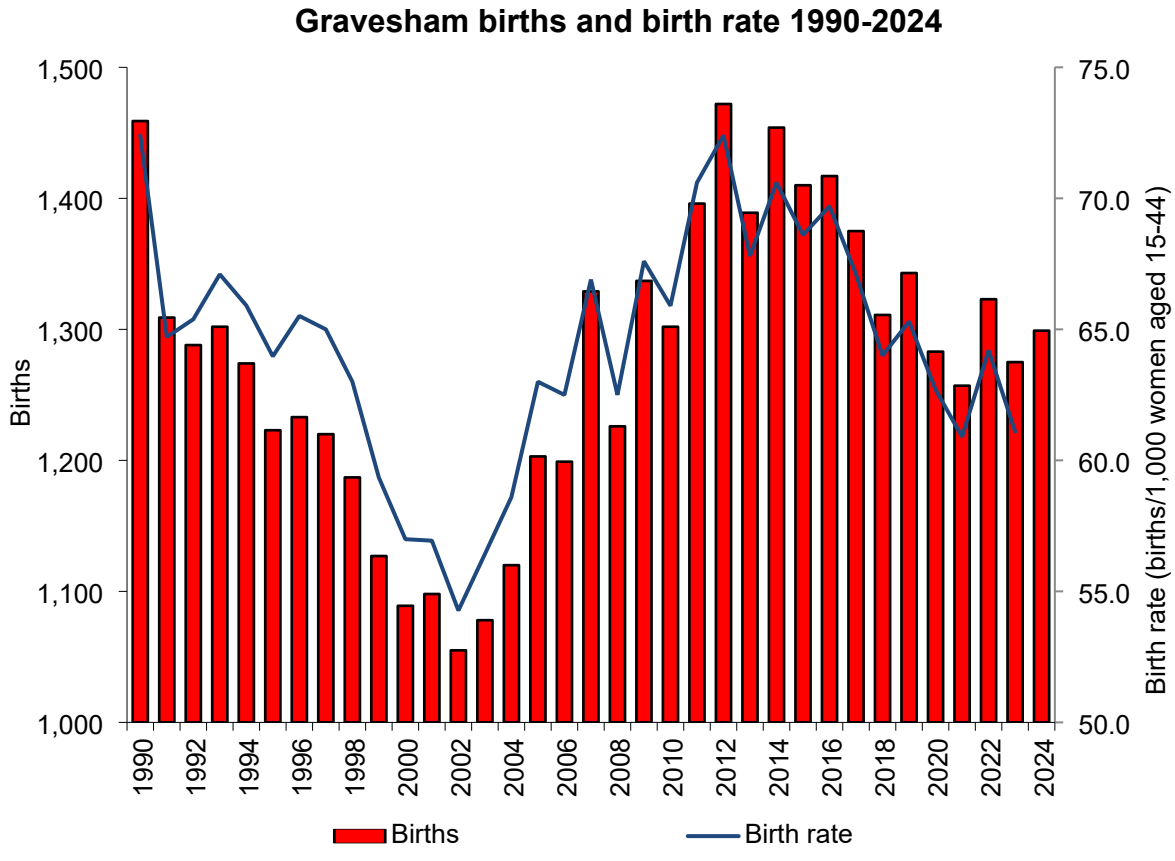
Planning Group	School	Status
Gravesend East	Chantry Community Academy	Academy
	Holy Trinity CE Primary School (Gravesend)	Academy
	Kings Farm Primary School	Community
	The Riverview Academy	Academy
	Singlewell Primary School	Community
	St. John's RC Primary School (Gravesend)	Academy
	Tymberwood Academy	Academy
	Westcourt Primary School	Academy
	Whitehill Primary School	Academy

Planning Group	School	Status
	Cecil Road Primary School	Community
Gravesend West	Copperfield Academy	Academy
	Painters Ash Primary School	Community
	Saint George's CE Primary School (Gravesend)	Academy
	Shears Green Infant School	Academy
	Shears Green Junior School	Community
	Springhead Park Primary School	Free
	Wrotham Road Primary School	Academy
	Lawn Primary School	Community
Northfleet	Rosherville CE Primary Academy	Academy
	St. Botolph's CE Primary School (Gravesend)	Academy
	St. Joseph's RC Primary School (Northfleet)	Academy
	Higham Primary School	Community
Gravesham Rural East	Shorne CE Primary School	Academy
	Cobham Primary School	Community
Gravesham Rural South	Culverstone Green Primary School	Academy
	Istead Rise Primary School	Academy
	Meopham Community Academy	Academy
	Vigo Village School	Community

Birth Rate and Birth Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the Borough and the number of recorded births.





Gravesham Forecasts

Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Gravesend East	652	69	64	31	50	55	46	43	39	36	34	34	622
Gravesend West	474	52	17	19	6	5	-1	-3	-6	-10	-15	-20	444
Northfleet	140	0	3	-7	5	-12	-2	-5	-8	-10	-13	-15	150
Gravesham Rural East	60	4	1	15	12	9	9	8	8	7	7	7	60
Gravesham Rural South	180	27	25	1	24	42	22	20	18	16	14	12	180
Gravesham	**1,506**	**152**	**109**	**60**	**98**	**100**	**74**	**64**	**51**	**39**	**28**	**18**	**1,456**

Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective	1,370	32	-3	-34	-78	-113	-74	-71	-75	-97	-126	-103	1,389
Gravesham and Longfield Selective	420	-13	-29	-41	-58	-70	-59	-59	-66	-73	-87	-84	420

Primary Borough commentary

Recent forecasts have indicated a stabilisation of demand that leaves a manageable surplus of Year R capacity across the Borough for the duration of the Plan period. Locally, Northfleet Planning Group indicates a small deficit in September 2026 and then from September 2028 for subsequent years. Gravesend West Planning Group also indicates a very small deficit from September 2029.

These deficits can be addressed through expansion of Rosherville CE Primary Academy. Once the school moves into its new premises on the Cable Wharf development in Northfleet, the school can increase its intake to 2FE from a current PAN of 20.

Gravesham is expected to publish a new Local Plan in 2026. The Reg 18 consultation has been completed. Ahead of any new Plan being published, new housing development on the Northfleet Embankment and Gravesend Canal Basin will see demand for Primary School places increase in the medium term.

The new housing on the Canal Basin is expected to comprise a mix of types, with the majority being one, two and three bedroom flats. Traditionally, the number of school age children generated from such housing types is lower than for houses, but the shortage of housing may now result in more families living in smaller dwellings. KCC will work with GBC to ensure that we remain cognisant of the numbers and types of dwelling and react accordingly.

The largest surplus is in the Gravesham East Primary Planning Group. There is additional capacity ready to be re-introduced, following some schools in the area taking the decision to reduce their PAN in response to low year R intakes in recent years. However, if a significant number of new dwellings are more suitable for families, then we may need to seek land for a new primary school for the longer term.

New housing in the Coldharbour area will generate some additional need for Year R places. This will be accommodated within the primary provision at Saint George's CE Primary School and the Shears Green Infant and Shears Green Junior schools.

Northfleet Planning Group
The planning group indicates only a very small surplus for September 2026 and September 2029, with deficits for the rest of the Plan period. This will be managed by using the expanded and relocated Rosherville CE Primary Academy.

Gravesham Rural South Planning Group
The planning group indicates a small deficit for the Plan period. This will be managed locally by adjacent planning areas.

Gravesend West
This planning group sees small deficits forecast through the longer term planning period. Shears Green Infant School recently reduced their PAN from 4FE to 3FE due to reduced demand in the area. Should the forecast deficits materialise, KCC has the option of working with the school/trust to increase capacity once more.

Secondary Borough Commentary

There is one selective and one non-selective planning group that cover the Gravesham area. See appendix 13.2 for the secondary planning group maps.

Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group
There are seven schools in the Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective Planning Group: Longfield Academy, Meopham School, Northfleet Technology College, Northfleet School for Girls, Thamesview School, Saint George's CE School and Saint John's Catholic Comprehensive School.

The planning group is in deficit for the duration of the Plan period, fluctuating between 1FE and 4FE deficit for the whole of the main Plan period. The deficit of just over 1FE for September 2026 increases to just under 4FE for September 2028. The deficit then decreases to 2.5FE and remains steady for a three-year period before increasing to a second peak of just over 4FE for September 2033.

KCC have recently commissioned an additional permanent 1FE at Northfleet Technology College, which has been included in the forecasts.

By 2027, another 3FE of provision will appear to be required. However, as previously stated, demand will need to be met through cross border working in the medium term. In the meantime, KCC will work with the schools in the planning group and Gravesham Borough Council to identify options for increasing existing provision or introducing new schools, whilst acknowledging that any work to expand an existing school will be very expensive and logistically challenging.

Longer term, KCC will definitely need to consider new secondary provision based on the publication of the Gravesham Local Plan. KCC will monitor the forecasts as the new Gravesham Local Plan becomes clear. During the local plan consultation, KCC notified GBC that there is a deficit and so any new housing needs to come with land for a new, non-selective secondary school or schools.

Gravesham and Longfield Selective Planning Group
There are two schools in the Gravesham and Longfield Selective Planning Group: Gravesend Grammar School and the Mayfield Grammar School.

The planning group is in deficit for the whole of the planning period. For September 2026, the deficit is 1.5FE. This deficit increases to 2FE - 3FE for the duration of the Plan period.

Following expansions to both Mayfield Grammar School and Gravesend Grammar School, both Gravesham Grammar Schools are at their capacity and cannot be expanded further. Therefore, this demand will need to be managed across Borough boundaries or by expansion to existing schools by using satellites.

If additional Grammar school places are to be provided, the only feasible option is to look holistically at selective provision across the wider North Kent. The most efficient use of resources would be to introduce new satellite provisions, similar to those introduced in Sevenoaks. This is because current Government legislation prohibits the introduction of new selective schools.

However, options to do this would be logistically and politically challenging. The key constraints would be identifying both boys and girls Grammar schools willing to operate a satellite provision on a shared site, identifying land to accommodate the provisions, obtaining DfE approval and obtaining the requisite capital funding. An estimate of cost can be made by looking at the cost of a new 6FE school. This would indicate a cost of c£40m to introduce a 3FE boys, and a 3FE girls Grammar satellite, plus the capital cost of obtaining at least four hectares of land. Any smaller than 3FE and a satellite becomes financially unviable for the host school to manage.

Due to the constraints around providing further selective provision, KCC will seek to ensure that there is sufficient capacity, even if that provision is non-selective.

Planned Commissioning – Gravesham

Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Northfleet			1FE at Rosherville CE Primary Academy			
Gravesham and Longfield Non-Selective				3FE permanent expansion		
North West Kent Selective And Gravesham and Longfield Selective			6FE selective permanent provision			

7.7 Maidstone

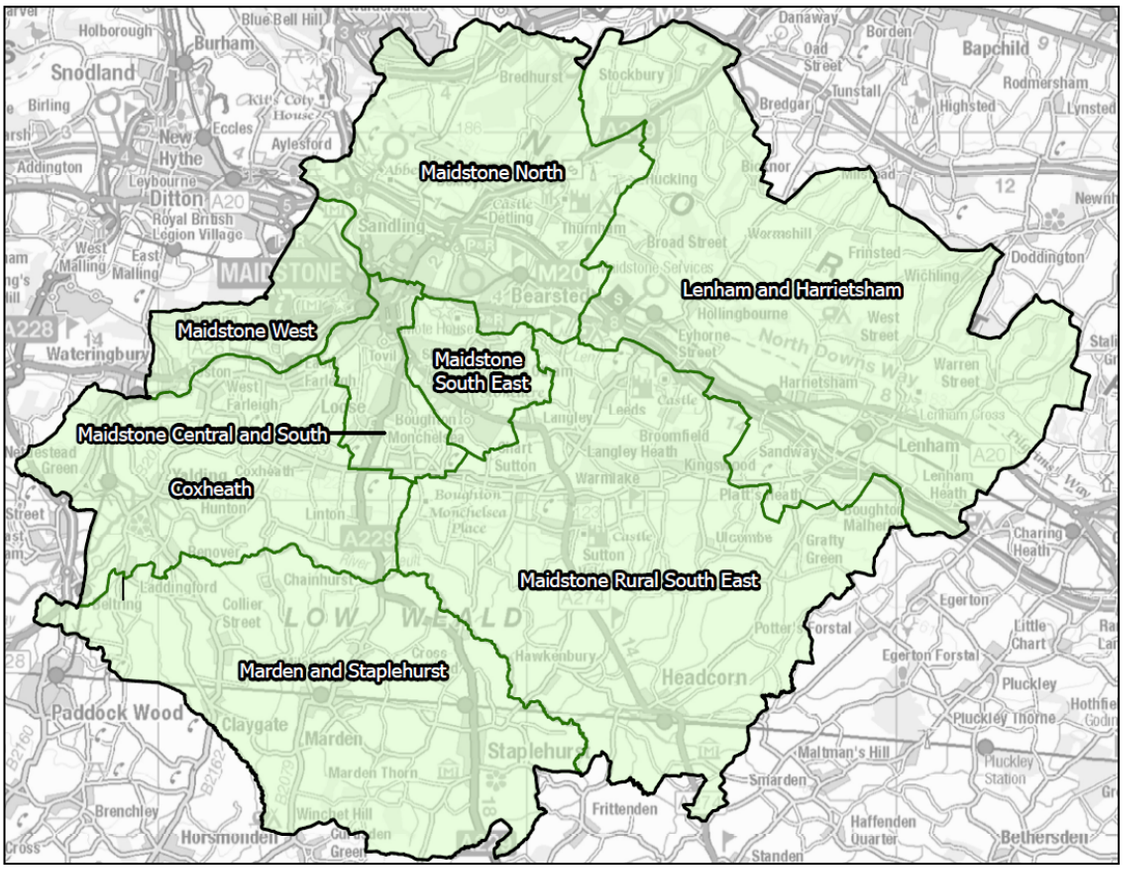
Borough commentary

- The birth rate in Maidstone dropped sharply in 2019 and 2020, but then increased significantly in 2021, before dropping back again in 2022 and 2023. However, it remains above the county and national averages.

- We forecast sufficient primary school places across the Borough throughout the Plan period. However, there is pressure for places forecast within some planning groups. Within the secondary sector, we forecast a significant pressure for places in both the non-selective and selective sectors.

- Maidstone Borough Council's Local Plan was formally adopted in October 2017, setting out the scale and location of proposed development up to 2031. This plan was reviewed and in 2024 the Borough Council adopted the Local Plan Review, which plans for the delivery of 1,157 per annum until 2038.

Map of the Maidstone Primary Planning Groups



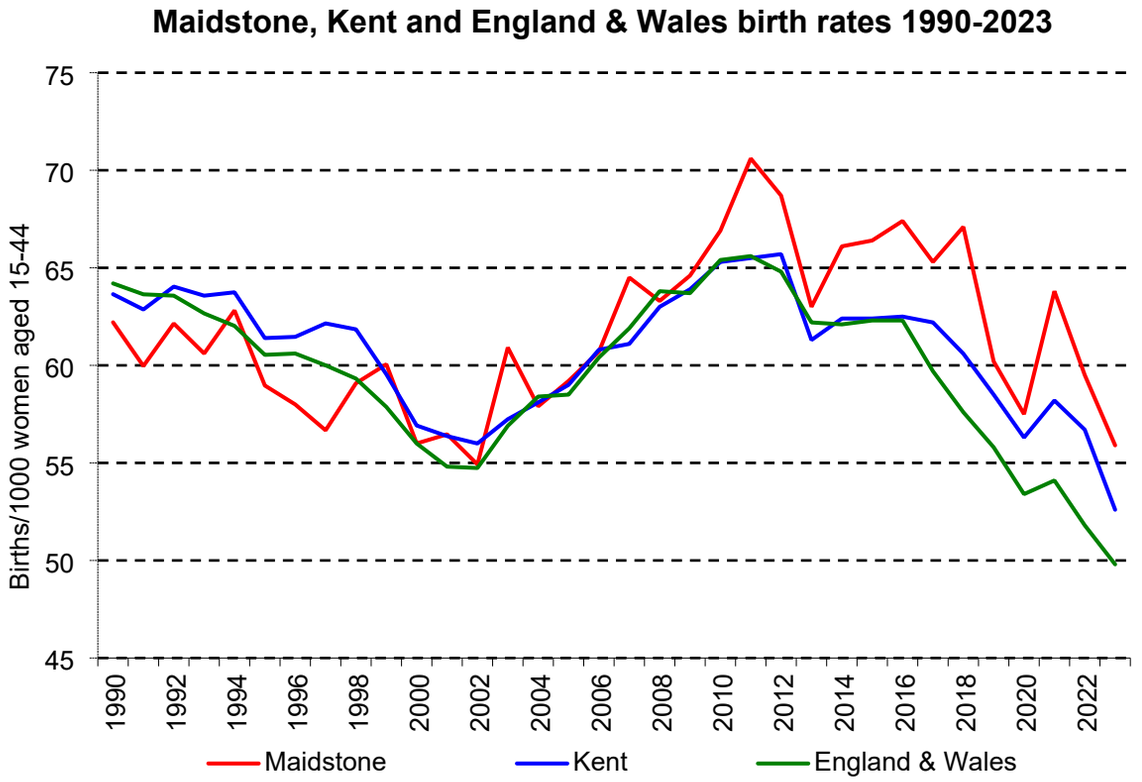
Maidstone Primary Schools by Planning Group

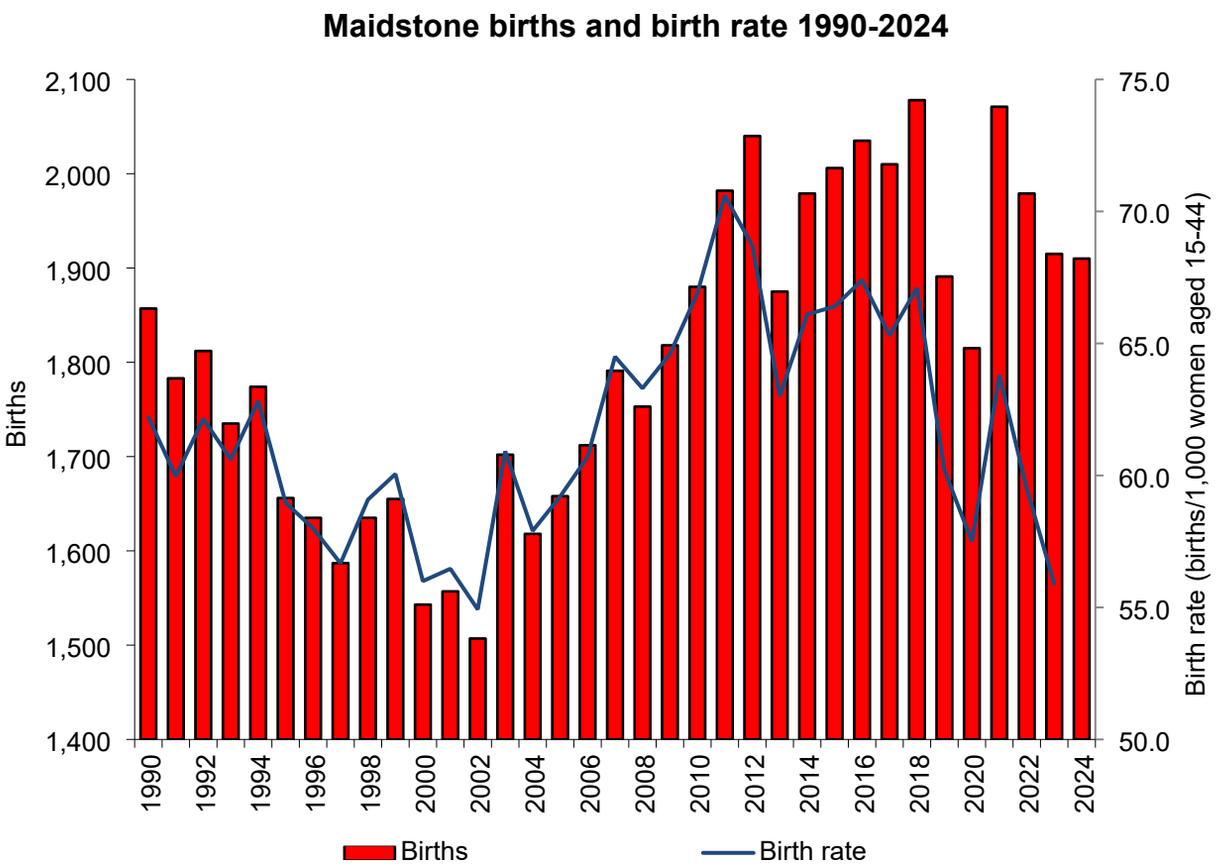
Planning Groups	School	Status
Maidstone Central and South	Archbishop Courtenay CE Primary School	Academy
	Boughton Monchelsea Primary School	Community
	Loose Primary School	Community
	South Borough Primary School	Academy
	Tiger Primary School	Free
Maidstone North	Bearsted Primary Academy	Free
	Bredhurst CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Madginford Primary School	Community
	North Borough Junior School	Community
	Roseacre Junior School	Foundation
	Sandling Primary School	Community
	St. John's CE Primary School (Maidstone)	Academy
	St. Paul's Infant School	Community
	Thurnham CE Infant School	Voluntary Controlled
	Valley Invicta Primary School at East Borough	Academy
Maidstone West	Allington Primary School	Academy
	Barming Primary School	Academy
	Brunswick House Primary School	Community
	Jubilee Primary School	Free
	Palace Wood Primary School	Community
	St. Francis' RC School	Voluntary Aided
	St. Michael's CE Infant School	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Michael's CE Junior School	Voluntary Controlled
	West Borough Primary School	Community
Maidstone South East	Greenfields Community Primary School	Community
	Holy Family RC Primary School	Academy

Planning Groups	School	Status
	Langley Park Primary Academy	Academy
	Molehill Primary Academy	Academy
	Oaks Primary Academy	Academy
	Park Way Primary School	Community
	Senacre Wood Primary School	Community
	Tree Tops Primary Academy	Academy
Lenham and Harrietsham	Harrietsham CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Hollingbourne Primary School	Community
	Lenham Primary School	Community
	Platts Heath Primary School	Community
Coxheath	Coxheath Primary School	Community
	East Farleigh Primary School	Community
	Hunton CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Yalding St. Peter and St. Paul CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Marden and Staplehurst	Laddingford St. Mary's CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Marden Primary Academy	Academy
	St. Margaret's Collier Street CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Staplehurst School	Community
Maidstone Rural South East	Headcorn Primary School	Community
	Kingswood Primary School	Community
	Leeds and Broomfield CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Sutton Valence Primary School	Community
	Ulcombe CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled

Birth Rate and Births Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the Borough and the number of recorded births.





Maidstone Forecasts

Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Maidstone Central and South	285	19	24	10	7	9	11	11	12	15	21	27	285
Maidstone North	530	20	33	31	60	47	45	46	46	49	54	59	530
Maidstone West	460	25	36	-10	13	58	19	19	22	28	37	46	460
Maidstone South East	327	8	32	-6	12	19	23	27	30	35	41	48	327
Lenham and Harrietsham	118	21	14	15	15	14	12	11	10	10	10	10	118
Coxheath	159	13	-16	-5	-21	-7	-15	-16	-17	-17	-15	-14	129
Marden and Staplehurst	165	24	7	16	11	22	13	13	13	14	17	19	165
Maidstone Rural South East	140	17	24	18	16	34	22	21	21	21	22	24	140
Maidstone	**2,184**	**147**	**153**	**71**	**113**	**197**	**131**	**132**	**137**	**156**	**187**	**219**	**2,154**

Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Maidstone Non-Selective	1,530	-25	-80	-93	-124	-179	-237	-173	-164	-144	-221	-175	1,560
Maidstone and Malling Selective	815	-15	17	16	-8	-32	-56	-27	-32	-20	-52	-21	815

Primary District commentary

Overall, forecasts indicate that there will be sufficient places for Year R across the Plan period for the Maidstone district. However, there is pressure for places within the rural planning groups.

Over the past decade the Borough of Maidstone has seen one of the highest levels of inward migration in the county; this means that pre-school and school-aged children born outside of the area have moved into the Borough. The most common driver of this movement is the creation of new housing in the Borough, either through planned housebuilding or the conversion of office and retail spaces through permitted development, utilising permitted development rights that aren't controlled through the planning system in the same way. At times this has placed significant in-year pressure on schools, the County Council will continue to monitor the impact of this over the duration of The Plan.

Maidstone West Planning Group
There is a deficit of 10 places forecast for 2026-27. We will monitor the situation carefully to assess whether additional provision is needed, however, we anticipate that there will be sufficient places in neighbouring planning groups to meet the demand.

In the longer term, housing developments on the Maidstone side of Hermitage Lane will necessitate up to 2FE of additional provision. Land has been secured that would enable a 2FE primary school to be established on a site to the East of Hermitage Lane, known as Chapel Field. However, based on the current rate of housing growth, it is currently not expected to be required within the Plan period, this will continue to be reviewed as houses are occupied. The location on the boundary between Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling means that it is important to consider demand arising from housing growth local to the site in both Maidstone North and East Malling when anticipating the timing of the school's establishment.

Coxheath Planning Group
Housebuilding within this area has increased the pre and school aged population very significantly over recent years, in response the 2025 iteration of the Plan proposed commissioning of an additional 1FE in the planning group to mitigate the forecast deficit. As part of our ongoing commissioning cycle the County Council tracked and analysed the most local data available, this has shown that whilst the demand for school places in the area will still be significantly greater than it was five years ago, the rate of increase in that demand has eased and is forecast to remain stable.

The forecast show a fluctuating deficit of around 15 places on average throughout the Plan period, with the exception of 2026-27 and 2028-28 when the deficit dips to 5 and 7 respectively. Given local context which includes consideration of nearby schools in adjacent planning areas, existing travel to school patterns and the level of surplus in adjacent areas, it is viewed as not currently appropriate to commission an additional form of entry in Coxheath. This does not mean we anticipate up to 15 pupils living within the area not to be able to secure a place close to their home, as there is expected to be some natural offsetting against pupils living further away from the school.

We will closely monitor the demand for places within the planning group and respond appropriately to any changed in demand or wider context in future.

Maidstone South East Planning Group
There is a deficit of 6 places forecast for 2026-27. We will monitor the situation carefully to assess whether additional provision is needed, however, we anticipate that there will be sufficient places in neighbouring planning groups to meet the demand.

Secondary District Commentary

There are two planning groups which are within Maidstone Borough, one non-selective and one selective (See appendix 12.2 for the non-selective and selective planning group maps). The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

Maidstone Non-Selective Planning Group
There are eight schools in the Maidstone non-selective planning group: Cornwallis Academy, The Lenham School, Maplesden Noakes School, New Line Learning Academy, School of Science and Technology, St. Augustine Academy, St. Simon Stock Catholic School and Valley Park School.

The planning group is in deficit throughout the Plan period, with the initial deficit of 93 places (in excess of 3.0FE) gradually increasing to a high of 237 places (around 8 FE) in 2029-30. After 2029-30, the longer-term forecast suggests that the deficit will decrease slightly but will remain significant if no mitigating action is taken.

In recent years, schools within this planning group have admitted over PAN, creating additional capacity. We anticipate this pattern to continue and will accommodate some of the forecast deficit. However, up to 60 to 90 temporary places via bulge provision within the existing Secondary schools will be needed to meet the demand for places during the initial 2 years of the Plan period and this increases to 120 temporary places in 2028-29.

We anticipate the need for the establishment of a new secondary school no later than 2029-30 and will seek to continue to work with partners, including the DfE, to identify an appropriate and available location within the Borough over the coming year.

Maidstone and Malling Selective Planning Group
There are four schools in the Maidstone selective planning group: Invicta Grammar School, Maidstone Grammar School, Maidstone Grammar School for Girls and Oakwood Park Grammar School.

The forecast for the planning group indicates that there will be sufficient places in 2026-27. However, in 2027-28 there will be a deficit of 8 places that then increases markedly from 2028-29, with fluctuating deficits of around a 1 FE forecast through to the end of forecast period in 2033-34. Therefore, in the longer term, subject to the pace and school of housing development, it will be necessary to expand an existing school by 1 FE.

Planned Commissioning – Maidstone

Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Maidstone West					New 2FE School on East of Hermitage Lane	
Maidstone Non-Selective Planning Group	Up to 90 temporary Year 7 places in existing schools	Up to 90 temporary Year 7 places in existing schools	Up to 120 temporary Year 7 places in existing schools	Establishment of new 6FE secondary school		
Maidstone and Malling Selective Planning Group				1 FE permanent expansion of existing school		

7.8 Sevenoaks

District Summary

- The birth rate in Sevenoaks rose in 2021, but declined markedly in 2022 and 2023 with a slight increase recorded in 2024. However, it is still above the County and National averages. The number of births has followed a similar trend and dropped significantly to 1092 in 2023, which is lowest for more than 20 years.

- There remains a surplus of Year R places across the district. However, after reaching a peak in 2027, that surplus is forecast to reduce throughout the Plan period. Forecasts only show a marginal deficit in the Sevenoaks Rural North Planning Group from September 2029, but to address this, capacity can be utilised in adjacent planning groups that show a surplus, such as Sevenoaks East, Swanley, Sevenoaks Northern Villages and the Hartley and New Ash Green. KCC has previously initiated discussions with some primary schools, where surplus places were more acute, about how they would seek to maintain financial viability. This could be done by proposing a reduction in PAN through the annual admissions consultation, or when the need appeared to be more urgent, through In Year Variation. However, KCC is cognisant of the upcoming new Sevenoaks Local Plan (see below), and the impact of the Local Plan on existing primary surpluses. Therefore, no further PAN reductions are proposed at this time.

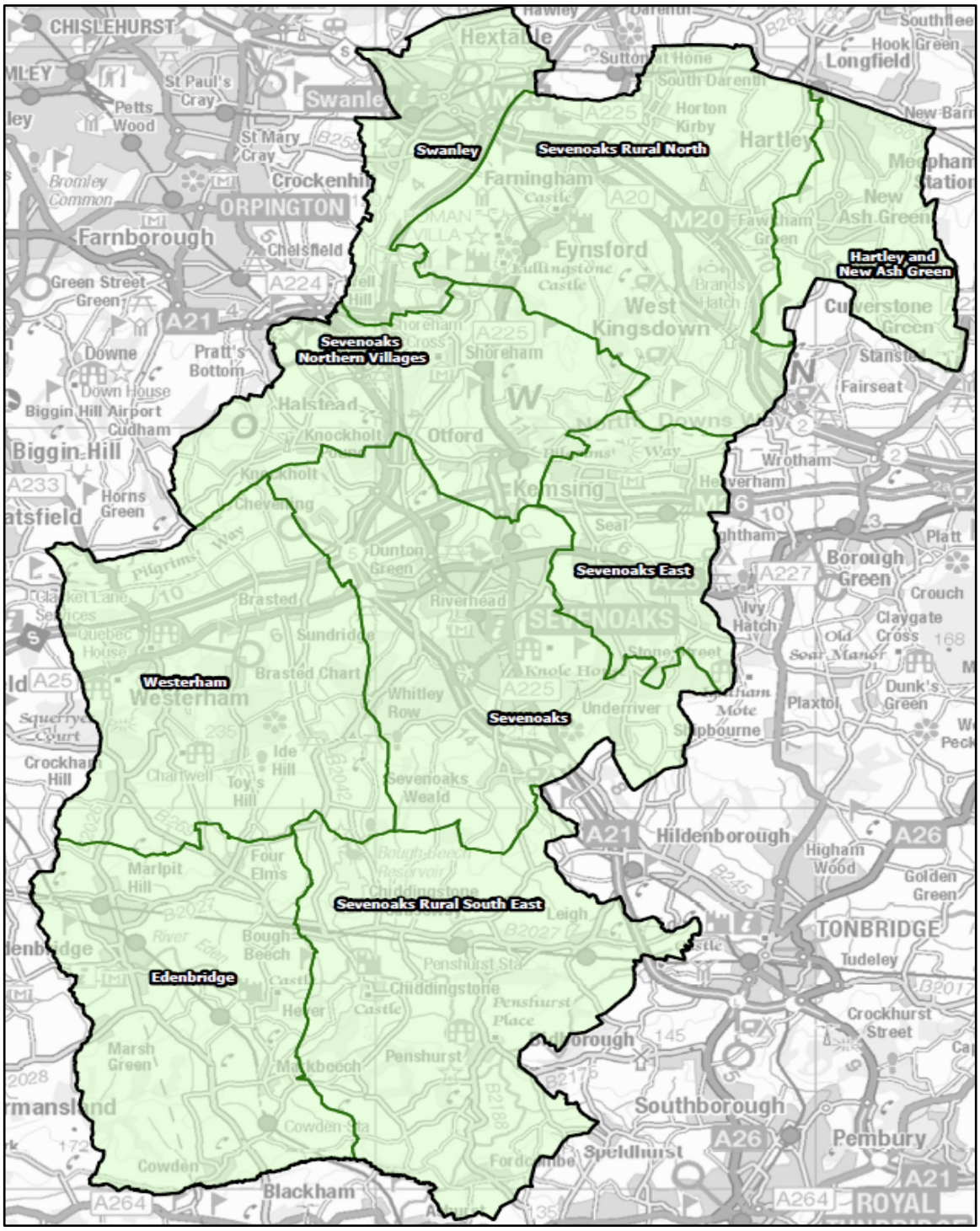
- The Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective Secondary Planning Group is forecast to show a surplus of places for the duration of the Plan period. Currently, KCC plan no action, although the numbers will be monitored over the forthcoming years and once the Sevenoaks Local Plan is published.

- For all of the Plan period in the Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective Planning Group, there is a surplus. The surplus is forecast to fluctuate between a 4.5FE to 7FE. However, house building in Dartford Borough continues at pace and not all planned sites have yet been consented and therefore not included in the current projections.

- The West Kent Selective Planning Group has small deficits forecast during the early part of the Plan period that may require additional temporary bulge provision.

- Sevenoaks District Council is expected to publish a new Local Plan within the next 18 months that will indicate building a significant number of new dwellings (up to 17,175) in the years up to 2042. Sevenoaks District Council had consulted on their Infrastructure Delivery Plan to identify the essential community infrastructure that will be required and have scheduled to consult again in Autumn 2025. Prior to the publication of the Local Plan, new housing development sites have already been identified with Fort Halstead, Four Elms Road and Sevenoaks Quarry being progressed. Fort Halstead and Sevenoaks Quarry sites have the potential for a new Primary School if sufficient demand for new provision materialises.

Map of the Sevenoaks Primary Planning Groups



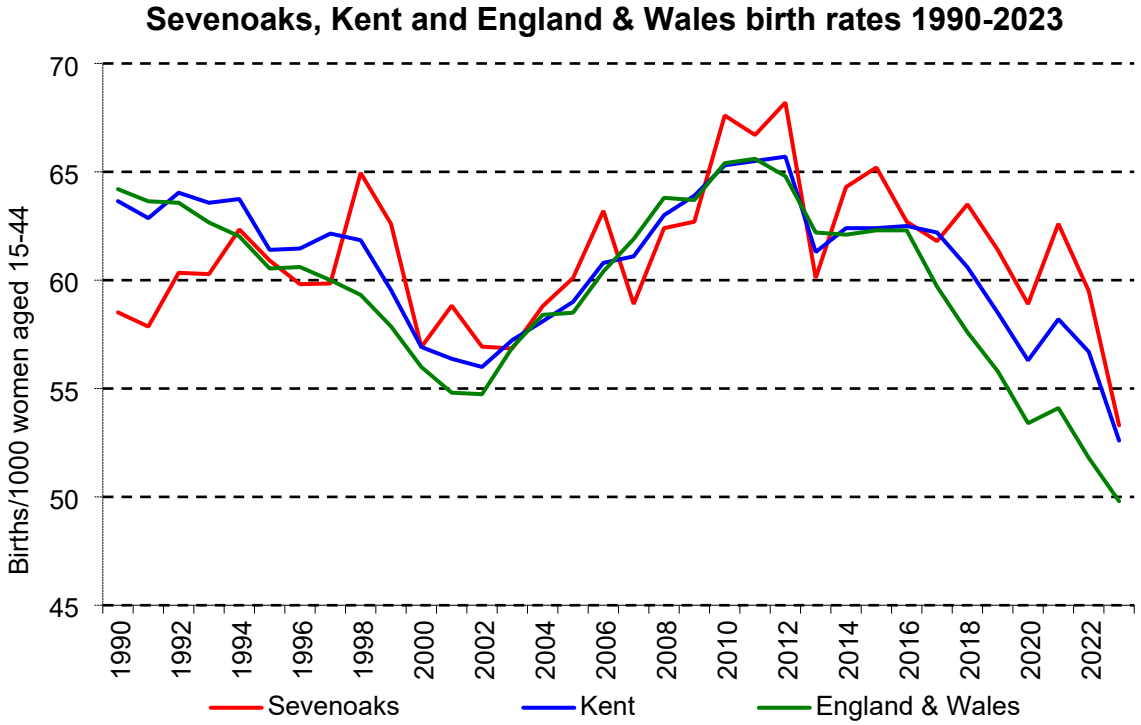
Sevenoaks Primary Schools by Planning Group

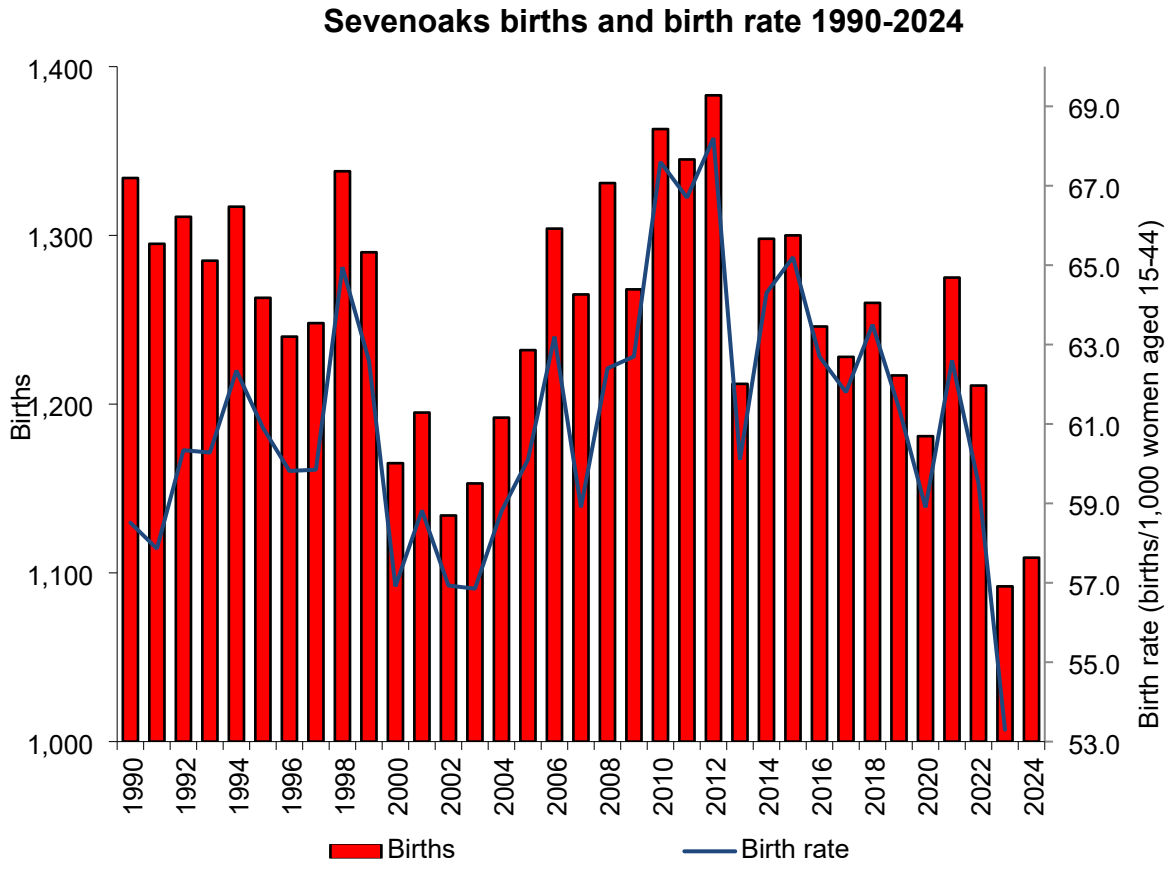
Planning group	School	Status
Swanley	Crockenhill Primary School	Community
	Downsview Community Primary School	Community
	Hextable Primary School	Community
	High Firs Primary School	Community
	Horizon Primary Academy	Academy
	St. Bartholomew's RC Primary School	Academy
	St. Mary's CE Primary School (Swanley)	Voluntary Aided

Planning group	School	Status
	St. Paul's CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Sevenoaks Rural North	Anthony Roper Primary School	Foundation
	Fawkham CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Horton Kirby CE Primary School	Academy
	St. Edmund's Church of England Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Hartley and New Ash Green	Leigh Academy Hartley	Academy
	New Ash Green Primary School	Community
	Our Lady of Hartley RC Primary School	Academy
Sevenoaks Northern Villages	Halstead Community Primary School	Academy
	Otford Primary School	Community
	Shoreham Village School	Academy
	St. Katharine's Knockholt CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
Sevenoaks East	Kemsing Primary School	Community
	Seal Church of England Primary School	Academy
	St. Lawrence CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Sevenoaks	Amherst School	Academy
	Chevening St. Botolph's CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Dunton Green Primary School	Community
	Lady Boswell's CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Riverhead Infant School	Community
	Sevenoaks Primary School	Community
	St. John's CE Primary School (Sevenoaks)	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Thomas' RC Primary School (Sevenoaks)	Academy
	Weald Community Primary School	Community
Westerham	Churchill CE Primary School (Westerham)	Voluntary Controlled
	Crockham Hill CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Ide Hill CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Sundridge and Brasted CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Edenbridge	Edenbridge Primary School	Academy
	Four Elms Primary School	Academy
	Hever CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
Sevenoaks Rural South East	Chiddingstone CE School	Academy
	Fordcombe CE Primary School	Academy
	Leigh Primary School	Community
	Penshurst CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided

Birth Rate and Births Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the district and the number of recorded births.





Sevenoaks Forecasts

Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Swanley	300	36	11	4	30	19	18	15	8	6	8	10	300
Sevenoaks Rural North	120	25	10	-1	12	0	-2	-5	-8	-10	-11	-12	105
Hartley and New Ash Green	150	15	-2	22	16	14	10	8	6	6	5	5	150
Sevenoaks Northern Villages	130	66	26	33	41	35	33	31	28	27	27	26	100
Sevenoaks East	102	27	15	22	31	22	21	20	19	19	19	19	102
Sevenoaks	390	86	79	42	72	75	52	47	37	29	22	19	360
Westerham	87	7	13	22	21	20	17	15	13	11	10	10	87
Edenbridge	105	16	8	9	12	16	9	8	5	2	-1	-3	105
Sevenoaks Rural South East	83	18	26	20	27	27	23	23	22	21	20	20	83
Sevenoaks	**1,467**	**296**	**186**	**174**	**263**	**227**	**181**	**161**	**131**	**111**	**99**	**94**	**1,392**

Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
NS - Dartford and Swanley	1,260	10	123	175	132	154	176	174	211	184	146	205	1,560
NS - Sevenoaks and Borough Green	610	-3	29	6	13	27	19	30	74	32	52	118	630
SG - West Kent	1,264	-41	-2	-14	-13	11	10	39	75	84	99	165	1,294

Primary District commentary

The Year R forecast indicates that no additional Primary capacity is needed. The levels of surplus forecast have persisted for three years and individual schools have started to encounter financial viability issues. KCC has worked with a number of schools across the district to take mitigating action where necessary. Otford Primary School, Sevenoaks Primary School and Anthony Roper Primary school have all consulted to reduce their PANs, removing 75 places of Primary capacity. This has helped to reduce the district wide surplus to more manageable levels in the future.

However, forecasts do not take into account any further new housing development that Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) may include in the new Sevenoaks District Local Plan, that has not been notified to KCC already.

Three consented sites in Fort Halstead, Sevenoaks Quarry and Four Elms Road will create demand for Primary places. However, it is likely that demand can be managed using existing capacity, at least in the medium term.

As more new housing developments come forward and demand for school places increases, KCC will, in the first instance, look to accommodate that demand within existing provision. Where there is the potential for demand to exceed capacity in a particular planning group, KCC will look for the most appropriate option to address the issue. Options will include utilising surplus capacity in adjacent planning groups, expansion of existing schools or introducing new provision.

Secondary District Commentary

There are three non-selective and two selective secondary planning groups that are fully or partially within Sevenoaks District. See appendix 13.2 for the secondary planning group maps.

However, only three groups (West Kent Selective, Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective and Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective Planning Groups) actually have schools or satellites of schools within Sevenoaks District in them.

Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective Planning Group

There are eight schools in the Dartford and Swanley Non-Selective Planning Group: Alkerden C of E Academy, Dartford Science and Technology College, Ebbsfleet Academy, Leigh UTC, Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy, Stone Lodge School, Leigh Academy Wilmington and Orchards Academy. All the schools are in Dartford Borough, except for Orchards Academy which is in Sevenoaks District.

Demand is manageable without any intervention for the duration of the Plan period.

To manage the demand that will be derived from the additional housebuilding, the new secondary provision at the Alkerden C of E Academy, will be expanded to its full capacity of 8FE, in the coming years and is included in the forecast. For 2025 the school has opened in temporary accommodation admitting 5FE of Year 7 students. For 2026 Alkerden C of E Academy will be admitting 6FE of Year 7 students. Also included in the forecasts is the 2FE that KCC have commissioned at Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy.

Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective Planning Group

There are three schools in the Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective Planning Group: Knole Academy, Wrotham School and Trinity School. Forecasts indicate that there will be sufficient Year 7 places across the Plan period.

A key factor in this planning group is the impact of the publication of the Sevenoaks Local Plan, which has been explained above. Should the Sevenoaks Local Plan be agreed in the near future, additional housing will see the secondary need increase. KCC has notified Sevenoaks District Council that there is limited opportunity to expand any of the existing schools, and that any notable increase in demand for secondary provision will need to be accommodated by the introduction of a new school.

Sevenoaks have indicated that a new development site is being considered in the north of the planning group, at Pedham Place, a former golf course, providing about 2500 new homes. This development must also provide a new secondary school.

No decisions can be made until the Local Plan is published, but it is possible that a new secondary school could be provided in Edenbridge where there is a site that is being held for such provision, if required. The commissioning of a new school in Edenbridge depends on its financial viability. The Department for Education has indicated in the past, a preference for any new secondary schools to be larger (>5FE), rather than smaller (4 - 5FE), which impacts on viability.

Currently, there is insufficient demand in Edenbridge and its environs, to support a new secondary school. If sufficient new housing was outlined in the new Local Plan, or through windfall sites, KCC will again consider whether a new school in Edenbridge is viable.

West Kent Selective Planning Group
There are six schools in the planning group: Judd School, Tonbridge Grammar School, Weald of Kent Grammar School, Skinners' School, Tunbridge Wells Girls' Grammar School and Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys.

The forecast indicates that there will be deficits of 14 and 13 in 2026-27 and 2027-28. We anticipate that these forecast deficits will be met through commissioned bulge provision in existing schools where necessary or own admission authorities offering over their PAN. We will keep the need for additional permanent capacity under review.

Planned Commissioning – Sevenoaks

Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
West Kent Selective	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 30 temporary places				

7.9 Swale

District commentary

- The birth rate for Swale remains slightly above the national and county averages and follows a similar pattern with a notable decline in the rate from 2016 to 2020, before recovering slightly in 2021 and then declining once again. The number of births recorded follows a similar pattern.

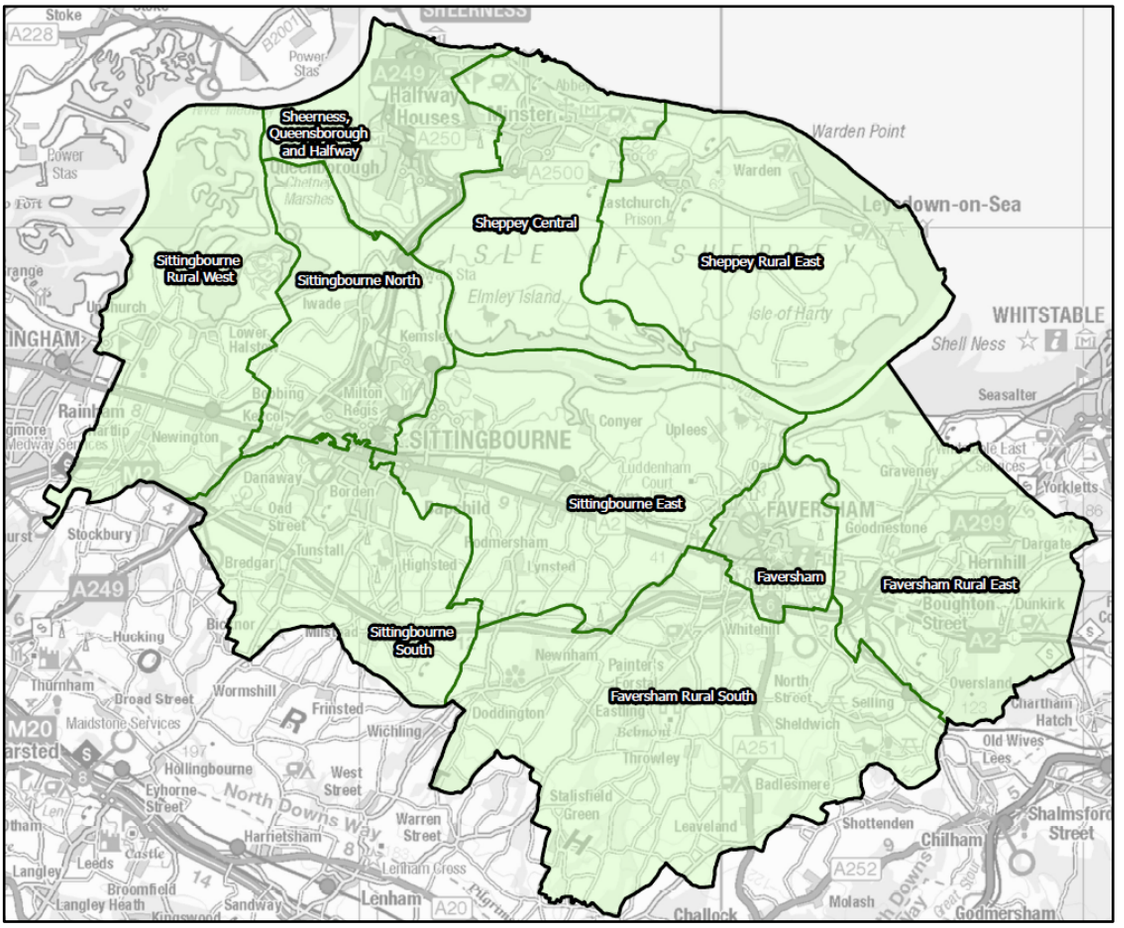
- We forecast surplus primary places across the District throughout the plan period however there are variances across the different planning groups.

- Within the secondary sector, we forecast pressures on capacity for non-selective Year 7 places including Sittingbourne non-selective planning group and Isle of Sheppey planning group. Whilst Sittingbourne and Sheppey selective planning group shows capacity across the plan period.

- Swale Borough Council's Local Plan, adopted in July 2017, proposes a total of 13,192 new homes over the Plan period to 2031 with approximately 776 dwellings per year. During the 2014/15 to 2023/24 a total of 7,288 houses were completed (NET) with an average of 729 dwellings per year.

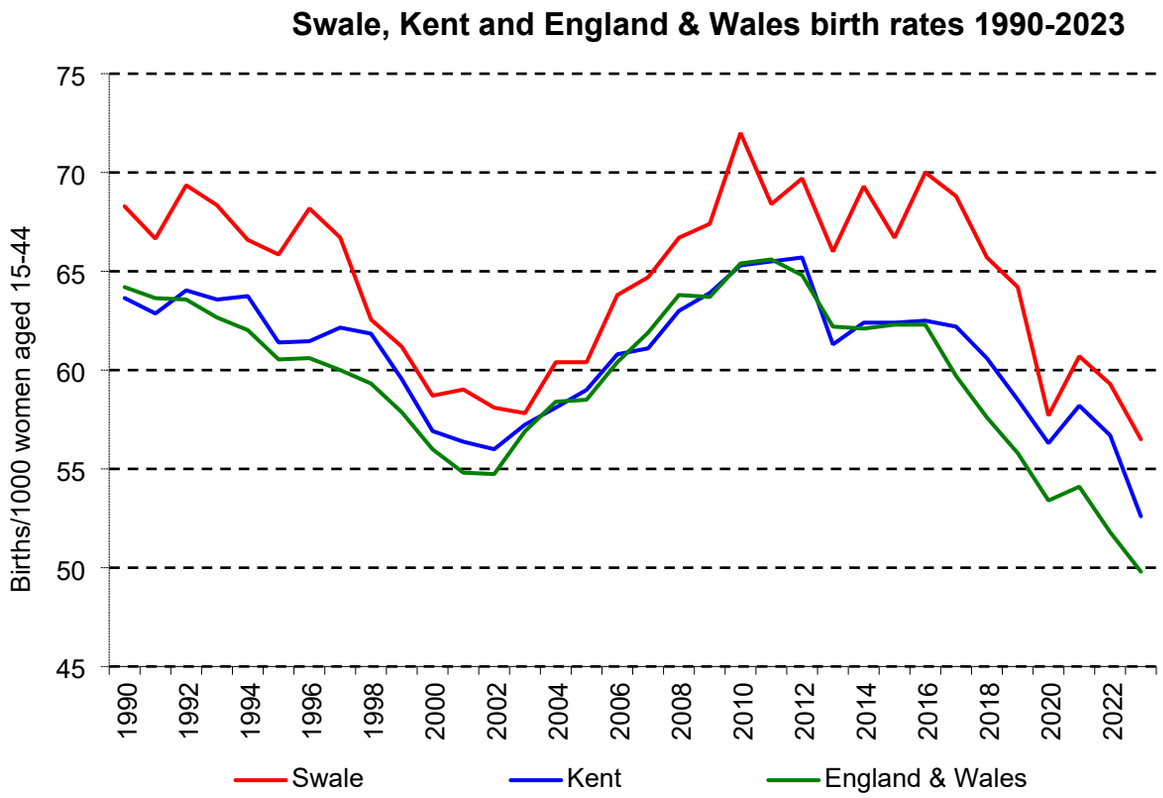
- Swale Borough Council is in the process of reviewing their current local plan and have agreed the Local Development Scheme 2024 (LDS). The LDS is the formal document that sets out the timetable for the Council's Local Plan Review and states that a draft Plan Regulation 18 consultation will be carried out in the fourth quarter of 2025, with a Regulation 19 pre-submission consultation in the second quarter of 2026, with submission of the Council's Local Plan, at the end of the fourth quarter in 2026.

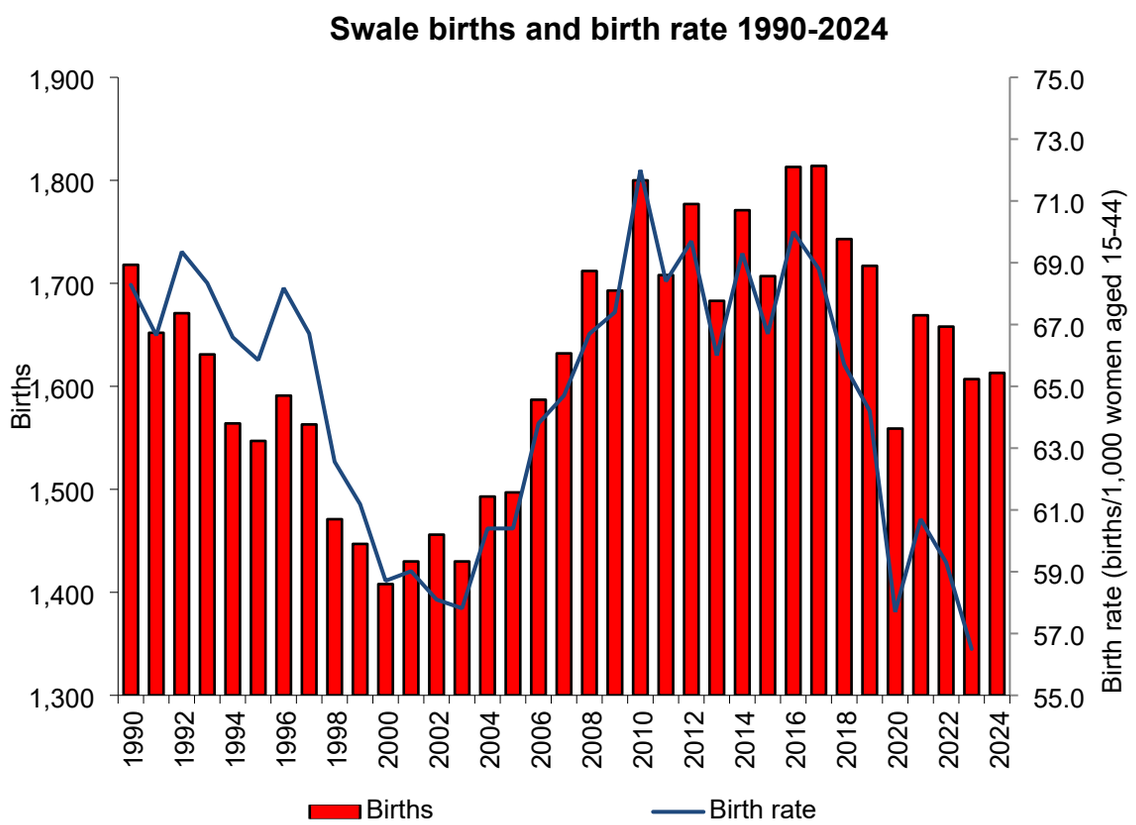
Map of the Swale Primary Planning Groups


Sheerness, Queensborough and Halfway
Sittingbourne Rural West
Sittingbourne North
Sheppey Central
Sheppey Rural East
Sittingbourne East
Faversham
Faversham Rural East
Sittingbourne South
Faversham Rural South
WHITSTABLE
SITTINGBOURNE
FAVERSHAM
Warden Point
Isle of Harty
Shell Ness
Seasalter
Leysdown-on-Sea
Sheerness
Halfway Houses
Minster
Eastchurch
Elmley Island
Conyer
Uplees
Graveney
Yorkletts
Goodnestone
Hernhill
Boughton
Dunkirk
Whitehill
Newnham
Painter's Forstal
Doddington
Eastling
Belmont
Throwley
Sheldwich
Selling
Chartham Hatch
Old Wives Lees
Badlesmere
Leaveland
Stalisfield Green
Shottenden
Chilham
Shalmsford Street
Challock
Molash
Godmersham
Lenham
Harrietsham
Hollingbourne
Maidstone Services
Broad Street
Wormshill
Frinsted
Wichling
Milstead
Bredgar
Tunstall
Stockbury
Hucking
Thurnham
Rainham
Newington
Kemsley
Milton Regis
Iwade
Lower Halstow
Bobbing
Borden
Danaway
Oad Street
Highsted
Lynsted
Luddenham
Court
Luddenham
Dargate
Hernhill
North Street
Selling
Sheldwich
Throwley
Badlesmere
Leaveland

Planning groups	School	Status
	Oaks Community Infant School	Academy
	Rodmersham Primary School	Community
	St. Peter's RC Primary School (Sittingbourne)	Academy
	Tunstall CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Westlands Primary School	Academy
Sittingbourne North	Bobbing Village School	Academy
	Grove Park Primary School	Academy
	Iwade School	Academy
	Kemsley Primary Academy	Academy
	Milton Court Primary Academy	Academy
	Regis Manor Primary School	Academy
Sittingbourne Rural West	Hartlip Endowed CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Holywell Primary School	Academy
	Lower Halstow Primary School	Community
	Newington CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Sheerness, Queenborough and Halfway	Halfway Houses Primary School	Academy
	Queenborough School	Academy
	Richmond Academy	Academy
	Rose Street Primary School	Community
	St. Edward's RC Primary School	Academy
	West Minster Primary School	Community
Sheppey central	Minster in Sheppey Primary School	Academy
	St. George's CE Primary School (Minster)	Academy
	Thistle Hill Academy	Academy
Sheppey Rural East	Eastchurch CE Primary School	Academy
	St Clements CE Primary School	Academy

Birth Rate and Births Analysis
The charts below set out the birth rates for the Borough and the number of recorded births.





Swale Forecasts

Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Faversham	240	42	18	15	-19	-18	0	-4	-11	-18	-20	-20	240
Faversham Rural East	75	2	8	-1	-1	-2	3	2	1	0	-1	-1	75
Faversham Rural South	60	8	11	10	3	6	7	6	5	4	3	3	60
Sittingbourne East	270	49	21	46	68	54	52	50	47	43	42	39	285
Sittingbourne South	305	27	22	7	45	29	15	4	-6	-16	-21	-28	300
Sittingbourne North	330	29	33	13	31	40	25	21	18	15	13	12	330
Sittingbourne Rural West	105	7	13	11	1	17	9	7	4	2	1	0	105
Sheerness, Queenborough and Halfway	360	59	46	25	19	46	35	37	40	43	46	46	300
Sheppey Central	210	55	54	45	46	41	41	39	36	35	35	35	210
Sheppey Rural East	60	19	20	9	8	20	14	14	14	13	13	12	60
Swale	**2,015**	**297**	**246**	**180**	**202**	**234**	**201**	**175**	**146**	**122**	**111**	**99**	**1,965**

Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Faversham Non-Selective	210	9	32	20	-3	6	5	-9	4	-11	-16	-40	210
Isle of Sheppey Non-Selective	360	11	3	-1	-12	-3	-12	-9	17	31	30	29	330
Sittingbourne Non-Selective	765	-3	-37	-8	-97	-69	-66	-90	-21	-29	-57	5	765
Canterbury and Faversham Selective	645	-8	15	0	-47	-28	-30	-42	-7	-30	-34	-28	645
Sittingbourne and Sheppey Selective	300	6	24	32	5	19	12	8	33	32	24	44	300

Primary District Commentary

Forecasts indicate that across Swale district there will be surplus capacity for Year R throughout the plan period. Year R surplus capacity peaks at 7.8FE in 2028/29 for the district, however there are differences across the primary planning groups with place pressures in Faversham planning groups and surplus across the Isle of Sheppey Planning Groups.

Faversham Planning Group
Forecasts indicate from 2027/2028 a pressure on places for Year R of 0.6FE, which fluctuates across the plan period. There are several housing developments and strategic sites in Faversham and dependent on the rate of build-out and occupation of these sites, it is likely that there will be a need for additional school places. A feasibility study has been undertaken for the future expansion of St Mary's of Charity primary school by 1FE to meet this need when required.

Sittingbourne East, South, North and Rural West Planning Groups
Forecasts indicate an ongoing surplus of places in Sittingbourne planning groups across the plan period with the highest surplus capacity in 2027/2028 and then this decreases. It is anticipated that in the medium to long term, as new housing developments are built and occupied, a new 2FE primary school will be established to serve the need from the Wises Lane development in the Sittingbourne South planning area.

Sheerness, Queenborough and Halfway, Sheppey Central and Sheppey Rural East Planning Groups
Forecasts indicate an ongoing surplus of places of over 3FE across these three planning groups throughout the plan period. Discussions will take place with the schools on managing this surplus to ensure schools remain viable.

Secondary District Commentary

There are five planning groups within Swale district, or which cross the district boundary (See appendix 13.2 for the non-selective and selective planning group maps). Three of which are non-selective (Faversham, Isle of Sheppey and Sittingbourne) and two selective (Sittingbourne and Sheppey, and Canterbury and Faversham). The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

Faversham Non-Selective Planning Group
The Abbey School is the only non-selective school in Faversham. Forecasts indicate there are sufficient Year 7 places across the plan period with a slight pressure on places for 2027/2028 and then surplus capacity for 2028/2029. It shows a sustained pressure in the medium/long term from 2032/2033. All the housing developments for Faversham identified in the current Local Plan are being built out and a 1FE permanent expansion of The Abbey School will be required later in the forecast period as housing occupations increase to meet this need.

Isle of Sheppey Non-Selective Planning Group
There are two schools in the Isle of Sheppey non-selective planning group: East Kent College Sheppey Secondary and Leigh Academy Minster.

Forecasts for Year 7 show a pressure of places from 2026/2027 continuing across the plan period. The plan's forecast takes into consideration the historical travel flows of pupils travelling off the Isle of Sheppey for their education in Sittingbourne schools. This results in additional pressure on places in the Sittingbourne non-selective planning group. The establishment of two schools on the Isle of Sheppey in September 2024 has started to address this situation and is helping reverse the volume of pupils travelling off the Isle of Sheppey to secondary schools in Sittingbourne. Discussions are being held with the schools on the Isle of Sheppey to ensure there

are sufficient Year 7 places in the short term. An expansion of one of the island schools will be required to continue to reverse previous travel patterns.

Sittingbourne Non-Selective Planning Group
There are three schools in the Sittingbourne non-selective planning group: Fulston Manor School, The Westlands School and The Sittingbourne School.

Forecasts indicate that for Year 7 there is a fluctuating deficit of places over the plan period. For 2026/27 forecasts show a deficit of 0.2FE places rising to a peak of 3.2FE in 2027/28. The pressure showing in Sittingbourne is exacerbated by the numbers of pupils travelling off the Isle of Sheppey for their secondary education. Temporary bulges will be needed for 2026/27 prior to a permanent expansion to meet the ongoing need for places in Sittingbourne and Isle of Sheppey.

In the longer term, a new 6FE secondary school on the North Sittingbourne Quinton Road housing development will be commissioned between 2030 and 2033 to meet the need from new housing developments.

Sittingbourne and Sheppey Selective Planning Group
There are two Schools in the planning group, Borden Grammar School (Boys) and Highsted Grammar School (Girls). Forecasts indicate sufficient Year 7 places with a surplus capacity across the plan period.

Canterbury and Faversham Selective Planning Group
There are four schools in the Canterbury and Faversham selective planning group: Barton Court Grammar School, Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School, Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys and Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School.

Forecasts indicate sufficient capacity in the planning group until 2027. From 2027/28 the forecast indicates a fluctuating pressure of up to 1.5FE. We will be working with existing school within the planning group to meet this need.

Planned Commissioning – Swale

Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Faversham			1FE expansion of St Mary's of Charity			
Sittingbourne South					2FE new Primary School at Wises Lane	
Faversham Non-Selective					1FE expansion of Abbey School	
Isle of Sheppey Non-Selective	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 2FE Permanent expansion				
Sittingbourne Non-selective	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 2FE Permanent expansion			6FE new provision - NW Sittingbourne/ Quinton Road	
Canterbury and Faversham Selective		0.5FE expansion Simon Langton Girls School				

7.10 Thanet

District commentary

- The birth rate in Thanet has fallen steadily from 2017 however the birth rate is higher than the national average but has fallen below the county average. The number of births has similarly decreased since 2017 to a low of 1251 in 2023 and 2024.

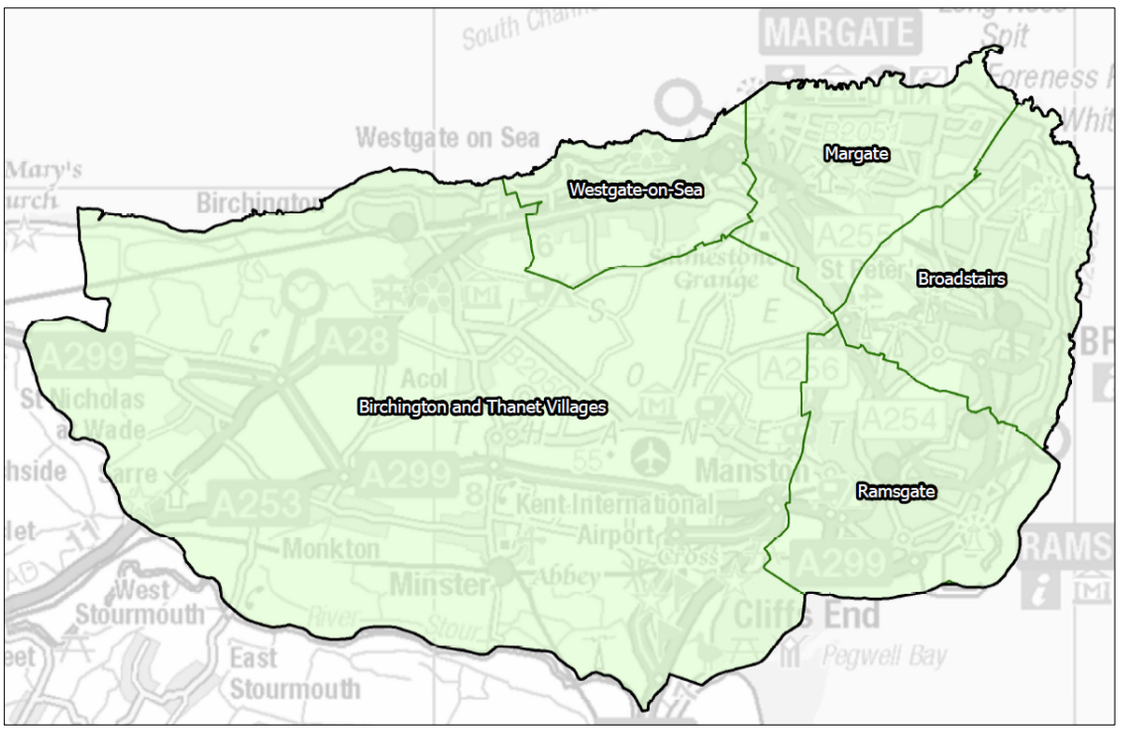
- We forecast surplus primary school places across the district throughout the plan period with a peak in 2028/2029.

- Within the secondary sector, we forecast pressures on capacity for non-selective Year 7 places across the plan period. There is a surplus of capacity of selective places throughout the plan period for the Thanet selective group.

- Thanet District Council's Local Plan to 2031, adopted on the 9 July 2020, includes the provision of 17,140 additional dwellings in the period up to 2031. During the 2014/15 to 2023/24 a total of 4,628 houses were completed (NET) with an average of 463 per year.

- Thanet District Council is revisiting the timetable for the Thanet Local Plan update subject to the outcome of the new Government's consultation on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system.

Map of the Thanet Primary Planning Groups



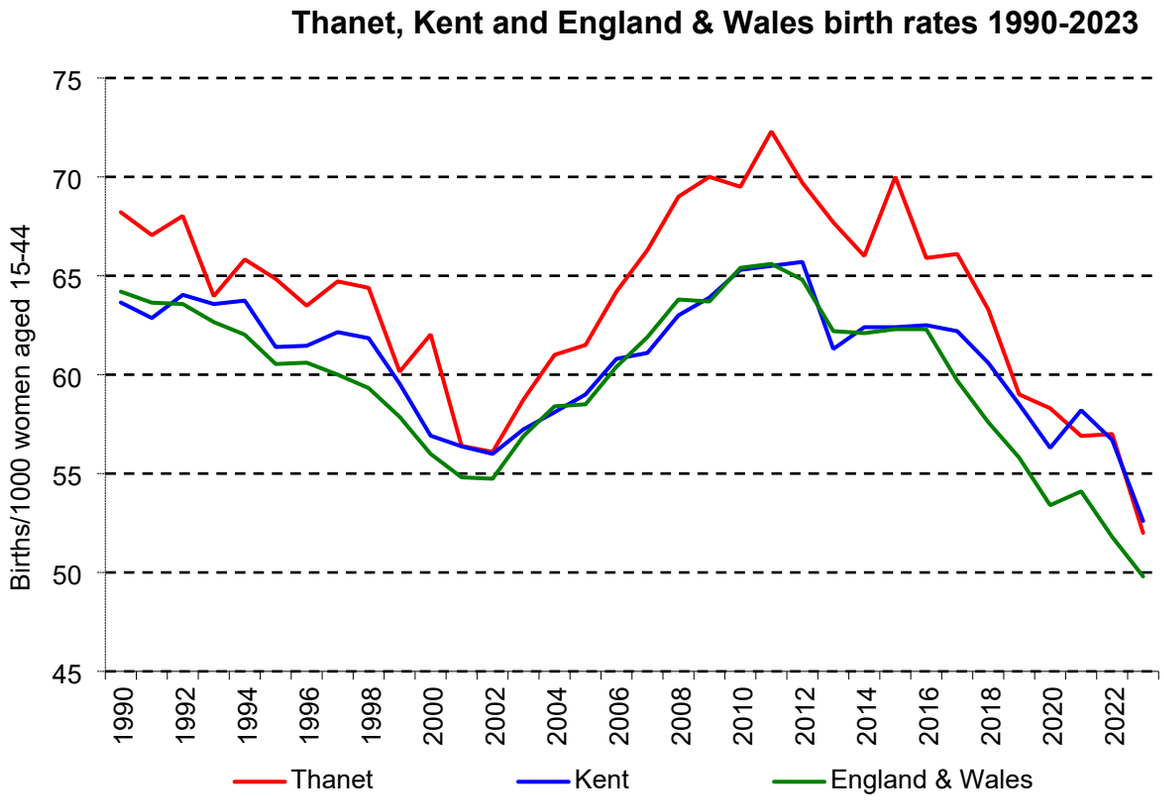
Thanet Primary Schools by Planning Group

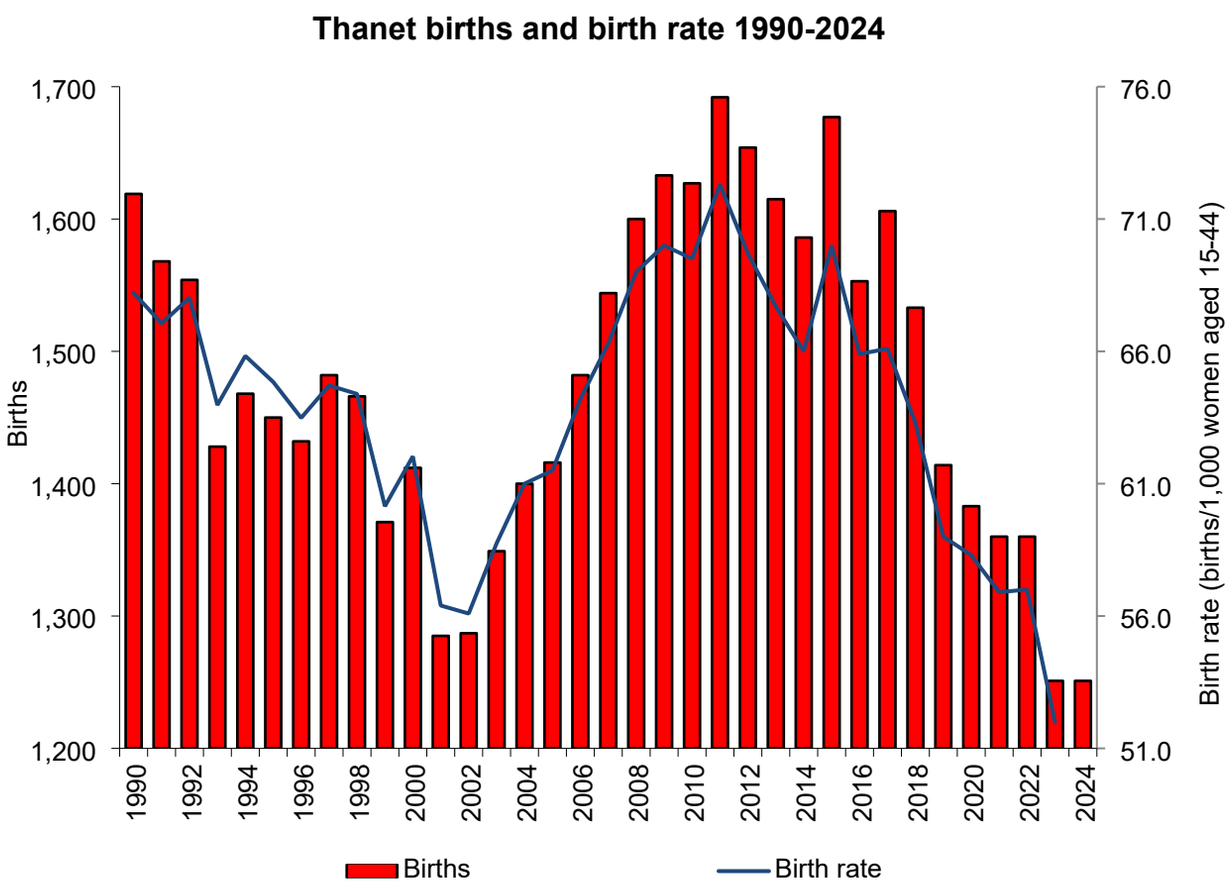
Planning Group	School	Status
Margate	Cliftonville Primary School	Academy
	Drapers Mills Primary Academy	Academy
	Holy Trinity and St. John's CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Northdown Primary School	Academy
	Palm Bay Primary School	Academy
	Salmestone Primary School	Academy
	St. Gregory's RC Primary School	Academy
Westgate-on-Sea	Garlinge Primary School	Community
	St. Crispin's Community Infant School	Community
	St. Saviour's CE Junior School	Voluntary Controlled
Ramsgate	Chilton Primary School	Academy
	Christ Church CE Junior School	Academy
	Dame Janet Primary Academy	Academy
	Ellington Infant School	Community
	Newington Community Primary School (Ramsgate)	Academy
	Newlands Primary School	Academy
	Priory Infant School	Community
	Ramsgate Arts Primary School	Free
	Ramsgate Holy Trinity CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. Ethelbert's RC Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. Laurence-in-Thanet CE Junior Academy	Academy
Broadstairs	Bromstone Primary School	Foundation
	Callis Grange Infant School	Community
	St. George's CE Primary School (Broadstairs)	Foundation
	St. Joseph's RC Primary School (Broadstairs)	Academy
	St. Mildred's Infant School	Community

Planning Group	School	Status
	St. Peter-in-Thanet CE Junior School	Voluntary Aided
	Upton Junior School	Academy
Birchington and Thanet Villages	Birchington CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Minster CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Monkton CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Nicholas at Wade CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled

Birth Rate and Births Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the district and the number of recorded births.





Thanet Forecasts

Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Margate	435	60	69	27	73	73	60	63	65	68	73	79	390
Westgate-on-Sea	210	51	9	13	9	24	17	19	20	21	23	25	180
Ramsgate	495	63	121	59	73	56	53	51	47	39	32	30	465
Broadstairs	330	24	31	42	46	48	36	35	33	30	28	27	315
Birchington and Thanet Villages	165	21	10	14	1	4	5	3	1	-2	-6	-9	165
Thanet	**1,635**	**219**	**239**	**156**	**202**	**205**	**170**	**171**	**165**	**155**	**150**	**151**	**1,515**

Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Thanet Non Selective	1,099	-36	-75	-68	-82	-38	-127	-14	-22	27	26	65	1,099
Thanet Selective	345	-1	21	23	21	25	9	23	25	26	30	37	345

Primary District Commentary

Forecasts indicate that Thanet district has surplus capacity for Year R places across the Plan period. Surplus capacity ranges between 5.2FE in 2026/27 to a peak of 6.8FE in 28/29.

There are differences within the individual planning groups, with Margate and Ramsgate showing high levels of surplus capacity, Westgate-on-sea and Broadstairs also showing some capacity whilst Birchington and Thanet Villages planning group showing slight surplus capacity which is reducing to a deficit of places later in the plan period.

Margate and Ramsgate Planning Groups
Forecasts indicate surplus Year R places across the plan period between for both Margate and Ramsgate planning groups, discussions will continue to take place with the schools on options to manage this surplus.

Birchington and Thanet Villages Planning Group
Forecasts indicate a small reduction of surplus capacity for Year R places. Any future pupil pressures arising from the developments closer to the borders of the Margate and Ramsgate planning groups could initially be accommodated in Margate and Ramsgate schools due to the surplus capacity available. Birchington Primary School will revert to a 3FE PAN to support the initial pressure from new housing in Birchington. New primary school provision to serve any new housing developments may be required later in the plan period in Birchington and/or Westgate-on-Sea if all housing comes forward as set out in the Local Plan.

Secondary District Commentary

There are two planning groups which are within Thanet district, one non-selective and one selective (See appendix 13.2 for the non-selective and selective planning group maps). The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

Thanet Non-Selective Planning Group
There are six schools in the Thanet non-selective planning group: Charles Dickens School, Hartsdown Academy, King Ethelbert School, Royal Harbour Academy, St George's CE Foundation School and Ursuline College.

Forecasts indicate a pressure on places across the plan period of 2.2FE from 2026/27 which increases to 4.2FE in 2029/30. We will work with existing schools to ensure there are sufficient Year 7 places to meet the need.

Thanet Selective Planning Group
There are two schools in the Thanet selective planning group: Chatham and Clarendon Grammar School and Dane Court Grammar School. Forecasts indicate surplus places throughout the plan period.

Planned Commissioning – Thanet

Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Birchington and Thanet Villages/ Westgate-on-Sea						2FE new primary in Birchington and /or Westgate on Sea
Thanet Non-Selective	Up to 60 temporary places	Up to 90 temporary places	Up to 45 temporary places	Up to 45 temporary places		

7.11 Tonbridge and Malling

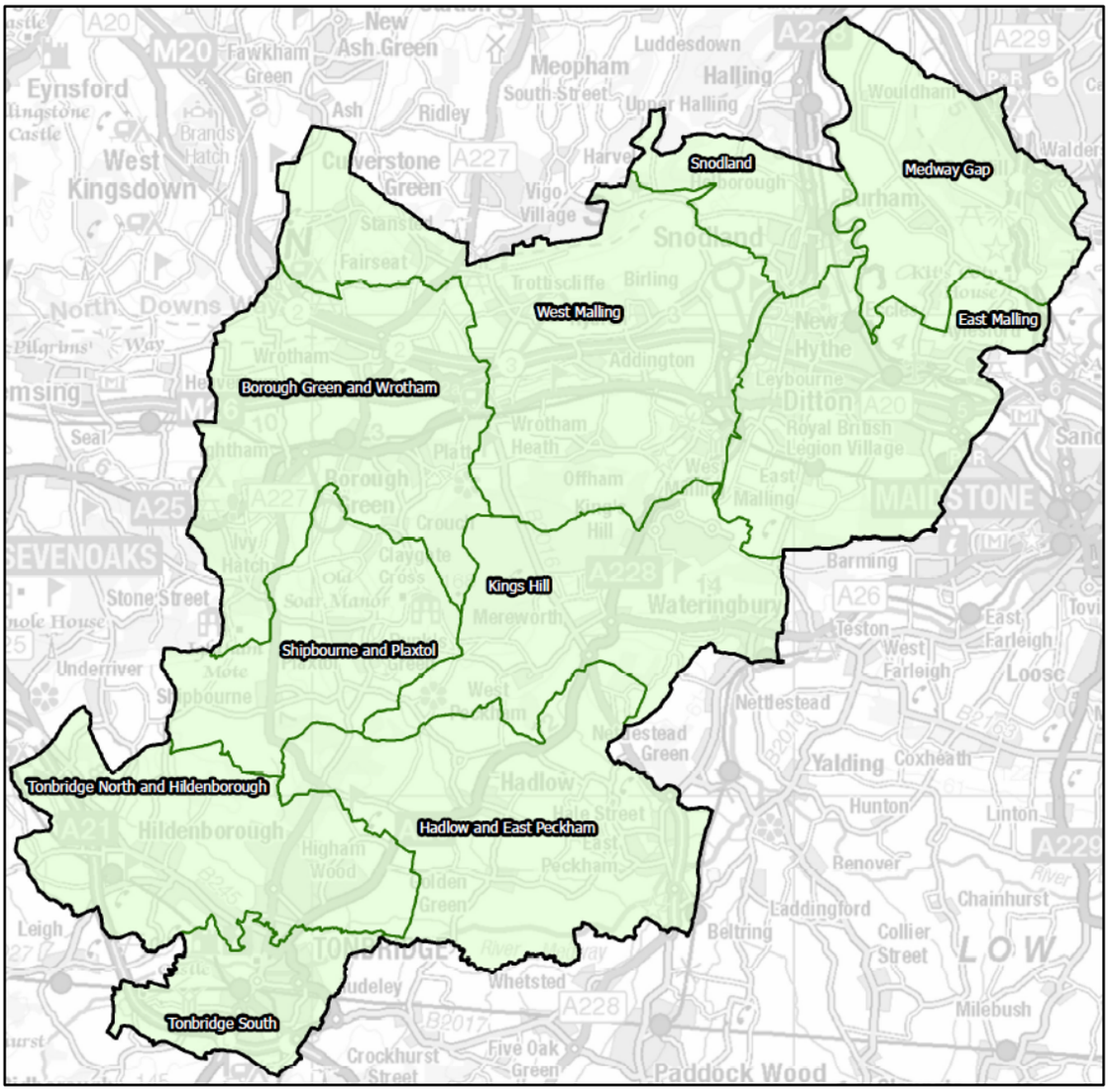
Borough commentary

- The birth rate for Tonbridge and Malling dropped from 2018 to 2020, before increasing slightly in 2021 and then falling sharply in 2022 and 2023. The number of births also increased in 2021, but fell back in 2022 and the dropped significantly in 2023 to 1253 births which is the lowest since 2013. The number of births moderately recovered in 2024, but remains low.

- We forecast sufficient primary school places across the Borough to meet demand across the Plan period. However, there is local place pressures within some planning groups which will need to be addressed. Within the Non-Selective secondary planning groups, we anticipate sufficient places during the Plan period. The West Kent Selective planning group as has small deficits forecast for the initial years of the Plan period.

- On 13 July 2021, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council withdrew their proposed Local Plan from public examination. The Borough Council expects to submit a revised plan to the Secretary of State 2025. The forecasts within the Kent Commissioning Plan incorporate consented housing proposals and remaining sites to be built out from the current Core Strategy. Any housing proposals from emerging Local Plans are not incorporated within the forecasts.

Map of the Tonbridge and Malling Primary Planning Groups

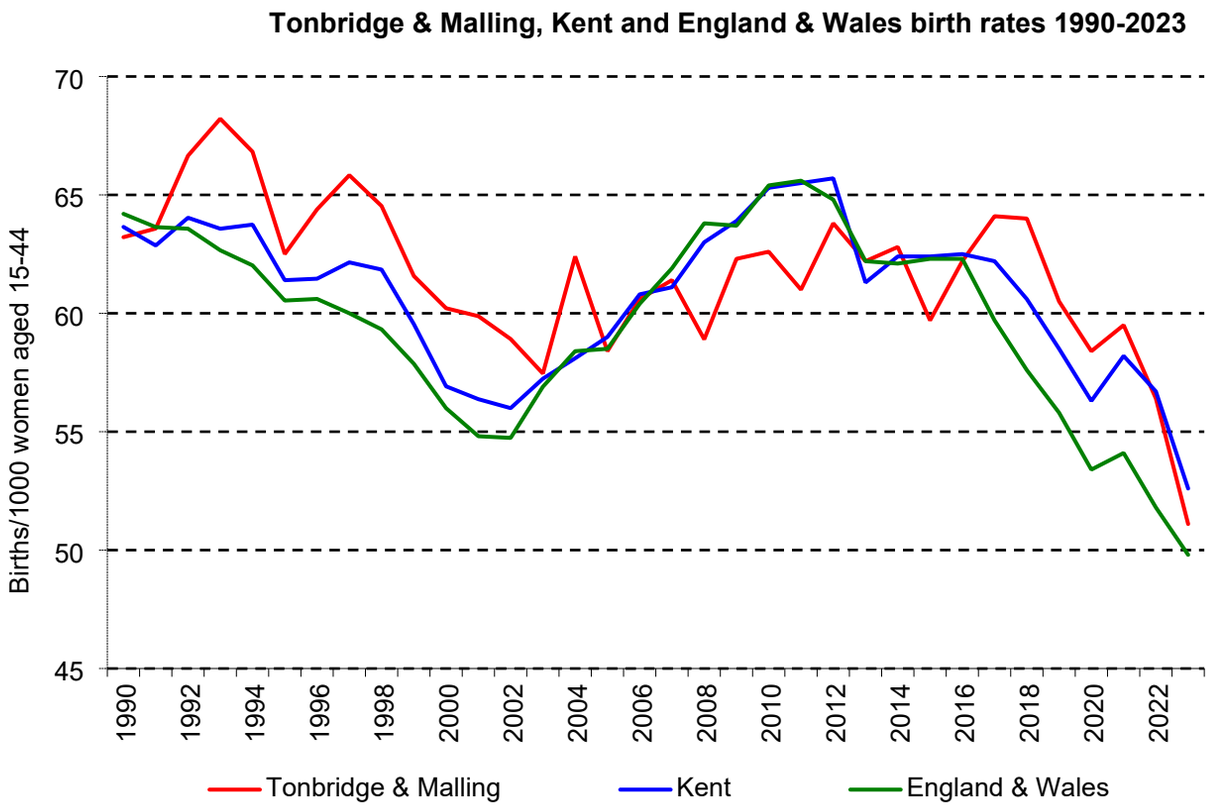


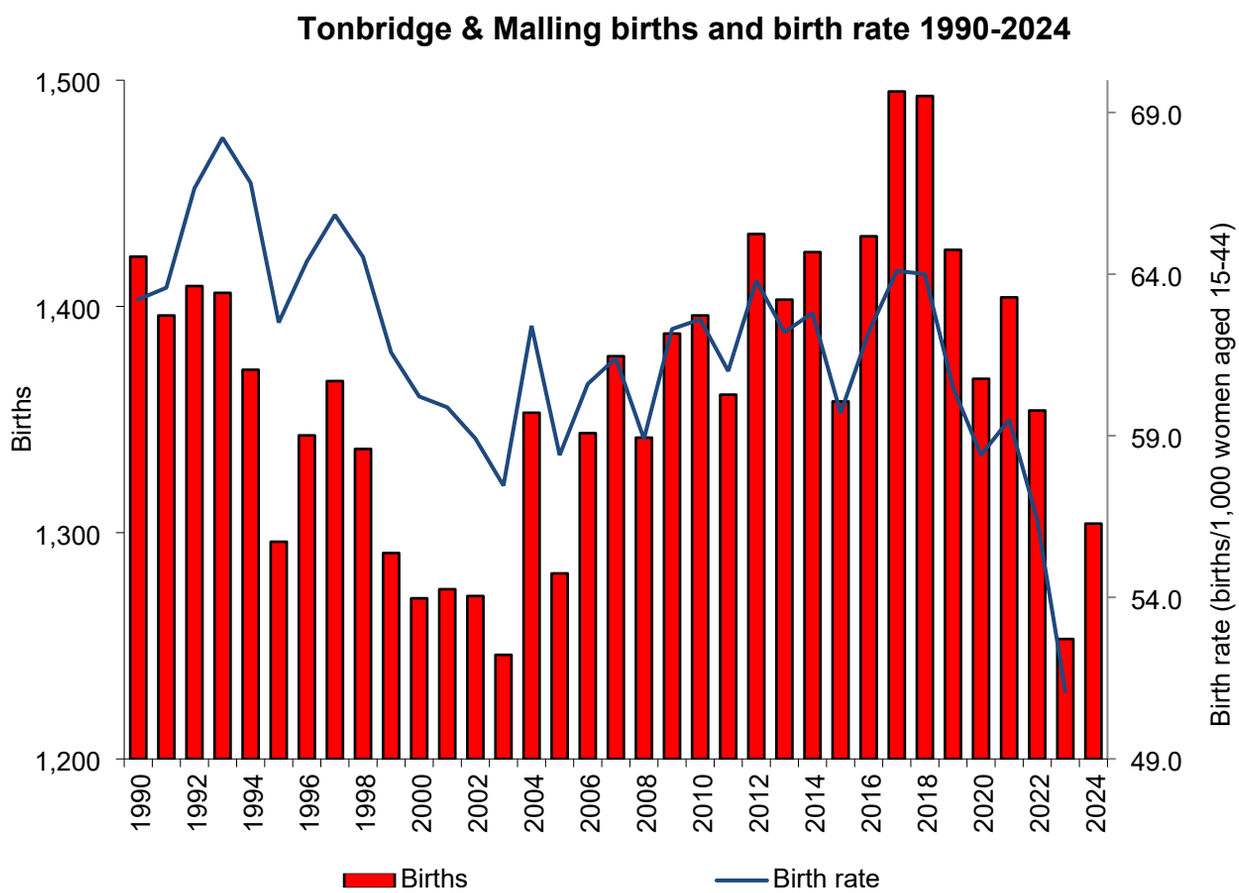
Tonbridge and Malling Primary Schools by Planning Group

Planning Groups	School	Status
Tonbridge South	Bishop Chavasse CE Primary School	Free
	Royal Rise Primary School	Academy
	Slade Primary School	Community
	Sussex Road Community Primary School	Community
Tonbridge North and Hildenborough	Cage Green Primary School	Academy
	Hildenborough CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Long Mead Community Primary School	Community
	St. Margaret Clitherow RC Primary School	Academy
	Stocks Green Primary School	Community
	Woodlands Primary School	Community
Hadlow and East Peckham	East Peckham Primary School	Community
	Hadlow Primary School	Community
Shipbourne and Plaxtol	Plaxtol Primary School	Community
	Shipbourne School	Community
Kings Hill	Discovery School	Community
	Kings Hill School	Community
	Mereworth Community Primary School	Community
	Valley Invicta Primary School at Kings Hill	Academy
	Wateringbury CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided

Planning Groups	School	Status
Borough Green and Wrotham	Borough Green Primary School	Foundation
	Ightham Primary School	Academy
	Platt CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. George's CE Primary School (Wrotham)	Voluntary Controlled
West Malling	More Park RC Primary School	Academy
	Offham Primary School	Community
	Ryarsh Primary School	Community
	Trottiscliffe CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Valley Invicta Primary School at Leybourne Chase	Academy
	West Malling CE Primary School	Academy
East Malling	Brookfield Infant School	Community
	Brookfield Junior School	Community
	Ditton CE Junior School	Voluntary Aided
	Ditton Infant School	Foundation
	Leybourne St. Peter and St. Paul CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Lunsford Primary School	Community
	St. James the Great Academy	Academy
	St. Peter's CE Primary School (Aylesford)	Voluntary Controlled
	Valley Invicta Primary School at Aylesford	Academy
Snodland	Snodland CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. Katherine's School (Snodland)	Academy
	Valley Invicta Primary School at Holborough Lakes	Academy
Medway Gap	Burham CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Mark's CE Primary School (Eccles)	Academy
	Tunbury Primary School	Community
	Wouldham All Saint's CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled

Birth Rate and Births Analysis
The charts below set out the birth rates for the Borough and the number of recorded births.





Tonbridge and Malling Analysis – Primary

Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Tonbridge South	210	27	20	14	45	43	24	23	22	22	24	28	210
Tonbridge North and Hildenborough	270	71	35	46	44	52	40	35	31	28	26	25	225
Hadlow and East Peckham	60	3	-2	5	-2	1	0	-1	-1	-1	-1	0	60
Shipbourne and Plaxtol	24	12	8	10	10	10	9	9	9	9	10	10	24
Kings Hill	240	22	6	2	20	-2	-10	-20	-26	-30	-34	-36	225
Borough Green and Wrotham	135	40	18	24	50	32	28	26	25	25	26	27	135
West Malling	162	12	15	-1	31	24	11	9	8	7	7	7	162
East Malling	294	33	50	31	39	40	19	15	9	2	-3	-7	294
Snodland	150	5	11	13	1	24	14	14	16	17	19	20	150
Medway Gap	198	35	-1	-13	-16	-18	-18	-25	-30	-31	-32	-34	168
Tonbridge & Malling	**1,743**	**260**	**158**	**130**	**223**	**205**	**119**	**86**	**62**	**48**	**42**	**41**	**1,653**

Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Malling Non-Selective	543	28	57	68	21	24	21	50	29	57	39	50	543
Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective	610	-3	29	6	13	27	19	30	74	32	52	118	630
Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells Non-Selective	1,645	197	169	91	95	88	56	117	126	129	147	178	1,586
West Kent Selective	1,264	-41	-2	-14	-13	11	10	39	75	84	99	165	1,294

Primary District Commentary

For primary education, the overall forecasts indicate sufficient places to meet demand across the Plan period. However, there are local place pressures within the some of the individual planning groups.

Hadlow and East Peckham Planning Group
The planning group forecast indicates a 2 place deficit in 2027-28 and a 1 place deficit from 2030-31 to 2033-24. We will monitor the situation carefully, but anticipate that there will be sufficient places in neighbouring planning groups to meet the demand.

Kings Hill Planning Group
Demand for places is forecast to increase during the Plan Period, with a 2 place deficit in 2028-29 increasing to around 30 places from 2031-32 onwards. We will monitor the situation carefully to assess whether additional provision is needed. We anticipate that there will be sufficient places in neighbouring planning groups to meet the initial demand, but may need to commission an additional 1 FE of permanent provision later in the Plan Period.

East Malling Planning Group
There are small deficits forecast for the last 2 years of the Plan Period. We will monitor the situation carefully, but anticipate that there will be sufficient places in neighbouring planning groups to meet the demand.

West Malling Planning Group
Forecasts for West Malling show a small deficit in 2026-27 that can be accommodated in the adjacent Kings Hill planning group.

Medway Gap Planning Group
The planning group is forecast to have a deficit that increases throughout the Plan period. Where the demand in the short to medium term cannot be accommodated in neighbouring planning groups, we will work with local schools to establish bulge provision before seeking a more permanent solution via the expansion of an existing school towards the end of the forecast period. The demand for school places within this group can be impacted by children resident in Medway, we will work with Medway Council when determining the most appropriate commissioning strategy for ensuring all children have a school place.

Secondary District Commentary

There are four planning groups which are within Tonbridge and Malling Borough or which cross the Borough boundary (See appendix 12.2 for the non-selective and selective planning group maps). Three of which are non-selective. The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

Malling Non-Selective Planning Group
There are three schools in the planning group: Aylesford School, Holmesdale School and Malling School. Forecasts indicate that there will be sufficient Year 7 places across the Plan period.

Sevenoaks and Borough Green Non-Selective Planning Group
There are three schools in the Sevenoaks and Borough Green non-selective planning group: Knowle Academy, Wrotham School and Trinity School. Forecasts indicate that there will be sufficient Year 7 places across the Plan period.

Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells Non-Selective Planning Group
There are eight schools in the planning group: Hadlow Rural Community School, Hayesbrook School, Hillview School for Girls, Hugh Christie Technology College, Bennett Memorial Diocesan School, Mascalls Academy, Skinners' Kent Academy and St. Gregory's Catholic School.

Forecasts indicate that there will be sufficient Year 7 places across the Plan period. It should be noted that these forecasts do not incorporate the impact of housing growth associated with unconsented or unallocated development outside of an adopted Local Plan, therefore future strategic housing growth may have a significant impact over and above the forecast need.

West Kent Selective Planning Group
There are six schools in the planning group: Judd School, Tonbridge Grammar School, Weald of Kent Grammar School, Skinners' School, Tunbridge Wells Girls' Grammar School and Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys.

The forecast indicates that there will be deficits of 14 and 13 in 2026-27 and 2027-28. We anticipate that these forecast deficits will be met through commissioned bulge provision in existing schools where necessary or own admission authorities offering over their PAN. We will keep the need for additional permanent capacity under review.

Planned Commissioning – Tonbridge and Malling

Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Kings Hill					1FE Expansion of Existing School	
Medway Gap					1FE Expansion of Existing School	
West Kent Selective	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 30 temporary places				

7.12 Tunbridge Wells

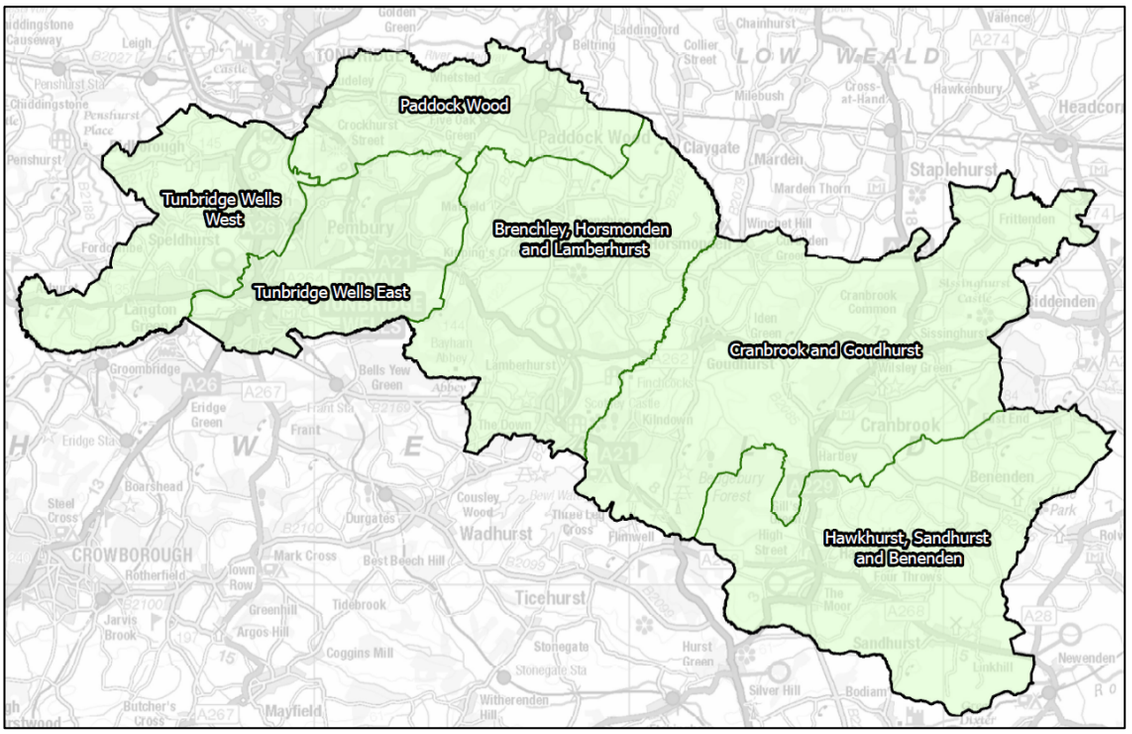
Borough Commentary

- The birth rate for Tunbridge Wells has in general been falling since 2010 and continued to drop in 2023. However the rate is still above both the county and national averages. The number of recorded births has followed a similar trend to a low of 1068 in 2023, which is the lowest for more than 20 years, before rising to 1102 in 2024.

- We forecast sufficient primary school places across the Borough throughout the Plan period albeit there is local place pressure within the Cranbrook and Goudhurst, the Brenchley, Horsmonden and Lamberhurst, Hawkhurst, Sandhurst and Benenden and the Paddock Wood planning groups. Within the secondary sector, we anticipate there will be sufficient places during the Plan period within the Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells Non-Selective and the Cranbrook Selective groups. The West Kent Selective planning group as has small deficits forecast for the Plan period.

- A new proposed Local Plan has undergone independent examination and a Final Report is awaited from the Planning Inspector prior to the plan being adopted by the Borough Council. The assessed housing need for the Borough within the proposed new Plan is 678 dwellings per annum, equivalent to some 12,200 additional homes over the plan period to 2038. We will continue working with the Borough Council to ensure sufficient education provision is provided for future housing growth.

Map of the Tunbridge Wells Primary Planning Groups



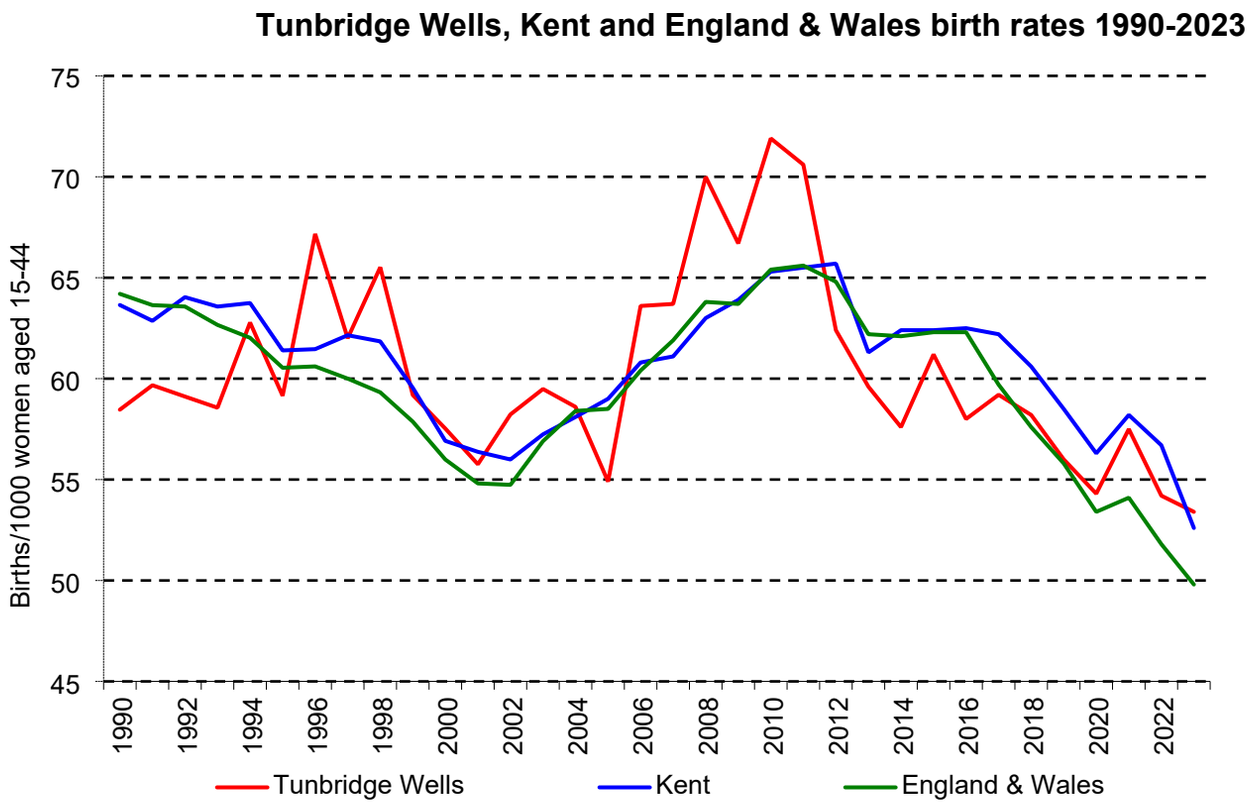
Tunbridge Wells Primary Schools by Planning Group

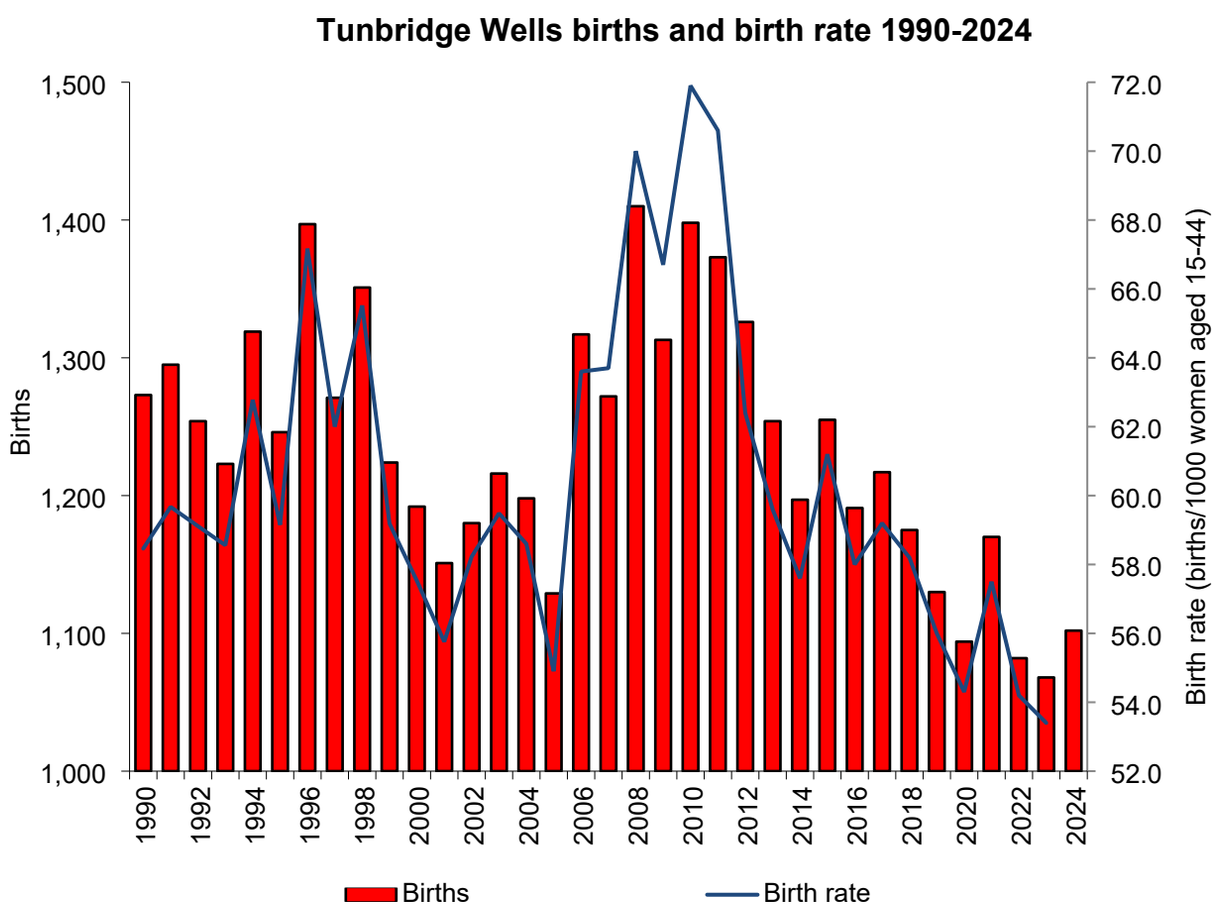
Planning Groups	School	Status
Tunbridge Wells East	Broadwater Down Primary School	Community
	Claremont Primary School	Community
	Pembury School	Community
	Skinners' Kent Primary School	Academy
	St. Barnabas CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. James' CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. Mark's CE Primary School (Tunbridge Wells)	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Peter's CE Primary School (Tunbridge Wells)	Voluntary Controlled
	Temple Grove Academy	Academy
	Wells Free School	Free
Tunbridge Wells West	Bidborough CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Bishops Down Primary School	Community
	Langton Green Primary School	Community
	Rusthall St. Paul's CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Southborough CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Speldhurst CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	St. Augustine's RC Primary School (Tunbridge Wells)	Academy
	St. John's CE Primary School (Tunbridge Wells)	Voluntary Controlled
	St. Matthew's High Brooms CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Paddock Wood	Capel Primary School	Community
	Paddock Wood Primary School	Academy
Brenchley, Horsmonden and Lamberhurst	Brenchley and Matfield CE Primary School	Academy
	Horsmonden Primary School	Academy
	Lamberhurst St. Mary's CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
Cranbrook and Goudhurst	Colliers Green CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
	Cranbrook CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Frittenden CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled

Planning Groups	School	Status
	Goudhurst and Kilndown CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Sissinghurst CE Primary School	Voluntary Aided
Hawkhurst, Sandhurst and Benenden	Benenden CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Hawkhurst CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled
	Sandhurst Primary School	Community

Birth Rate Analysis

The charts below set out the birth rates for the Borough and the number of recorded births.





Tunbridge Wells Forecasts

Primary - Year R Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Tunbridge Wells East	450	57	86	87	80	74	84	87	91	98	107	116	450
Tunbridge Wells West	435	39	79	87	120	117	100	98	97	96	99	102	450
Paddock Wood	120	5	2	-7	-27	-50	-29	-38	-44	-47	-48	-49	120
Brenchley, Horsmonden and Lamberhurst	90	12	-1	-4	2	1	-4	-5	-7	-10	-10	-10	90
Cranbrook and Goudhurst	116	4	0	4	8	21	1	-3	-5	-6	-6	-5	121
Hawkhurst, Sandhurst and Benenden	90	5	0	9	7	21	5	2	0	-3	-3	-3	90
Tunbridge Wells	**1,301**	**122**	**164**	**175**	**190**	**183**	**157**	**142**	**131**	**128**	**139**	**152**	**1,321**

Secondary - Year 7 Surplus/Deficit Capacity if No Further Action is Taken

Planning Group name	2024/25 capacity	2024/25 (A)	2025/26 (F)	2026/27 (F)	2027/28 (F)	2028/29 (F)	2029/30 (F)	2030/31 (F)	2031/32 (F)	2032/33 (F)	2033/34 (F)	2034/35 (F)	2034/35 capacity
Tenterden and Cranbrook Non-Selective	360	95	72	5	2	-1	-5	8	4	-5	4	15	300
Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells Non-Selective	1,645	197	169	91	95	88	56	117	126	129	147	178	1,586
Cranbrook Selective	90	0	19	12	5	7	5	4	10	2	8	11	90
West Kent Selective	1,264	-41	-2	-14	-13	11	10	39	75	84	99	165	1,294

Primary District Commentary

For primary education the overall forecasts indicate sufficient places to meet demand across the Plan period for Year R and all primary years. There is local place pressure within the Paddock Wood, the Brenchley, Horsmonden and Lamberhurst, Hawkhurst, Sandhurst and Benenden and the Cranbrook and Goudhurst planning groups

The Year R surplus in Tunbridge Wells town (Tunbridge Wells East and West planning groups) is forecast to be in excess of 20% during the Plan period; depending on the distribution of this surplus between schools it may necessitate adjustment to the PANs of individual schools in order to ensure class sizes remain financially viable.

Paddock Wood Planning Group
The town has seen significant housebuilding in recent years, consequently the planning group is forecast to have deficits throughout the Plan period. We will monitor the situation but anticipate that the deficits in the short term will be accommodated in the neighbouring planning groups or within one of the small schools within the planning group offering over PAN for the first 2 years of the Plan period.

From 2028-29 the demand is forecast to be 1 FE or greater and there are fewer places available in neighbouring planning groups. To meet this demand we will seek to establish a new primary school within the town. Careful consideration to any impact for smaller rural schools within the wider are will be given as part of the consultation process for the new school.

Brenchley, Horsmonden and Lamberhurst Planning Group
The planning group is forecast to have small deficits in 2026-27 and from 2029-30 onwards. We will monitor the situation but anticipate that the deficits will be accommodated in the neighbouring planning groups or within one of the small schools within the planning group offering over PAN.

Cranbrook and Goudhurst Planning Group
Forecasts indicate that the planning group will have small deficits from 2030-31 onwards. We will monitor the situation but anticipate that the deficits will be accommodated in the neighbouring planning groups or within one of the small schools within the planning group offering over PAN.

Hawkhurst, Sandhurst and Benenden Planning Group
Forecasts indicate that the planning group will have small deficits from 2030-31 onwards. We will monitor the situation but anticipate that the deficits will be accommodated in the neighbouring planning groups or within one of the small schools within the planning group offering over PAN.

Secondary District Commentary

There are four planning groups which are within Tunbridge Wells Borough or which cross the Borough boundary, two non-selective and two selective (See appendix 12.2 for the non-selective and selective planning group maps). The commentary below outlines the forecast position for each of the planning groups.

Tenterden and Cranbrook Non-Selective Planning Group
Following a substantive decision by the Secretary of State for Education to close High Weald Academy on 31 August 2022, this is a single school planning group containing Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre. The academy has decreased its PAN for September 2026 entry by 60 Year 7 places, this was in response to the level of surplus places within the wider area. The forecast indicates that there will be small deficits in 2028-29, 2029-30 and 2032-33. The County Council will work with the academy to ensure that sufficient places are made available.

Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells Non-Selective Planning Group
There are eight schools in the planning group: Hadlow Rural Community School, Hayesbrook School, Hillview School for Girls, Hugh Christie Technology College, Bennett Memorial Diocesan School, Mascalls Academy, Skinners' Kent Academy and St. Gregory's Catholic School.

Forecasts indicate that there will be sufficient Year 7 places across the Plan period. It should be noted that these forecasts do not incorporate the impact of housing growth associated with unconsented or unallocated development outside of an adopted Local Plan, therefore future strategic housing growth may have a significant impact over and above the forecast need.

Cranbrook Selective Planning Group
There is only one school in the Cranbrook selective planning group: Cranbrook School. We forecast sufficient Year 7 and Years 7-11 places throughout the Plan period.

West Kent Selective Planning Group
There are six schools in the planning group: Judd School, Tonbridge Grammar School, Weald of Kent Grammar School, Skinners' School, Tunbridge Wells Girls' Grammar School and Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys.

The forecast indicates that there will be deficits of 14 and 13 in 2026-27 and 2027-28. We anticipate that these forecast deficits will be met through commissioned bulge provision in existing schools where necessary or own admission authorities offering over their PAN. We will keep the need for additional permanent capacity under review.

Planned Commissioning – Tunbridge Wells

Planning Group	By 2026-27	By 2027-28	By 2028-29	By 2029-30	Between 2030-33	Post 2033
Cranbrook and Goudhurst Planning Group					Up to 10 temporary places	
Paddock Wood			1FE Through Establishment of New Primary School			
West Kent Selective	Up to 30 temporary places	Up to 30 temporary places				

8. Commissioning Special Education Needs

The SEND Sufficiency Plan sits under the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent and is reviewed annually. Its purpose is to strategically inform SEN educational place planning in the medium to long term The Sufficiency Plan has been updated for 2025 and is appended to the KCP (See Appendix 11.3 in separate document).

This section provides a summary of the key messages and commissioning intentions for education places for children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

8.1 Duties to Provide for SEND

The Children and Families Act 2014 provides the statutory basis for identifying children and young people (age 0-25) in England with special educational needs (SEN), assessing their needs and making provision for them. It gives children, young people and their parents/carers greater control and choice in decisions while ensuring needs are properly met. The authority must consider the extent to which the provision available is sufficient to meet the educational needs, training needs and social care needs of the children and young people concerned.

8.2 Kent Overview

Nationally the number of EHCPs has increased year on year since their introduction in 2014. The impacts of this on families and the sustainability of the system across England are well documented. In response to this, the Government is preparing for significant changes to the SEND system. A white paper is expected in the autumn and will set out Ministers' reform proposals for schools in England.

Kent is part of the DfE Safety Valve programme which began in 2022-23 and it is set to run for five years. This financial agreement, which provides £140 million of additional funding aims to support us, as a local authority, to reform our High Needs systems and SEND services for children and young people whilst ensuring those services are sustainable. We have also contributed £82 million for this work.

The Kent Local Area received an Improvement Notice following its inspection in 2019. Significant transformation continues as the Local Area works to address the weaknesses and improve the provision and support for children with SEND.

From a provision planning perspective, there are some key headlines which influence our future actions. In 2024/25, proportionally Kent had:

- Fewer children and young people identified as requiring SEN support in mainstream schools (12.4%) when compared to the England average (14%).
- More children and young people (20,635) aged 0-25 years with an EHCP compared to the England average (6.2% Kent; 5.6% England).
- Fewer children and young people with EHCPs educated in mainstream schools, including specialist resource provisions (SRPs), (36%) compared to national averages (44%).
- More children and young people with EHCPs placed in special schools, including independent schools, (39%) compared to national averages (30%).
- More of its EHCPs supporting young people aged 11-15 years (40% of issued EHCPs vs 37% in England), fewer supporting those aged 5-11 years (31% of issued EHCPs vs 33% England) and fewer children and young people aged 0-10 years and aged 20+ years with an EHCP when compared to England.
- Significantly more of its EHCPs with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) as the primary need (46%) compared to England (31%)[2] and fewer with moderate learning difficulties (5% Kent

[2] Education, health and care plans, Reporting year 2025 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK

vs 11% England). Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) at 19% and Speech Language and Communication (17%) are the two next most prolific need types and are at rates similar to England.

The impact of these key headlines is significant for families, schools, the authority and the taxpayer. There remains a systemic need to better meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. Kent's Strategy for children with special educational needs and disabilities sets out the key areas of transformation.

A significant educational change programme is ongoing with the aim of improving the capacity of mainstream school SEND inclusion in Kent. This will enable staff to be increasingly skilled, confident and able to educate and support more children with EHCPs in mainstream provisions.

This realignment will be supported by the inclusive practices included in the Countywide Approach To Inclusive Education (CATIE), the Accessibility Strategy, Services to Schools, the Section 19 Framework, Co-Production Charter and Transition Charter. In particular there has been a focus on developing skills for teaching neurodiverse pupils, with whole school training via the Autism Education Trust, and 'This is Me' which looks at a child's strengths and needs with the aim to help meet their needs at home and at school.

In Kent, wherever possible, we want children to go to schools that are near to where they live so that they have the support of their friends and get to know their local area. We want all of our children and young people to reach their full potential as they transition into adulthood.

We acknowledge that special schools play an important role in our continuum of education provision. However, we have to address the imbalance we have in Kent regarding the proportion of children and young people with EHCPs in mainstream education, when comparing to England. One focus will be increasing places in SRPs to successfully support more children and young people with SEND. This is likely to mean the overall size of Kent's maintained special schools (including the new schools agreed with the Department for Education) remains stable, whilst we reduce our reliance on independent and non-maintained special schools. The sizes of individual schools will change over time to reflect the local demographics and policy changes.

From the data, we are seeing the impact of our transformation:

- In England in between January 2024 and January 2025 there was a 10.8% rise in the number of EHCPs amongst the 0-25 year old cohort. In Kent the rise was 6.8%.
- Kent accounted for 3.23% of England's EHCPs in 2024/25, down from 3.37% in 2023/24.
- In 2023/24 35% of pupils with EHCPs were in mainstream schools in Kent; this increased to 36% in 2024/25. Correspondingly, the percentages in special schools reduced from 41% to 39%.

8.3 SEN Provision and Placement

In Kent, as in other local authorities, we offer a continuum of educational provision. This includes mainstream schools, SRPs within our mainstream schools, special schools and alternative provisions. SEN places in these provisions are commissioned annually by the local authority. To ensure we can provide sustainable high quality educational provision, the SEND system in Kent needs to be realigned. The proportion of children and young people with an EHCP educated within each placement type needs to be brought in line more closely to national figures (see figure 8a).

Figure 8a: EHCPs by Establishment Type, January 2025 (0-25 year olds)

Type of Establishment	Number	Kent %	England %
Special school including independent	8,050	39%	30%
Mainstream school including SRPs	7,452	36%	44%
Further Education and post-16	2,952	14%	14%
Educated elsewhere	1,782	9%	8%
Placement not recorded	314	1.5%	>1%
Non-maintained early years	66	>1%	>1%
Alternative Provision	19	>1%	>1%
Total	**20,635**		

Source: 2025 SEN2Return

It is expected that an increasing proportion of pupils with an EHCP will attend a mainstream school, and we have clear and defined expectations for this within our Mainstream Core Standards. There are 67 mainstream schools providing 76 SRPs (some schools have more than one SRP) with 42 primary schools and 25 secondary. For 2025-26 a total of 1,589 SRP places have been commissioned for children and young people with an EHCP. This is an increase of 153 places from 2024-25.

Following the work from the SRP Review there are proposals to significantly increase the capacity and number of SRPs across Kent through opening new SRPs and expanding existing SRPs. The additional provision is needed as it is recognised that some pupils who are categorised as SRP appropriate are placed in high cost independent special schools when there is not enough capacity in SRPs. Data from SRP Panel decisions indicate that 81% of cases considered are for children and young people with ASD, and 13% having speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and 6% related to other SEN types. The expansion of SRPs for these principal need types is necessary.

Discussions within the education community, particularly schools with SRPs, has indicated support for broadening the designations of SRPs, particularly those relating to ASD and SLCN, such that an SRP can meet the needs of both. This would further increase the accessibility of local provision.

There are currently 25 state funded special schools in Kent, and we are not intending to significantly expand the overall number of places these provide. Over time the profile of pupils may change so that these schools are supporting those pupils with an EHCP and the most complex needs. Equally overtime the sizes of individual schools may change to reflect local demographics and needs. For 2025-26 a total of 6,432 state funded special school places were commissioned in these provisions. This included 5,482 places for pre-16 pupils and 950 places for post-16 pupils. This is a total increase of 148 places from the number commissioned for 2024-25.

Nore Academy, a new special school on the Isle of Sheppey, opened in January 2025. The DfE has recognised the pressure felt in Kent as proposals for new additional special schools were agreed as part of the Safety Valve. We continue though, to feel the effect of the delayed provision of two new special schools, planned in Swanley and Whitstable. Both were anticipated to open in September 2025 but have been delayed until September 2027 as a result of DfE decision making. This has led to a continued dependence on high cost placements in the independent special school sector.

As of January 2025, 1,772 Kent resident pupils had places funded for an independent non-maintained school place. Although the rate appears to be steadying, this is an increase of 124 places from January 2024 and represents 8.5% of all Kent EHCPs. It is our intention to reduce the numbers of new admissions in the independent sector, as we build capacity in other sectors of our SEN provision, thus our expectation is that over time we will have less requirement for provision from this sector.

8.4 Post-16 SEND provision

Most young people with SEND will complete their education alongside their peers by 18 years of age. However, some young people will require longer to complete and consolidate their education and training, and the length of time will vary for each young person. The Children and Families Act 2014 extended the special educational needs system to young people up to the age of 25. Consequently, since 2015 KCC has seen a large growth in the number of EHCPs for young people up to the age of 25.

We know the number of young people wanting to remain in education is growing. However, planning post-16 SEND provision is complex. KCC continues its work to establish a robust evidence base to resolve any gaps in provision. Remaining at their secondary school for sixth form is one of the choices that young people with SEND can make; 17 of Kent's state funded special schools have sixth form provisions.

Further Education (FE) College remains the most common type of provision attended across all the age groups of the post-16 cohort. However, Kent is below the national average for General and Tertiary College/Higher Education placement, with 9.8% of placements compared to 11.1% nationally in 2025.

FE Colleges provide a range of courses for 16 to 25 SEND learners and are the most popular form of education for this group. However, due to a range of issues, FE colleges are not suitable in the first instance for many SEND learners and a proportion of learners drop out of college in the first term. Special post-16 institutions (SPIs) provide an alternative to FE colleges, offering more bespoke learning environments often for learners with additional or more complex needs. In 2025, 928 young people attended an SPI, which is 4.5% of the cohort. In comparison, 1.5% attended SPIs nationally.

Of the SPIs in Kent in 2025, the majority have a contractual relationship with KCC. Growth in SPI provision to this point continues to be largely organic and provider led. To ensure we have full County coverage, we wish to work in partnership with prospective providers as there is the need for more targeted SPI provision in the County.

We continue to work with FE Colleges to ensure that we have good geographical coverage of the right courses at the right levels and that there are clear pathways and partnerships with alternate types of providers such as SPIs to meet the needs of learners with more complex needs or requiring a more bespoke package.

We expect that the number of EHCPs for young people over the age of 18 will continue to grow as the population bulge works its way through secondary school and into post-16, and without careful planning, demand could outstrip supply. To ensure sufficient quality post-16 SEND provision, we will enhance the guidance and support provided to young people as they approach adulthood, including vocational training, career advice, and life skills programs[3].

We want to explore new ways of working, including potential collaborations between partner agencies and organisations, which are service intelligence and data-driven, in order to get the right provision in the right area to meet need.

[3] Strategy for children with special educational needs and disabilities

8.5 Future Commissioning of Provision

Evidence for our commissioning intentions is set out within KCC's SEND Sufficiency Plan and not repeated here. This will inform changes and additional SEN provision required from September 2026 and throughout the rest of this plan period.

A total of 664 new special school places are planned to be commissioned over the time period 2026 to 2030 (Figure 8b). This includes new schools and expansions. It also includes satellite provisions which are classes hosted in mainstream schools for pupils on roll of the special school. They are run by staff employed by the special school.

Figure 8b: Agreed and Planned Special School Additional Provision in Kent

Provision: Special School	Proposed Year	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Expansion of special school (Broomhill Bank)	2026	C&I	Sevenoaks/ Tunbridge Wells	172	112	30	30	0	0
New satellite for special school (Aspire Primary)	2026	C&I	Swale	30	8	8	14	0	0
Expansion of special school 6th form, (Meadowfield School)	2026	PSCN	Swale	20	10	10	0	0	0
New special school (all through) Swanley	2028	PSCN	Sevenoaks	250	0	0	114	66	70
New special school (all through) Whitstable	2028	SEMH/ ASD	Canterbury	120	0	0	48	28	44
Expansion of special school (Parkwood Hall)	2031	C&L	Sevenoaks	72	32	8	8	8	16
Total planned special school places				**664**	**162**	**56**	**214**	**102**	**130**

A total of 889 SRP places are planned to be commissioned over the time period 2026 to 2030. These are set out by Area in Figures 8c to 8f below. In some cases, the additional places are already occupied, as schools with SRPs have been required to take further pupils. It is important we right-size these provisions. These also include SRPs that have been committed to or form part of a new academy's funding agreement. These provisions look to address evidenced gaps in SRP provision across Kent, and to ensure there are SRP pathways in both primary and secondary schools in local areas to avoid pupils needing to move in to special schools because of a lack of SRP pathway.

Figure 8c: Planned New/Expanded SRPs in East Kent

East Provision: SRP	Proposed Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Lansdowne Primary	2026	ASD/SLCN	Swale	20	7	7	6	0	0
Richmond Primary	2026	ASD/SLCN	Swale	40	14	14	12	0	0
Newlands Primary	2026	ASD/SLCN	Thanet	40	14	14	12	0	0
Herne Bay Primary Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Canterbury	20	0	7	7	6	0
Faversham Primary Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Swale	20	0	7	7	6	0
Total primary planned SRP places				**140**	**35**	**49**	**44**	**12**	**0**
Royal Harbour Academy	2026	ASD/SLCN	Thanet	50	16	16	18	0	0
Thanet Non-Selective Secondary	2027	ASD/SLCN	Thanet	50	0	16	16	18	0
Canterbury Coastal Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Canterbury	50	0	16	16	18	0
Isle of Sheppey Secondary	2027	ASD/SLCN	Swale	50	0	16	16	18	0
Total secondary planned SRP places				**200**	**16**	**64**	**66**	**54**	**0**
Total planned SRP places				**340**					

Figure 8d: Planned New/Expanded SRPs in North Kent

North Provision: SRP	Proposed Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Alkerden C of E Academy (Primary)	2026	ASD/SLCN	Dartford	15	2	2	3	3	5
Rosherville C of E Primary Academy	2026	ASD/SLCN	Gravesham	15	6	5	4	0	0
Edenbridge Planning Group	2026	ASD/SLCN	Sevenoaks	20	7	7	6	0	0
Sevenoaks Rural North Planning Group	2026	ASD/SLCN	Sevenoaks	20	7	7	6	0	0
Swanley Planning Group	2026	ASD/SLCN	Sevenoaks	15	6	5	4	0	0
Total primary planned SRP places				**85**	**28**	**26**	**23**	**3**	**5**
Alkerden C of E Academy (Secondary)	2026	ASD/SLCN	Dartford	25	6	6	6	7	0
Gravesham and Longfield Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Gravesham	30	0	10	10	10	0
Sevenoaks and Borough Green Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Sevenoaks	30	0	8	12	10	0
Total secondary planned SRP places				**85**	**6**	**24**	**28**	**27**	**0**
Total planned SRP places				**170**					

Figure 8e: Planned New/Expanded SRPs in South Kent

South Provision: SRP	Proposed Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Ashford Oaks PS	2026	ASD	Ashford	10	6	4	0	0	0
The Downs PS	2026	ASD/SLCN	Dover	14	6	5	3	0	0
Ashford North Planning Group	2026	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	14	6	5	3	0	0
Ashford East Planning Group	2026	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	14	6	5	3	0	0
Tenterden South Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	14	0	6	5	3	0
Ashford South Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	14	0	6	5	3	0
Total primary planned SRP places				**80**	**24**	**31**	**19**	**6**	**0**
Homewood School and 6th Form Centre	2026	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	50	16	16	18	0	0
Dover Christ Church	2026	PSCN	Dover	35	10	15	10	0	0
St Edmunds Catholic	2026	ASD	Dover	20	7	7	6	0	0
Turner Free School	2026	SLD	Folkestone & Hythe	20 (already operating -30 places)	10	10		0	0
Total secondary planned SRP places				**125**	**43**	**48**	**34**	**0**	**0**
Total planned SRP places				**205**					

Figure 8f: Planned New/Expanded SRPs in West Kent

West Provision: SRP	Proposed Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
SE Maidstone town	2026	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	14	6	5	3	0	0
NW Maidstone town	2026	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	14	6	5	3	0	0
Maidstone rural	2026	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	14	6	5	3	0	0
Tunbridge Wells town 1	2026	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	14	6	5	3	0	0
Tunbridge Wells town 2	2026	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	14	6	5	3	0	0
Tunbridge Wells rural	2026	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	14	6	5	3	0	0
Total primary planned SRP places				**84**	**36**	**30**	**18**	**0**	**0**
St Augustine (expansion)	2026	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	30	8	12	10	0	0
Maidstone secondary town	2026	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	30	8	12	10	0	0
Skinners Kent Academy	2026	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	30	8	12	10	0	0
Total secondary planned SRP places				**90**	**24**	**36**	**30**	**0**	**0**
Total planned SRP places				**174**					

Following conversations regarding broadening the designation of existing SRPs, a number of proposals are expected to be brought to achieve this outcome for September 2026 (see Figure 8g). The details of these are being finalised.

Figure 8g: Planned changes for SRPs in Kent

SRP	Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Proposed Category of Change
The Archbishops School (secondary)	2026	VI, SPLD	Canterbury	0	Broaden Designation
Reculver (primary)	2026	C&L, VI	Canterbury	0	Broaden Designation
Castle Hill (primary)	2026	HI	Folkestone & Hythe	0	Broaden Designation
Hythe Bay (primary)	2026	SLCN	Folkestone & Hythe	0	Broaden Designation
The Marsh Academy (secondary)	2026	ASD	Folkestone & Hythe	0	Broaden Designation
Westlands (secondary)	2026	SPLD, PD	Swale	0	Broaden Designation
Bromstone (primary)	2026	SLCN	Thanet	0	Formalisation and Broaden Designation
Total planned places				**0**	

A total of 70 Alternative Provision (AP) places are planned to be commissioned over the time period 2026 to 2030 (see Figure 8h). The Rosewood School, as a pupil referral unit (PRU) to support medical needs and associated recovery, sits between mainstream and special school provisions. Its core aim is to reintegrate a pupil back to their mainstream provision. It is planned to expand The Rosewood School in the Canterbury district matching the provision in the West of the County. A new Alternative Provision is to be commissioned for up to 40 pupils in the Swale district.

Figure 8h: Agreed and Planned Alternative Provision in Kent

Alternative Provision:	Proposed Opening Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Expansion of KS3 provision (The Rosewood School)	2026	Health Needs Education Centre	Canterbury	30	30	0	0	0	0
Alternative Provision	2027	AP	Swale	40	0	40	0	0	0
Total Planned Alternative Provision Places				**70**	**30**	**40**	**0**	**0**	**0**

9. Commissioning Early Years Education and Childcare

9.1 Legislative Context - Free Entitlements and new Wraparound Childcare

Early Education and Childcare is legislatively governed by the Childcare Acts of 2006 and 2016. These place a duty on all local authorities to improve outcomes for young children, to cut inequalities between them, to secure sufficient childcare, with adequate flexibility to allow parents to work via the following:

- From September 2025, 30 hours per week for working parents of all children aged 9 months and above
- 15 hours of early education for eligible two-year olds (the Two Year Old Entitlement, in Kent known as Free for Two)
- The Universal Entitlement of 15 hours for all three and four-year olds

In September 2024, the Government announced it would provide capital funding to create or expand 3,000 on-site nurseries in primary schools either run by the school or in partnership with private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers. Funding was allocated to successful schools in Spring 2025 to support the first cohort of places.

In this context, KCC also commissions The Education People to work with schools and PVI providers to increase the supply of wraparound childcare, so that all parents of primary school-aged children can access childcare from 8am to 6pm (or the equivalent hours with different start and end times if appropriate) if they need it.

Following a national pilot programme of free breakfast clubs in 750 schools, the Government has announced its intention to legislate for the mandatory provision of free breakfast club places in every school.

9.2 Early Education and Childcare Provision in Kent

Early Education and Childcare in Kent is available through a large, diverse and constantly shifting market of maintained, academies, PVIs and childminders, all of which operate as individual businesses and are therefore subject to market forces.

The local authority in Kent (as commissioned through The Education People) is required to work with providers in making available a sufficient range of provision, in the right geographical areas, at the right times and offering flexible sessions to fit with both standard and atypical working patterns.

The DfE provided each local authority with information related to the expansion of funded early education and childcare entitlements and wraparound childcare, as announced in the Spring Budget of 2023. This information included the DfE's analysis of the demand for and supply of childcare places in Kent. The result of this analysis continues to be used to support childcare sufficiency planning carried out by The Education People.

9.3 Annual Report on Childcare Sufficiency

The local authority is required to produce an 'Annual Report on Childcare Sufficiency', showing the supply of, and demand for, early years and childcare provision across the County, including where there might be over supply and particularly a deficit in provision. Based on any identified gaps and needs, The Education People's Early Years and Childcare Service works with providers and potential providers to encourage the establishment of additional provision where it is required.

The Annual Report on Childcare Sufficiency for the 2025-2026 academic year makes use of the DfE analysis by using its estimated demand for childcare for 9 month to 36 month-olds combined with the population forecast based demand for childcare for 3 and 4 year olds. The supply of childcare places in Kent is derived from the number of available places that early education and childcare providers state in the annual childcare sufficiency audit.

9.4 Sufficiency of Childcare Places for Children Aged 0-4 Years Old

The assessment of sufficiency is calculated by comparing the total available childcare supply of places with the forecast number of childcare places required in each age group in each planning area and district. Figure 9a shows the anticipated childcare places needed for 0 to 4 year olds in the 2025/2026 academic year.

Figure 9a: 0 to 4 year olds Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2025/2026 Academic Year)

District	0-4 Year Old Population	0-4 Year Old places required	0-4 Year Old Childcare places available	Surplus / Deficit of Places
Ashford	6,789	4,416	4,350	-67
Canterbury	6,105	4,160	4,809	649
Dartford	7,601	4,542	5,822	1,280
Dover	5,051	3,169	3,416	247
Folkestone & Hythe	4,552	2,971	3,536	565
Gravesham	6,208	3,851	3,629	-222
Maidstone	9,645	5,914	6,778	864
Sevenoaks	5,819	3,636	5,594	1,958
Swale	7,870	5,087	5,662	575
Thanet	6,316	4,034	4,992	958
Tonbridge & Malling	6,540	4,105	5,007	902
Tunbridge Wells	5,358	3,885	5,378	1,492
Total	**77,854**	**49,770**	**58,970**	**9,201**

With many of the group based early education and childcare providers in Kent offering childcare to 2, 3 and 4 year olds in one room, and to allow for the flexibility in the childcare market within this age group, the sufficiency of childcare places is analysed for under 2 year olds and the 2, 3 and 4 year old age group.

Figure 9b shows the childcare sufficiency of places for under 2 year olds. This will be crucial to monitor given that from September 2025, eligible working parents will be able to increase their access from 15 hours to 30 hours of free childcare per week for children aged 9 months to school age. Figure 9c shows the childcare sufficiency of places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.

Figure 9b: 0 to 2 year olds Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2025/2026 Academic Year)

District	0-2 Year Old Population	0-2 Year Old places required	0-2 Year Old Childcare places available	Surplus / Deficit of Places
Ashford	2,830	813	930	117
Canterbury	2,456	776	1,081	305
Dartford	3,161	930	1,243	313
Dover	2,027	614	716	102
Folkestone & Hythe	1,875	560	760	200
Gravesham	2,578	784	749	-35
Maidstone	3,927	1,145	1,491	346
Sevenoaks	2,364	683	1,338	655
Swale	3,273	982	1,344	362
Thanet	2,601	764	1,022	258
Tonbridge & Malling	2,645	791	1,283	492
Tunbridge Wells	2,211	756	1,290	534
Total	**31,948**	**9,599**	**13,248**	**3,649**

Figure 9c: 2, 3 and 4 year olds Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2025/2026 Academic Year)

District	2, 3 and 4 Year Old Population	2, 3 and 4 Year Old places required	2, 3 and 4 Year Old Childcare places available	Surplus / Deficit of Places
Ashford	3,959	3,603	3,419	-184
Canterbury	3,649	3,384	3,728	344
Dartford	4,440	3,612	4,579	967
Dover	3,024	2,554	2,699	145
Folkestone & Hythe	2,677	2,411	2,776	365
Gravesham	3,630	3,067	2,879	-187
Maidstone	5,718	4,769	5,287	518
Sevenoaks	3,455	2,952	4,256	1,303
Swale	4,597	4,105	4,318	213
Thanet	3,715	3,270	3,970	700
Tonbridge & Malling	3,895	3,314	3,724	410
Tunbridge Wells	3,147	3,129	4,087	958
Total	**45,906**	**40,171**	**45,722**	**5,551**

9.5 Sufficiency Estimates by Planning Area

Sufficiency rates have been calculated using primary planning areas. Where some primary planning areas indicate a deficit of 0-4 childcare places, consideration must be given to the fact that neighbouring planning areas may have a surplus of places and children may be travelling to access settings in adjacent areas based on parental preferences and/or travel to work patterns. Equally, where planning areas have more provision than children, children may be drawn from other areas to access these settings.

The percentage of funded three and four year olds accessing a setting within the planning area in which they live can be used to interpret the deficit in each planning area along with qualitative analysis to understand whether the variation in local take up rates are driven by a preference for particular providers, commuting patterns or a lack of places in the local area.

9.6 Future Planning

Supporting the sufficiency, sustainability and quality of early years and childcare provision remains crucial in the aim to ensure a long term, sufficient supply of places.

The supply of Free Entitlement places for 9 months to four year olds will be kept under review as planned new housing developments are built and potentially increase the demand for places. Where housing developments are proposed in school planning areas where there is an indicative deficit of places or where the size of a development means that it will require new provision, KCC will engage in discussions with developers to either seek funding to provide nursery provision which may include securing community rental or leasehold accommodation availability for private, voluntary or independent sector providers of 0-4 year old childcare.

When a new school is delivered according to the ESFA Baseline Design, a nursery space is now included in the design. As new schools are planned, KCC will work with the sponsor to identify early years provision and the most appropriate way to deliver this.

10. Commissioning Plan Post-16

The academic year 2024/25 has been a difficult one for young people progressing into post-16 education:

- More young people than ever before did not achieve the entry criteria for their own 6th forms, consequently the number of students in 6th forms shrank for the first time.
- Provision for young people needing to study at L2 and below or in specialist settings filled very quickly despite the colleges taking on an additional 1,500 people.
- The 16-18 cohort grew by over 2,000.
- Provision for those outside schools and colleges continued to shrink.

Consequently, the weeks after GCSE results day were very difficult for many learners as many did not have viable alternatives. Our NEET numbers are also significantly higher than previous years. In June 2025 1,625 young people were NEET compared to 1,355 in June 2024, an increase of 20%.

The choice of lower level qualifications for learners outside college has continued to shrink. The number of providers decreased from 18 in in 2023/24 to 16 in 2024/25. The number of places shrank slightly from 733 to 720 over the same period.

Work with the DFE to increase places in the county is still ongoing. Last summer, the treasury withdrew an initial offer from the DFE of an additional 450 places and insisted that education providers used existing funding growth methodologies to grow provision. This has not met the need and Colleges and Community Learning and Skills only received 66% of the growth funding requested. This may have implications for next year's provision. Internal discussions are ongoing in the DFE but have not yet led to a resolution.

This situation is now common across most of the country. The discussion is moving away from this being an issue about gaps in provision for NEETs and other vulnerable young people to the sufficiency of places across the whole system for lower achieving learners. The DFE and KCC are both currently working on gaining a clear picture of capacity of post-16 delivery in schools. The DFE does not disaggregate post-16 capacity from the overall school capacity, so KCC is working with the schools to produce a more accurate picture.

A Post-16 White Paper is expected in the Autumn which may impact provision. We are also still awaiting the outcome of the Curriculum and Assessment Review, which could impact on the range of qualifications available to post-16 student.

10.1 Pathways for All

The work of Pathways for All, the county's 16-19 review, has continued to move on. The board and the local Collaborative Partnership Areas are very aware of the situation for those transitioning onto post-16 and there has been a focus on improving this.

This was the first year of the 2024 priority document "No young person left behind" and the focus was on identifying the cold spots in provision and support for young people. The Focus in 2025/26 will be to develop plans to resolve these cold spots.

Notable successes on 2024/25 have been:

- The development of a clearing system on the Kentchoices website for learners to see which courses still have places available after GCSE results day.
- Collaborative events in some areas for young people to explore all the post-16 options available to them.
- Collaborative approaches across education providers to support vulnerable learners in the post-16 transition.

The priorities from this document are:

- To secure a mechanism that creates joint ownership of knowledge and skills between providers and employers in Kent and Medway.
- To create relevant and viable Level 3 provision across Kent and Medway that reflects regional skill needs, whilst providing meaningful choice, an outstanding learning experience and strong progression.
- To ensure there is an offer that enable learners who have SEMH needs to reengage with mainstream provision and perform as well as those cohorts that do not.
- To ensure there is an appropriate and local offer to enable learners who have SEND requirement to increase their life choices and meet their full potential.
- To increase the number of learners, including those with SEND, studying at Level 2 from a GCSE base of less than 2 (Level 1 entry criteria).

These are likely to be reviewed this year in the light of changing circumstances and government policy.

10.2 The LCPAs and their Priorities

This year the LCPAs have focussed on identifying cold spots and are beginning to identify actions to resolve these. The areas they have identified to take action on are:

Ashford

- There is a narrow range of training providers – more providers and a skills centre needed.
- Developing the following courses
    - Multi skills construction courses
    - Catering courses from L1 - 3
    - Retail training

Maidstone and Malling

- L2 Academic provision – a broad suite of GCSE retake options is needed.
- An increase in vocational and technical courses across participating institutions is needed.
- Post-16 Alternative provision needs to be developed as a collaborative project.

East Kent – Canterbury/Faversham/Thanet, Dover, Folkestone

- There is a reduced number of providers offering L2 and below courses progressing onto L3.
- A number of students do not have English as their first language. Out of county moves to the area, in particular in Canterbury
- Students not achieving GCSE at L4 in particular for maths and English.
- Vulnerable/at risk young people have limited transition activity in some areas.
- Skills gap – construction.
- Lack of employability provision for those students wanting to go into employment and who a need preparation for employment, life skills and maths and English.
- Students not having a backup plan, following GCSE results and/or applying too late for college. Many college places were oversubscribed and full.
- Rising number of students with mental health barriers. Students drop out of school early, but College is not the right choice for them.

North Kent

- Students who do not achieve 4 or above in their GCSE English and Maths in their GCSEs in year 11 and are possibly capable of achieving 4s.

- Students who do not achieve 4 or above in their GCSE English and Maths in their GCSES and, will very likely, not achieve this regardless of any potential intervention/support.
- Students who have high pastoral needs for post 16 but cannot stay on at their own school post 16, as they didn't achieve their GCSE English and Maths.
- Students who drop out mid-year for a variety of reasons (health, changing circumstances, wanting to change course).
- Popular vocational courses at North Kent College are heavily oversubscribed e.g. plumbing and car mechanics. Alternatives need to be found.
- Students arriving mid-year 11 who are refugees/EAL who will not achieve level 4 in GCSE Maths and English.
- Students who are electively home educated (EHE) or can't cope in an education environment.
- Students who are keen to work rather than go to a provider.

Sittingbourne and Sheppey

- Limited availability of courses due to limited college provision and travel issues.
- Students who do not achieve 4 or above in their GCSE English and Maths
- More level 2 options needed for those who will never achieve.
- More level 1 options needed other than work ready programmes.
- Students who have high pastoral needs for post-16 but can't stay on at their own school post-16 as didn't achieve their GCSE English and Maths.
- Students who drop out mid-year for a variety of reasons (health, changing circumstances, wanting to change course, do not like the course).
- Popular vocational courses are oversubscribed and require travel for students. Local alternatives needed.
- Students arriving mid-year 11 who are out of area, usually from abroad and therefore EAL. Rolling provision needed.
- Students who are electively home educated (EHE), CME, hospital schooled or for MH reasons cannot cope in a large education environment.
- Students who are keen to work rather than remain in education.

The Swale LCPA is beginning to identify specific courses needed in the district:
- Plumbing
- Electrical installation
- Engineering
- A range of L1 courses
- Art and music L2

10.3 The Post-16 Co-ordination group

A group has been formed to bring together KCC Departments, including relevant SEND teams and The Education People team that support post-16 learners. The purpose of the group is to provide strategic direction and accountability for achieving KCC strategic outcomes surrounding post-16 education and surrounding projects. The aim of this group is to work towards a post-16 policy, bringing together all of the post-16 interdependencies to ensure they are working towards common goals.

The main outcomes from the group are expected to be:
- The post-16 sector and cohort are represented on all interdependent projects, with input from the coordination group.
- Kent is clear on what it expects from its post-16 provisions.
- The roles of Mainstream (including SRPs) and Special School sixth forms, Further Education Colleges and Specialist Post-16 Institutions are clear.

- Kent is providing appropriate data and intelligence to the sector to ensure planning for future cohorts can be adequately supported.
- There is a forum for ideas, discussion and challenge around future provision for post-16 SEND provision in Kent.

Currently work is being undertaken to:

- Develop key messages from the sector to ensure that all partners understand the current situation and any immediate needs that need to be met.
- Develop a data set to support post-16 commissioning groups. Use of the future planning tool to identify the demand from young people is being explored.
- Ensure that work being undertaken within SEND and mainstream teams has maximum impact for both and does not duplicate.
- To explore how to meet the immediate needs of the most vulnerable learners. Initially there will be a focus on co-ordinating work across all departments to reduce NEETs.
- Ascertain clarity from schools in respect of physical buildings capacity for post 16 provision. Using the recent DfE Net Capacity Assessments, Officers will produce a detailed questionnaire to be issued to all schools to better understand how space is being utilised. This can then help inform decisions around additional learning pathways.
- Undertake a root and branch review of all services within CYPE and TEP supporting Post 16 provision, in order to identify efficiencies and develop more cohesive working practices to ensure KCC can strengthen its influence on the Post 16 sector.

11. Appendices

11.1 Forecasting Methodology Summary

To inform the process of forecasting Primary school pupil numbers, KCC receives information from the Kent Primary Care Agency to track the number of births and location of Pre-school age children. The Pre-school age population is forecast into Primary school rolls according to trend-based intake patterns by ward area. Secondary school forecasts are calculated by projecting forward the Year 6 cohort, also according to trend-based intake patterns. If the size of the Year 6 cohort is forecast to rise, the projected Year 7 cohort size at Secondary schools will also be forecast to rise.

It is recognised that past trends are not always an indication of the future. However, for the Secondary phase, travel to school patterns are firmly established, parental preference is arguably more constant than in the Primary phase and large numbers of pupils are drawn from a wide area. Consequently, forecasts have been found to be accurate.

Pupil forecasts are compared with school capacities to give the projected surplus or deficit of places in each area. It is important to note that where a deficit is identified within the next few years work will already be underway to address the situation.

The forecasting process is trend-based, which means that relative popularity, intake patterns, and inward migration factors from the previous five years are assumed to continue throughout the forecasting period. Migration factors will reflect the trend-based level of house building in an area over the previous five years, but also the general level of in and out migration, including movements into and out of existing housing. An area that has a large positive migration factor may be due to recent large-scale housebuilding, and an area with a large negative migration factor may reflect a net out-migration of families. These migration factors are calculated at Pre-school level by ward area and also at school level for transition between year groups, as the forecasts are progressed.

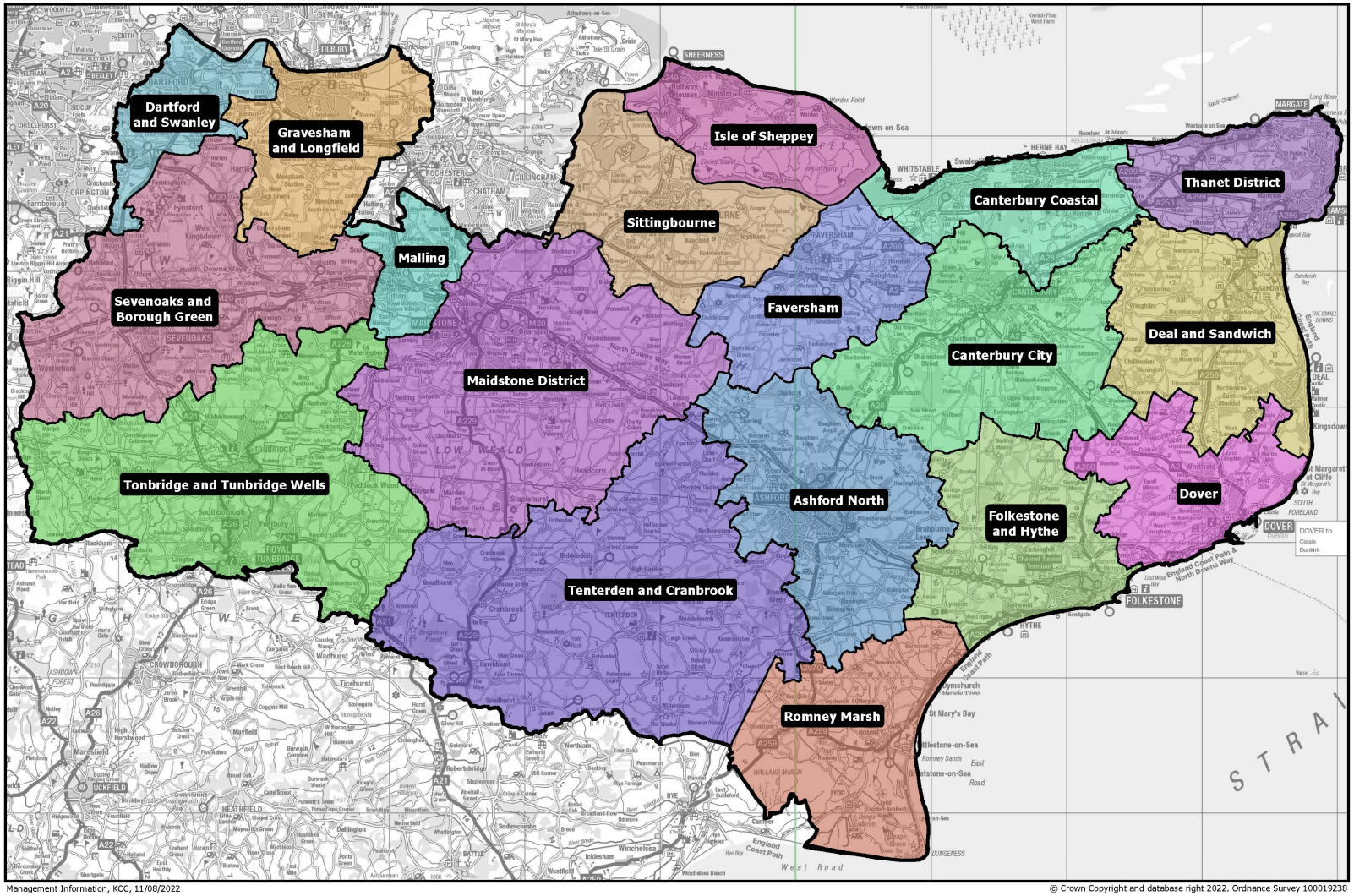
Information about expected levels of new housing, through the yearly Housing Information Audits (HIA) and Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategies is the most accurate reflection of short, medium and long term building projects at the local level. Where a large development is expected, compared with little or no previous house building in the area, a manual adjustment to the forecasts may be required to reflect the likely growth in pupil numbers more accurately.

Pupil product rates (the expected number of pupils from new housebuilding) are informed by the MORI New Build Survey 2005. KCC has developed a system that combines these new-build pupil product rates (PPRs) with the stock housing PPR of the local area to model the impact of new housing developments together with changing local demographics over time. This information is shared with district authorities to inform longer term requirements for education infrastructure and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) discussions at an early stage.

Forecasting future demand for school places can never be completely precise given the broad assumptions which have to be made about movements in and out of any given locality, the pace of individual housing developments, patterns of occupation and not least parental preferences for places at individual schools. This will be a function of geography, school reputation, past and present achievement levels and the availability of alternative provision.

11.2 Secondary Planning Group Maps

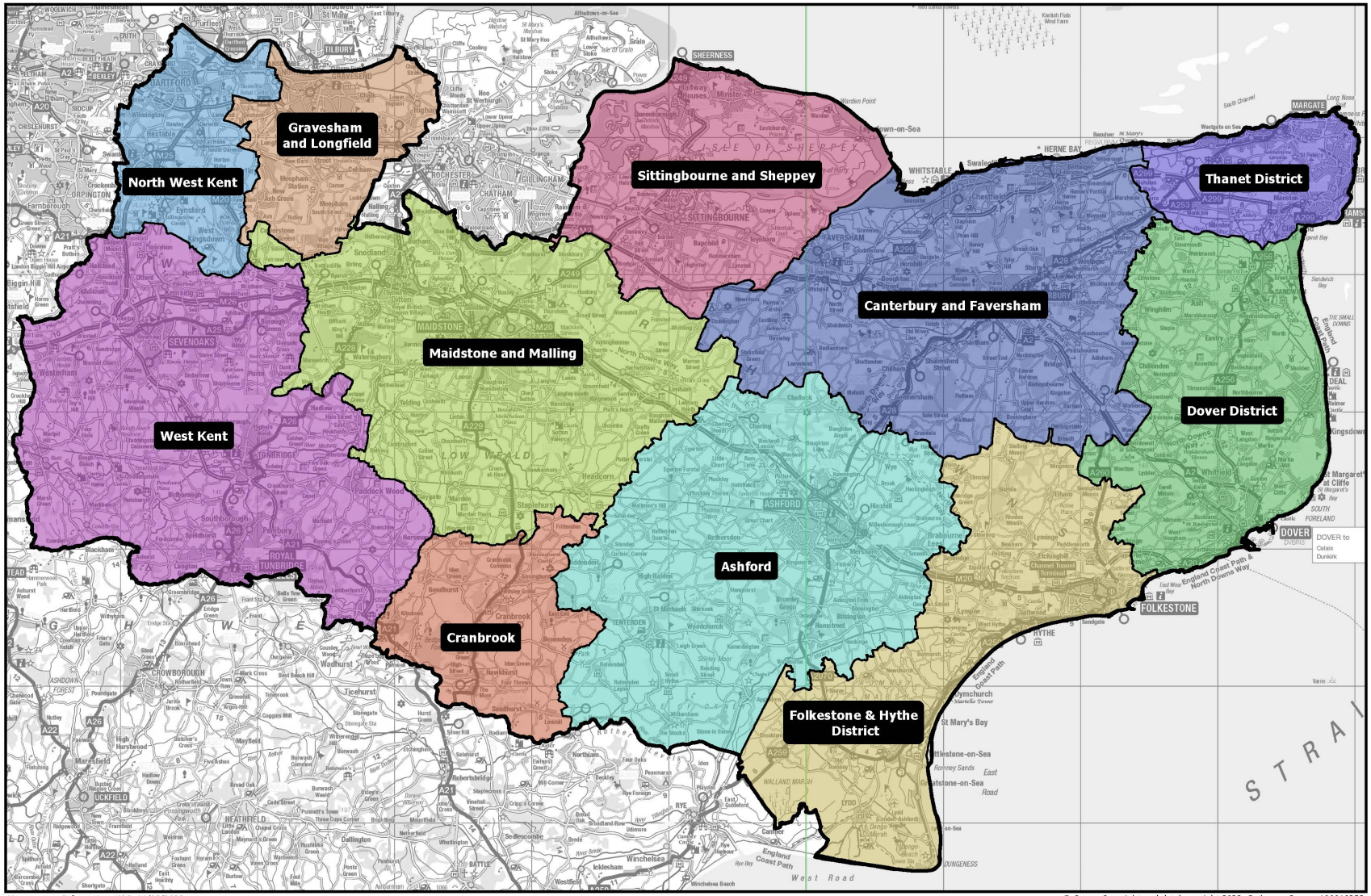
Kent Secondary Non Selective Planning Groups



Management Information, KCC, 11/08/2022

© Crown Copyright and database right 2022. Ordnance Survey 100019238

Kent Secondary Selective Planning Groups



Management Information, KCC, 11/08/2022

© Crown Copyright and database right 2022. Ordnance Survey 100019238

11.3 SEND Sufficiency Plan Annual Review

See SEND Sufficiency Plan in separately appended document.

If you need information in an alternative format, such as braille or a language other than English:

Email: alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk

Call: 03000 421 553



Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026 - 2030

This page is intentionally left blank

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Sufficiency Plan

1. Purpose of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Sufficiency Plan

The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent (KCP) sets out how we will carry out our responsibility for ensuring there are sufficient high quality places, in the right places for all learners, while at the same time fulfilling our other responsibilities to raise education standards and promote parental preference.

The purpose of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Sufficiency Plan is to set out how the county council meets this aspect of its wider SEND duties. It sits under the KCP and strategically informs and supports the local authority in its development of **SEND educational provision** in the medium to long term.

There are four key aims of the SEND Sufficiency Plan:

1. Inform medium to longer term commissioning/decommissioning of places for children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan;
2. Inform capital investment planning and future bids to DfE Wave programmes;
3. Inform high level discussions with providers around required changes to current provision to meet future needs; and
4. Support the delivery of the Safety Valve programme, to ensure effective SEN provision in Kent is delivered in a sustainable and efficient way.

1.1 Duties to Provide for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The Children and Families Act 2014 provides the statutory basis for the system in England to identify children and young people (age 0-25 years) with special educational needs (SEN), assess their needs and make provision for them.

The statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND): Code of practice first published in 2014, sets out detailed information on the support available for children and young people aged 0 to 25 years under the 2014 Act.

There are three levels of support currently available through the graduated approach:

- Ordinarily Available Provision, inclusive high quality teaching and everyday adjustments that all schools and settings are expected to provide for all pupils;
- Special Education Needs (SEN) Support, provided to a child or young person in their pre-school, school, or college who need additional help beyond ordinarily available provision; and

- Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP), a legal document issued by the local authority for children and young people (aged 0-25 years) with complex and long-term needs that cannot be met through SEN Support alone.[1]

Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 requires the local authority to secure sufficient primary and secondary schools in its area to provide all pupils the opportunity of an appropriate education. Section 18 of the same Act enables the local authority to utilise non-maintained schools. Section 19 sets out the requirement for the local authority to make suitable provision at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not access a suitable education without such alternative arrangements.

In Kent we aim to provide education and specialist support to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

1.2 Strategic Overview of Special Educational Needs and Disability in Kent

Kent is part of the Department for Education (DfE) Safety Valve programme which began in 2022, and it is set to run for five years. This financial agreement, which provides £140 million of additional funding, aims to support us as a local authority to reform our High Needs systems and SEND services for children and young people whilst ensuring those services are sustainable. We have also contributed £82 million for this work.

In 2023, following the Kent Local Area Inspection by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC), an improvement notice was issued. In 2024 the improvement notice was lifted as a 'reflection of the hard work undertaken by the local area to improve services[2]'. Improving the SEND services remains a priority for all in the local area. The DfE and NHS England continue to review regularly the progress of our improvement plan (called an Accelerated Progress Plan).

From a provision planning perspective, there are some key headlines which influence our future actions. In 2024/25, in terms of numbers of SEN support, EHCPs and placement type, proportionally Kent had:

- fewer children and young people identified as requiring SEN support in mainstream schools (12.4% Kent;14% England);
- more children and young people (20,635) aged 0-25 years with an EHCP compared to the England average (6.2% Kent; 5.6% England);

[1] Solving the SEND Crisis - Committees - UK Parliament
[2] Kent improvement plan for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) - Kent County Council

- fewer children and young people with EHCPs educated in mainstream schools, including SRPs, (36% Kent; 44% England) (Figure 1a); and
- more children and young people with EHCPs placed in special schools, including independent schools, (39% Kent; 30% England) (Figure 1a).

Figure 1a: Placement Type in England and Kent

Placement Type	2023/24		2024/25	
	England	Kent	England	Kent
Mainstream School, including SRPs	43%	35%	44%	36%
Special School, including Independent	32%	41%	30%	39%

In 2024/25, when compared to England in terms of EHCP numbers by age and SEN type, Kent had:

- more EHCPs supporting young people aged 11-15 years (40% Kent, 37% England), fewer EHCPs supporting those aged 5-11 years (31% Kent, 33% England) and fewer children and young people aged 0-10 years and 20+ year olds with an EHCP when compared to England; and
- significantly more EHCPs with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) as the primary need (46% Kent, 31% England)[3] and fewer with moderate learning difficulties (5% Kent, 11% in England). Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) at 19% and Speech Language and Communication (17%) are the two next most prolific need types and are at rates similar to England.

Further information about this is set out in section 2.1 (age groups) and 2.2 (SEN type).

Home to school travel information (Figure 1b) shows that secondary aged pupils in Thanet travel furthest to access SRP places (average 14.4 miles), whilst secondary aged pupils in Sevenoaks are least likely to attend an SRP in their home district (10.3%). Almost all primary and secondary aged pupils in Tonbridge and Malling attend an SRP in their home district.

Figure 1b: Pupil Travel Patterns for SRPs

	Average distance - pupil's home to their SRP	Proportion of pupils attending an SRP in their home district
Primary Age	**Varied from:** 3.1 miles in Tonbridge and Malling to 9.2 miles in Sevenoaks.	**Varied from:** A low of 29.4% in Tunbridge Wells to a high of 100% in Tonbridge and Malling.
Secondary Age	**Varied from:** 3.5 miles in Dartford to 14.4 miles in Thanet.	**Varied from:** A low of 10.3% in Sevenoaks to a high of 93.5% in Tonbridge and Malling.

[3] Education, health and care plans, Reporting year 2025 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK

Similar travel information (Figure 1c) indicates that secondary pupils in Swale have the greatest average journey to access a maintained special school (13.9 miles), and Dartford primary aged children are least likely to attend one in their own district (3.6%).

Figure 1c: Pupil Travel Patterns for Maintained Special Schools

	Average distance - pupil's home to their maintained special school	Proportion of pupils attending a maintained special school in their home district
Primary Age	**Varied from:** 3.9 miles in Thanet to 11.0 miles in Dover.	**Varied from:** a low of 3.6% in Dartford to a high of 93.4% in Thanet.
Secondary Age	**Varied from:** 4.5 miles in Thanet to 13.9 miles in Swale.	**Varied from:** A low of 13.1% in Dartford to a high of 89.8% in Thanet.

What does this mean for place planning – Our strategic intention is to move towards national averages, meaning we will assume a lower percentage of children in Kent will need EHCPs, more of those with EHCPs will be in mainstream schools (including SRPs), and a smaller proportion will be placed in special schools (reducing the County Council's use of independent and non-maintained special schools). A focus is needed on meeting needs locally, within communities, particularly for children and young people with the high incident needs of ASD, SLCN and SEMH.

2. Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs)

Nationally the number of Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs) has increased year on year since their introduction in 2014. The challenges this has placed on the SEN system across England, its sustainability, and the consequential impact on families are well documented. In response to this, the Government is preparing for significant changes to the SEND system. A white paper is expected in the autumn and will set out Ministers' reform proposals for England.

In Kent the total number of EHCPs for 2025 is 20,635 and this is an increase of 1,229 EHCPs from 2024. We are seeing change. The increase in the number of EHCPs in 2024/25 in Kent was lower than the increase reported in England. Kent accounted for 3.23% of England's EHCPs in 2024/25, down from 3.37% in 2023/24. This may be accounted for by the number of EHCPs in other local authorities accelerating at a faster rate to us, as we gain control of the numbers of EHCPs in Kent.

2.1 Age Groups for EHCPs in Kent

The majority of children and young people with an EHCP in Kent and England are those of statutory school age and post-16 young people. This is shown in figure 2a.

Kent has a lower percentage (31%) of pupils with an EHCP age 5-10 years, compared to England (33%). This may indicate that a significant number of successfully inclusive primary schools are able to support their SEND pupils without the requirement for an EHCP.

Figure 2a: Percentage of EHCPs in Each Age Group 2024/25

Age of Pupil	England	Kent
Early Years	4%	3%
Age 5-10	33%	31%
Age 11-15	37%	40%
Age 16-19	20%	22%
Age 20+	6%	4%

Source: *excluding independent and non-maintained special schools
Special educational needs in England, Academic year 2024/25 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK

Figure 2a shows that 40% of EHCPs in Kent are assigned to children aged 11-15 years old (secondary phase) which is significantly higher than the percentage (31%) held by children aged 5-11 years old (primary phase). This 9% difference has implications for provision planning in Kent, particularly during the phase transfer point for year 6 pupils into year 7. In England the difference is lower at 4%.

The largest cohort with an EHCP is for pupils aged 11-15 years. Pressure will build in the post-16 space as the secondary age pupil population bulge ages. It is necessary to increase provision capacity to resolve this.

2.2 Special Educational Need (SEN) Types for EHCPs in Kent

When analysing the distribution of all EHCPs by need type in 2024/25, Kent has proportionally more children and young people with an EHCP for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and proportionally fewer with moderate learning difficulties, when compared to England [4]. This is shown in figure 2b.

In Kent, the proportion of children and young people with an EHCP with a need type of ASD in January 2025 was 46% and this is an increase from 44.5% in January 2024. We are significantly out of sync with the national figure of 31%.

[4] Education, health and care plans, Reporting year 2025 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK

Figure 2b: EHCPs by Age Group and Need Type

SEN Type 2025	Under 5	Aged 5-10	Aged 11-15	Aged 16-19	Aged 20-25	Total	Kent %	England %
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	338	3,182	3,688	1,967	360	9,535	46%	31%
Social Emotional Mental Health	8	658	1,840	1,245	82	3,833	19%	21%
Speech, Language and Communication Needs	212	1,625	1,181	467	98	3,583	17%	21%
Moderate Learning Difficulty	13	226	479	269	54	1,041	5%	11%
Severe Learning Difficulty	27	190	297	217	76	807	4%	4%
Physical Disability	33	213	211	153	34	644	3%	4%
Specific Learning Difficulty	3	56	191	119	17	386	2%	2%
Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty	14	125	135	76	22	372	2%	1%
Hearing Impairment	6	58	78	43	9	194	1%	1%
Not Recorded	2	18	33	52	15	120	>1%	>1%
Visual Impairment	5	30	30	21	3	89	>1%	>1%
Multi-Sensory Impairment	3	10	8	4	2	27	>1%	>1%
Other Difficulty/Disability	0	1	3	0	0	4	>1%	>1%
Kent Total	**664**	**6,392**	**8,174**	**4,633**	**772**	**20,635**		

Source: SEN2 Return January 2025

Kent is implementing the Autism Education Trust training and framework to achieve consistent knowledge and practice in supporting autistic children and young people across all schools and settings. This work allows Kent to upskill leaders and staff in mainstream and specialist educational settings and enable them to better support autistic children and young people.

The Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) is a project led by NHS Kent and Medway, KCC and Medway Council. The project focuses on strengthening knowledge, skills and improving environments to better meet the needs of neurodiverse children in school. PINS aims to bring health and education specialists and expert parent carers into mainstream primary settings. Collaboration with parents and carers is key to the success.

The second largest SEN type for EHCPs in Kent is Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) at 19% in January 2025, which is a slight decrease from 19.3% in January 2024. NurtureUK was commissioned by Kent County Council in September 2021 to run a three year programme of whole school approaches to nurture for mainstream primary and secondary schools in Kent. It's aim is to develop school inclusion practices, ensuring every child has access to an education that allows them to thrive both academically and socially.

The levels for SEN type Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) have remained steady with 17% in both January 2025 and January 2024. Kent County Council (KCC) and NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB) have committed to improving support for children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) within the Kent County Council area. The initiative is underpinned by use of the Balanced System®[5], an outcomes-based framework and delivery model for integrated services.

2.3 Establishment Types for EHCPs in Kent

Figure 2c shows the numbers of children and young people with EHCPs attending different types of educational setting. This shows clearly the significant differences between Kent and England when looking at the percentages of pupils with EHCPs attending mainstream schools (including SRPs) - 36% Kent and 44% England; and those attending special schools (including independent and non-maintained special schools) – 39% Kent and 30% England.

Figure 2c: EHCPs by Establishment Type 2025

Type of Establishment	Number of Kent EHCPs	Kent %	England %
Special school including independent	8,050	39%	30%
Mainstream school including SRPs	7,452	36%	44%
Further Education and post-16	2,952	14%	14%
Educated elsewhere	1,782	9%	8%
Placement not recorded	314	1.5%	>1%
Non-maintained early years	66	>1%	>1%
Alternative Provision	19	>1%	>1%
Total	20,635		

Source: 2025 SEN2Return

The impact of the differences in EHCP placement types in Kent is significant for families, schools, the local authority and the taxpayer. This position is unsustainable. It means too much of a finite resource is spent on too few, to the detriment of the many. To ensure we can provide sustainable high quality education provision for all, the SEND system in Kent needs to be realigned. There remains a systemic requirement to better meet the needs of children and young people with SEND and align more closely with the national averages. Kent's Strategy for the Future of Education in Kent 2025-2030 and Strategy for children with special educational needs and disabilities sets out the key areas of transformation.

It is expected that many pupils with an EHCP can attend a mainstream school, and we have clear and defined expectations for this within our Mainstream Core Standards.

[5] The Balanced System® in Kent for Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) - KELSI

3. SEND Provision and Placement

In Kent, as in other local authorities, we offer a continuum of educational provision, which includes mainstream schools, specialist resource provisions (SRPs) within our mainstream schools, special schools (maintained and independent) and alternative provisions.

It is expected that many pupils with an EHCP can attend a mainstream school. For those pupils with more complex needs an SRP or special school may be appropriate. The places at these SEND provisions are commissioned by us on an annual basis.

Each year in the autumn the Assistant Directors Education meet with school leaders of the special schools and SRPs for a commissioning conversation. It provides an opportunity to discuss successes and pressures with a time to reflect on the future ambitions of the schools. The meetings to commission SEN places for 2026-26 took place while this report was being finalised and therefore the outcomes are not included at this stage.

Alternative Provision places are also available for pupils who cannot attend a mainstream school for a period of time.

3.1 Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs)

In Kent there are 76 SRPs. These are provided by 67 schools as some schools offer more than one SRP. There are 42 primary schools and 25 secondary schools that have an SRP.

For 2025-26 a total of 1,589 SRP places have been commissioned for children and young people with an EHCP. This is an increase of 153 places from 2024-25. These provisions are designated according to the SEN types as shown in figure 3a.

Figure 3a: SRP Commissioned Places by Need Type

Need Type	2024-25			2025-26		
	Primary	Secondary	Post-16	Primary	Secondary	Post-16
ASD	304	317		378	347	
SLCN	191	208	20	207	210	20
PSCN	165	38		165	70	
HI	40	27		37	24	
VI	19	8		19	6	
PD	21	36		25	33	
SPLD	0	42		0	48	
Phase Total	**740**	**676**	**20**	**831**	**738**	**20**
Total			**1,436**			**1,589**

The Malling School is jointly commissioned for SLCN and ASD for 120 places. This total is included in the SLCN numbers.
Reculver Primary is commissioned for multiple SEN and VI for 15 places. This total is included in the VI numbers.

SRP panels held by the local authority are attended by teachers and KCC staff. In 2024-25 the panel considered 1,370 cases and determined 448 (33%) to be SRP appropriate.

The data shows that 81% of cases were for an EHCP for ASD, with 13% having speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and 6% related to other SEN types. The expansion of SRPs for these principal need types of ASD and SLCN is necessary.

3.2 Maintained Special School Provision

There are currently 25 maintained special schools in Kent. This includes Nore Academy, a new special school on the Isle of Sheppey which opened in January 2025. In Kent, the designation of state funded special schools follow the four areas of need within the SEND Code of Practice. The number of special schools for each designation is shown in figure 3c.

Figure 3c: Special School Designations

Special School Designation	Number of Schools
Communication and Interaction	6
Social Emotional and Mental Health	8
Cognition and Learning (identified as Profound, Severe and Complex Needs, PSCN)	10
Physical Difficulty (identified Other Difficulty/Disability and PD	1

The largest number of special school places are for the SEN type of Cognition and Learning, and in Kent these schools are designated as Profound, Severe and Complex Need. Pupils with the SEN type of ASD and SLCN attend all of the special school designations.

For 2025-26 a total of 6,432 state funded special school places were commissioned, which includes 5,482 places for pre-16 pupils and 950 places for post-16 pupils. This is a total increase of 148 special school places from the number commissioned for 2024-25. The commissioned places for the 25 special schools, including Nore Academy, are shown in figure 3d.

Figure 3d: State Funded Special School Commissioned Places

Special School Designation	Commissioned Places 2024-25			Commissioned Places 2025-26		
	Pre-16	Post-16	Total	Pre-16	Post-16	Total
Communication & Interaction	1,154	258	1,412	1,214	251	1,465
Social Emotional Mental Health	1,013	35	1,048	1,037	35	1,072
Cognition and Learning*	3,142	567	3,709	3,146	634	3,780
Physical Difficulty**	85	30	115	85	30	115
Total	**5,394**	**890**	**6,284**	**5,482**	**950**	**6,432**

*identified as Profound, Severe and Complex Needs, (PSCN) in Kent
**identified as Physical Difficulty and Other Difficulty or Disability in Kent

The Department for Education (DfE) has recognised the pressure felt in Kent as proposals for new additional special schools were agreed as part of the Safety Valve. We continue though, to feel the effect of the delayed provision of two new special schools, planned in Swanley and Whitstable. Both were anticipated to open in September 2025 but have been delayed until September 2027 as a result of DfE decision making. This has led to a continued dependence on high cost placements in the independent special school sector.

3.3 Independent Non-Maintained Special Schools (INMSS)

Where we are unable to provide a specialist school placement in a Kent maintained special school or SRP, placements are commissioned in the independent and non-maintained sector.

As of January 2025, 1,772 Kent resident pupils had places funded for an INMSS place. This represents 8.5% of all Kent EHCPs, and a decrease of 64 places from January 2024.

The majority of INMSS pupils attend a school which is enrolled on the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS). For the schools which are not on this system, we are more likely to ‘spot purchase’ a place and have an individual contract for the pupil.

We have 21 INMSS engaged on the DPS and would encourage other INMSS schools to join this system. The DPS enables us to apply due diligence and assessments of the quality, policies, governance structures and cost of these placements.

3.4 Alternative Provision (AP)

All local authorities have a statutory duty to provide full-time and suitable alternative provision (AP) for pupils who cannot attend a mainstream school. These pupils may have been permanently excluded from school or, due to physical or mental health conditions, are unable to attend school. Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) are a frequently used form of AP.

In Kent, some PRUs and AP are maintained by the local authority with some Academy PRUs and AP. The budgets are fully delegated to the Management Committees. This enables local Headteachers to oversee the provisions while maintaining the responsibility for their students.

In general, a wide range of emotional and educational needs are exhibited by the pupils attending AP, with some on the neurodevelopment pathway. These pupils do not have an EHCP. The main aim of an AP placement is, after the short term respite, successful reintegration and return to mainstream education. A number of pupils are in the process of EHCP assessment or have been awarded an EHCP and are awaiting placement.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, e.g. permanent exclusion, pupils attending AP remain on the roll of their mainstream school, with dual registration at the AP. If a school feel that it is unreasonable for them to be accountable for the education of a pupil, they can apply for sole registration at a PRU, through the Kent referral system. The range of AP in Kent is shown in figure 3e below.

Figure 3e: Kent Pupil Referral Units

Kent Area/District	**Pupil Referral Unit**
Thanet and Dover	Enterprise Learning Alliance
West Kent, Tunbridge Wells	Two Bridges School
Folkestone and Hythe	Birchwood School
Dartford and Gravesham Swale	North West Kent Alternative Provision: Estuary Academy North and Estuary Academy Island
Maidstone and Malling	Maidstone and Malling Alternative Provision
Canterbury	Canterbury Inclusion Service
Kent Area/District	**Alternative Provision**
Tonbridge & Malling	Health Needs Education Service: Rosewood School The school has three sites across the county, these are based in Canterbury, West Malling and a residential adolescent unit in Staplehurst.

The total number of commissioned places for AP for 2025-26 are shown in figure 3f below. The number of places will change each year in line with population growth or reduction across the county, along with the share of places in each district. Additional places in a PRU can be commissioned directly by the district/individual schools if available.

Figure 3f: Commissioned Places in PRU Academic Year 2025-26

District	2025-26 Commissioned Places
Ashford	33
Canterbury	44
Dartford	42
Dover	38
Folkestone&Hythe	28
Gravesham	31
Maidstone&Malling	51
Swale	41
Thanet	39
West Kent Learning Federation	49
Total	**396**

Source: Countywide Key Stage 3&4 Inclusion Dashboard

The Rosewood School, as a pupil referral unit (PRU) to support medical needs and associated recovery, sits between mainstream and special school provisions. This school is the authority's provision for children and young people who because of ill health cannot attend school for a period of time. Its core aim is to reintegrate a pupil back to their mainstream provision. The Rosewood School was commissioned for 146 places in 2025-26.

In Kent, all non-selective secondary schools will receive the PRU funding. Primary and grammar schools do not receive the funding as previously agreed by the Schools Funding Forum. However, the local authority is clear in its expectation that districts should use their whole allocation flexibly, to meet the needs of all children within their district, including those of primary school age.

3.5 Early Years

All early years providers are required to be inclusive and have arrangements in place to identify and support children with SEN or disabilities and to promote equality of opportunity for children in their care.[6] This is set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Practitioners are required to review children's progress and share a summary with parents. Every child or young person with special educational needs should have SEN support. Its purpose is to help children make progress.

6 Special-educational-needs-support-in-the-early-years-IASK.pdf

In the early years, it is important that there is no delay in putting in place any necessary special educational provision as a delay may lead to lost learning, frustration in learning, behaviour difficulties and loss of self-esteem. Parents should be involved in planning support and, where appropriate, in reinforcing the provision or contributing to progress at home.

Based on the outcomes of the review into Early Years education in Kent and in response to the public consultation, a revised model of support for Early Years has been implemented[7]. We have moved to a more proactive model with a clearly defined offer at universal, targeted and specialist levels that enables identifying children in need of support earlier and ensuring that the right support is provided.

This model will improve outcomes for young children by increasing the capacity of professionals to undertake more direct work with children and enable earlier identification to the benefit of all vulnerable children, not only those with SEND. It will enable more consistent implementation of universal strategies and provide opportunities to upskill and build confidence with Early Years educators in relation to SEND. Support for this is being provided in the mainstream setting through a coaching and mentoring model and our core training offer is free at the point of access.

The Special Education Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF) is a statutory requirement provided by local authorities to early years providers, childminders, and some out-of-school settings to support pre-school children with special educational needs. There is now a revised and more efficient process for settings to apply for SENIF in Kent.

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment identifies where further Early Years provision may be needed. The expectation is that such provision will be accessible to all children, regardless of their SEND.

3.6 Post-16 SEN Provision

Most young people with SEND will complete their education alongside their peers by 18 years of age. However, the Children and Families Act 2014 extended the special educational needs system to young people up to the age of 25 years. Since 2015, we have seen a large growth in the number of EHCPs for young people up to this age and, due to the population bulge working its way through secondary school and into post-16, this is forecast to increase during the plan period.

Those young people with an EHCP are able to choose their post-16 pathway earlier than their peers who do not have an EHCP. They will though, like their peers, need to have the relevant examination result at levels to enable them to enrol and begin

[7] (Public Pack)Supplementary Agenda No.1 Agenda Supplement for Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee, 09/07/2024 14:00

post-16 courses. We will enhance the guidance and support provided to young people as they approach adulthood, including vocational training, career advice, and life skills programs[8]

Mainstream sixth form coverage is uniformly distributed across Kent and predominantly offers Level 3 courses (e.g. A Level qualifications). Often the EHCP learners do not have the relevant qualifications to be eligible to enrol onto and start these courses. Information from the mainstream application system[9] shows that there are less Level 2 and below level courses on offer for students. We are working with providers to resolve this.

There are 17 maintained special schools which offer sixth forms as post-16 provision, and 950 post-16 places have been commissioned for 2025-26 (figure 3d). The special school post-16 offer varies across the county, but some sixth forms work alongside partner Further Education (FE) Colleges to deliver a wider curriculum offer and include learners who need Level 2 courses. Retention of the post-16 student cohort at special school is high.

Kent has three Further Education (FE) College Groups based in the county: Mid Kent College, East Kent College and North Kent College. These have 11 Kent campuses with 1 based in Medway, and currently there are no college sites in either Tunbridge Wells or Sevenoaks. In 2025 Kent was below the national average for EHCP learners attending General and Tertiary College/Higher Education provisions, (9.8% Kent; 11.1% England). There are fewer course available for those EHCP students who are working at Level 2 and below to access FE college courses. Due to this and a range of other issues, FE colleges are not suitable in the first instance for many SEND learners. A proportion of these young people drop out of college in the first term.

We arrange placements at Specialist Post-16 Institutions (SPIs) directly with these institutions. Across the county there are 22 SPIs and 4 of these offer provision for post-19 students. These provide a range of offers, which include employability and vocational courses such as music, sport, animal care or horticulture. As a result of their specialist subject focus and location many students travel long distances to attend.

We commission services to help young people with EHCPs progress into supported employment and to assist those who are (or are at risk of) not continuing in either education or employment with training (NEET). These promote other opportunities for post-16 learners including apprenticeships, supported internships, traineeships, and supported employment.

[8] Strategy for children with special educational needs and disabilities
[9] KentChoices | Home

The number of young people aged 16 to 24 years with an EHCP and categorised as Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) was 221 in January 2025. It has decreased from 553 young people in the previous year. Work supported by the Pathways for All strategy and post-16 sector providers aims to reduce the number of young people who become NEET in Kent.

3.7 Residential Provision

There are 100 young people aged 11 – 25 years, with an EHCP residing in residential special schools currently. The 13 young people in 52-week provisions have either a joint arrangement with Social Care or a tripartite arrangement with Social Care and Health.

There are 87 young people in 38-week provisions and these places are provided on either a joint or tripartite basis although some are fully funded by education.

It is anticipated that the number of young people requiring residential placements will remain stable during the forecast period.

4. EHCP Forecast

To support our future SEND commissioning intentions, Kent produces an EHCP Forecast. Based on historical data about how children of certain ages and SEN types move between placement types over time, it estimates the number of children and young people with an EHCP and what type of setting they might be placed in for the future. It factors in newly issued EHCPs, which are driven by population, and also EHCPs being ceased.

Mitigations for the Safety Valve, which is an agreement between KCC and government to reduce KCC's annual High Needs Budget deficit, have been applied to the EHCP Forecast in order to inform future commissioning in line with policy direction.

4.1 EHCP Forecast for Age Groups

Figure 4a indicates there will be an increase in the number of EHCPs in all education phases by 2026. From 2028 the numbers for EHCPs in Years R-6 and Years 7-11 are forecast to start to decrease. For the post-16 cohort (Years 12-13 and Years 14+) the numbers increase throughout the forecast period. The overall result is a small increase in the number of EHCPs over the time of the plan period. For 2025 to 2026, a 3% increase is indicated, and this year on year change rate decreases to less than 1% by 2030.

In the Forecast tables (figures 4a to 4s) the number of pupils recorded for 2025 is the current number of pupils reported to the DfE (SEN2 Return).

Figure 4a: EHCP Forecast for all age groups

Age Group	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Early Years	49	55	54	54	55	56
Years R-6	7,006	7,078	7,037	6,894	6,719	6,505
Years 7-11	8,174	8,413	8,297	8,161	8,042	8,069
Years 12-13	2,694	2,988	3,389	3,643	3,743	3,669
Years 14+	2,712	2,736	2,816	3,066	3,401	3,675
Total	**20,635**	**21,270**	**21,593**	**21,818**	**21,960**	**21,974**

4.2 EHCP Forecast by SEN Type

ASD is the largest SEN type for children and young people with an EHCP in both Kent and nationally, and the size of this cohort is forecast to continue to increase. The numbers of children and young people in the SEMH cohort will remain steady but there will be a notable increase of EHCPs for the SLCN cohort for the plan period.

The SEN type of Other, includes SEN types such as Hearing Impairment, Vision Impairment, Multi-sensory impairment and Physical Disability. This cohort is indicated to decrease slightly in number over the plan period. The details are shown in figure 4b below.

Figure 4b: EHCP Forecast by Need Type (overall)

Special Educational Need Type	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
ASD	9,566	9,839	9,976	10,085	10,122	10,114
SEMH	3,866	3,933	3,941	3,911	3,892	3,820
SLCN	3,592	3,857	4,058	4,241	4,400	4,534
MLD/SPLD	1,432	1,461	1,475	1,464	1,462	1,450
SLD/PMLD	1,181	1,178	1,158	1,142	1,122	1,100
Other	998	1,002	986	976	963	955
Total	**20,635**	**21,270**	**21,593**	**21,818**	**21,960**	**21,974**

4.3 EHCP Forecast for Mainstream Schools

The EHCP Forecast (Figure 4c) indicates a decrease in the rolls of mainstream schools (excluding SRPs) by 152 children by 2030 (figures include years 12-13 and years 14+). This reduction (2.6%) is in line with the fall forecast in primary school rolls (2.4%). The number of pupils in the ASD cohort will remain as the largest group, although the number will slightly decrease (151 pupils). The SLCN cohort is forecast to increase in numbers (267 pupils).

Figure 4c: EHCP Forecast for Mainstream Schools by Need Type

Special Educational Need Type	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
ASD	2,103	2,023	2,002	1,997	1,976	1,954
SEMH	1,133	1,129	1,092	1,064	1,026	1,010
SLCN	1,664	1,779	1,849	1,901	1,925	1,931
MLD/SPLD	555	543	521	489	455	436
SLD/PMLD	64	71	76	78	79	79
Other	337	333	329	318	305	294
Total	**5,856**	**5,877**	**5,870**	**5,848**	**5,766**	**5,704**

Figure 4d shows that for the SEN type of ASD, the Year R-6 cohort is larger than the Year 7-11 cohort. The number of pupils in mainstream schools with EHCPs associated with ASD will decrease, particularly in the primary sector.

Figure 4d: EHCP Forecast for mainstream schools for ASD.

Special Educational Need Type	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
ASD Year R-6	1,321	1,240	1,221	1,203	1,192	1,169
ASD Year 7-11	705	700	693	702	687	689
Total	**2,026**	**1,940**	**1,914**	**1,905**	**1,879**	**1,858**

Figure 4e shows that for the SEN type of SLCN, the Year R-6 cohort is larger than the Year 7-11 cohort. The cohort sizes in mainstream schools will increase over the forecast period, particularly in the secondary sector.

Figure 4e: EHCP Forecast for mainstream schools for SLCN

Special Educational Need Type	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
SLCN Year R-6	1133	1189	1225	1230	1216	1184
SLCN Year7-11	502	564	598	638	672	707
Total	**1635**	**1753**	**1823**	**1868**	**1888**	**1891**

In January 2025 there were 168 post-16 (year 12 and 13) students attending mainstream schools. This number is forecast to increase to 208 students by 2030.

What does this mean for place planning – there will be sufficient school places in the mainstream sector to meet the indicated need. Schools will need to adapt their support for children with SEN to meet the marginal shift in the profile of need towards SLCN.

4.4 EHCP Forecast for SRPs

The SRP Review identified variations in SRP provisions by district and some gaps for secondary pathways. Following the SRP Review, (phase two, January 2024) proposals to increase strategically the capacity and number of SRPs across Kent are being developed. The increased pupil places are planned by opening new SRPs, expanding some existing SRPs and changing designations for some SRPs.

Discussions within the education community, particularly schools with SRPs, has indicated support for broadening the designations of SRPs, particularly those relating to ASD and SLCN, such that an SRP can meet the needs of both. This would further increase the accessibility of local provision.

The largest cohort of SEN type in SRPs is ASD, and this is forecast to significantly increase over the plan period. The second largest cohort in SRPs is for SLCN, which is also forecast to increase over the time of the plan period. The other SEN types for SRPs are not forecast to increase significantly over the plan period. The EHCP Forecast for need type in SRPs is set out in figure 4f.

Figure 4f: EHCP Forecast for SPRs by Need Type

Special Educational Need Type	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
ASD	826	922	962	1,039	1,125	1,195
SEMH	59	50	47	45	44	43
SLCN	340	365	367	387	408	437
MLD/SPLD	56	57	57	58	58	57
SLD/PMLD	43	49	53	56	61	63
Other	130	123	116	112	105	101
Total	**1,454**	**1,567**	**1,602**	**1,698**	**1,802**	**1,897**

A breakdown of the forecast ASD and SLCN cohort for SRPs in shown in figure 4g and 4h. We commission 20 post-16 places (for ASD and SLCN) at one SRP. It is noted that there may be exceptional circumstances which can lead to a small number of students remaining at an SRP for the post-16 phase of their education.

Figure 4g: EHCP Forecast for SRPs ASD Cohort by Age

Special Educational Need Type	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
ASD Year R-6	446	520	553	591	627	629
ASD Year 7-11	344	371	378	415	468	538
Total	**790**	**891**	**931**	**1,006**	**1,095**	**1,167**

Figure 4h: EHCP Forecast for SRPs SLCN Cohort by Age

Special Educational Need Type	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
SLCN Year R-6	162	186	184	198	206	213
SLCN Year 7-11	168	171	174	180	193	216
Total	**330**	**357**	**358**	**378**	**399**	**429**

We do not have SRPs which are designated for the SEN type of SEMH, and it is not our intention to commission these for the future. There are a small number of pupils with SEMH as their primary need type who attend an SRP. They may have additional SEN.

In January 2025 there were 57 post-16 (year 12 and 13) students attending an SRP. This number is forecast to decrease to 47 students by 2030.

What does this mean for place planning – The number of SRP places will increase as this enables pupils to attend mainstream schools with additional support. Planning will focus on districts to close identified gaps for primary transition for year 6 pupils into year 7 for the SEN types of ASD and SLCN.

The additional SRP planned provision (shown in section 5.2) is needed as it is recognised that some pupils who are categorised as SRP appropriate by the SRP Panel are placed in high cost independent schools when there is not enough capacity in SRPs.

4.5 EHCP Forecast for Maintained Special Schools

The EHCP Forecast (Figure 4i) indicates an increase in the rolls of maintained special schools by 273 children by 2030. The number of pupils in the ASD cohort will remain as the largest group, although the number will slightly decrease. The SLCN cohort is forecast to have a significant increase in numbers.

Figure 4i: EHCP Forecast for Maintained Special Schools by Need Type

Special Educational Need Type	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
ASD	3,636	3,683	3,700	3,638	3,584	3,528
SEMH	671	692	725	756	812	862
SLCN	796	866	929	966	1,023	1,068
MLD/SPLD	277	273	262	255	254	255
SLD/PMLD	809	780	754	729	702	677
Other	245	260	271	285	301	317
Total	**6,434**	**6,554**	**6,640**	**6,629**	**6,675**	**6,707**

Figure 4j shows that for the SEN type of ASD the Year 7-11 cohort is larger than the Year R-6 cohort and the size of the gap between these groups increases over the time of the forecast.

Figure 4j: EHCP Forecast for Maintained Special Schools for ASD

Special Educational Need Type	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
ASD Year R-6	1,448	1,394	1,351	1,267	1,211	1,165
ASD Year 7-11	1,774	1,855	1,906	1,920	1,950	1,949
Total	**3,222**	**3,249**	**3,257**	**3,187**	**3,161**	**3,114**

Figure 4k shows a significant increase in the number of year 7-11 (secondary age) pupils with the SEN type of SLCN in maintained special schools. This is forecast to increase from 314 pupils in 2025, to 551 pupils by 2030.

Figure 4k: EHCP Forecast for Maintained Special Schools for SLCN

Special Educational Need Type	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
SLCN Year R-6	422	454	466	459	446	426
SLCN Year 7-11	314	345	388	421	490	551
Total	**736**	**799**	**854**	**880**	**936**	**977**

In January 2025 there were 611 post-16 (year 12 and 13) students attending a maintained special school. This number is forecast to increase slightly to 619 students by 2030.

What does this mean for place planning – The majority of the maintained special schools (21 schools) offer places for pupils in both the primary and secondary school phases. These schools will see an increase proportionally for the secondary cohort. This is in line with the secondary bulge of pupils travelling through the mainstream

sector. Over time the profile of pupils in individual schools will change to reflect the changing demographic needs as set out above. We expect system realignment to ensure that these schools are supporting those pupils with an EHCP and the most complex needs.

The proposed two new special schools will provide the capacity required to meet the forecast increased need. With this capacity included, we are looking to hold maintained special school numbers broadly static. The additional planned places are reliant on the DfE special schools opening, and this work has currently been paused.

4.6 EHCP Forecast for Independent Schools

It is our intention to reduce the numbers of new admissions in the independent sector as we build capacity in other sectors of our SEN provision, thus our expectation is that we will have less requirement for provision from this sector. This will support us in our Best Value endeavours and requirements of the Safety Valve Agreement. Accordingly, the EHCP forecast indicates that the number of placements in independent schools will continue to decrease over the plan period. This will be across all SEN types as shown in figure 4l.

Figure 4l: EHCP Forecast for Independent Schools by SEN Type

Special Educational Need Type	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
ASD	839	875	826	732	577	451
SEMH	522	506	439	370	268	197
SLCN	210	227	226	217	187	160
MLD/SPLD	122	122	111	94	68	52
SLD/PMLD	35	35	33	31	28	24
Other	44	45	42	41	36	32
Total	**1,772**	**1,809**	**1,678**	**1,484**	**1,164**	**917**

In January 2025 there were 176 post-16 (year 12 and 13) students attending an independent school. This number is forecast to decrease to 131 students by 2030.

What does this mean for place planning – It is recognised that the independent sector is a valuable part of the educational provision in Kent and will continue to be so. However, reliance on this sector is unsustainable. It is expected most commissioned places will be for schools on our Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) Framework.

4.7 EHCP Forecast for Other Settings

Most children attend school for their education, but there are a range of "other settings" that children and young people with an EHCP attend. These include Alternative Provision (AP), Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), awaiting provision, educated at home, education other than at school (EOTAS) and apprenticeships.

Parents have the right to educate their child at home. This is known as elective home education (EHE) and it is recognised that parents may choose home education for a variety of reasons. We have policy and procedures to support this decision[10].

A parents' right to educate their child at home applies equally where a child has an EHCP. Further details are available in paragraphs 10.30 to 10.38 of the SEND Code of Practice January 2015. In Kent, we have 329 primary and secondary age children and young people with an EHCP who are educated at home. We assume that this number will remain stable over time.

The Education Programme supplies short term tuition for children and young people with an EHCP who are waiting for a school place and have no provision. The service also provides 6th day provision for permanently excluded children and young people, for primary aged both with or without an EHCP and secondary aged with an EHCP only. Most children and young people are allocated a Tutor for academic work and a Wellbeing Support Officer (WSO) who offers separate sessions based on a bespoke wellbeing curriculum.

There are 58 children and young people with an EHCP enrolled on this programme. The total capacity is for 93 pupils.

KCC commissions external tuition companies to provide education for pupils who may be awaiting placement or as part of an EOTAS package. The 2025 SEN2 return to DfE identified 374 children and young people with an EHCP who are awaiting placement (figure 4m).

Figure 4m: EHCPs Awaiting Provision

Age Group	Number of EHCPs
Early Years	4
Primary Age	105
Secondary Age	265
Total	**374**

Source: SEN2 Return 2025

[10] Kent County Council Elective Home Education Policy and Procedure

The EHCP Forecast indicates a decrease in the numbers of school aged pupils in "other settings" from 900 (actuals) in 2025 to 586 in 2030 – see Figure 4n for Years R-6, and Figure 4o for years 7-11. The decrease is across all need types.

Figure 4n: EHCP Forecast for Other Settings by Need Type (Years R–6)

Special Educational Need Type	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
ASD	120	109	89	71	66	62
SEMH	34	34	29	23	21	20
SLCN	39	44	37	30	28	27
MLD/SPLD	6	10	16	21	26	31
SLD/PMLD	9	9	8	8	7	6
Other	13	12	12	11	11	10
Total	**221**	**217**	**190**	**165**	**158**	**156**

Figure 4o: EHCP Forecast for Other Settings by Need Type (Years 7–11)

Special Educational Need Type	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
ASD	298	312	286	236	207	192
SEMH	237	235	195	152	126	115
SLCN	72	85	81	76	76	75
MLD/SPLD	42	47	45	38	31	28
SLD/PMLD	14	14	11	10	9	8
Other	16	14	10	12	11	11
Total	**679**	**707**	**627**	**524**	**460**	**430**

In January 2025 there were 476 post-16 students (year 12 and 13) attending Other Settings. This number is forecast to decrease to 271 students by 2030.

What does this mean for place planning – We expect that the numbers of children and young people on EHE will remain stable, and we encourage parents choosing this option to have awareness of our policy and procedures.

We will continue to offer provision from The Education Programme, but we are not expecting to add capacity to this service. External tuition will continue to be provided to pupils who are in between placements.

As we add capacity in SRPs and maintained special schools, it is expected we will be able to more quickly identify suitable placements and reduce the period children and young people are awaiting these. It is expected that the numbers for this cohort will decrease over time.

4.8 EHCP Forecast for Post-16 in Further Education (FE) Colleges and Specialist Post-16 Provision (SPI)

The EHCP forecast for post-16 students who attend a FE College or SPI (Figure 4r) indicates that the SEN types are of similar ranking as the pre-16 cohort with ASD continuing as the largest group.

Figure 4r: EHCP Forecast of Post-16 in Full Time Education (FE College and SPI) by Need Type

Special Educational Need Type	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
ASD	1,292	1,472	1,720	2,002	2,222	2,360
SEMH	718	838	1,010	1,161	1,263	1,259
SLCN	351	394	486	589	677	756
MLD/SPLD	297	335	399	458	518	541
SLD/PMLD	180	194	200	209	216	221
Other	147	150	145	148	147	144
Total	2,985	**3,383**	**3,961**	**4,567**	**5,043**	**5,282**

In 2025, there were 2,045 students with an EHCP attending a General FE and Tertiary College and 930 students attending an SPI. This is 55% of young people in years 12,13 and 14+ with an EHCP. A significant increase in the number of young people in this cohort for the plan period is expected, as shown in figure 4s. The forecasts suggest that by 2030 72% of Post-16 young people with an EHCP will be in this sector.

As schools cannot legally have young people on roll post Year 14 the FE Colleges and SPIs provide for a greater proportion of the year 14+ cohort (currently 65%). This is forecast to increase to 79% of the cohort by 2030.

Figure 4s: EHCP Forecast of Post-16 in Full Time Education

Age	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Years 12-13	1,206	1,543	1,922	2,288	2,436	2,394
Years 14	1,771	1,835	2,033	2,274	2,602	2,885
Total	**2,985**	**3,383**	**3,961**	**4,567**	**5,043**	**5,282**

Note: the total includes statistical rounding from other data sources

What does this mean for place planning - The Post-16 forecasts present the most significant challenge to the County Council in respect of meeting the education needs of any group with an EHCP.

The Department for Education (DfE) commissions places at FE Colleges and SPIs. It is from the DfE that their core funding is received. The funding is paid on a lagged basis, and this makes the expansion of places challenging, and is a significant barrier to new provision entering the market. However, it is clear from the forecasts that urgent solutions, both locally and nationally, need to be found to enable the County Council and other authorities, to provide suitable education pathways.

The Local Authority has two main statutory duties for post-16 education. Firstly, to secure enough suitable education and training provision to meet the reasonable needs of all young people in their area who are over compulsory school age but under 19 or aged 19 or over and for whom an EHCP is maintained. Secondly, to make available to all young people aged 13-19 years, and to those between 20 and 25 years with SEN, the support it considers appropriate to encourage, enable or assist effective participation in education or training by those young people.

The Local Authority must have an overview of provision, and resolve gaps as they arise, so that the needs of young people are met. Pathways for All[11] is the approach that we have established to deliver this.

The strategic themes of Pathways for All, centre on ensuring that post-16 provision is 'Accessible, Ambitious and Appropriate' for all young people. The urgency of this work is heightened by the lack of places at Level 2 and below for students, and the increasing numbers of NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training). Local Collaborative Partnership Area groups (LCPAs), led by post-16 sector leaders across the county, are creating a more coherent local offer and information about the local action plans. [12]

The EHCP Forecast indicates that better community support for young people with autism is required to enable more young people to become independent learners as they move in to post-16 education and on to an independent adulthood. The provision for course places at Further Education (FE) Colleges and Specialist Post-16 Institutions (SPIs) will need to increase significantly.

[11] Pathways for All three year strategy

[12] Local Collaborative Partnership Area Action Plans

5. Future SEN Commissioning of Provision

An overview of our commissioning intentions is detailed in the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent (KCP) which is updated annually.

5.1 Special School Planned Commissioning

A total of 664 new special school places are planned to be commissioned over the KCP time period, 2026 to 2030. This includes new schools and expansions. It also includes satellite provisions which are classes hosted in mainstream schools for pupils on roll of the special school. They are run by staff employed by the special school.

Figure 5a: Agreed and Planned Special School Additional Provision in Kent

Provision: Special School	Proposed Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Expansion of special school (Broomhill Bank)	2026	C&I	Sevenoaks	172	112	30	30	0	0
New satellite for special school (Aspire Primary)	2026	C&I	Swale	30	8	8	14	0	0
Expansion of special school 6th form, (Meadowfield School)	2026	PSCN	Swale	20	10	10	0	0	0
New special school (all through) Swanley	2028	PSCN	Sevenoaks	250	0	0	114	66	70
New special school (all through) Whitstable	2028	SEMH/ ASD	Canterbury	120	0	0	48	28	44
Expansion of special school (Parkwood Hall)	2031	C&L	Sevenoaks	72	32	8	8	8	16
Total planned special school places				**664**	**162**	**56**	**214**	**102**	**130**

5.2 SRP Planned Commissioning

A total of 889 new SRP places are planned to be commissioned over the time period 2026 to 2030 as shown in figures 5b to 5f. It includes provision that has been agreed as a commitment to, or as part of, an Academy's funding agreement for a new school.

Evidence indicates that ASD and SLCN are the main areas of SEN type where additional capacity is required, and this is reflected in our commissioning intentions.

Figure 5b: Planned New/Expanded SRPs in East Kent

East Provision: SRP	Proposed Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Lansdowne Primary	2026	ASD/SLCN	Swale	20	7	7	6	0	0
Richmond Primary	2026	ASD/SLCN	Swale	40	14	14	12	0	0
Newlands Primary	2026	ASD/SLCN	Thanet	40	14	14	12	0	0
Herne Bay Primary Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Canterbury	20	0	7	7	6	0
Faversham Primary Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Swale	20	0	7	7	6	0
Total primary planned SRP places				**140**	**35**	**49**	**44**	**12**	**0**
Royal Harbour Academy	2026	ASD/SLCN	Thanet	50	16	16	18	0	0
Thanet Non-Selective Secondary	2027	ASD/SLCN	Thanet	50	0	16	16	18	0
Canterbury Coastal Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Canterbury	50	0	16	16	18	0
Isle of Sheppey Secondary	2027	ASD/SLCN	Swale	50	0	16	16	18	0
Total secondary planned SRP places				**200**	**16**	**64**	**66**	**54**	**0**
Total planned SRP places				**340**					

Figure 5c: Planned New/Expanded SRPs in North Kent

North Provision: SRP	Proposed Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Alkerden C of E Academy (Primary)	2026	ASD/SLCN	Dartford	15	2	2	3	3	5
Rosherville C of E Primary Academy	2026	ASD/SLCN	Gravesham	15	6	5	4	0	0
Edenbridge Planning Group	2026	ASD/SLCN	Sevenoaks	20	7	7	6	0	0
Sevenoaks Rural North Planning Group	2026	ASD/SLCN	Sevenoaks	20	7	7	6	0	0
Swanley Planning Group	2026	ASD/SLCN	Sevenoaks	15	6	5	4	0	0
Total primary planned SRP places				**85**	**28**	**26**	**23**	**3**	**5**
Alkerden C of E Academy (Secondary)	2026	ASD/SLCN	Dartford	25	6	6	6	7	0
Gravesham and Longfield Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Gravesham	30	0	10	10	10	0
Sevenoaks and Borough Green Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Sevenoaks	30	0	8	12	10	0
Total secondary planned SRP places				**85**	**6**	**24**	**28**	**27**	**0**
Total planned SRP places				**170**					

Figure 5d: Planned New/Expanded SRPs in South Kent

South Provision: SRP	Proposed Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Ashford Oaks PS	2026	ASD	Ashford	10	6	4	0	0	0
The Downs PS	2026	ASD/SLCN	Dover	14	6	5	3	0	0
Ashford North Planning Group	2026	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	14	6	5	3	0	0
Ashford East Planning Group	2026	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	14	6	5	3	0	0
Tenterden South Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	14	0	6	5	3	0
Ashford South Planning Group	2027	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	14	0	6	5	3	0
Total primary planned SRP places				**80**	**24**	**31**	**19**	**6**	**0**
Homewood School and 6th Form Centre	2026	ASD/SLCN	Ashford	50	16	16	18	0	0
Dover Christ Church	2026	PSCN	Dover	35	10	15	10	0	0
St Edmunds Catholic	2026	ASD	Dover	20	7	7	6	0	0
Turner Free School	2026	SLD	Folkestone &Hythe	50 (already operating - 30 places)	10	10		0	0
Total secondary planned SRP places				**125**	**43**	**48**	**34**	**0**	**0**
Total planned SRP places				**205**					

Figure 5e: Planned New/Expanded SRPs in West Kent

West Provision: SRP	Proposed Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
SE Maidstone town	2026	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	14	6	5	3	0	0
NW Maidstone town	2026	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	14	6	5	3	0	0
Maidstone rural	2026	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	14	6	5	3	0	0
Tunbridge Wells town 1	2026	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	14	6	5	3	0	0
Tunbridge Wells town 2	2026	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	14	6	5	3	0	0
Tunbridge Wells rural	2026	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	14	6	5	3	0	0
Total primary planned SRP places				**84**	**36**	**30**	**18**	**0**	**0**
St Augustine (expansion)	2026	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	30	8	12	10	0	0
Maidstone secondary town	2026	ASD/SLCN	Maidstone	30	8	12	10	0	0
Skinners Kent Academy	2026	ASD/SLCN	Tunbridge Wells	30	8	12	10	0	0
Total secondary planned SRP places				**90**	**24**	**36**	**30**	**0**	**0**
Total planned SRP places				**174**					

Following conversations with the schools' community, there is support for broadening the designation of existing SRPs. This will better utilise the skills of these provisions and make provision available more locally to children. Accordingly, a number of

proposals are expected to be brought to achieve this outcome for September 2026. The details of these are being finalised and are shown in figure 5f.

Figure 5f: Planned Changes for SRPs in Kent

SRP	Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Proposed Category of Change
The Archbishops School (secondary)	2026	VI, SPLD	Canterbury	0	Broaden Designation
Reculver (primary)	2026	C&L, VI	Canterbury	0	Broaden Designation
Castle Hill (primary)	2026	HI	Folkestone &Hythe	0	Broaden Designation
Hythe Bay (primary)	2026	SLCN	Folkestone &Hythe	0	Broaden Designation
The Marsh Academy (secondary)	2026	ASD	Folkestone &Hythe	0	Broaden Designation
Westlands (secondary)	2026	SPLD, PD	Swale	0	Broaden Designation
Bromstone (primary)	2026	SLCN	Thanet	0	Formalisation and Broaden Designation
Total planned places				**0**	

5.3 Alternative Provision Commissioning

A total of 70 Alternative Provision (AP) places are planned to be commissioned over the time period 2026 to 2030, (figure 5g).

It is planned to expand The Rosewood School in the Canterbury district in order to match the provision in the West of the County. A new Alternative Provision is to be commissioned for up to 40 pupils in the Swale district.

Figure 5g: Agreed and Planned Alternative Provision in Kent

Alternative Provision:	Proposed Opening Date	SEN Type	District	Potential Additional Number of Places	Total Additional Places Added By Year				
					2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Expansion of KS3 provision (The Rosewood School)	2026	Health Needs Education Centre	Canterbury	30	30	0	0	0	0
Alternative Provision	2027	AP	Swale	40	0	40	0	0	0
Total Planned Alternative Provision Places				**70**	**30**	**40**	**0**	**0**	**0**

5.4 Further Education (FE) College and Specialist Post-16 Provision (SPI) Commissioning

Places at Further Education (FE) Colleges and Specialist Post-16 Institutions (SPIs) will need to increase significantly as the number of young people in this cohort is forecast to grow. It is recognised that there is some urgency for this both from the increasing student numbers and from the necessity for the sector to provide more courses at Level 2 and below.

The national funding challenges need to be overcome to support the expansion needed. We will work with the sector to find solutions.

EQIA Submission – ID Number
Section A

EQIA Title
Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026-30

Responsible Officer
Paul Wilson - CY EDSEN

Approved by (Note: approval of this EqIA must be completed within the EqIA App)
Nicholas Abrahams - CY EDSEN

Type of Activity

Service Change
No
Service Redesign
No
Project/Programme
No
Commissioning/Procurement
No
Strategy/Policy
Strategy/Policy
Details of other Service Activity
No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate
Children Young People and Education
Responsible Service
Education and SEND
Responsible Head of Service
Nicholas Abrahams - CY EDSEN
Responsible Director
Christine McInnes - CY EDSEN

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the Plan is to:

- provide an overarching framework for determining when and where education may be needed in the future. The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent sets out the forecast number of children and young people in Kent and breaks this down to smaller geographical areas (districts and planning groups) to show where there may be a need for more or fewer places.
- Set out the principles which will be used to consider and evaluate individual proposals which might come forward (be commissioned) to address any identified shortage or surplus of places in a locality.

Summary of the outcome of the analysis:
No change is required. The evidence suggests that there is no potential for discrimination and all appropriate measures have been taken to advance equality and foster good relations between the protected groups.

Section B – Evidence

Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?

Yes

It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?

Yes

Is there national evidence/data that you can use?

Yes

Have you consulted with stakeholders?

Yes

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?

The equality impact assessment for the Commissioning Plan is carried out at two levels; First, in respect of the Commissioning Plan itself, to assess whether the commissioning principles and guidelines may have an impact (either positive or negative) on any protected groups and if so what action, if any, should be taken to amend the Plan or to mitigate the negative impacts. The second, a more detailed analysis of the impacts on any protected group arising from individual education consultation proposals is conducted contemporaneously through the Plan period.

This assessment deals solely with the first of these two levels, with consultation completed with high level stakeholders consulted to ensure the Plan is drafted collaboratively. This process incorporates meetings with District and Borough Council Leaders and CEOs/Planning Officers, along with School Governor and Headteacher briefings for each district. This consultative activity will be completed prior to the adoption of the Plan by KCC Cabinet committee in January 2026.

Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?

Yes

Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?

Yes

Section C – Impact

Who may be impacted by the activity?

Service Users/clients

Service users/clients

Staff

No

Residents/Communities/Citizens

No

Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?

Yes

Details of Positive Impacts

The overarching nature of the Commissioning Plan means that this equalities impact assessment is at a strategic level, rather specifically covering the various local commissioning schemes. In broad terms, the Plan focuses on the positive impacts for all children and young people, particularly the most vulnerable pupils and those with SEND. It provides a vehicle through which individuals and groups can make their voices heard regarding both current education provision and future proposals. An equality impact assessment will be completed as part of each individual consultation process that follows on from the Commissioning Plan. This assessment indicates that the plan will have either neutral or positive impacts on pupils within the protected groups.

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions

19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age

Are there negative impacts for age?

No

Details of negative impacts for Age

Not Applicable

Mitigating Actions for Age

Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age
Not Applicable
20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability
Are there negative impacts for Disability?
No
Details of Negative Impacts for Disability
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Disability
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Disability
Not Applicable
21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex
Are there negative impacts for Sex
No
Details of negative impacts for Sex
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Sex
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Sex
Not Applicable
22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
No
Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race
Are there negative impacts for Race
No
Negative impacts for Race
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Race
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race
Not Applicable
24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief
No
Negative impacts for Religion and belief
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief
Not Applicable
25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation

No
Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
No
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
No
Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
No
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable

From: Beverly Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Christine McInnes, Interim Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education

To: Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee – 18 November 2025

Subject: Specialist Resourced Provision Review and future commissioning intentions

Decision no: 25/00085

Key Decision : The proposals affect more than 2 Electoral Divisions

Classification: *Unrestricted*

Past Pathway of report: Children's, Young People & Education Cabinet Committee 16 May 2024

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member decision

Electoral Division: All

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary:
The aim of this report is to:

- Outline the process to be adopted to commission additional places in Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) and to change the designations of some existing SRPs in line with the commissioning proposals set out in the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026-30.
- Outline the case for a proposed change in how we support children and young people who have an EHC plan with vision impairment (VI) identified as their primary need, moving to a more responsive countywide approach of peripatetic specialist support in local mainstream schools.
- Confirm, as policy, the current position with regard to SRPs for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), and SRP provision for Post 16 students.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **ENDORSE,** or **MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS** to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on the proposed decision as detailed in the Proposed Record of Decision (PRoD) attached at appendix four.

---

1. Introduction

1.1 The Department for Education (DfE) expects Local Authorities (LA) to manage their specialist estates efficiently to avoid detriment to schools' education offers, creating disadvantage to children and young people who have special educational needs (SEND), or the LA's financial position. This means ensuring the sustainability of maintained specialist school places that are appropriately matched to need-type, phases of education and geographical locations.

1.2 The DfE's definition of a Specialist Resource Provision (SRP) is: "*resourced provision are places that are reserved at a mainstream school for pupils with a specific type of SEN, taught for at least half of their time within mainstream classes, but requiring a base and some specialist facilities around the school".*

1.3 Although many of the SRPS in Kent schools are provided with accommodation specific to the SRP and its designation, some operate utilising the school's own inclusion and SEND bases with the children spending the greater percentage of their time within mainstream classes. Schools with SRPs also often utilise the space and the qualified specialist teacher and staff expertise to undertake in-reach for children in their school who require additional support. SRPS will, as time progresses, form part of the provision and support within their community of schools.

1.4 KCC's continuum of education provision includes mainstream schools and academies, mainstream schools and academies with SRPs, special schools and alternative provisions. KCC also commissions places in independent and non-maintained schools. The map at appendix 1 shows location of current SRPs.

1.5 The proposals contained in this paper sit within the broader context of KCC's transformation of the SEND system, working to ensure equitable provision for all children and young people throughout the County and improve outcomes for Kent's most vulnerable children. The wider programme includes:

- a new model of support for children in the early years sector, with a greater focus on early intervention and co-ordinated support,
- the introduction and establishment of a school-to-school model of support (communities of schools) aligned with Health Primary Care Networks (PCNs),
- a review of the current contracts and service level agreements for SRPs (to be implemented from September 2026),
- the introduction of a SEND Continuum of Need and Provision, designed to be a guide for schools to aid decision making around appropriate support for children and young people with additional needs, and
- work on a new funding model to support children and young people with SEND in accessing the curriculum, whether they are being educated in a mainstream school, mainstream with SRP, or in a maintained special school.

1.6 The proposals are encompassed within the SEND Sufficiency Plan section of the Kent Commissioning Plan in order to ensure alignment with the capital budget planning and reporting processes.

1.7 KCC's SEND Strategy 2025-2028 is built on the principles of inclusion, partnership and participation. Every child has the right to access opportunities without discrimination. They deserve the right support in their local communities, surrounded by friends and family. Where appropriate, they should be able to attend their local schools and receive the appropriate support to access meaningful learning experiences. They also have the right to specialised and tailored support from professionals, helping them to achieve to their full potential.

1.8 The existing quantum and pattern of SRP provision across Kent has been reviewed. This has identified a number of issues that need to be addressed:

- Access to SRPs is not equitable across districts. Children and young people in a number of districts are travelling considerable distances to access appropriate educational provision. These geographical gaps need to be addressed.
- There are pathway gaps, for example, we have children attending primary schools with SRPs who have no secondary school with an SRP they can transition to. This can lead to children moving into special schools, or independent provision when they would have been able to thrive in a local mainstream secondary school, if it was able to provide the additional support that comes through an SRP.
- There are need-type gaps, where current SRPs are for very specific SEND need types (e.g. ASD) and children fall outside of these strict definitions. There is frequently an overlap between Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Speech Language and Communication needs (SLCN) and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH). The current strict definitions can mean that some children either have to travel considerable distances to access an appropriate SRP, or attend an Independent or non-maintained special school when they should be able to attend local schools alongside their peers. DfE recognised SEND need type definitions are attached at Appendix 2 and current travel patterns for children and young people by district are attached at Appendix 3.
- Demand gaps. In some districts and for some need types e.g. ASD, we have insufficient SRP places to meet demand, resulting in having to fund higher cost places in the independent and non-maintained sector (INMSS) or being supported in state-funded special schools.
- There is a considerable gap, in some instances, between the number of SRP places occupied, and the number that KCC submits to the DfE and agrees to fund each year (commissioned number).[1]

[1] There are 3 types of numbers relating to SRPS: designated number (the number the SRP was set up to accommodate), commissioned number (the number agreed annually by the LA to be funded

- A small number of SRPs have very low numbers and struggle to be viable and retain the specialist teachers they require, whist others are considerably over the number of places agreed and that they were set up for.
- We have an anomaly relating to SRPs for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH).
- The current approach to supporting children and young people with vision impairment in SRPs is not equitable across the County.
- There is a lack of clarity around Post 16 SRP provision. Secondary SRPs were all established for students in Years 7 to 11. No SRPS were established with an expectation of commissioning them to take young people Post 16. We now have a small number of SRPs with Post 16 students where the school requested that the placement and funding continues, or where we as the Local Authority, have placed a young person Post 16.

2. Key Considerations

2.1 Access to local provision:

i.

Demand and Pathway Gaps	Demand Gaps	Pathway Gaps
Sevenoaks Dover Folkestone Swale Thanet Tonbridge & Malling Tunbridge Wells	Dartford Gravesham	Ashford Canterbury Maidstone

2.2 Commissioned numbers vs capacity:

i. Whilst planning for additional SRP places to meet geographical, demand and pathways gaps, it is also clear that we have a number of SRPs where we are placing in numbers considerably below the number of places we commission.

ii. Work is underway to improve the data available to inform improved medium to longer term SEND provision planning, and to provide more accurate short-term planning data based on information held on children and their likely requirements and preferences pre Year R and Year 7 entry. Commissioning numbers over the last few years have been based on historical patterns. With the pupil population changing and the need to include as many children and young people in mainstream education as possible and where appropriate, historical patterns are not a good basis for future commissioning decisions.

---

based on presumed demand), and numbers on roll (numbers of children on roll – this can be more or less than the designated and/or commissioned number).

iii. Overall the position as at June 2025 is that there are 177 commissioned SRP places unfilled. We have placed 83 more children in some SRPs than they have been commissioned for.

iv. There are a number of SRPs that have one or two spare places. This is acceptable given the need for some spare capacity for placements that can take place at any point in the academic year. For Hearing Impairment (HI), although the overall numbers are predicted to remain steady, the fluctuations in ages and stages can mean that HI SRPs can have lower numbers at certain points in time. There are however certain designations of SRP where spare capacity is more likely:

- 58 spare places across a number of SRPs for SLCN (increased from last year when there were 37 spare places)
- 24 spare places across the two secondary school SRPs with a designation of SPLD
- 21 spare places across 8 SRPs for Hearing Impairment

2.3 **Equitable provision for children and young people with an EHCP for Vision Impairment:**

i. As part of the overall review, a deep dive was undertaken into SRPs for Hearing Impairment (HI), Vision Impairment (VI) and Physical Disability (PD) to consider the viability, geographical accessibility and demand and to make recommendations to ensure that children and young people with lower incidence complex needs, receive the support they require to remain within mainstream primary and secondary schools, where this is appropriate.

ii. Vision Impairment, as a primary need, is a low incidence need. Less than 1.0% of all Kent EHCPs for school age children and young people have a primary need of VI. In March 2025 there were 67 EHCPs for VI (5 – 16 year-olds) in Kent. Of those 67 children and young people, 34 were attending mainstream schools without an SRP, 20 were in a special school due to the complexity of their needs, and 11 were attending a mainstream school with an SRP. Of those 11 children and young people, only 5 are currently attending a mainstream primary or secondary school with an SRP that is solely for, or includes a designation of VI. The others are attending SRPs that have other designations such as Profound, Severe and Complex needs (PSCN).

iii. Currently KCC has two SRPs with a designation that is solely for VI. These are at The Charles Dickens School, Broadstairs (Barton Court Academy Trust) and Morehall Primary School, Folkestone (Turner Schools Trust). From September 2025, Morehall will have one VI pupil in its SRP and The Charles Dickens School will have two students.

iv. There are an additional two SRPs that include VI within their designation. These are Reculver CE Primary School (Diocese of Canterbury Academy Trust) and The Archbishops School, Canterbury (Foundation School). KCC also has one provision that has not been set up as an SRP but is looking to formalise its position as an SRP and redesignate to ensure it is meeting local

needs, this is Bromstone Primary School, Broadstairs (Foundation School). Across these school's SRPs in September 2025, Reculver will have one pupil with VI, Bromstone one pupil with VI and The Archbishop's School will have none.

v. All current SRPs, whether solely for VI or including VI within their designation are in East and South Kent. The low numbers of children and young people in provisions with VI as their designation as well as the location of current provisions only in the east and south of the County means that the viability and accessibility of these SRPs is an issue. The low numbers of children with VI requiring support from an SRP also prohibits expansion of similar provision across the County. As schools have become more inclusive, new accommodation is designed to be more accessible and with improvements in technology, increased numbers of children and young people with vision impairments are choosing to attend their local mainstream schools. These children are supported by the Qualified Teachers for Vision Impairment and other VI specialists from the KCC Specialist Teaching Services for Children and Young People with Sensory Impairment and/or Physical Disabilities: Sensory Impairment in Mainstream Schools - KELSI and Physical Disability and Complex Medical Needs - KELSI. The Vision Impairment specialists in this team also support schools with SRPs for VI where there has been a gap in recruitment of a qualified teacher for VI.

2.4 **Social, Emotional and Mental Health SRPs:**

i. Only five SRPs designated for SEMH needs were established and were all primary SRPs. Four were in new schools: Thistle Hill (Swale) and Finberry (Ashford) with Stour Academy Trust; Holborough Lakes and Leybourne Chase with Valley Invicta Academy Trust, and one in Nonnington CE Primary (an established small VC primary school). Experience has shown that the SRP model of provision is not best suited to supporting children and young people with SEMH, and four of the five provisions have since changed their designation to ASD. No children have been placed in the SRP at Nonnington over the last 6 years due to past challenging circumstances at the school. The provision therefore still exists but is no longer utilised.

ii. As the SRPs for SEMH did not deliver the expected outcomes in relation to supporting children to continue in mainstream education, a deep dive was undertaken by Kent Analytics in October 2022 into SEMH Provision for Children and Young people in mainstream education in Kent made several recommendations:

- Improving early identification of need.
- Improving transition planning and support to children with SEMH, particularly at Year 6 to 7 transition.
- Extending use of "managed moves" between schools to enable fresh starts for young people, where this is judged as suitable.

- Exploration of different approaches to alternative provision for pupils and students with SEMH that enable appropriate time crucial support at points of crisis and enable re-engagement with mainstream education.

iii. In addition to support schools and academies, an SEMH toolkit was developed and is available on kelsi: Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) toolkit - KELSI and NurtureUK was commissioned by KCC to run a three year programme of whole school approaches to Nurture for mainstream primary and secondary schools in Kent.

2.5 Post 16:

i. All secondary age SRPs were consulted on and set up to provide places for young people in Years 7 to 11. There was never the intention to commission them to provide Post 16 places. Only The Malling School is commissioned annually for Post 16 places. Other places are ”spot purchased” as required. The majority of secondary age SRPs do not have Post 16 young people. A few will have one or two in exceptional circumstances, and one, The Malling School, takes a higher number. The expectation is that in the majority of cases, the SRP support the young person will have received pre 16, will equip them to manage in sixth form or move into FE or to another Post 16 provider with lower levels of support. The Local Authority is required by law to ensure any young person with an EHCP is able to access support required to meet their needs as set out in their EHC Plan. This does not necessarily mean that this has to be through a place in an SRP. There will always be a small number of young people with low incidence complex SEND who will continue to require high levels of support to continue into Post 16, even when studying at a higher level e.g. complex hearing impairment or physical disability with medical needs.

ii. As at July 2025 KCC was funding 33 places for Post 16 students in SRPs. 9 students were funded across 7 SRPs, the majority with ASD as their primary need. The remaining 24 were attending the SRP at The Malling School (Foundation). Nine students had a primary need of Speech, Language and Communication (SLCN), 13 were for Autistic Spectrum disorder (ASD), one for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and another for Specific Learning Difficulty (SPLD).

iii. A recent audit of Post 16 SRP places indicated that the majority of those in SRPs at Post 16 are following A level or Level 3 courses.

2.6 Broadening designations

i. Extensive work has taken place with the school community on the Continuum of Provision. This describes the degree of adaptation that is required to enable the individual pupil to access the curriculum. It is the degree of adaptation to meet need, rather than the need itself, that will underpin future funding arrangements. The current mechanism of designating SRPs for a specific need type results in C&YP needing to crisscross areas of the county to attend an appropriate SRP. We have 8 schools that have multiple designations, an arrangement that helps keep provision more local.

Warwickshire, for example have “Communication and interaction” SRPs which provide support for C&YP with ASD and/or SLCN. Discussions with existing SRP schools and those seeking to host an SRP has found significant support for SRPs meeting a wider range of need, particularly needs that have at their heart communication – ASD, SLCN, HI. This can also be extended to SEMH needs in certain circumstances.

3. Proposals

3.1 Access to Local Provision:

i. The Commissioning Plan for Education in Kent 2026-30 (Tables 8c to 8f) set out proposals to address the SRP place gaps and to expand the amount of provision in this part of the continuum. These proposals expand current provision, establish new provision and, in some cases, amend or expand the designations of current SRPs in order that they are better placed to meet local SEND need.

ii. Subject to the direction of travel being agreed, individual proposals contained in the Commissioning Plan for Education in Kent 2026-30 (Tables 8c to 8f and 8g) will be progressed. Any plans that are not currently reflected in the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2026-30 will be reflected in the revised Plan for 2027 to 2031.

iii. The statutory and democratic process for each proposal would depend on the status of the school relating to each proposal. For example:

- For proposals to establish or alter SEN provision (e.g. SRP) in any local authority maintained school (to include Community, Voluntary Aided, Voluntary Controlled and Foundation schools), the “Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools ” August 2025 statutory guidance would apply and the decision maker in these cases would be the Local Authority. The decision making process would also address any decisions required around capital funding (if applicable).
- For proposals to establish or alter SEN provision (e.g. SRP) in an academy, the “Making significant changes to an academy”, August 2025 non-statutory guidance would apply. Under this guidance, some proposals such as expansion to a current SRP in an academy may fall below the threshold for any process e.g. those where proposed expansions are of 20 places or less, or are 20% or less of the overall school capacity (whichever is smaller). For proposals covering the establishment of new SRPs, or expansions above the threshold, full consultation will be required, plus the submission of a Tier 1 screening form to the DfE by the relevant Trust. This can only be made once consultation has taken place and any decisions on required funding have been made.
- The Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education has existing delegated authority in respect of revenue and capital approvals

up to £1m providing the expenditure is within the approved budget. However in order to expedite delivery to support children and young people, and to avoid any ambiguity, it is proposed to authorise the Corporate Director to (a) to approve, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, statutory proposals where the Local Authority is the decision maker, and (b) make funding decisions on behalf of the Local Authority, including those involving capital allocations over £1m and in such cases in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.

- This delegated authority to the Corporate Director is strictly limited to the implementation of the proposals set out in Tables 8c to 8f/g of the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026–30 and must remain within the overall approved allocation of £20 million from the High Needs Capital Grant.
- An Officer Record of Decision will be made in cases where the Local Authority is the decision maker and/or those where capital expenditure exceeds £1m.

3.2 **Commissioned Numbers vs Capacity**

i. The annual process of the Local Authority agreeing "commissioned places" (funded places) with Special Schools and SRPs for 2026/2027 and subsequent submission to the DfE in November has taken place and is intended to reflect actual need rather than historic commissioned numbers. This alongside the changes to the SEN "top up" funding will mean that a number of the smaller SRPs will be looking to expand their SEN designations. This will fit with the Local Authority's desire to educate more children and young people within their own local communities, wherever possible. Proposals to broaden designations of some SRPs are included in the Commissioning Plan for Education in Kent 2026-30 (Table 8g).

3.3 **Equitable provision for children and young people with an EHCP for Vision Impairment:**

i. As set out in paragraph 2.3 above, more children with VI needs are successfully accessing education in their local mainstream schools, thereby reducing demand for SRP places for this need type. These children are supported by the Qualified Teachers for Vision Impairment and other VI specialists from the KCC Specialist Teaching Services for Children and Young People with Sensory Impairment and/or Physical Disabilities. It is proposed that all children and young people with VI will be able to attend their local mainstream schools, if appropriate, and will be supported by the KCC Specialist team providing peripatetic services across the County.

ii. It is proposed that the LA cease commissioning places from VI SRPs to support children and young people with VI needs.

iii. It should be noted that children and young people currently attending VI SRPs will not be detrimentally impacted. They will remain in the mainstream schools they currently attend and will receive continuing support from specialist teachers and staff.

iv. Should the recommendation be agreed, there will be implications for the SRPs that are no longer commissioned to provide for VI needs. The Qualified Teachers for VI currently employed in relation to the VI SRPs (all are employed by Academy Trusts) carry additional duties within their schools and will not be detrimentally impacted by these proposals. The appropriate academy trust will need to determine how it wishes to proceed, for example seeking a change of designation for the SRP, or seeking to have it removed. Appropriate processes will need to be followed as identified above.

v. Consultation will take place with families and pupils affected and with staff should these proposals go forward.

3.4 **Social, Emotional and Mental Health SRPs:**

i. The proposal is to confirm the current position as the Authority's policy position, that it does not commission support for pupils with SEMH needs via SRPs.

ii. The implication of this proposal, if agreed would be that the SRP at Nonnington Primary school, that has not be utilised for more than six years, needs to be formally decommissioned via the appropriate process.

iii. Future provision for children and young people with SEMH needs to be informed by the outcomes from current pilot approaches and further work with Kents' maintained special schools for SEMH and their local mainstream schools.

3.5 **Post 16:**

i. It is proposed that KCC adheres to its original position of only commissioning Secondary SRP places for young people in Years 7 to 11. Exceptional cases will be considered on a case by case basis.

3.6 **Broadening designations**

i. It is proposed, therefore, that a number of existing SRPs and new SRPs broaden their provision, with their designations extended accordingly to provide ASD, SLCN and HI (where appropriate as HI requires a qualified teacher of the deaf). It is recommended that an evolutionary approach is taken with schools, such that those that support a broadening of their SRPs' designations undergo the necessary statutory processes to achieve this in the first instance. If and when other schools wish to change, the appropriate changes will be undertaken.

4. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk.

4.1 The decision was taken to review SRPs under the wider SEND Transformation Programme. Kent's high Dedicated Schools Grant deficit, its commitment made to the DfE under Kent's Safety Valve agreement and its Accelerated Progress Plan all meant the option of 'do nothing' and not carrying out the review was not a viable option.

4.2 The option of not delivering additional SRP places is not viable. The outcomes of the SRP panel demonstrates that children who require the level of adaptation of the curriculum to need specialist provision is such that without additional maintained SRP places, the Authority will continue to be dependent upon high-cost placements in the independent special school sector. The SEND Sufficiency Plan sets out the evidence base for the requirement for additional provision.

4.3 The option of continuing with the current approach to VI SRPs would not address the issues of lack of equity in provision, or viability of the current provisions.

5. Financial Implications

Capital

5.1 Capital costs related to proposals to commission new SRPs and/or expand current SRPs to meet provision pathway and geographical gaps and meet growth in demand will be funded through KCC's High Needs Capital Grant allocations provided by the Department of Education (DfE). This capital grant is provided an annual basis to support high needs provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities or requiring alternative provision. The grant can be used to either create new school places, improve existing facilities or/and support mainstream inclusion.

5.2 The annual grant allocations are combined, along with other specific funding sources, to fund the programme of works to support the development of High Needs Provision across Kent. The programme has been running since 2020-21 with a total combined annual budget of just under £109m of which, £67m has been either spent or committed to current known schemes (as at Quarter 1 2025 capital monitoring reported to Cabinet in September 2025). The balance of £41.5m is intended to support new projects, such as the sufficiency of SRPs and special school places and SEND support in mainstream schools.

5.3 The estimated cost of delivering the accommodation required to deliver the additional SRP places set out in the Commissioning Plan for Education in Kent 2026-30 (Tables 8c to 8f) is £20m.

5.4 These costs sit alongside those for capital investment in special schools and initiatives to make environmental changes to mainstream schools to support inclusion.

5.5 Projects will be prioritised to ensure costs remain within the overall budget allocated.

Revenue:

5.6 The Council commissions schools to provide the support and provision provided in an SRP on a day-to-day basis, normally by paying a pre-agreed rate per place. The Council funds the revenue costs of SRP places from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant, a specific ring-fenced revenue grant from the DfE.

5.7 The rate paid per place by the Council is currently under review and is subject to the implementation of a new funding model that is expected from September 2026. In addition, a revised contract/service level agreement is also expected to be introduced with school/Trusts running SRPs at the same time. The revenue cost and associated savings to address demand and pathway gaps as outlined in Section 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 and 3.2 will be set out in the Kent Commissioning Plan. However, this policy is designed to reduce the number of unfilled commissioned places and improve value for money. The revenue cost of funding unfilled places as set out in Section 2.2 iii is between £1,062,000 and £1,770,000 per year. Reducing the number of ongoing unfilled places would be a direct saving to the Grant.

5.8 The implementation of the changes to VI designations outlined in Section 2.3 and 3.3 is expected to have a small financial benefit to the local authority. With the average cost of support funded by the Local Authority reducing from around £21,000 to around £15,000 per annum.

5.9 The proposals to adhere to the current policy regarding SEMH and Post 16 (as outlined in sections 2.4, 2.5. 3.4 and 3.5) are expected to be cost neutral.

5.10 The Council is currently overspending on its High Needs Block by approximately £55m-£60m per year of which the use of more specialist provision such as state-funded or independent special schools, rather than supporting children to remain more locally in their mainstream school, has been highlighted as a key contributing factor to this position. Whilst there is no direct cost of SRPs to the General Fund, the Council is part of the Safety Valve Programme, a DfE initiative to support Local Authorities with the highest deficits, of which the Council has agreed to contribute a total of £82m between 2022-23 and 2027-28 to help reduce the accumulated deficit, alongside an extra £140m from DfE. The DfE funding is contingent on the development of a plan to achieve value for money within the existing SEN regulatory framework and to aim to reach an in-year breakeven position by the end of 2027-28. Reducing the Council's reliance on specialist education placements is a key part of the strategy to achieve this, and the use of SRPs in providing a wider more specialist SEN offer in mainstream, supports this aim. Alongside ensuring the current SRP offer continues to offer Value for Money and meets current demands. In addition, enabling children to be supported more locally will also reduce the cost of school transport, which is a direct cost to the General Fund.

5.11 The implementation of this policy is intended to reduce the demand for more specialist provision, by providing more cost effective alternative offers within mainstream, and ultimately reduce the number of children requiring

independent school places. There is a risk this further expansion may not achieve this. The council has already invested heavily in SRPs and has a greater number of places than national and local averages, whilst still seeing greater numbers being supported in more specialist education settings than other parts of the country. Whilst this policy is designed to reduce this risk, and ensure better use of our offer moving forward, this risk still remains and regular review of the effectiveness of the SRPs will be important to address potential limitation of impact in future years.

6. Legal implications

6.1 Under the Children and Families Act 2014 KCC has a duty 'to support the child and his or her parent, or the young person, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help him or her achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes'. By ensuring we have appropriate provision as locally as possible, we are delivering on our obligation in accordance with this legislation.

6.2 Local Authorities need to deliver their statutory duties and be aware of non-statutory guidance and advice, which relate to children and young people with sensory impairments. These are:

- The Equalities Act which: places duties on local authorities to review support services and in doing so requires Local Authorities to have due regard to the way in which any changes will affect children and young people with a disability (in this case those with a sensory impairment). It specifies the requirement to make well informed, reasonable adjustments for children and young people with a sensory impairment.
- The SEND Code of Practice places requirements on Local Authorities to: provide access to advice from a suitably qualified person as part of the EHCP process and subsequent "assess, plan, do, review" cycles, and make appropriate provision for those with an EHC plan in the 0-25 range.
- The DfE Specification for mandatory qualifications for specialist teachers of deaf/blind children and young people which requires teachers in the Sensory Inclusion Service (or in charge of Units or SRPs) to hold a statutory qualification in Hearing Impairment (HI) or Vision Impairment (VI).
- Sufficiency Duties: KCC is under a statutory duty to contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient primary education and secondary education are available to meet the needs of the population of their area: section 13 of the Education Act 1996 ("the 1996 Act").
- KCC must ensure that its education functions are exercised by the authority with a view to promoting high standards, ensuring fair access to opportunity for education and training, and promoting the fulfilment of learning potential by every person under the age of 20 and those over the age of 20 and for whom an EHC Plan is maintained: section 13A. By section 14, KCC must secure that sufficient schools for providing primary

and secondary education are available for their area, defined as being sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide for all pupils the opportunity of appropriate education.

- Under section 27 of the Children and Families Act 2014 ("the 2014 Act"), KCC is under a duty to keep under review the educational provision, training provision and social care provision made in its area (and outside it) for children and young people who have special educational needs or a disability. KCC must consider the extent to which its provision is sufficient to meet the educational needs, training needs and social care needs of the children and young people concerned.

6.3 All individual proposals to either establish new, expand current or cease current provision will be required to go through the appropriate processes in line with either "Making Significant Changes (prescribed alterations) to Maintained Schools" August 2025 (statutory guidance) or "Making Significant Changes to an Academy" (non-statutory guidance) August 2025). The decision maker varies – the Local Authority in the case of maintained schools, the Secretary of State for Education in respect of academy and free schools. This means that every individual proposal will be required to undertake a public consultation and carry out and publish an Equality Impact Assessment prior to a report being taken through the decision making process relevant to each proposal.

6.4 The public sector equality duty requires KCC, in the exercise of its functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other unlawful conduct prohibited by the act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic; and
- foster good relations between people who share and people who do not share a relevant protected characteristic.
- An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is published alongside this report.

7. Equalities implications

7.1 The review of SRPs was set up as a project under the Council's wider SEND Transformation Programme. The main recommendations from the review will expand provision to enable more children and young people to attend specialist provision in their locality, reducing travel distances and improving choice.

7.2 For young people with vision impairment who live in East and South Kent and are currently able to attend an SRP specifically for VI, they will still receive the full support required from a fully qualified teacher for vision impairment and receive support from suitably qualified specialist staff e.g. braillists. The proposed approach will ensure that all children and young people wherever they live in Kent have access to the same support as close to where they live as possible.

7.3 The confirmation of KCC's current commissioning policy with regard to secondary SRPs being for young people in Years 7 to 11 may have the

potential to impact some young people who were previously attending an SRP at Post 16. All young people are entitled to the support set out within their Education, Health and Care Plan. They will be entitled to this support whether they are in an SRP, mainstream without an SRP, in FE College or other placement. The focus should be on ensuring that young people are equipped to become independent and confident adults and are able to access the Post 16 education or training most appropriate for their needs and future success.

7.4 Proposals to better support those with SEMH will be brought forward in due course. Further research in to evidence based approaches is needed. Additionally, further conversation is needed with the school community on how children and young people can move up and down the continuum of provision quickly and effectively as their circumstances change.

8. Data Protection Implications

8.1 An initial Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) screening has been carried out and submitted which determined, in line with KCC's DPIA policy and the requirements of the UK GDPR, a DPIA is required in relation to the proposals for vision impairment. A full DPIA is published alongside this report.

9. Other corporate implications

9.1 Where proposals involve modification of buildings, the Infrastructure Team will be involved as necessary, with feasibility studies and resultant works being undertaken. Most proposals will involve building works being managed directly by the schools concerned.

9.2 Implementation of the policy choices, if made, will require public consultation on individual solutions proposed, which will require support from the Authority's Engagement and Consultation Team.

9.3 The Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education will need to enter into the relevant contracts with schools and academy trusts. These are standard documents but will require legal support to have sealed as appropriate.

10. Governance

10.1 Key decision 23/00128 delegated authority for the Director of Education and SEND to enter into service level agreements (SLA) and contracts with existing SRP holding schools and trusts. This proposed decision will enable the Director to enter in to the same contract/SLA with schools/trusts hosting newly approved SRPs. The SLA and contracts do not refer to a need type or designation, therefore any agreed changes to designation or the number of pupils supported by an SRP will not require a new SLA or contract to be entered in to.

10.2 The four Assistant Directors Education will undertake or work with trusts to undertake consultations (statutory and non-statutory) on individual proposals

and to produce the relevant reports/applications to enable the relevant decision maker (Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education and the Secretary of State) to determine proposals. Local Members will be consulted on proposals in their divisions, and consultation documents can be sent to the Members of this Cabinet Committee. Delivery of commissioning intentions will be contained in the 2027-31 iteration of the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent.

11. Conclusions

11.1 Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) are a key component of KCC's continuum of specialist education provision. The evidence from the review and associated "deep dives" supports targeted growth of SRPs across Kent in order to ensure children and young people have equitable access to local specialist provision that enables them to succeed in mainstream education.

11.2 With a focus on a sustainable financial model that delivers excellent outcomes, the proposed changes to VI provision and confirmation of alternative approaches to supporting children and young people with SEMH in mainstream schools will further ensure that the needs of all learners are met effectively and inclusively.

12. Background Documents

- *Equality Impact Assessment*
- *Data Protection Impact Assessment*
- *Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026-30 (Decision:25/00099)*

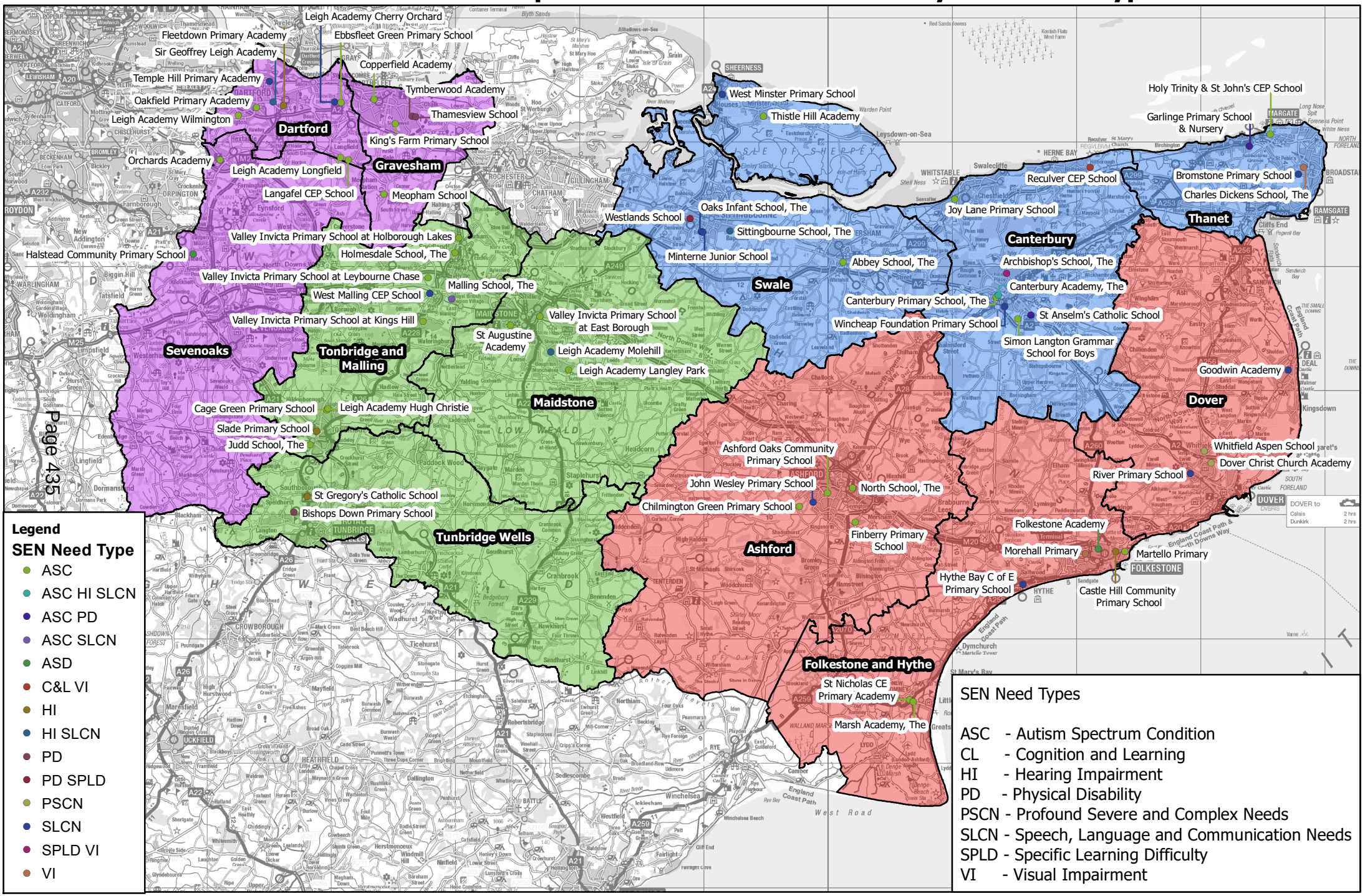
13. Appendices

Appendix One: Map of current Specialist Resource Provisions
Appendix Two: DfE recognised SEND need type definitions
Appendix Three: Travel patterns for children with EHCPs attending SRPs 2025
Appendix Four: Proposed Record of Decision (PRoD)

14. Contact details

Report Author: Siobhan Price/ Marisa White Job title: Assistant Director School Inclusion /Inclusion Officer Telephone number: 03000414211 Email address: siobhan.price@kent.gov.uk Marisa.white@kent.gov.uk	Director: *Christine McInnes* Job title: Director Education and SEN Telephone number: 03000 418913 Email address: christine.mcinnes@kent.gov.uk

Kent Schools with Specialist Resource Provision by SEN Need Type



Legend

SEN Need Type

- ASC
- ASC HI SLCN
- ASC PD
- ASC SLCN
- ASD
- C&L VI
- HI
- HI SLCN
- PD
- PD SPLD
- PSCN
- SLCN
- SPLD VI
- VI

SEN Need Types

ASC - Autism Spectrum Condition
CL - Cognition and Learning
HI - Hearing Impairment
PD - Physical Disability
PSCN - Profound Severe and Complex Needs
SLCN - Speech, Language and Communication Needs
SPLD - Specific Learning Difficulty
VI - Visual Impairment

Management Information, KCC
29/09/2025

Source: SEN Provision Planning Toolkit, MI Schools Database

(C) Crown Copyright. All rights reserved 100019238, 2025

This page is intentionally left blank

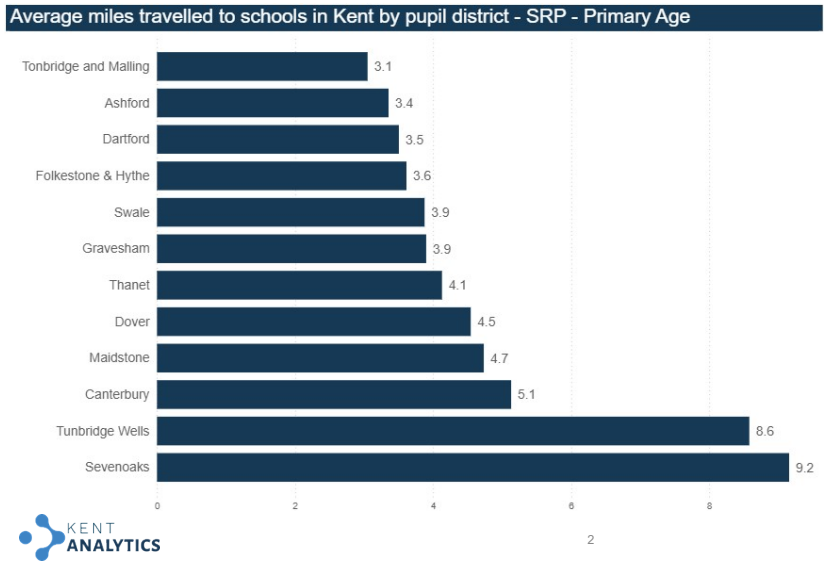
Appendix 2

School SEN type

Code	Description
SPLD	Specific learning difficulty
MLD	Moderate learning difficulty
SLD	Severe learning difficulty
PMLD	Profound and multiple learning difficulty
SEMH	Social, emotional and mental health
SLCN	Speech, language and communication needs
HI	Hearing impairment
VI	Vision impairment
MSI	Multi-sensory impairment
PD	Physical disability
ASD	Autistic spectrum disorder
OTH	Other difficulties/disability – to be applied in exceptional circumstances where the primary type of need has not yet been established

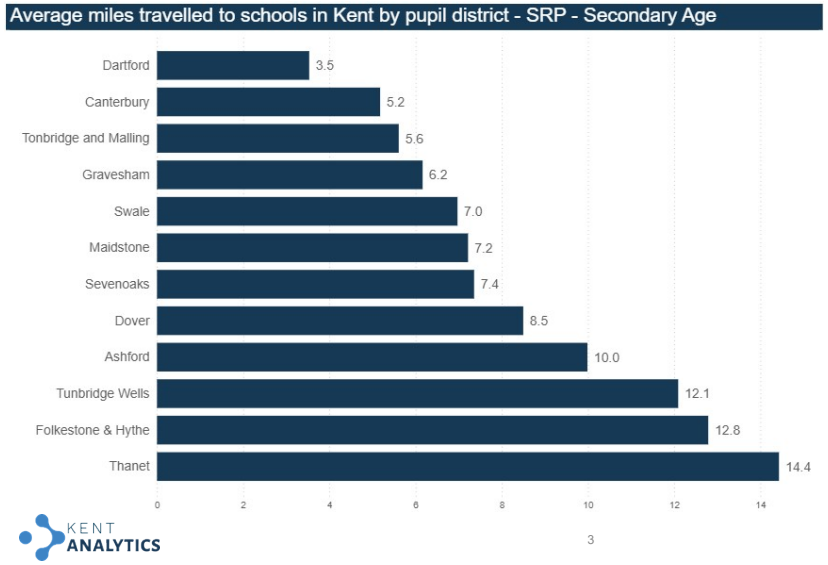
This page is intentionally left blank

Average Miles Travelled to KCC Schools with SRP – Primary Age



The average distance in miles between a primary age pupil's home address and their KCC school with SRP varied from 3.1 miles in Tonbridge and Malling to 9.2 miles in Sevenoaks

Average Miles Travelled to KCC Schools with SRP – Secondary Age



The average distance in miles between a secondary age pupil's home address and their KCC school with SRP varied from 3.5 miles in Dartford to 14.4 miles in Thanet

This page is intentionally left blank

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NUMBER:
Beverly Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	25/00085

For publication *[Do not include information which is exempt from publication under schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972]*

Key decision: YES

Key decision criteria. The decision will:

a) be significant in terms of its effects on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions – which will include those decisions that involve:

- *the adoption or significant amendment of major strategies or frameworks;*
- *significant service developments, significant service reductions, or significant changes in the way that services are delivered, whether County-wide or in a particular locality.*

Subject Matter / Title of Decision: Specialist Resource Provision Review and Commissioning Intentions

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree to:

I. APPROVE the change in the model of support to children and young people with Vision Impairment from SRP provision, to being supported by the KCC Specialist team in their local mainstream school.

II. APPROVE and adopt the a policy position not to commission places in SRPs with a designation of Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH).

III. Confirm the policy position, that Secondary SRP places are commissioned for Years 7-11 only, with exceptions being considered on a case by case basis.

IV. APPROVE the allocation of £20m of the High Needs Capital Grant to enable the delivery of an increase in commissioned SRP places, in line with the proposals set out in Tables 8c to 8f of the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026-30.

V. DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education to enter in to all and any necessary negotiations, consultations and contracts to commission the increase in SRP places set out in Tables 8c to 8f of the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026-30, to change the designations of existing SRPs as set out in Table 8g of the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026-30, and to decommission SRP provisions to implement the decisions set out at I. and II. above,

VI. DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills to issue public notices, and approve proposals on behalf of the Local Authority.

VII. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education to approve capital expenditure on individual SRP proposals contained in Tables 8c to 8f of the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026-30 provided that the total capital expenditure remains within the agreed £20m, and in cases involving capital expenditure above £1m, such approval to be made in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.

VIII. DELEGATE authority to the Director for Education and Special Educational Needs to enter into contracts and service level agreements (SLAs) with mainstream primary and secondary schools that provide either new or existing Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs), on behalf of Kent County Council under the current contract/SLA in place agreed under key decision 23/00128.

Reason(s) for decision:

Background:

The Department for Education (DfE) expects Local Authorities (LA) to manage their specialist estates efficiently to avoid detriment to schools' education offers, creating disadvantage to children and young people who have special educational needs (SEND), or the LA's financial position. This means ensuring the sustainability of maintained specialist school places that are appropriately matched to need-type, phases of education and geographical locations.

A review of Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) identified pathway (primary to secondary), geographical and demand gaps in our current SRP structure. These gaps have led to children and young people in some areas of the County having to travel considerable distances to access appropriate specialist provision to meet their educational needs, some having to move into special schools when they transition from primary to secondary school due to a lack of secondary school SRP provision, and due to insufficient SRP capacity against demand in some areas and for some SEN need types, children and young people being placed in independent and non-maintained specialist provision at high cost.

All current SRPs, whether solely for VI or including VI within their designation are in East and South Kent. The low numbers of children and young people in provisions with VI as their designation as well as the location of current provisions only in the east and south of the County means that the viability and accessibility of these SRPs is an issue. The low numbers of children with VI requiring support from an SRP also prohibits expansion of similar provision across the County. As schools have become more inclusive, new accommodation is designed to be more accessible and with improvements in technology, increased numbers of children and young people with visual impairments are choosing to attend their local mainstream schools. These children are supported by the Qualified Teachers for Visual Impairment and other VI specialists from the KCC Specialist Teaching Services for Children and Young People with Sensory Impairment and/or Physical Disabilities: Sensory Impairment in Mainstream Schools - KELSI and Physical Disability and Complex Medical Needs - KELSI. The Visual Impairment specialists in this team also support schools with SRPs for VI where there has been a gap in recruitment of a qualified teacher for VI.

Equality Implications:
The review of SRPs was set up as a project under the Council's wider SEND Transformation Programme. The main recommendations from the review will expand provision to enable more children and young people to attend specialist provision in their locality, reducing travel distances and improving choice.

For young people with visual impairment who live in East and South Kent and are currently able to attend an SRP specifically for VI, they will still receive the full support required from a fully qualified teacher for visual impairment and receive support from suitably qualified specialist staff e.g. braillists. The proposed approach will ensure that all children and young people wherever they live in Kent have access to the same support as close to where they live as possible.

Financial Implications:
Capital costs related to proposals to commission new SRPs and/or expand current SRPs to meet provision pathway and geographical gaps and meet growth in demand will be funded through KCC's High Needs Capital Grant allocations provided by the Department of Education (DfE). This capital grant is provided an annual basis to support high needs provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities or requiring alternative provision. The grant can be used to either create new school places, improve existing facilities or/and support mainstream inclusion.

The Council commissions schools to provide the support and provision provided in an SRP on a day-to-day basis, normally by paying a pre-agreed rate per place. The Council funds the revenue

costs of SRP places from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant, a specific ring-fenced revenue grant from the DfE.

The rate paid per place by the Council is currently under review and is subject to the implementation of a new funding model that is expected from September 2026. In addition, a revised contract/service level agreement is also expected to be introduced with school/Trusts running SRPs at the same time.

Legal Implications:

The requirements placed on a local authority are defined in the Education Act 1996 (as amended), Education and Skills Act 2008, Education and Inspections Act 2006, Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 and the Equality Act 2010.

Under the Children and Families Act 2014 KCC has a duty 'to support the child and his or her parent, or the young person, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help him or her achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes'. By ensuring we have appropriate provision as locally as possible, we are delivering on our obligation in accordance with this legislation.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

This decision will be considered at the meeting of the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 18th November 2025.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

The decision was taken to review SRPs under the wider SEND Transformation Programme. Kent's high Dedicated Schools Grant deficit, its commitment made to the DfE under Kent's Safety Valve agreement and its Accelerated Progress Plan all meant the option of 'do nothing' and not carrying out the review was not a viable option.

The option of continuing with the current approach to VI SRPs would not address the issues of lack of equity in provision, or viability of the current provisions.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

None

....

signed date

This page is intentionally left blank

EQIA Submission – ID Number
Section A

EQIA Title
Specialist Resource Provision Review and Commissioning Intentions

Responsible Officer
Marisa White - CY EDSEN

Approved by (Note: approval of this EqIA must be completed within the EqIA App)
Siobhan Price - CY EDSEN

Type of Activity

Service Change
Service Change
Service Redesign
No
Project/Programme
Project/Programme
Commissioning/Procurement
No
Strategy/Policy
No
Details of other Service Activity
No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate
Children Young People and Education
Responsible Service
Education and SEND
Responsible Head of Service
Siobhan Price - CY EDSEN
Responsible Director
Christine McInnes - CY EDSEN

Aims and Objectives

The Department for Education expects Local Authorities (LA) to manage their specialist estates efficiently to avoid detriment to schools' educational offers, creating disadvantage to children and young people who have special educational needs (SEND), or the LA's financial position. This means ensuring the sustainability of maintained specialist school places that are appropriately matched to need-type, phases of education and geographical locations.

These proposals sit within the broader context of KCC's transformation of SEND system, working to ensure equitable provision for all children and young people throughout the County and improve outcomes for Kent's most vulnerable children. The programme includes the introduction of a school-to-school model of support (communities of schools) aligned with Health Primary Care Networks (PCNs), a review of the service level agreement for Specialist Resource Provisions to be implemented for September 2026; the introduction of a SEND continuum of need and provision designed to support decision making around support for children and young people, and work on a new funding model to support children and young people with SEND in accessing the curriculum, whether they are being educated in a mainstream school, mainstream with SRP, through an Alternative Curriculum provider or a maintained special school.
The proposals will also come under the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision and KCC's SEND Sufficiency Plan processes in order to ensure alignment with the Capital budget planning and reporting

process.

The proposals aim to ensure that KCC has sufficient choice of planned provision geographically across the continuum of education: mainstream schools, mainstream schools with specialist resource provision (SRPs), and special schools, focussing on SRPs in this instance. Provision must be financially viable to ensure that it can provide the quality of education and specialist support required to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

The aim is to provide additional specialist SEN and disability spaces through new and expanded Specialist Resource Provisions within mainstream schools. The proposals aim to address pathway gaps (primary to secondary gaps in provision), geographical gaps (where children and young people currently have to travel long distances to access appropriate SRP places, and demand gaps (where children and young people are having to be placed in the Independent, non-maintained sectors due to lack of maintained provision).
The proposals aim to enhance current provision and are positive for the local communities as there will be more places available to meet the needs of children and young people in their local area.

With regard to proposals to change the model of support for the few children and young people with visual impairment (VI) who currently attend SPS specifically for VI. The proposals are to expand the current model that operates across most of the County. Provision must be financially viable to ensure that it can provide the quality of education and specialist support required to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

The low numbers of children and young people in provisions with VI as their designation as well as the location of current provisions only in the east and south of the County means that the viability and accessibility of these SRPs is an issue. The low numbers of children with VI requiring support from an SRP also prohibits expansion of similar provision across the County. As schools have become more inclusive, new accommodation is designed to be more accessible and with improvements in technology, increased numbers of children and young people with visual impairments are choosing to attend their local mainstream schools. These children are supported by the Qualified Teachers for Visual Impairment and other VI specialists from the KCC Specialist Teaching Services for Children and Young People with Sensory Impairment and/or Physical Disabilities. It is proposed that all children and young people with VI will be able to attend their local mainstream schools, if appropriate, and will be supported by the KCC Specialist team providing peripatetic services across the County.

It should be noted that children and young people currently attending the provisions that are affected by the proposals will not be detrimentally impacted. They will remain in the mainstream schools they currently attend and will receive continuing support.

The Qualified Teachers for VI currently employed in relation to the VI SRPs (all are employed by Academy Trusts) all carry additional duties within their schools and will not be detrimentally impacted by these proposals. They will retain links to the central team of specialist teachers in order to ensure that their qualifications and practice are kept up to date.

The recommendations for Post 16 are to remain with current policy- that SRP places are for young people in Years 7 to 11, and to be consistent in our approach to placement of young people Post 16, whilst being able to consider exceptional cases. The Local Authority is required by law to ensure any young person with an EHCP is able to access support required to meet their needs as set out in their EHC Plan. This does not necessarily mean that this has to be through a place in an SRP.

Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?

Yes

It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?

Yes

Is there national evidence/data that you can use?

Yes

Have you consulted with stakeholders?

No

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?

No. There has been targeted consultation as part of the review and gap analysis. This consultation has been with maintained mainstream and special schools and partner organisations. There has not been any public consultation to include service users. It is intended that this will take place linked to individual proposals as they are brought forward through the recognised statutory and democratic process and in accordance with the following government guidance:
Making significant changes to maintained schools
Making significant changes to an academy
Involved so far:
Maintained schools (including Academies, Academy Trusts, Special Schools and PRUs)
Education and Special Educational Needs staff.
Partner organisations (nhs).

Future (on individual proposal basis):
maintained primary, secondary and special school staff and governing bodies including academies
SRP Lead teachers, SENCOs
Parents of children/young people
KENT PACT
KCC Members
Kent MPs
District/Borough/City Councils
All relevant partner agencies
Cof E and RC Diocesan authorities
Relevant representative groups for relevant SEND need types

Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?

No

Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?

Yes

Section C – Impact

Who may be impacted by the activity?

Service Users/clients

Service users/clients

Staff

Staff/Volunteers

Residents/Communities/Citizens

No

Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?

Yes

Details of Positive Impacts

For children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan, the proposals intend to provide additional specialist SEN and disability spaces through new and expanded Specialist Resource Provisions within mainstream schools. The proposals aim to address pathway gaps (primary to secondary gaps in provision), geographical gaps (where children and young people currently have to travel long distances to access appropriate SRP places, and demand gaps (where children and young people are having to be placed in the Independent, non-maintained sectors due to lack of maintained provision). Where changes are proposed to the designations of current SRPS, these are made to ensure that SRPs can meet the needs of children and young people in their locality.

The proposals (once implemented) should provide more choice for children and young people with SEN who prefer and/or would benefit from remaining with maintained mainstream schools alongside their peers but require the additional support that an SRP brings. They also are designed to reduce the distances some children and young people are currently having to travel to access appropriate provision and enable them to access appropriate education provision more locally.

All children and young people with an EHC Plan for VI who wish to be educated in mainstream schools will be able to attend their local schools and receive the specialist support they require to achieve their potential no matter where in Kent they live.

For children and young people with an EHCP for VI, KCC Specialist Teaching Services for Children and Young People with Sensory Impairment and/or Physical Disabilities will provide the appropriate support to children in their local schools and provide advice, support and training to schools with pupils with complex VI. The Service is already aware of the children with complex VI and the support they require having supported most from birth. The proposed model of support already operates across North and West Kent and in schools without an SRP for VI in East and South Kent.

All children with an Education, Health and Care Plan are entitled to the support set out within that plan no matter whether they attend an SRP or are supported within the mainstream school.

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions

19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age

Are there negative impacts for age?

Yes

Details of negative impacts for Age

Those young people who have been receiving support in an SRP and remain in their mainstream school Post 16 who will no longer be funded for a continued placement in the SRP unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Mitigating Actions for Age

1) Ensure that all decisions that are made in relation to the EHC Needs Assessment, subsequent issuing of an EHC Plan and placements are made consistently in line with decision making protocols and the law.
2) To introduce a robust and well organised procedure for Post 16 transfer, ensuring that all decisions made regarding placements are made consistently and lawfully and that EHCPs are reviewed to reflect the young person's needs as they progress towards adulthood.
3) To ensure that all young people with an EHCP at Post 16 are receiving the support set out within their plan.

Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age

Alice Gleave – SEN Safety Valve Lead

20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability
Are there negative impacts for Disability?
Yes
Details of Negative Impacts for Disability
Yes, children and young people with visual impairment in East and South Kent who will no longer be able to attend an SRP specifically for VI. Those few pupils whose families chose an SRP for VI and lived in East and South Kent would no longer have that option to choose from.
Mitigating actions for Disability
1. The option of an SRP with a different designation if the child/young person also had other SEND needs would remain open. 2. The child/young person would receive full support in their local school from fully qualified teachers for VI and other specialist VI staff via the KCC Specialist Teaching Services for Children and Young People with Sensory Impairment and/or Physical Disabilities.
Responsible Officer for Disability
Rory McDonnell – Head of Specialist Teaching Service
21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex
Are there negative impacts for Sex
No
Details of negative impacts for Sex
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Sex
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Sex
Not Applicable
22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
No
Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race
Are there negative impacts for Race
No
Negative impacts for Race
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Race
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race
Not Applicable
24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief
No
Negative impacts for Religion and belief

Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief
Not Applicable
25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
No
Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
No
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
No
Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
No
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable

From: Beverley Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

From: Christine McInnes, Interim Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education

To: Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee – 18 November 2025

Subject: External Tuition (Special Educational Needs and Disability) – additional funding to enable the allowable extension

Decision no: 25/00097

Key Decision: Yes - overall service value exceeds £1m and affects more than two Electoral Divisions.

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: None

Future Pathway of report: None

Electoral Division: All

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary: This report provides the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee with the background and rationale for increasing the additional funding allocation of £16m to enable the extension of the External Tuition Modified Dynamic Purchasing System (MDPS), which is a joint arrangement with Medway Council.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **ENDORSE,** or **MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS** to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on the Proposed Decision as set out in Appendix A.

1. Introduction

1.1 External Tuition plays a vital role in ensuring that Kent County Council meets its statutory duty under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996[1] to provide suitable education to children and young people who, by reason of illness, exclusion or otherwise, are unable to attend school. For many children with SEND, Tuition provides either a temporary intervention to bridge a gap in school attendance,

[1] Education Act 1996

or a longer-term package of provision agreed under an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where mainstream or specialist placements are not suitable.

1.2 Historically, KCC relied on spot-purchasing arrangements, with individual caseworkers purchasing Tuition directly from providers on an ad hoc basis. This model offered flexibility, however created significant weaknesses which include lack of price control, inconsistent quality, limited provider oversight, and difficulties in monitoring outcomes. A review in 2021–2022 identified substantial risks of safeguarding, financial transparency, equity of access and non-compliance to Spending the Councils Money and Procurement legislation.

1.3 In response, KCC and Medway Unitary Authority jointly procured a Modified Dynamic Purchasing System (MDPS), commencing in September 2023 agreed through this Key Decision - 22/00078. The MDPS allows providers to join the framework on an ongoing basis (subject to quality and safeguarding checks) and enables the Council's to call off Tuition packages in a controlled, transparent way. The joint approach expanded the provider market, gave families and SEND officers a clearer offer, and supported improved financial forecasting.

1.4 The MDPS was commissioned for an initial three-year period to August 2026, with the option of two further one-year extensions. It was initially estimated that the total contract value over five years would be £15m, with £9m allocated for the initial term (£3m per annum). Due to many factors, spend on Tuition has increased significantly, which has been seen nationally, not just in Kent.

1.5 Commissioning practice reviews contracts annually. The Tuition MDPS is due to end within the next 12 months and therefore consideration has been given as to whether to re-procure the contract now, or enact any allowable extensions, subject to contract performance. The Children, Young People and Education Directorate Management Team agreed that the extensions should be enacted to allow stability to the Tuition service and complete operational improvements in purchasing and align to the wider Transformation programme of the SEND service. However, further authorisation is required as the estimated total contract value is likely to be exceeded.

2. Key Considerations

2.1 Good performance of the MDPS has been evidenced in the completion of a Service Review. It shows that the MDPS has delivered a more robust and consistent system for purchasing Tuition services. Providers are subject to quality checks before joining the MDPS and are contractually bound by standardised terms and conditions. Contract Management oversight has confirmed improvements in safeguarding compliance, reporting and outcomes. SEND officers have expressed higher confidence in the reliability of Tuition provision compared to the pre-2023 arrangements.

2.2 The Service Review did identify rising demand and capacity issues as a result of both contracted and non-contracted provision. Between September 2023 and March 2024, 315 Tuition packages were commissioned which increased to 614 by March 2025, an increase of 95% within two academic years.

2.3 SEND officers report several factors that have led to this increase:

- Rising prevalence of complex SEND needs, particularly autism spectrum conditions and anxiety-related school avoidance.
- Shortages of specialist school places, meaning some children wait extended periods for a placement and require interim Tuition.
- Increased use of Tuition as part of Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS) packages agreed through EHCPs.
- A wider societal trend of persistent absence post-pandemic.
- Escalating costs, where the financial impact of rising demand is compounded by increasing provider fees. As an example, the largest provider on the MDPS increased its hourly Tuition rate from £49 to £65 in 2023. While annual fee increases have generally been in line with inflation and labour market pressures, they have nevertheless driven a significant rise in overall spend.

3. Background

3.1 Prior to 2023, Tuition services were purchased on a spot-purchase basis. Caseworkers identified a provider, agreed a rate, and arranged lessons directly. This model does not comply with Spending the Council's Money, nor procurement legislation.

3.2 The rationale for a joint arrangement with Medway Council included creating a larger provider market to improve resilience; achieving economies of scale in procurement and contract management and ensuring consistency across the wider Kent and Medway education system.

3.3 The contract was structured with an initial term of three years (September 2023 to August 2026) with two optional one-year extensions. This had estimated total contract value of £15m, of which £9m was expected for the initial term.

3.4 Emerging pressures exceeded expectations almost immediately. The volume of referrals was 40% higher than forecast in the first year. This has placed pressure on the budget and on operational capacity. Joint governance arrangements introduced have helped mitigate the operational pressures and have also highlighted challenges in managing an expanding area of provision.

3.5 Children's view on the delivery of provision are collected by satisfaction surveys. A dedicated link is sent to each pupil, and a separate link is sent to parents or carers. The surveys capture how pupils and parents think about the Tuition, including whether it is engaging, they are learning new things, that they are listened to, and how well they feel supported to achieve their best. Responses are submitted directly to the SEND service, and the collated results inform the commissioning process, and they are shared with the provider.

4. Options considered and discounted, and associated risk

4.1 Option 1: Re-procure for a new contract to start September 2026 This option would involve commencing a new procurement in 2025.

Benefits would include updated market testing and the opportunity to reset the contract scope and KPIs. However, drawbacks significantly outweigh benefits. The provider market has not changed substantially since 2023, meaning the same providers are likely to re-tender. This option would bring high procurement and transition costs for limited benefit.

4.2 Option 2: Do not extend or re-procure, reverting to spot-purchasing

This would mean allowing the MDPS to end in 2026. This option carries high risks with the loss of contractual oversight, safeguarding checks, and quality assurance. Increased cost through uncontrolled pricing and the risk of failing statutory compliance. It is also likely to create a negative impact for some children and families reliant on continuity of provision.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 External Tuition is funded from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). KCC is currently overspending on its High Needs Block and is part of the Safety Valve Programme. The Department for Education funding is contingent on the development of a plan to achieve value for money with the existing SEN regulatory framework and to aim to reach an in-year breakeven position. Where the continued use of external Tuition is required, it is imperative this is commissioned on a cost-effective basis. The use of the MDPS is expected to support this aim.

5.2 The scale of demand has significantly exceeded projections, with forecast spend of £15m by the end of the initial three-year term, the level originally intended to cover a five-year period. Therefore, this proposal is to increase the contract value by a further £16m for the full extension period, September 2026 to August 2028, based on current spend assuming no mitigating action or further rises in demand.

5.3 The table below shows the current spend profile. The current estimate for 2025–2026 is c£8m. Spend through the contract increased by 117.5% between 2023-2024 (full year) and 2024-2025. This is coupled with demand increasing by 95% (315 to 614 arrangements) between 2023-2024 and 2024-2025

SEND Spend	*2023-2024	Percentage	2024-2025	Percentage
MDPS	**£1,692,568**	**90.20%**	**£6,311,332**	**92.50%**
Non –MDPS	**£129,918**	**6.90%**	**£339,418**	**5%**
Other (refers to direct payments to maintained schools, other LA's and parents.	**£54,351**	**2.90%**	**£175,321**	**2.50%**
Total	**£1,876,837**		**£6,826,072**	

*The Contract started on 1 September 2023. The data shown is 7/12 of the annual spend for contracted providers

5.4 Significant activity is required to address the costs and purchasing practice and to understand the overall impact of the significantly increased demand, alongside all other activity in the SEND Transformation programme. This includes:

- Moving the oversight of Alternative Provision to the Quality Assurance Team to improve management and development of appropriate processes

and protocols. Develop staff expertise and consistency in decision making (i.e. when Tuition is appropriate).
- Introduce measures to improve data recording and management
- Continue to raise awareness of MDPS processes, managing officers who do not follow them.
- Continue to apply robust measures to financial controls and price increase requests.
- Regularly review existing packages of support to determine if packages can be reduced or ended.

5.5 Furthermore, there needs to be greater understanding of the impact of increased use of Section 19 provision requests where Local Authorities are required to arrange suitable alternative education for children of compulsory school age who cannot attend school, along with the rise of Emotional School Based Avoidance and increased requests from parents for EOTAS packages of support, and tribunals agreeing these when previously they may not have.

5.6 Extending the total contract value for the remaining term of the extended contract reflects a more realistic estimate whilst further operational improvements are embedded. For example it enables the SEND Service to embed Tuition purchasing processes fully within the Quality Assurance Team. In parallel, the thematic review of children and young people not in school will inform pathways for reintegration into education and preparation for adulthood.

6. Legal implications

6.1 Under Section 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014[2], a local authority may arrange special educational provision outside of a school setting, but only where it determines that attendance at school would be inappropriate for the child or young person. The local authority retains responsibility for both securing and funding this provision. Misapplication arises when EOTAS is used solely due to lack of available placements, which does not meet the legal threshold under Section 61(2).

6.2 The duty under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 requires every local authority to make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or elsewhere for children who, by reason of illness, exclusion or otherwise, cannot attend school. This duty applies to pupils of compulsory school age, and the provision must be:

- Full-time or as close as possible to full-time, unless medically unfit.
- Suitable to the pupil's age, aptitude, ability, and any SEND.

6.3 This duty is further reinforced by a suite of complementary legislation:
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)[3] – statutory guidance under Section 77
- SEND Regulations 2014[4] – specifically The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 (Regulation 51).

[2] Children and Families Act 2014
[3] SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK
[4] The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

- Equality Act 2010 – section 20[5] requires reasonable adjustments to avoid discrimination against disabled pupils.

6.4 These laws require that all children and young people receive an education that is appropriate to their age, ability, aptitude, and any SEND. In addition, there is a specific legal requirement under Section 39 of the Children and Families Act 2014[6] for local authorities to secure the nearest appropriate school placement capable of meeting the child's needs, unless parents elect otherwise.

6.5 In 2025, the Department for Education issued updated guidance on Alternative Provision (AP)[7]. While Tuition is not explicitly defined within this guidance, local authorities interpret it as falling within the broader Alternative Provision framework, especially where it functions as a substitute or interim arrangement for pupils not in school.

6.6 The MDPS was let under the Public Contract Regulations (2015)[8] and the extension action complies with the legislation. Under the Procurement Act 2023[9], all Dynamic Purchasing Systems have to end by 27 October 2028. It is expected that the recommissioning of a new contract will commence in late 2026, by which time the new landscape for Local Government will be understood. Notwithstanding this, the extension past the 1 April 2028 can be disaggregated to the new landscape, should that be required. If not, notice can be given prior to the end of the extended contract.

6.7 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 establishes the 'public sector equality duty' which is an "have regard to" duty, requiring public bodies to consider equality in their decisions.

7. Equalities implications

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and no high negative impacts have been identified The MDPS supports children who are disproportionately affected by barriers to education, including those with disabilities, long-term illness, or exclusion.

8. Data Protection Implications

8.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessment is in place. Risks include variable data quality, inconsistent use of Synergy codes, and lack of integrated systems across SEND services. Mitigations include data cleansing, improved definitions, centralised recording, and closer oversight by the Quality Assurance Team.

9. Other corporate implications

9.1 Tuition costs contribute to the DSG deficit under the Safety Valve Agreement.

---

[5] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/20

[6] Children and Families Act 2014

[7] Alternative provision - GOV.UK

[8] The Public Contracts Regulations 2015

[9] Procurement Act 2023

9.2 The proposed decision supports the emerging draft Strategic Statement, Reforming Kent 2025 to 2028, this meets draft Aim 3: Supporting Residents that need help, Point 6: Improve processes and outcomes for our SEND services while tackling the unsustainable growth in demand:

10. Governance

10.1 Accountability for the External Tuition (Special Educational Needs and Disability) is with the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education. The responsibility is with the Director of Education and SEN.

11. Conclusions

11.1 The External Tuition MDPS has delivered significant improvements in quality, oversight, and safeguarding since its inception in 2023 and is performing well to meet the decision for the extension. Financial coverage is therefore sought for the contract extension of £16m.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **ENDORSE,** or **MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS** to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on the Proposed Decision as set out in Appendix A.

---

12. Background Documents

- Equality Impact Assessment
- Data Protection Impact Assessment

13. Contact details

Report Author: Christy Holden Job title: Head of Children's Commissioning Telephone number: 03000 415356 Email address: christy.holden@kent.gov.uk	Director: Christine McInnes Job title: Director of Education and SEND Telephone number: 03000 418913 Email address: Christine.mcinnes@kent.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NUMBER:
Beverley Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	25/00097

For publication

Key decision: YES

Subject Matter / Title of Decision External Tuition (Special Educational Needs and Disability) – additional funding to enable the allowable extension

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree to:

a) Approve an additional £16 million funding allocation, increasing the total contract value to £31 million, to enable the extension of the SEND External Tuition Modified Dynamic Purchasing System (MDPS) contract to 31 August 2028

b) DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education to take other relevant actions, including but not limited to finalising the terms of and entering into required contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision to extend.

Reason(s) for decision:

External Tuition plays a vital role in ensuring that Kent County Council meets its statutory duty under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996[1] to provide suitable education to children and young people who, by reason of illness, exclusion or otherwise, are unable to attend school. For many children with SEND, Tuition provides either a temporary intervention to bridge a gap in school attendance, or a longer-term package of provision agreed under an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where mainstream or specialist placements are not suitable.

The Modified Dynamic Purchasing System (MDPS) was commissioned for an initial three-year period to August 2026 Key Decision - 22/00078, with the option of two further one-year extensions. It was initially estimated that the total contract value over five years would be £15m, with £9m allocated for the initial term (£3m per annum). Due to many factors, spend on Tuition has increased significantly, which has been seen nationally, not just in Kent.

Commissioning practice reviews contracts annually. The Tuition MDPS is due to end within the next 12 months and therefore consideration has been given as to whether to re-procure the contract now, or enact any allowable extensions, subject to contract performance. The Children, Young People and Education Directorate Management Team agreed that the extensions should be enacted to allow stability to the Tuition service and complete operational improvements in purchasing and align

[1] Education Act 1996

to the wider Transformation programme of the SEND service. However, further authorisation is required as the estimated total contract value is likely to be exceeded.

Financial Implications

External Tuition is funded from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). KCC is currently overspending on its High Needs Block and is part of the Safety Valve Programme. The Department for Education funding is contingent on the development of a plan to achieve value for money with the existing SEN regulatory framework and to aim to reach an in-year breakeven position. Where the continued use of external Tuition is required, it is imperative this is commissioned on a cost-effective basis. The use of the MDPS is expected to support this aim.

The scale of demand has significantly exceeded projections, with forecast spend of £15m by the end of the initial three-year term, the level originally intended to cover a five-year period. Therefore, this proposal is to increase the contract value by a further £16m for the full extension period, September 2026 to August 2028, based on current spend assuming no mitigating action or further rises in demand.

The table below shows the current spend profile. The current estimate for 2025–2026 is c£8m. Spend through the contract increased by 117.5% between 2023-2024 (full year) and 2024-2025. This is coupled with demand increasing by 95% (315 to 614 arrangements) between 2023-2024 and 2024-2025

SEND Spend	*2023-2024	Percentage	2024-2025	Percentage
MDPS	**£1,692,568**	**90.20%**	**£6,311,332**	**92.50%**
Non –MDPS	**£129,918**	**6.90%**	**£339,418**	**5%**
Other (refers to direct payments to maintained schools, other LA's and parents.	**£54,351**	**2.90%**	**£175,321**	**2.50%**
Total	**£1,876,837**		**£6,826,072**	

*The Contract started on 1 September 2023. The data shown is 7/12 of the annual spend for contracted providers

Significant activity is required to address the costs and purchasing practice and to understand the overall impact of the significantly increased demand, alongside all other activity in the SEND Transformation programme. This includes:

- Moving the oversight of Alternative Provision to the Quality Assurance Team to improve management and development of appropriate processes and protocols. Develop staff expertise and consistency in decision making (i.e. when Tuition is appropriate).
- Introduce measures to improve data recording and management
- Continue to raise awareness of MDPS processes, managing officers who do not follow them.
- Continue to apply robust measures to financial controls and price increase requests.
- Regularly review existing packages of support to determine if packages can be reduced or ended.

Furthermore, there needs to be greater understanding of the impact of increased use of Section 19 provision requests where Local Authorities are required to arrange suitable alternative education for children of compulsory school age who cannot attend school, along with the rise of Emotional School Based Avoidance and increased requests from parents for EOTAS packages of support, and

tribunals agreeing these when previously they may not have.

Extending the total contract value for the remaining term of the extended contract reflects a more realistic estimate whilst further operational improvements are embedded. For example, it enables the SEND Service to embed Tuition purchasing processes fully within the Quality Assurance Team. In parallel, the thematic review of children and young people not in school will inform pathways for reintegration into education and preparation for adulthood.

Legal implications

Under Section 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014[2], a local authority may arrange special educational provision outside of a school setting, but only where it determines that attendance at school would be inappropriate for the child or young person. The local authority retains responsibility for both securing and funding this provision. Misapplication arises when EOTAS is used solely due to lack of available placements, which does not meet the legal threshold under Section 61(2).

The duty under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 requires every local authority to make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or elsewhere for children who, by reason of illness, exclusion or otherwise, cannot attend school. This duty applies to pupils of compulsory school age, and the provision must be:

- Full-time or as close as possible to full-time, unless medically unfit.
- Suitable to the pupil's age, aptitude, ability, and any SEND.

This duty is further reinforced by a suite of complementary legislation:

- SEND Code of Practice (2015)[3] – statutory guidance under Section 77
- SEND Regulations 2014[4] – specifically The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 (Regulation 51).
- Equality Act 2010 – section 20[5] requires reasonable adjustments to avoid discrimination against disabled pupils.

These laws require that all children and young people receive an education that is appropriate to their age, ability, aptitude, and any SEND. In addition, there is a specific legal requirement under Section 39 of the Children and Families Act 2014 for local authorities to secure the nearest appropriate school placement capable of meeting the child's needs, unless parents elect otherwise.

In 2025, the Department for Education issued updated guidance on Alternative Provision (AP) [6]. While Tuition is not explicitly defined within this guidance, local authorities interpret it as falling within the broader Alternative Provision framework, especially where it functions as a substitute or interim arrangement for pupils not in school.

The MDPS was let under the Public Contract Regulations (2015)[7] and the extension action complies with the legislation. Under the Procurement Act 2023[8], all Dynamic Purchasing Systems have to end by 27 October 2028. It is expected that the recommissioning of a new contract will commence in late 2026, by which time the new landscape for Local Government will be understood. Notwithstanding this, the extension past the 1 April 2028 can be disaggregated to the new landscape, should that be required. If not, notice can be given prior to the end of the extended contract.

[2] Children and Families Act 2014
[3] SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK
[4] The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
[5] Equality Act 2010
[6] Alternative provision - GOV.UK
[7] The Public Contracts Regulations 2015
[8] Procurement Act 2023

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 establishes the ‘public sector equality duty’ which is an “have regard to” duty, requiring public bodies to consider equality in their decisions.

Equalities implications

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed, and no high negative impacts have been identified The MDPS supports children who are disproportionately affected by barriers to education, including those with disabilities, long-term illness, or exclusion.

Data Protection Implications

A Data Protection Impact Assessment is in place. Risks include variable data quality, inconsistent use of Synergy codes, and lack of integrated systems across SEND services. Mitigations include data cleansing, improved definitions, centralised recording, and closer oversight by the Quality Assurance Team.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Option 1: Re-procure for a new contract to start September 2026 This option would involve commencing a new procurement in 2025.

Benefits would include updated market testing and the opportunity to reset the contract scope and KPIs. However, drawbacks significantly outweigh benefits. The provider market has not changed substantially since 2023, meaning the same providers are likely to re-tender. This option would bring high procurement and transition costs for limited benefit.

Option 2: Do not extend or re-procure, reverting to spot-purchasing

This would mean allowing the MDPS to end in 2026. This option carries high risks with the loss of contractual oversight, safeguarding checks, and quality assurance. Increased cost through uncontrolled pricing and the risk of failing statutory compliance. It is also likely to create a negative impact for some children and families reliant on continuity of provision

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

....

signed date

Analysis of Evidence for the Extension of the External Tuition Service

There is no readily available population dataset for children and young people (CYP) receiving External Tuition in Kent. Therefore, this analysis draws on data extracted from Synergy and financial records covering the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25, to develop a profile of Children and Young People (CYP) receiving External Tuition funded by Kent County Council (KCC).

Synergy IDs were used to match additional personal characteristics from the SENFIO dataset provided by Management Information. A total of 731 unique CYP were identified within the finance dataset, of which 89% were successfully matched to the SENFIO data. This provides a robust sample for analysis and comparison with the wider Kent cohort of CYP with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

The comparative analysis explored characteristics including gender, age, primary need, and district distribution. Ethnicity and deprivation (IMD deciles) were also considered, although no significant differences were found, so these have not been included in this summary.

An analysis of CYP Educated other than at School (EOTAS) was not possible within this report, as the data required to reliably identify this subset was not available at the time of analysis.

Headline Findings

- Growth in demand: The number of CYP receiving External Tuition increased by 19% between 2022/23 and 2023/24, and by a further 81% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. Over the same period, the number of EHCPs increased at a significantly slower rate of 3% and 6% respectively.
- Proportion of EHCP cohort: CYP receiving External Tuition as a proportion of the total EHCP population increased from 1.5% in 2022/23 to 3% in 2024/25.

Profile of CYP Receiving External Tuition (2023/24–2024/25)

- Gender: Males represent 59% of CYP receiving External Tuition compared to 41% females. This mirrors the gender profile of the wider EHCP cohort, where males are also overrepresented.
- Age: The majority of CYP receiving External Tuition are aged 12–17 years (66%), compared with 45% of all CYP with EHCPs. Fewer CYP aged 11 and under access

Tuition, reflecting the greater prevalence of exclusion, anxiety-related non-attendance, and medical needs among secondary-aged pupils.
- Primary Need: The largest group of CYP receiving External Tuition have Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) as their primary need (48%). The second largest group have Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs (35%), which is notably higher than the 19% observed across the overall EHCP cohort. CYP with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) are underrepresented in tuition data (8%) compared with the wider EHCP cohort (17%).
- Ethnicity and Deprivation: Ethnicity was not consistently captured within the available datasets. Analysis of deprivation (IMD deciles) indicated no notable difference between CYP receiving External Tuition and the broader EHCP cohort.

Summary and Implications for Equality

The data evidences that CYP accessing External Tuition are predominantly secondary-aged males with ASD or SEMH as their primary need. These groups are already identified as being at higher risk of exclusion, non-attendance, and educational disengagement.

The increase in Tuition demand demonstrates the continuing need for flexible, high-quality education provision for CYP unable to attend school. Maintaining and extending the current MDPS framework will therefore help ensure equitable access, continuity of education, and robust quality assurance for these disproportionately affected groups.

EQIA Submission – ID Number
Section A

EQIA Title
External Tuition SEND Additional Funding and Allowable Contract Extension

Responsible Officer
Catherine Read - CY CC

Approved by (Note: approval of this EqIA must be completed within the EqIA App)
Alice Gleave - CY EDSEN

Type of Activity

Service Change
No
Service Redesign
No
Project/Programme
No
Commissioning/Procurement
Commissioning/Procurement
Strategy/Policy
No
Details of other Service Activity
No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate
Children Young People and Education
Responsible Service
SEND
Responsible Head of Service
Alice Gleave - CY EDSEN
Responsible Director
Christine McInnes - CY EDSEN

Aims and Objectives

This activity concerns the allowable extension of the SEND External Tuition contract, delivered under the Modified Dynamic Purchasing System (MDPS) framework. The MDPS establishes standard terms and conditions for all suppliers, improving contract management, tools, and available remedies, while ensuring minimum supply capability standards.

External tuition provision forms part of the wider SEND service and fulfils Kent County Council's statutory duty under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996, which requires local authorities to provide suitable education for children and young people who, by reason of illness, exclusion, or other circumstances, cannot attend school.

The service also supports delivery of the Transformation programme of the SEND service.

Associated legislation includes:
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

Annual contract reviews are undertaken through established commissioning practice. As the current tuition MDPS is due to end within the next 12 months, consideration has been given to whether to re-procure or enact an allowable extension, subject to satisfactory performance.

The Children, Young People and Education Directorate Management Team (CYPE DMT) has agreed to enact the extension to ensure service stability, enable operational improvements in purchasing, and align commissioning with the wider transformation programme for SEND.

Contract management oversight confirms improvements in safeguarding compliance, reporting, and outcomes. Providers are subject to due diligence and quality checks prior to joining the MDPS and are contractually bound by standardised terms and conditions.

Section B – Evidence

Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?

Yes

It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?

Yes

Is there national evidence/data that you can use?

No

Have you consulted with stakeholders?

Yes

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?

SEND Management Team
- Operational SEND staff
- Service Review Group
- Approved Providers

Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?

Yes

Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?

Yes

Section C – Impact

Who may be impacted by the activity?

Service Users/clients

Service users/clients

Staff

No

Residents/Communities/Citizens

No

Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?

Yes

Details of Positive Impacts

Consistency and continuity of service for children and young people.
- Strengthened due diligence and safeguarding standards.
- Improved contract management and assurance of provider capability.
- Continued access to suitable education for those unable to attend school due to illness, exclusion, or SEND-related needs.

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions
19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age
Are there negative impacts for age?
Yes
Details of negative impacts for Age
Service is designed for statutory school-age and post-16 learners. Those outside this age range
Mitigating Actions for Age
Low negative impact. This is inherent to statutory responsibilities under the Education Act 1996.
Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age
Alice Gleave
20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability
Are there negative impacts for Disability?
No. Note: If Question 20a is "No", Questions 20b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Details of Negative Impacts for Disability
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Disability
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for Disability
Not Completed
21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex
Are there negative impacts for Sex
No. Note: If Question 21a is "No", Questions 21b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Details of negative impacts for Sex
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Sex
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for Sex
Not Completed
22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
No. Note: If Question 22a is "No", Questions 22b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Completed
23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race
Are there negative impacts for Race
No. Note: If Question 23a is "No", Questions 23b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Race
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Race
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race
Not Completed

24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief
No. Note: If Question 24a is "No", Questions 24b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Religion and belief
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief
Not Completed
25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
No. Note: If Question 25a is "No", Questions 25b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Completed
26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
No. Note: If Question 26a is "No", Questions 26b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Completed
27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
No. Note: If Question 27a is "No", Questions 27b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Completed
28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
No. Note: If Question 28a is "No", Questions 28b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities
Not Completed

This page is intentionally left blank

From: **Beverley Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills**

Christine McInnes, Interim Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education

To: **Children's and Young People's Cabinet Committee – 18th November 2025**

Subject: **School and Early Years Funding Arrangements for 2026-27**

Decision Number and Title **– 25/00092**

Key

- It affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions
- It involves expenditure or savings of maximum £1m – including if over several phases

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: Executive Decision

Electoral Division: ALL

Summary:
The Government has confirmed the Council will remain responsible for setting the School Budgets for primary & secondary schools for 2026-27 and has issued preliminary guidance to support local authorities. The distribution of funding to primary & secondary schools is calculated through the operation of a Local Funding Formula (LFF) and this paper predominately advises Members about the proposed principles in setting the LFF, contained within the School Funding Formula Consultation to schools, ahead of the DfE confirming the final Dedicated Schools Grant allocations in the Autumn. **The consultation is being completed during October and November. This paper is an opportunity for Members of this Committee to comment on these proposals ahead of a key decision being taken by the Cabinet Member in December.**

In addition, Local Authorities are also responsible for agreeing the distribution of funding to early years providers for the Free Entitlement offer for children aged between 9 months and 4 years, for up to 30 hours free children a week (dependent on eligibility) in accordance with Government guidance which is expected to be published in the Autumn. Changes to the rates paid to providers will form part of the same decision in December and this paper highlights the known information at this stage.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education & Skills on the proposed decision as detailed in the Proposed Record of Decision (PRoD) attached at appendix A.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Department of Education (DfE) provides Local Authorities with a specific ring-fenced grant each year to fund the school budgets (mainstream primary & secondary schools), early years free-entitlements for children under 5, high needs (Special Educational Needs Education Placements including special schools) and central services for schools. This is known as the Dedicated Schools Grant. It is the Local Authority responsibility to distribute this funding to schools, eligible early years and to provide SEN services and other services for schools in Kent.

1.2 Historically, Local Authorities were able to design their own formulas to calculate the annual primary and secondary school budget for schools in their area, based on the local needs. Since 2018, the Government has been reforming mainstream school funding (aged 5-11) with the aim to create a system where all schools, regardless of where they are located in the country, are funded based on a single national formula using up-to-date assessment of need that reflects the characteristics of their pupils. The first step was the introduction of the National Funding Formula (NFF) which is now used to both determine the total funding a Local Authority receives from the DfE for primary and secondary schools in their area and, the prescribed factors and allowable rates that a Local Authority can use in designing their own Local Funding Formula (LFF).

1.2 Local Authorities are also responsible for setting the payment rates to early years providers for Free Entitlement Rates for eligible children aged between over 9 months and four-year olds along with the funding rates to support Special Educational Needs across early years, schools and post 16 providers.

1.3 Normally, the Government would publish the planned spending levels for schools in the Summer (July 2025) for the forthcoming financial year (2026-27) which would include detailed guidance and estimated Dedicated School Grant totals. This information has been delayed and is not expected until the Autumn (with no exact date). In the interim, the Government has published a policy document outlining the principles on which Local Authorities can set the schools funding formula for state-funded mainstream schools confirming the local authority responsibilities and outlining the parameters in which each Local Authority LFF must operate.

1.4 At the time of writing little information has been published on either the overall grant funding available for Early Years Entitlements or Local Authority guidance on how to distribute it. This has historically been published later (during the Autumn Term). Like the mainstream schools formula, the DfE set strict parameters for how rates for early years providers can be set by individual local authorities.

1.4 The Council will need to decide how the Kent's LFF for schools and early years providers should change from 1 April 2026 taking into account views from both the schools & early years sector (where appropriate) and the Schools Funding Forum.

1.5 The Schools Funding Forum is a statutory body made up of a representative group of headteachers, governors or other senior members of staff (i.e. school finance manager) within Kent schools including academy trusts, maintained schools, primary, secondary and special schools. Along with Post 16 and Early Years providers.

2. Background

2.1 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding is allocated through 4 separate blocks, with each block calculated using their own nationally set formula (known as a National Funding Formula). Each block has its own rules and Local Authorities cannot transfer funding between blocks without seeking permission from either the Schools Funding Forum or the Secretary of State. The block allocations for Kent for 2025-26 are set out in table 1 below:

Table 1: 2025-26 Dedicated Schools Grant Block Amounts

Schools Block (SB)	High Needs Block (HNB)	Early Years Block (EYB)	Central Schools Services Block (CSSB)
£1,384.134m	£351.901m	£227.215m	£12.907m

2.2 The School Block allocation is the funding available for primary and secondary school core budgets. The allocation is updated each year to reflect the latest pupil numbers (as will be recorded on the October 2025 school census), any increase to reflect the rolling in of grants that were previously received separately by schools, and other general increases relating to either demographic changes or inflationary increases.

2.3 The Government's policy document published in the Summer set out key elements of the National Funding Formula for 2026-27, ahead of confirming detailed funding allocations. There is still no timeline as to when Government intends to complete its ambition for all schools' budgets (for primary & secondary schools) to be based on a single, national formula rather than each Local Authority being responsible for setting their own Local Funding Formula (LFF) to distribute School funding in their area. But to ensure a smooth transition for schools, the Government continues to increasingly tighten the restrictions on Local Authorities when setting their Local Funding Formula for 2026-27. For example: in 2026-27, all local Authorities must include all NFF factors in their local formulae (except the locally determined premises factors) and must also move closer to the NFF rates by at least 10%. Appendix B sets out the factors and rates used in the schools funding formula for 2025-26.

2.4 This paper and the associated consultation with schools focuses on the proposed principles of how the Local Funding Formula in 2026-27 will be set.

This information will be used to support the development of the final proposed decision.

2.5 The High Needs Block is used to fund payments for top up funding to mainstream schools & post 16 providers for individual children with SEN, and Specialist Resource Provisions, Special Schools and Alternative Provision Funding. Along with independent schools and other centrally commissioned SEN support services. The SEN funding modelling is currently being reviewed and any proposed funding changes and/or standard increases will be subject to a separate key decision and presented to Cabinet Committee in January 2026.

2.5 The Early Years Block is used to fund the rates paid to early years providers to deliver the Free Entitlement offer. In 2024, the Government announced a range of measures to support early education and help for parents with childcare so they can return to work more easily. This resulted in a number of changes to the sector including an expansion of the free entitlement offer from a universal/targeted offer for 3 & 4 year olds (& some eligible 2 year olds) to include free childcare up to 30 hours to working parents with children aged over 9 months. The DfE have not yet confirmed whether there will be any changes to the guidance for local authorities in setting the rates for providers however, they have confirmed the amount of funding a local authority can retain to support the delivery of council run (or commissioned) early years education services will be reduced from 4% to 3% of the total Early Years block. The expectation from the DfE is that central budgets will remain relatively static in 2026-27, as the reduction in the proportion of budget that can be retained will be offset to some extent by an increase in total block amount as the roll out of the expanded offer continues. The Council will not be able to assess the impact of this change until detailed allocations are published in Autumn. The impact of this change, along with the other resulting changes, will be confirmed as part of the final decision report.

3. Schools (Primary & Secondary) Funding Formula Consultation Proposals for 2026-27

3.1 The regulations state Local Authorities must consult with their primary and secondary schools when setting their school budgets, and in particular if they are considering transferring money from the School Block to the High Needs block. The council's historic approach has been to consult with schools once Local Authority DSG allocations are published by the DfE. However, this approach leads to delays when funding announcements are late (as was the case last year). Therefore, following consultation with the Schools Funding Forum, it was agreed to launch the Kent Schools' Local Funding Formula 2026-27 consultation during October, ahead of Government funding announcements. The consultation document, an illustration tool showing the impact of the proposals on individual school budget, an on-line response form and an equality impact assessment could be accessed via the following link: **www.kent.gov.uk/schoolfundingconsultation.**

3.2 The consultation document contains full details of the proposals. Kent currently mirrors the schools NFF in terms of both factors and rates (See Appendix B) whilst still addressing our high demand for Special Educational Needs services,

through the use of 1.2% of the school budget to support SEN services in mainstream schools funded through the High Needs budget. This is in line with the principle agreed in previous years where "our Local Funding Formula should move towards the NFF, but at the same time continue to utilise local flexibility to address areas of local concern". The consultation seeks views on continuing with this approach and specifically on the principles to:

1.Transfer of the Funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block: whether there is support to transfer funding which would be equivalent to 1.2% transfer from the primary & secondary schools budgets to the High Needs block to help to fund SEN Support services in mainstream schools.

2.Set the funding rates: In 2025-26 it was agreed the schools funding formula for primary & secondary schools would mirror the factors and rates of the National Funding Formula, with an equal reduction made to all factor rates to fund the High Needs transfer except the Minimum Per Pupil Level factor which would be reduced by a lower amount (0.9%). The consultation asks whether this principle should continue or whether the MPPL reduction should be increased to 1.2% so that schools are more equally contributing to the transfer.

3. Set the minimum funding guarantee (the minimum year on year change in per pupil funding – as defined by DfE). The DfE normally set an allowable range and the consultation seeks views as to whether this should be set at a minimum or higher rate.

3.4 The consultation results will be shared with the School Funding Forum on 21st November 2025 where their views and recommendations will also be sought ahead of final recommended proposals being presented for decision in December.

4. Schools Funding Formula Consultation: Further Details

High Needs Block Transfer

4.1 The Department of Education require all block transfer requests to be consulted with schools and to ensure the Council provides schools with full background details of the request. This is outlined in the consultation document (Appendix 3). Block transfers cannot be automatically repeated each year therefore schools must be consulted on an annual basis and where the transfer is greater than 0.5%, the Secretary of State must also agree, in addition to a formal Cabinet Member decision.

4.3 The consultation document, along with section 1h of the Cabinet financial monitoring reports outlines both the latest financial position and proposed principles to addressing the in-year deficit in the DSG. In 2025-26, the forecast grant shortfall is £58m (equivalent to 17% overspend on the High Needs Grant). This transfer request forms part of a wider approach to managing the Dedicated Schools Grant deficit recovery alongside reviewing the council's local policies and process in relation to supporting children with SEN. This approach forms part of the Local Authority's plan to move to a balanced in-year position on the High Needs Block as agreed with the DfE as part of the Safety Valve Programme. This programme is for those Councils with the highest deficits to support the development of a sustainable plan for recovery; including further

funding from the DfE to pay off part of the deficit. The Council has also agreed to fund part of the historic debt.

4.4 The transfer total of 1.2% is in line with last year's request and has previously been expected to be asked annually until the High Needs budget returns to a more sustainable position. The transfer helps to support future financial sustainability and avoids cuts to SEN services. The transfer is used to help to fund SEN support services.

Minimum Per Pupil Funding Level (MPPFL)

4.9 For the past 2 years, the Local Authority has taken the decision to mirror the National Funding Formula more closely and to ensure all schools contribute towards the High Needs transfer, when compared to the budget allocation they would receive through the NFF. The funding formula includes a protection factor to ensure all schools receive a minimum amount of funding per pupil (MPPL). This protection factor will "top-up" a school budget when the budget calculated on the characteristics of a school is lower than the protection threshold. By including a reduction to this protection factor, in the same way as the other factor valves, ensures all school budgets contribute towards the funding of the High Needs Transfer. The reduction to the MPPFL is subject to Secretary of State approval.

4.8 If the transfer is ultimately not supported, the proposal will default to mirroring of the National Funding Formula rates as closely as possible. This is in line with the overall guiding principle agreed by the schools and the Schools Funding Forum in previous years.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 All funding proposals associated with the Schools' Local Funding Formula proposals (primary & secondary schools) and Early Years Local Funding Formula are made within the total school block and Early Years Block available for distribution in 2026-27. The Government requires the full school block to be distributed to schools, except where a block transfer has been agreed. Local Authority's must budget to spend all of the Early Years Block and for 2026-27 only 3% of the total budgetary allocation can be retained (with school funding forum agreement) for council run or commissioned early years education services.

6.2 The High Needs Block is significantly overspent and therefore it is imperative that the Council does all that it can to mitigate this overspend including seeking additional funding where possible i.e through the transfer from the Schools Block. If the transfer were to not go ahead a review of service currently funded by the High Needs Block would have to be reviewed and a further decision (separate to this decision) would have to be taken with any proposed actions to redress the reduced income level.

7 Legal implications

7.1 The Council is required to set the schools budget in accordance with Education Act 2002 and the Conditions of DSG Grant 2026-27 (when published). School

Budgets and Early Years funding rates must be published by 28th February of each year for the forthcoming financial year.

7.2 The Schools Funding Forum generally have a consultative role whose composition, constitution and procedures of schools forums are set our in the Schools Forums (England) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/2261) (as amended).

7.3 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 provides an obligation upon public authorities to have due regard to certain express equality considerations when exercising their functions, including when making decisions.

8 Equalities implications

8.1 An equalities impact assessment has been completed and is included as part of the consultation documentation. There were no adverse impacts identified.

9 Other corporate implications

9.1 This does not have an impact on other areas of the Council.

10 Governance

10.1 Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education will be delegated responsibility to enact the decision and to make any further necessary changes to funding rates in light of any final affordability issues.

11 Alternatives considered

11.1 The alternatives to the recommendations within this paper are set out as part of the consultation and have been referenced in the body of this report.

12 Conclusions

12.1 Schools are currently being consulted and the results will be shared with the Schools Funding Forum in November to gather their views on the principles for setting schools' budget, along with the Early Years Funding Formula. The Cabinet Member for Education & Skills will be asked to make this decision during December in readiness for DfE submissions in mid-January and formal publication at the end of February 2026. Approval will also be sought, where appropriate, from the Secretary of State for both the 1.2% transfer and to reduce the minimum per pupil funding level.

14 Recommendation(s):

14.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education & Skills on the proposed decision as detailed in the Proposed Record of Decision (PRoD) attached at appendix A.

14 Background Documents

10.1 The Kent Schools' Local Funding Formula 2026-27 Consultation documentation can be found in the link below: **www.kent.gov.uk/schoolfundingconsultation.**

10.2 Appendix A: Draft Proposed Record of Decision
10.3 Appendix B: List of Prescribed Factors and Rates for the Primary & Secondary School Budgets
10.4 Appendix C: Initial Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

15 Contact details

Report Author:	Relevant Director:
Karen Stone CYPE Finance Business Partner	Christine McInnes Interim Corporate Director of Children's Young People and Education
03000 416733	03000 416991
Karen.stone02@kent.gov.uk	christine.mcinnes@kent.gov.uk

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NUMBER:
Beverley Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	25/00092

For publication *[Do not include information which is exempt from publication under schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972]*

Key decision: YES

Key decision criteria. The decision will:

a) *result in expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000); or*
b) *be significant in terms of its effects on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions*

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Changes to the KCC local funding formula for State Funded Schools and Early Years Providers 2026-27

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree to:

- APPROVE changes to the Kent County Council local funding formula for schools and early years providers that is used to calculate school budgets and early years rates from 1 April 2026.
- DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education, to make any necessary changes to the Local Funding Formula rates once final affordability is known and the outcome of Secretary of State approval.
- Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, to agree the distribution method for school and early years specific education grants during 2026-27 provided by the Department of Education, in line with grant conditions.

Reason(s) for decision:

Background:

The Department of Education provides Local Authorities with a specific ring-fenced grant each year to fund the school budgets (mainstream primary & secondary schools), early years free-entitlements for children under 5, high needs (Special Educational Needs Education Placements including special schools) and central services for schools. It is the Local Authority responsibility to distribute this funding to schools, eligible early years and to provide SEN services and other services for schools in Kent.

The Government's intention remains to have all primary and secondary school budgets to be based on a single formula set nationally by Government, with no Local Government involvement. To

support this aim, for 2026-27 Local Authorities will continue to set a local funding formula to distribute their schools block funding (for all schools including both maintained, academies and free schools), in consultation with their local schools and their Schools' Funding Forum, however, the extent to which local decisions can be made continues to be increasingly limited as the National Funding Formula stipulates the variables that can be used within the formulae, along with some rates. A dis-application to the Secretary of State will be required where a Local Authority formula is outside nationally prescribed guidelines, this includes setting the Minimum Per Pupil Funding Level at a different level to the national threshold.

Within the current guidelines, Local Authorities are able to transfer funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block with the agreement of Schools' Funding Forum and in certain circumstances the Secretary of State, this includes where the total value to be transferred is over 0.5% of the School Block.

The Government requires schools to be consulted on an annual basis regarding any proposed changes to Local Funding Formula for all schools and the request to transfer funding from the school's block to high needs block. The council is also responsible for allocating any additional grants, issued by the DfE, to schools in line with Government guidelines.

The Council is responsible for setting the Early Years Local Funding Formula which is used for setting the rates paid to early years providers for the Free Entitlement offer for children aged between 9 months and 4 years attending nurseries or childminders, for up to 30 hours of free childcare a week (dependent on eligibility).

The proposed changes to both the Local Funding Formula used to calculate the School Budgets and set the Early Years Providers Funding rates is dependent on the Government's final funding announcements on the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2026-27 (expected in the Autumn) and the outcome of relevant consultations and Schools Funding Forum feedback. This will inform the final recommendations, and the formal decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education & Skills. This will include recommendations on the following principles:

- **Whether to transfer funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block at the same (or different) percentage rate as the previous year (1.2%)**
- **Changes to factor values in the schools local funding formula, in response to Government funding announcements, including whether the Minimum Per Pupil Funding Level should continue to be reduced and to what extent.**

Links to the Council's Strategic Statement:

- Whilst the decision relates to the distribution of ring-fenced grant, this decision is linked to achieving the overall objectives of best valve whereby proposals will support the financial recovery of the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

Financial Implications:

- The costs of the new proposed funding formulas will be fully met from the increases in the Dedicated Schools Grant, a specific ring-fenced grant from the Department of Education, used to fund primary & secondary school budgets, and Early Years Free Entitlement, and will not be a further cost to Council funding.
- This decision will impact the High Needs Budget for 2026-27. The agreement to transfer funding from the schools block to the high needs block will increase the funding available to help support SEN Support Services provided by the Council and reduce the overspend on this block of funding. Overspends on the High Needs Block have led to an annual deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant since 2018-19.This has arisen where the total spend on SEN services is exceeding the annual grant received from the DfE for High Need Services. As a result the Local Authority is part of the Safety Valve Programme, a DfE initiative to support Local Authorities with highest deficits, of which the Council has agreed to fund £82m from

General Fund, between 2022-23 and 2027-28, to help reduce the accumulated High Needs deficit, alongside an extra £140m from DfE. The transfer of funding from the schools block to support the High Needs block is part of the plan to avoid higher overspends during this period.

Legal implications:

- The Local Authority is required to set the schools budget in accordance with the Education Act 2002 and the Conditions of DSG Grant 2026-27. School Budgets and Early Years funding rates must be published by 28th February of each year.
- Proposals will be made in accordance with the prevailing grant conditions for the Dedicated Schools Grant set by the Department of Education. Where relevant, Secretary of State approval will be sought if recommendations require a dis-application of these conditions.
- Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, provides that "…a public authority must in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act, b) advance equality of opportunity… c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.."
- Secretary of State approval will be required for the proposal to transfer 1.2% of the Schools Block to the High Needs Block and to change the Minimum Per Pupil Funding Rate.

Equalities implications:
An initial equalities impact assessment has been completed and is included as part of the consultation documentation. There were no adverse impacts identified at this stage but will be reviewed as final proposals are confirmed.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

To be completed following consideration on the principles at the Children's and Young People Cabinet Committee considered on 18 November 2025.

An all-schools consultation is taking place during October and November 2025. This was open to all Kent schools. The consultation document, an illustration tool showing the impact of proposals on individual school budget, an on-line response form and an equality impact assessment were provided

www.kent.gov.uk/schoolfundingconsultation

Recommendations will be shared with the Schools' Funding Forum on 21 November 2025.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Primary & Secondary Schools Local Funding Formula Changes:
Options that were considered and discarded included:

- Options to excessively deviate from the National Funding Formula (NFF) used by Government to allocate school funding to local authorities for distribution to schools. This is in line with previous recommendations from both schools & the Schools Funding Forum who have supported the general principle that "our Local Funding Formula should move towards the NFF, but at the same time continue to utilise local flexibility to address areas of local concern".

Further options to be considered as part of the final key decision, following feedback from consultations and the views of the Schools Funding Forum:

- Option to transfer funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block
- Options to transfer a different percentage from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block (either higher or lower) that in previous years (previously 1.2%)

- Options to change the reduction to the MPPFL (either higher or lower) from 2025-26
- Option to set the Minimum Funding Guarantee within the Government's allowable range

Early Years Funding Formula Changes:
Option to be considered as part of the final key decision following feedback from consultations and the views of the Schools Funding Forum:

- Changing the basis of the funding rates in addition to or instead of applying a standard uplift

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

.....
signed

.....
date

Appendix B: List of Prescribed Factors and Rates for the Primary & Secondary School Budget

Factor Description	2025-26 Kent indicative NFF rates	Rates Used 2025/2026	Change	Local Rate vs NFF	Increase in Rate from 24-25
Primary - Basic Entitlement	£3,849.85	£3,777.32	£10.60	98.1%	0.3%
Secondary - KS3 Basic Entitlement	£5,426.01	£5,324.37	£14.94	98.1%	0.3%
Secondary - KS4 Basic Entitlement	£6,117.52	£6,002.64	£16.84	98.1%	0.3%
Primary- Free School Meals	£495.37	£483.37	£1.53	97.6%	0.3%
Secondary- Free School Meals	£495.37	£483.37	£1.53	97.6%	0.3%
Primary - Ever 6 Free School Meals	£1,060.78	£1,042.28	£2.92	98.3%	0.3%
Secondary - Ever 6 Free School Meals	£1,556.15	£1,529.32	£4.29	98.3%	0.3%
Primary - Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (F)	£235.17	£231.74	£0.65	98.5%	0.3%
Primary - Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (E)	£285.21	£281.05	£0.79	98.5%	0.3%
Primary - Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (D)	£445.33	£438.83	£1.23	98.5%	0.3%
Primary - Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (C)	£490.36	£478.49	£1.56	97.6%	0.3%
Primary - Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (B)	£520.38	£507.85	£1.43	97.6%	0.3%
Primary - Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (A)	£685.51	£670.57	£1.88	97.8%	0.3%
Secondary - Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (F)	£340.25	£335.28	£0.94	98.5%	0.3%
Secondary - Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (E)	£450.33	£443.76	£1.25	98.5%	0.3%
Secondary - Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (D)	£635.47	£621.26	£1.74	97.8%	0.3%
Secondary - Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (C)	£695.51	£680.43	£1.91	97.8%	0.3%
Secondary - Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (B)	£745.55	£729.73	£2.05	97.9%	0.3%
Secondary - Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (A)	£950.70	£931.89	£2.62	98.0%	0.3%
Primary - English as an Additional Language	£595.44	£581.81	£1.63	97.7%	0.3%
Secondary - English as an Additional Language	£1,596.18	£1,563.01	£4.39	97.9%	0.3%
Primary- Low Prior Attainment	£1,175.87	£1,153.77	£3.24	98.1%	0.3%
Secondary - Low Prior Attainment	£1,786.32	£1,750.37	£4.91	98.0%	0.3%
Mobility Primary	£965.71	£946.68	£2.66	98.0%	0.3%
Mobility Secondary	£1,386.02	£1,360.85	£3.82	98.2%	0.3%
Primary- Lump Sum	£145,207.37	£142,484.22	£399.85	98.1%	0.3%
Secondary Lump Sum	£145,207.37	£142,484.22	£399.85	98.1%	0.3%
Primary - Sparsity	£57,442.48	£56,307.78	£158.01	98.0%	0.3%
Secondary - Sparsity	£83,461.72	£81,848.44	£229.69	98.1%	0.3%
Split Site basic eligibility funding	£54,039.96	£52,954.95	£148.60	98.0%	0.3%
Split Site distance funding	£27,019.98	£26,526.78	£74.44	98.2%	0.3%
MPPFL Primary	£4,955.00	£4,910.41	£22.89	99.1%	0.5%
MPPFL KS3	£6,239.71	£6,183.55	£31.49	99.1%	0.5%
MPPFL KS4	£6,802.93	£6,741.71	£34.69	99.1%	0.5%
MFG%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.5%		

Key:

KS – Key Stage

NFF – National Funding Formula (DfE prescribed factors and rates used to calculate the total funding available for local authority's to set their primary and secondary school budget)

MPPFL – Minimum Per Pupil Funding Level (the minimum amount per pupil a school should budget should provide)

MFG – Minimum Funding Guarantee (the minimum increase per pupil a school should receive).

The MPPFL and MFG are protection factors to ensure a school receives either a minimum amount or a minimum uplift. A school budget is calculated based on the pupil characteristics of the children they support.

This page is intentionally left blank

EQIA Submission – ID Number
Section A

EQIA Title
Kent Schools Local Funding Formula Consultation 2026-27

Responsible Officer
Jody Catterall-James - CED F

Approved by (Note: approval of this EqIA must be completed within the EqIA App)
Christine McInnes - CY EDSEN

Type of Activity

Service Change
No

Service Redesign
No

Project/Programme
No

Commissioning/Procurement
No

Strategy/Policy
No

Details of other Service Activity
Annual change to funding formula

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate
Strategic and Corporate Services

Responsible Service
Finance

Responsible Head of Service
Christine McInnes - CY EDSEN

Responsible Director
Sarah Hammond - CY CDO

Aims and Objectives

KCC is consulting with Kent schools on proposed changes to the Schools' Local Funding Formula (LFF) from 1 April 2026, including a transfer of resources from the schools' block (SB) to the High Needs Block (HNB) in 2026-27. The Consultation Paper seeks the view of Headteachers, Chairs of Governors and Bursars of all Kent schools (both maintained and academies).

This is not a new policy. The proposals we are consulting schools on are merely refinement of the existing arrangements for allocating funding to schools via the local funding formula.

The proposals concern the number of factors, in accordance with school finance regulations, as well as how much funding is provided through each factor. The formula allocates funding to school governing bodies. It is the governing body of each school that is responsible for making decisions on how that funding is to be spent. The governing body will be expected to expedite their Equality Duties under the Equality Act 2021 and its associated guidance.

Section B – Evidence

Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?
Yes

It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?
Yes

Is there national evidence/data that you can use?
Yes

Have you consulted with stakeholders?

No

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?

We will be consulting with schools in Kent.

Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?

Yes

Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?

Yes

Section C – Impact

Who may be impacted by the activity?

Service Users/clients

No

Staff

No

Residents/Communities/Citizens

Residents/communities/citizens

Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?

Yes

Details of Positive Impacts

Disability - School budgets contain a notional amount of funding for SEN and this is made up of a basket of factors, including low prior attainment and deprivation. The proposals within the consultation will increase the amount of funding in relation to these factors in line with changes to the national funding formula.

Sex - We currently fund pupils with prior attainment at the National Funding Formula level, and we expect to continue to do this thorugh this consultation. Kent data suggests that across all key stages, boys progress is lower than girls. This consultation proposes to increase this amount of funding provided to schools through the low prior attainment factor in line with changes in national funding formula.

Race - We currently fund pupils with English as an Additional Language at the NFF level, and we expect to continue to do this through this consultation.

Religion and Belief - The Formula budget applied to faith schools is exactly the same as non-faith schools, therefore faith schools are not adversely impacted by these funding proposals.

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions

19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age

Are there negative impacts for age?

No. Note: If Question 19a is "No", Questions 19b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval

Details of negative impacts for Age

Not Completed

Mitigating Actions for Age

Not Completed

Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age

Not Completed

20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability

Are there negative impacts for Disability?

No. Note: If Question 20a is "No", Questions 20b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval

Details of Negative Impacts for Disability

Not Completed

Mitigating actions for Disability

Not Completed
Responsible Officer for Disability
Not Completed
21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex
Are there negative impacts for Sex
No. Note: If Question 21a is "No", Questions 21b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Details of negative impacts for Sex
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Sex
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for Sex
Not Completed
22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
No. Note: If Question 22a is "No", Questions 22b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Completed
23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race
Are there negative impacts for Race
No. Note: If Question 23a is "No", Questions 23b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Race
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Race
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race
Not Completed
24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief
No. Note: If Question 24a is "No", Questions 24b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Religion and belief
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief
Not Completed
25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
No. Note: If Question 25a is "No", Questions 25b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Completed

26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
No. Note: If Question 26a is "No", Questions 26b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Completed
27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
No. Note: If Question 27a is "No", Questions 27b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Completed
28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer’s responsibilities
Are there negative impacts for Carer’s responsibilities
No. Note: If Question 28a is "No", Questions 28b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Negative impacts for Carer’s responsibilities
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Carer’s responsibilities
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for Carer’s responsibilities
Not Completed

From: *Chris Palmer Cabinet Member for Integrated Children Services*

Christine McInnes - Corporate Director Children Young People and Education

To: *Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee- 18th November 2025*

Subject: *In-House Provision- DfE Grant Funding*

Key Decision : *Yes, under the following criteria:*

- *Savings or expenditure of more than £1m*
- *Affects two or more Electoral Divisions*

Key Decision no: 25/00100

Classification: *Unrestricted*

Past Pathway of report: *None*

Future Pathway of report: *Cabinet Member Decision*

Electoral Division: *The project is still scoping where in the County in-house provisions will be located so at this time could affect all divisions.*

Summary: The increasing costs of children placements was identified as a critical area within the council's strategic statement. In 2024, the Placement Sustainability programme was developed to progress the key activities that are needed to strengthen financial sustainability over the MTFP period, which included exploring in-house provision.

Earlier this year the DfE advertised grant funding for local authorities to match any capital funding (put forward by the local authority) to create additional children's homes for children with complex needs and challenging behaviour. KCC was notified this summer of their successful bid and that match funding totalling up to **£2,765,719** would be awarded subject to the terms and conditions of the grant.

The proposed decision will allow for the deployment of the additional funding secured from DfE to support the already in development Inhouse Service model being worked on under Key Decision 24/00105 and increase its scope.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services on the proposed decision as detailed in Appendix A**

---

1. Introduction

In February 2025 a proposal was endorsed at CYPE Cabinet Committee (under key Decision 24/00105) to develop a short/medium term service (emergency provision) within a **£3,840,000** envelope (along with a further £0.025m for feasibility studies & surveys), to support stabilisation of the child's complex behaviours and step down their needs whilst suitable longer-term provision in more 'home like' settings is secured to achieve better long-term outcomes. This project is progressing at pace, meeting the critical milestones agreed.

Earlier this year the DfE advertised grant funding for local authorities to match any capital funding (put forward by the local authority) to create additional children's homes for children with complex needs and challenging behaviour. KCC was notified this summer of their successful bid and that match funding totalling up to **£2,765,719** would be awarded subject to the terms and conditions of the grant.

This brings the overall maximum project total to **£6,605,000 from the original £3,840,000 envelope (along with a further £0.025m for feasibility studies & surveys) as agreed via key decision 25/00105 earlier in the year.**

It is anticipated the proposed maximum budget of £6,605,000, formed from £2,765,719 match funding from the DfE and up to £3,840,000 KCC funding, may deliver savings from the original bid approved as it contains a 20% contingency. Any savings or underspend will be confirmed once final costings of the project are known.

2. Key Considerations

The key areas which the proposed decision aims to address includes:

- What the match funding has been set up for and the eligibility and compliancy required to enable KCC to claim monies
- Understand the financial impact of accepting and utilising the funding
- Impacts and dependencies on the existing in-house provision project

The proposed decision aims to achieve best value for the Council, including financial viability, cost-effectiveness, whether sustainable outcomes for children are likely to be enhanced and to increase quality of life and everyday independence, skills, choice, control and personal agency.

3. Background

The increasing costs of children placements was identified as a critical area within the council's strategic statement. In 2024, the Placement Sustainability programme was developed to progress the key activities that are needed to strengthen financial sustainability over the MTFP period, which included exploring in-house provision.

The match funding opportunity was advertised to local authorities earlier this year with successful candidates notified in summer 2025. The grant aims to support this project by matched capital funding between April 2025 and March 2029 to create

additional provision in children's homes for children with complex needs and challenging behaviour, recognised to be a response to complex and ongoing trauma.

The grant aligns and supports the strategic aims of the in-house provision project to develop and offer its own Ofsted registered children's residential homes to address high-cost placements. An application was submitted with adherence to the organisational governance process for grant approvals.
This funding will be available to local authorities to help create accommodation which will:

- ensure there is sufficient provision in the right places for children with complex needs;
- ensure local health and social care teams work together to provide care which meets all of a child's needs; and
- reduce the number of children and young people with complex needs and behaviours being accommodated in unregistered provision.

Strategy Dependencies

In-house provision in Kent could support the Kent economy to be resilient with market changes as part of a long-term strategy with providers, whilst using preventative approaches to improve outcomes for children and young people in Kent.

It could also support some of the most complex and vulnerable children and young people within Kent whilst enhancing commissioning practice, using innovative and alternative methods to deliver care and building on partnerships to deliver best outcomes.

The proposal sets out a strong case for investment to create in-house provision as part of a longer-term financial sustainability strategy of mixed provision supporting the council in achieving its strategic objectives.

Achieving best value from in-house provision is both about financial viability and cost-effectiveness and considering whether sustainable outcomes for children are likely to be enhanced increasing; quality of life; everyday independence skills; choice; control; and personal agency.

The grant monies will align to several organisational strategies as part of the in-house provision project:

- **Sufficiency Strategy** - Kent County Council (KCC) has high aspirations for children, young adults and their families/carers and are committed to achieving permanency and stability for all children and young adults through our services and those of our partners.

- **'Keeping Children Safe, helping families thrive' government strategy-** The strategy sets out plans to reset the children's social care system including delivering a whole system and child centred approach to reform, resetting how national government works in collaboration with local government and local partners. This seeks to achieve:

- Greater transparency on the costs of placements to support local authorities in commissioning and national government in oversight of the market
- A new financial oversight scheme, led by the Department for Education, which will include development of a criteria for “difficult to replace” providers, new requirements on cash reserves to support transition to new ownership or closure and reduce the impact on children
- Backstop power for the Secretary of State to set profit caps if the above measures do not have the desired effect
- Introduction of a regulation making power for future use to govern local authority use of agency social workers within children’s social care, building on recent work in this area.
- Introduction to a new provision to meet complex needs of children with challenging behaviour.

4. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

The project team considered two options with this appraised and informed by key stakeholders and subject matter experts.

This included consideration of best value, the opportunities (e.g. potential benefits and ability to deliver critical success factors) and risks, impacts and potential challenges for each option. The two options reviewed was 1) do nothing and continue to progress the in-house provision project without DfE grant funding monies or 2) accept grant funding monies to support the aims and objectives of the in-house provision project.

The proposed recommended option is an update to the Inhouse Provision programme to make best use of the additional funding from DfE.

5. Financial Implications

KCC was notified this summer of their successful bid in acquiring match funding up to **£2,765,719 (using 50:50 claims methodology)**.

The total cost of project submitted for the DfE bid (at least £5.5m), was higher than the original estimate of £3.8m agreed by Key Decision 24/00105. This reflects an enhanced specification required to each property to comply with the DfE output specification and increased requirement of c200m2 properties from an original 120m2.

Utilising the grant funding will require KCC to meet the specifications set out in the bid. This is outlined within the legal implications section. Complying to the DfE's output specification is likely to further reduce the lifecycle costs incurred by KCC as premises may have new Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing services (MEP) delivered which will in turn bring a lower lifecycle cost to KCC’s operational and maintenance costs, reducing KCC's overall lifecycle costs to maintain the provisions.

The proposed maximum revised budget of £6,605,000 is formed from £2,765,719 match funding from the DfE and up to £3,840,000 of KCC funding approved by the

Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services earlier this year under key decision 24/00105. Whilst the total maximum capital cost of the project has increased, due to the match funding from the DfE, this could still result in a total saving of up to £1,074,281 for KCC from the original £3,840,000 envelope (along with a further £0.025m for feasibility studies & surveys). Final costings are still subject to confirmation, therefore at this stage, it is proposed to retain this potential saving for the project to enhance the contingency (up to 20%) for any unforeseen costs. KCC was expecting to fund this project mainly from prudential borrowing therefore if this contingency is not required this will result in a revenue saving from reduced interest payments. Financial progress updates (including reporting of savings) will be made periodically to the Capital Officer Group (internal governance) to ensure ongoing cost effectiveness and delivery of revenue savings as set out in the original key decision.

The grant conditions require the provision to remain operational for at least 5 years, the previous key decision on the implementation of the in-house provision (key Decision 24/00105) outlined the intention to invest in residential care provision on a long-term basis. Therefore, whilst the previous decision considered the associated risks of investing in in-house provision, this new requirement means KCC will have to continue to operate children's homes, even if it becomes inefficient to do so, during the first 5 years of operation. The home will only become inefficient if there is insufficient number of occupants or difficulties in recruitment. The former is unlikely, given the growing complexities experienced by children, and the service are putting in safeguards through workforce development strategy to prevent the latter.

Whilst the risks of this option were robustly considered, the benefits for adding grant funding to the existing in-house provision project outweigh the negatives.

6. Legal Implications

The children's homes capital funding can only be used for the specific 'Funded Activities' set out in the grant agreement and the project must be delivered as described in KCC's bid documentation. Any changes to a project's scope must be agreed in advance by the Department for Education (DfE) and the project may be liable to cancellation and/or clawback of funding if a change of scope is not agreed and/or subsequently taken forward by the LA.

Funding will be provided via a grant issued under Section 14 of the Education Act 2002, which means funding will be paid in arrears upon satisfactory evidence of work completed. It is the expectation grant funding will be awarded in relation to activity beginning in Summer 2025 (from the point the grant was awarded), with work starting on the projects as soon as possible after the award is given, and in line with committed milestones, project plans and required KPIs that will be included in all grant offer letters.

KCC is required to enter into a legally binding Grant Funding Agreement which comprises DfE's standard Grant Terms and Conditions. These conditions include provisions regarding the funding management including clawback provision, DfE controls over additional 3rd party funding There is a capital build deadline of 2029 and a minimum operation timeframe of the service for 5 years after the placements commence. The conditions also include reporting arrangements for KCC to keep DfE apprised of the project progress.

The project team must ensure monthly reporting is submitted and compliancy with the terms and conditions of the grant is met.

7. Equalities implications

An Equality Impact Assessment was completed as part of the project and found low level negative impacts on the protected characteristics at this stage of the proposal. Positive impacts were identified for the protected characteristics of age, disability and sex. This will be reviewed and updated as the proposal progresses however, the supplementary decision doesn't change any equality implications.

8. Data Protection implications

A Data Protection Impact Assessment screening was undertaken and found to have low level negative impacts to data protection with a full DPIA not required at this time. The DPIA will be maintained and updated as a live document throughout the duration of the proposal. This will be reviewed and updated as the proposal progresses however, the supplementary decision doesn't change any data implications.

9. Governance

The appropriate governance processes of the council will be followed for the proposal.

If the decision is taken by the Cabinet member for Integrated Children's Services the Corporate Director of CYPE in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services and the S151 Officer for Finance will have delegated authority to accept and deploy grants and other external uplift funding to support the delivery of the in-house provision model.

The Director for Infrastructure will have delegated authority to deliver the necessary acquisitions and capital works. Infrastructure will ensure compliance with constitutional requirements in respect of property transactions and agreements and KCC's procurement strategy and formal process.

The Corporate Director of CYPE will have delegated authority, to take other necessary actions, including but not limited to finalising the terms of and entering into required contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision.

Progress on the In-House Provision project is overseen by the In-House Provision Project Steering Group and will be reported into the Placement Sustainability Programme Board which is within scope of the Strategic Reset Programme, with regular updates and exception reporting to the Strategic Reset Programme Board. Along with capital updated to the Capital Officers Group.

10. Conclusions

The proposed decision will allow for the deployment of the additional funding secured from DfE to support the already in development Inhouse Service model being worked on under Key Decision 24/00105 and increase its scope. This could result in a total

saving of up to £1,074,281 for KCC from the original £3,840,000 envelope (along with a further £0.025m for feasibility studies & surveys) agreed at CYPE Cabinet Committee earlier this year, if the contingency is not required. Whilst the risks of this option were robustly considered, the benefits for adding grant funding to the existing in-house provision project outweigh the negatives.

The DfE funding terms and conditions stipulate any provisions will need to operate for a minimum of 5 years from when the first placement began. It is important to note the service need will subsist post the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). The requirement for these homes is not anticipated to change within the next 5 years, however the geographic split and therefore financial responsibility for provisions could therefore be impacted by LGR and should be considered. On this basis, KCC will await the government's decision in relation to LGR by the Spring 2026 and evaluate the situation accordingly as to what this will mean for both KCC and any new unitary authorities.

---

11. Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services on the proposed decision as detailed in Appendix A**

---

12. Background Documents

- Care Standards Act
- Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive
- The Children Act 1989

13. Appendices

- Proposed Record of Decision
- EQIA
- DPIA
- Key Decision 24/00105

14. Contact details

Report Author: Kevin Kasaven Job title: Director of Children's Countywide Services Telephone number: 03000 416334 Email address: kevin.kasaven@kent.gov.uk	Director: Christine McInnes Job title: Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education Telephone number: 03000418913 Email address: christine.mcinnes@kent.gov.uk

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NUMBER:
Cabinet Member for Integrated Children Services	25/00100

For publication *[Do not include information which is exempt from publication under schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972]*

Key decision: YES

Key decision criteria. The decision will:

a) result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000);

b) affects two or more Electoral Divisions

Subject Matter / Title of Decision: In House Provision- DfE Grant Funding

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Integrated Children Services, I agree to:

a) APPROVE the updating and expanding of the Inhouse Provision programme scope to make best use of the additional match funding secured, in accordance with the associated grant conditions and the strategic objectives confirmed in Key Decision 24/00105.

b) APPROVE the increase in total maximum capital budget to £6,050,000, incorporating the additional £2.7m DfE funding.

c) DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of CYPE in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services and the S151 Officer for Finance to accept and deploy any further grants and other external uplift funding to support the delivery of the in-house provision model, providing funding is given on similar terms or matches the approved strategic policy objectives of the in-house programme

d) DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of CYPE to take other necessary actions, including but not limited to finalising the terms of and entering into required contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision.

e) DELEGATE authority to the Director of Infrastructure to progress relevant property management and development activity as required to implement this decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

The background overarching policy objectives for this programme are set out in Key Decision 24/00105, which approved the progression of establishing an Inhouse Provision model, with associated capital investment in relevant properties.

This proposed decision seeks to confirm the updated arrangements and scope of the project, including an increased total spend, so as to align with the new position following the securing of

£2.7m in additional funding from the DfE. The reasons for progression at a strategic level remain the same as per Key Decision 24/00105.

Earlier this year the DfE advertised grant funding for local authorities to match any capital funding (put forward by the local authority) to create additional children's homes for children with complex needs and challenging behaviour. KCC was notified this summer of their successful bid and that match funding totalling up to £2,765,719 would be awarded subject to the terms and conditions of the grant.

The proposed decision will allow for the deployment of the additional funding secured from DfE to support the already in development Inhouse Service model being worked on under Key Decision 24/00105 and increase its scope.

Background

The increasing costs of children placements was identified as a critical area within the council's strategic statement. In 2024, the Placement Sustainability programme was developed to progress the key activities that are needed to strengthen financial sustainability over the MTFP period, which included exploring in-house provision.

The match funding opportunity was advertised to local authorities earlier this year with successful candidates notified in summer 2025. The grant aims to support this project by matched capital funding between April 2025 and March 2029 to create additional provision in children's homes for children with complex needs and challenging behaviour, recognised to be a response to complex and ongoing trauma.

The grant aligns and supports the strategic aims of the in-house provision project to develop and offer its own Ofsted registered children's residential homes to address high-cost placements. An application was submitted with adherence to the organisational governance process for grant approvals.

This funding will be available to local authorities to help create accommodation which will:

- ensure there is sufficient provision in the right places for children with complex needs;
- ensure local health and social care teams work together to provide care which meets all of a child's needs; and
- reduce the number of children and young people with complex needs and behaviours being accommodated in unregistered provision.

Options

The project team considered two options with this appraised and informed by key stakeholders and subject matter experts.

This included consideration of best value, the opportunities (e.g. potential benefits and ability to deliver critical success factors) and risks, impacts and potential challenges for each option. The two options reviewed was 1) do nothing and continue to progress the in-house provision project without DfE grant funding monies or 2) accept grant funding monies to support the aims and objectives of the in-house provision project.

The proposed recommended option is an update to the Inhouse Provision programme to make best use of the additional funding from DfE.

How the proposed decision supports the council's strategic statement

In-house provision in Kent could support the Kent economy to be resilient with market changes as part of a long-term strategy with providers, whilst using preventative approaches to improve outcomes for children and young people in Kent.

It could also support some of the most complex and vulnerable children and young people within Kent whilst enhancing commissioning practice, using innovative and alternative methods to deliver care and building on partnerships to deliver best outcomes.

The proposal sets out a strong case for investment to create in-house provision as part of a longer-term financial sustainability strategy of mixed provision supporting the council in achieving its strategic objectives.

Achieving best value from in-house provision is both about financial viability and cost-effectiveness and considering whether sustainable outcomes for children are likely to be enhanced increasing; quality of life; everyday independence skills; choice; control; and personal agency.

Financial Implications

KCC was notified this summer of their successful bid in acquiring match funding up to **£2,765,719 (using 50:50 claims methodology)**.

The total cost of project submitted for the DfE bid (at least £5.5m), was higher than the original estimate of £3.8m agreed by Key Decision 24/00105. This reflects an enhanced specification required to each property to comply with the DfE output specification and increased requirement of c200m2 properties from an original 120m2.

Utilising the grant funding will require KCC to meet the specifications set out in the bid. This is outlined within the legal implications section. Complying to the DfE's output specification is likely to further reduce the lifecycle costs incurred by KCC as premises may have new Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing services (MEP) delivered which will in turn bring a lower lifecycle cost to KCC's operational and maintenance costs, reducing KCC's overall lifecycle costs to maintain the provisions.

The proposed maximum revised budget of £6,605,000 formed from £2,765,719 match funding from the DfE and up to £3,840,000 of KCC funding approved by the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services earlier this year under key decision 24/00105. Whilst the total capital cost of the project has increased, due to the enhanced specification required as part of the match funding from the DfE, this could still result in a total saving of up to £1,074,281 for KCC from the original £3,840,000 envelope (along with a further £0.025m for feasibility studies & surveys). Final costings are still subject to confirmation, therefore at this stage, it is proposed to retain this potential saving for the project to enhance the contingency (equivalent up to 20%) for any unforeseen costs. KCC was expecting to fund this project mainly from prudential borrowing therefore, if this contingency is not required, this will result in a revenue saving from reduced interest payments.

The grant conditions require the provision to remain operational for at least 5 years, the previous key decision on the implementation of the in-house provision (key Decision 24/00105) outlined the intention to invest in residential care provision on a long-term basis. Therefore, whilst the previous decision considered the associated risks of investing in in-house provision, this new requirement means KCC will have to continue to operate children's homes, even if it becomes inefficient to do so, during the first 5 years of operation. The home will only become inefficient if there is insufficient number of occupants or difficulties in recruitment. The former is unlikely, given the growing complexities experienced by children, and the service are putting in safeguards through workforce development strategy to prevent the latter.

Whilst the risks of this option were robustly considered, the benefits for adding grant funding to the existing in-house provision project outweigh the negatives.

Legal Implications

The children's homes capital funding can only be used for the specific 'Funded Activities' set out in the grant agreement and the project must be delivered as described in KCC's bid documentation. Any changes to a project's scope must be agreed in advance by the Department for Education (DfE) and the project may be liable to cancellation and/or clawback of funding if a change of scope is not agreed and/or subsequently taken forward by the LA.

Funding will be provided via a grant issued under Section 14 of the Education Act 2002, which means funding will be paid in arrears upon satisfactory evidence of work completed. It is the expectation grant funding will be awarded in relation to activity beginning in Summer 2025 (from the point the grant was awarded), with work starting on the projects as soon as possible after the award is given, and in line with committed milestones, project plans and required KPIs that will be included in all grant offer letters.

KCC is required to enter into a legally binding Grant Funding Agreement which comprises DfE's standard Grant Terms and Conditions. These conditions include provisions regarding the funding management including clawback provision, DfE controls over additional 3rd party funding There is a capital build deadline of 2029 and a minimum operation timeframe of the service for 5 years after the placements commence. The conditions also include reporting arrangements for KCC to keep DfE apprised of the project progress.

The project team must ensure monthly reporting is submitted and compliancy with the terms and conditions of the grant is met.

Equalities implications

An Equality Impact Assessment was completed as part of the project and found low level negative impacts on the protected characteristics at this stage of the proposal. Positive impacts were identified for the protected characteristics of age, disability and sex. This will be reviewed and updated as the proposal progresses however, the supplementary decision doesn't change any equality implications.

Data Protection implications

A Data Protection Impact Assessment screening was undertaken and found to have low level negative impacts to data protection with a full DPIA not required at this time. The DPIA will be maintained and updated as a live document throughout the duration of the proposal. This will be reviewed and updated as the proposal progresses however, the supplementary decision doesn't change any data implications.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee will consider this decision at its meeting on the 18 November 2025.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

The only options available was to accept the funding or reject from the DfE.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: No

.....	.....
signed	date

This page is intentionally left blank

EQIA Submission Draft Working Template

If required, this template is for use prior to completing your EQIA Submission in the EQIA App.
You can use it to understand what information is needed beforehand to complete an EQIA submission online, and also as a way to collaborate with others who may be involved with the EQIA.
Note: You can upload this into the App when complete if it contains more detailed information than the App asks for and you wish to retain this detail.

Section A

1. Name of Activity (EQIA Title):

In-House Provision

2. Directorate

Children, Young People & Education (CYPE)

3. Responsible Service/Division

Integrated Children's Services (ICS)

Accountability and Responsibility

4. Officer completing EQIA
Note: This should be the name of the officer who will be submitting the EQIA onto the App.

Sian Dellaway & Chloe Parnell

5. Head of Service
Note: This should be the Head of Service who will be approving your submitted EQIA.

Damien Ellis

6. Director of Service
Note: This should be the name of your responsible director.

Kevin Kasaven

The type of Activity you are undertaking

7. What type of activity are you undertaking?

Service Change – *operational changes in the way we deliver the service to people.* Answer Yes/No

No

Service Redesign – *restructure, new operating model or changes to ways of working.* Answer Yes/No

No

Project/Programme – *includes limited delivery of change activity, including partnership projects, external funding projects and capital projects.* Answer Yes/No

Yes

Commissioning/Procurement – *means commissioning activity which requires commercial judgement.* Answer Yes/No

Yes

Strategy /Policy – *includes review, refresh or creating a new document.* Answer Yes/No
Yes
Other – Please add details of any other activity type here.

8. Aims and Objectives and Equality Recommendations – Note: You will be asked to give a brief description of the aims and objectives of your activity in this section of the App, along with the Equality recommendations. You may use this section to also add any context you feel may be required.

KCC's current policy is to commission placements from private providers, in spot purchasing arrangements given the immediate and complex needs of children. This means our costs are determined by market forces and pricing decisions by providers, which whilst influenced through our commissioning approach, limits our financial control. Having an element of in-house provision would enable the Council to control costs more directly (e.g. property and staffing costs).

Children with complex needs require different types of care and support placements, which can lead to significant costs. These types of placements can often involve intensive ratios of staff support to keep the child safe and can involve specialist residential settings (in or out of county), with limited options available in the market. KCC is actively working to reduce the use of unregistered accommodation (i.e. accommodation which is not registered with Ofsted). Unregistered accommodation is used only exceptionally in an emergency when there is no other alternative in circumstances of imperative necessity and where the placement is essential to avoid a breach of the child's Convention rights.

Nationally, other local authorities have made the decision to invest in their own in-house provision, as well as commissioned provision, as part of a longer-term sustainable strategy for managing placement costs and rising demand for placements of children with complex needs. Many local authorities are already operating, or in the advanced stages of delivering a range of types of accommodation, including in-house residential homes.

The proposal is to develop a short/medium term service (emergency provision) to support stabilisation of the child's complex behaviours and step down their needs whilst suitable longer-term provision in more 'home like' settings is secured to achieve better long-term outcomes. This aims to avoid the number of children being placed in expensive commissioned placements, and/or unregistered placements.

This aims to:

- Enhance outcomes and service quality for children
- Transition children to better matched and best value registered placements
- Enhance our social work offer for children, young people and families
- Mitigate risk to KCC and our children by reducing the likelihood of unregistered placements, poor continuity of care or inappropriate settings
- Use KCC's commissioning arrangements to further negotiate improved costs across the market
- Using strengths-based models, increase likelihood of future cost avoidance by increasing independence and stability, better outcomes and emotional toolkits for children accessing the service.
- Ensure KCC is acting lawfully in only placing children in registered children's homes under section 22C(6)(c) of the Children Act 1989

This project is currently in its early stages, and further work is planned to define it in more detail. As the project develops and the plans become more defined, the EQIA will be reviewed and updated accordingly.

There will be a matching criteria that is specific to each child to ensure their safety, however this is yet to be scoped. The EQIA will be refreshed once this element has been designed.

Section B – Evidence

Note: For questions 9, 10 & 11 at least one of these must be a 'Yes'. You can continuing working on the EQIA in the App, but you will not be able to submit it for approval without this information.

9. Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity? *Answer: Yes/No*

Yes

10. Is it possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way? *Answer: Yes/No*

Yes

11. Is there national evidence/data that you can use? *Answer:* *Yes/No*

No

12. Have you consulted with Stakeholders?
Answer: Yes/No
Stakeholders are those who have a stake or interest in your project which could be residents, service users, staff, members, statutory and other organisations, VCSE partners etc.

Yes

13. Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?
Please give details in the box provided. This may be details of those you have already involved, consulted and engaged with or who you intend to do so with in the future. If the answer to question 12 is 'No', please explain why.

We have actively engaged with stakeholders through the In House Provision steering group, which meets regularly. This group includes service stakeholders, commissioning colleagues, infrastructure colleagues, and finance colleagues. Additionally, we have consulted with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) regarding potential therapeutic services. Currently, this project is in its early development stages and will be further refined over time. As the project progresses and becomes more defined, we will engage with additional stakeholders. Key stakeholders will be involved, consulted, and engaged through the agreed governance route, which includes DMT, CMT, and the CYPE Cabinet Committee for comprehensive oversight and decision-making. The EqIA will be reviewed and updated in line with future stakeholder engagement and as the project evolves.

14. Has there been a previous equality analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years? *Answer: Yes/No*

No

15. Do you have evidence/data that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?
Answer: Yes/No

Uploading Evidence/Data/related information into the App
Note: At this point, you will be asked to upload the evidence/ data and related information that you feel should sit alongside the EQIA that can help understand the potential impact of your activity. Please ensure that you have this information to upload as the Equality analysis cannot be sent for approval without this.

Data

Section C – Impact

16. Who may be impacted by the activity? *Select all that apply.*

Service users/clients - *Answer: Yes/No*

Residents/Communities/Citizens - *Answer: Yes/No*

Staff/Volunteers - *Answer: Yes/No*

17. Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing? *Answer: Yes/No*

Yes

18. Please give details of Positive Impacts

Age: The establishment of KCC Ofsted registered children's residential homes will positively impact younger individuals (aged 0-17). Current data indicates that most children in unregistered placements are between 13 and 17 years old (87.5%), with a significant portion being 15 years old (22.5%). By investing in and developing KCC's own Ofsted registered facilities, there will be more opportunities to improve outcomes for children.

Disability: A notable percentage of children (42.5%) in unregistered placements are supported by the Strengthening Independence Service, which aids those aged 0-25 with complex needs or disabilities. Investing in in-house provision will allow these individuals to be placed in Ofsted registered facilities, managed by KCC, increased likelihood of the child's needs being met, enhancing outcomes for this group while more suitable and stable long-term placements are found, thereby reducing reliance on unregistered provision. There will also be a positive impact on children with a disability who currently have to travel to out of county placements, as this provision will negate the use of these.

Sex: The investment in and development of KCC Ofsted regulated residential children's homes is likely to benefit boys more, as a higher proportion of boys (62.5%) are in unregistered placements compared to girls (37.5%). Boys may particularly benefit from in-house provision that supports their independence and improves outcomes, reducing the need for unregistered placements.

Additionally, the development of KCC Ofsted regulated residential children's homes will create new job opportunities for KCC staff and the local community. These opportunities may be more appealing to females, as data shows that the majority of the CYPE workforce is female (86.7%).

Gender identity/transgender:
No positive impacts against this characteristic.

Race:
No positive impacts against this characteristic.

Religion & Belief:
No positive impacts against this characteristic.

Sexual Orientation:
No positive impacts against this characteristic.

Pregnancy & Maternity:
No positive impacts against this characteristic.

Marriage & Civil Partnerships:
No positive impacts against this characteristic.

Carers Responsibilities:
No positive impacts against this characteristic.

Negative Impacts and Mitigating Actions

The questions in this section help to think through positive and negative impacts for people affected by your

activity. Please use the Evidence you have referred to in Section B and explain the data as part of your answer.
19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age
a) Are there negative impacts for Age? *Answer: Yes/No* *(If yes, please also complete sections b, c,and d).*
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Age
N/A
c) Mitigating Actions for Age
N/A
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Age
N/A
20. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability
a) Are there negative impacts for Disability? *Answer: Yes/No* *(If yes, please also complete sections b, c,and d).*
Yes
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Disability
There is an increased likelihood that CYP who have more complex needs are more likely to be placed within this type of provision.
c) Mitigating Actions for Disability
By providing in house provision for CYP with more complex needs it will mean that provisions set up for those with reduced needs will potentially be relieved.
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Disability
21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex
a) Are there negative impacts for Sex? *Answer: Yes/No* *(If yes, please also complete sections b, c,and d).*
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Sex
N/A
c) Mitigating Actions for Sex
N/A
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Sex
N/A
22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
a) Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender? *Answer: Yes/No* *(If yes, please also complete sections b, c,and d).*
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Gender identity/transgender
N/A
c) Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
N/A

d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Gender identity/transgender
N/A
23. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Race
a) Are there negative impacts for Race? *Answer: Yes/No* *(If yes, please also complete sections b, c,and d).*
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Race
N/A
c) Mitigating Actions for Race
N/A
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Race
n/a
24. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
a) Are there negative impacts for Religion and Belief? *Answer: Yes/No* *(If yes, please also complete sections b, c,and d).*
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Religion and belief
N/A
c) Mitigating Actions for Religion and belief
N/A
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Religion and belief
N/A
25. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
a) Are there negative impacts for sexual orientation. *Answer: Yes/No (If yes, please also complete sections b, c,and d).*
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Sexual Orientation
N/A
c) Mitigating Actions for Sexual Orientation
N/A
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Sexual Orientation
N/A
26. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
a) Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity? *Answer: Yes/No* *(If yes, please also complete sections b, c,and d).*
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
N/A
c) Mitigating Actions for Pregnancy and Maternity

N/A
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Pregnancy and Maternity
N/A
27. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for marriage and civil partnerships
a) Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships? *Answer: Yes/No* *(If yes, please also complete sections b, c,and d).*
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
N/A
c) Mitigating Actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
N/A
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Marriage and Civil Partnerships
N/A
28. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
a) Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities? *Answer: Yes/No* *(If yes, please also complete sections b, c,and d).*
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Carer's Responsibilities
N/A
c) Mitigating Actions for Carer's responsibilities
N/A
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Carer's Responsibilities
N/A

This page is intentionally left blank

From: **Christine Palmer, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services**

Christine McInnes, Interim Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education

To: **Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee – 18 November 2025**

Subject: **KCC's Sufficiency Strategy – 2025 to 2028**

Decision No: 25/00093

Key Decision: Yes
Savings or expenditure of more than £1m
Affects two or more Electoral Divisions

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of report: Corporate Parenting Panel – 21 October 2025

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: All
https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?bcr=1

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary: This report provides the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee with an overview of the steps taken to update and renew the previous Sufficiency Strategy 2022 to 2027 so it reflects the position in 2025 and covers the period to 2028.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **ENDORSE**, or **MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS** to the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services on the Proposed Decision as set out in Appendix A.

---

1. Introduction

1.1 On 27 July 2022, the Corporate Parenting Panel endorsed KCC's previous Sufficiency Strategy for 2022 to 2027 which sets out the Council's approach to meet its statutory responsibility to provide secure, safe and appropriate accommodation to Children in Care, Children in Need and Care Leavers.

1.2 Following presentation of the annual review of the Strategy in 2024, the Panel requested that the Strategy be reviewed, modernising its format and reflecting

the significant changes seen in both Children's Social Care nationally and in Kent. The Strategy covers the supply of accommodation and describes, at a high level, demand for accommodation, current accommodation options available and the forecast utilisation of this accommodation. It provides the forecast of future needs for all Children in Care, Children in Need and Care Leavers.

1.3 Whilst the impact of the High Court Judgment in 2023, which placed a duty on KCC to accommodate all newly arriving Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UAS children), did affect the sufficiency of accommodation for our Children in Care, the expansion of KCC's estate and the improvements of the National Transfer Scheme has mitigated most of the challenges, therefore this Strategy is focused on our citizen children.

2. Development of the Sufficiency Strategy

2.1 Embracing the Government's 2023 'Stable Homes Built on Love'[1] strategy and implementing the six pillars of reform will lead to greater sufficiency and therefore these pillars are the foundation for KCC's Sufficiency Strategy. This vision is underpinned by the fundamental principle of the Children Act 1989[2] that children's welfare is paramount. The six Pillars are:

1. Family help provides the right support at the right time so that children can thrive with their families.
2. A decisive multi-agency child protection system.
3. Unlocking the potential of family networks.
4. Putting love, relationships and a stable home at the heart of being a child in care.
5. A valued, supported and highly skilled social worker for every child who needs one.
6. A system that continuously learns and improves and makes better use of evidence.

2.2 In developing this renewed Sufficiency Strategy, a Task and Finish Group was established to:

- Finalise the Strategic priorities of the Sufficiency Strategy, including identifying their outcomes.
- Use the feedback from the consultation with operational teams to identify current and future local accommodation to address the challenges for children, Care Leavers, and their families and how these interact with national challenges.
- Scope work and agree actions to take forward for the Council to meet sufficiency.
- Inform the content and layout which needs to be within the revised Sufficiency Strategy.

2.3 The Sufficiency Strategy 2025 to 2028 (attached at Appendix B) continues to underpin how our access to accommodation and support can be increased.

[1] Guide for children and young people: Stable Homes, Built on Love - GOV.UK
[2] The Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations

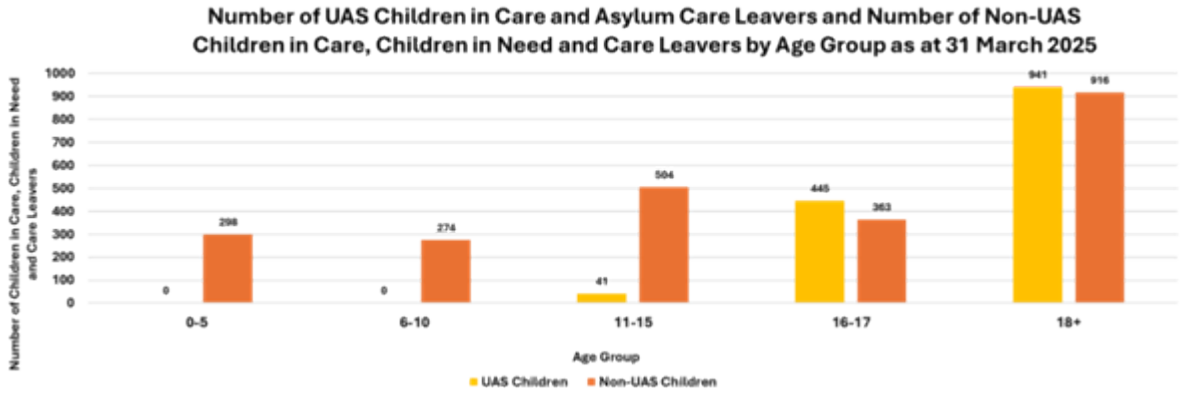
There is a focus on providing safe environments for children and young adults for whom the authority has a Corporate Parenting responsibility.

3. Background

3.1 Demand for placements across Children's Social Care is increasing and therefore we must manage placement matching well, buy services from providers that can expand in capacity and deliver value for money and good outcomes. All services are seeing children and young adults with more complex lives and as such require different approaches and models of support. Additionally, placements in Kent from other Local Authority children restricts Kent's access to local provision and impacts affordability.

3.2 The number of children in care now, in comparison to 2022, has increased from 1,768 (March 2022) to 1,895 (March 2025), including 545 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking (UAS) Children (March 2025). This is an increase of 7.2%.

3.3 The graph below shows that age group 11-15 has the highest number of non-UAS Children in Care and age group 16/17 has the highest number of UAS Children in Care. There are no UAS Children in the 0-5 and 6-10 age groups.



3.4 Whilst there is slight variance in end of year figures, many more children have entered and left KCC's care over recent years with the sharpest rise noted for UAS children with 1,133 being welcomed in 2022/23; 2,179 (63.5% increase) being welcomed in 2023/24 and 2,691 (23.5% increase) in 2024/25. These increases are a direct result of the High Court Judgement in 2023 with more UAS children coming into care of the Council rather than continuing to be supported by the Home Office. Many of these children stay with KCC for a short while, a matter of days or weeks, and are then transferred to another Local Authority. In 2024/25, 2,341 UAS Children moved under the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) to another Local Authority.

3.5 All UAS Children aged 16/17 who are under the care of KCC, will transfer into Supported Accommodation Low Needs Service after and an agreed period in a spot purchased Accommodation service, increasing the sufficiency in these settings.

3.6 The High Court ruling in 2023 made clear that KCC must take every possible step to increase its capacity to accommodate and look after all UAS Children arriving in Kent. In response, KCC subsequently expanded its accommodation

and services for newly arriving children across the County. This includes seven new Reception Centres, three are registered as Children's Homes and four as Supported Accommodation premises. Social Work teams have expanded from three to six teams to assess children's needs and match placements upon arrival, before supporting them to transition to more permanent homes cross the UK. KCC has accommodated every UAS child upon arrival to Kent, providing them with a welcoming and safe home from which to recover and resettle across the UK.

3.7 The cost of placements and support for UAS Children and former UAS Children Care Leavers is expected to be fully funded from Home Office Grants and is not a cost to the KCC Genera Fund. Conversely, the cost of placements and support for citizen children is mainly funded from the KCC General Fund (along with a small contribution from Health and specific government grants).

3.8 KCC currently spends 13% of its net budget (General Fund) on looked after children placements equating to £117m (32% on all children's services and education), of which a considerable proportion is for children placed in externally commissioned Residential Children's Homes. In 2024/25, a total of £108m was spent on citizen looked after children placements of which £51m was for residential care placements, and this proportion will rise. Whilst the number of children in residential care is relatively low (187 out of 1,400 children), the cost of placements is significantly higher than other types of support.

3.9 All residential placements are spot purchased and therefore lacks the contract management and market oversight compared to other Local Authorities who operate a relational approach with their residential providers. The main driver of demand for Residential Children's Homes is the need to secure a suitable placement for Children in Care with particularly complex needs and/or a history of placement breakdown.

3.10 The government are giving new powers to Ofsted, as part of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill[3], to repress providers who exploit Social Care with ambitions to limit the amount of profit a provider can make. This may affect the transparency of some providers and KCC will need to look at better ways to work with providers to build trusting and open relationships.

3.11 The Bill includes the provision of a statutory framework to authorise a Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS) for children who need it to keep them safe, in accommodation other than a Secure Children's Home. There is likely to be a number of children who will require a DOLS in place if they are deprived of their liberty.

3.12 KCC are developing its own in-house Residential Homes with the ambition of creating four, two-bedroom homes across the county supporting Kent's most complex children.

3.13 Supported Accommodation is used for 16/17-year-old Children in Care and some on the edge of care. There has been a national challenge in relation to

[3] **Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament**

delays by Ofsted for registration of providers to meet the new Supported Accommodation Regulations, introduced in 2023. This challenge has also impacted KCC as the delays have resulted in a higher number of children having to be placed out of county and in higher cost spot-purchased Supported Accommodation due to the lack of sufficiency of registered providers in Kent. This can lead to KCC having to place in unregistered provision as there are no other options available, and there is a robust process in place to make sure there is greater oversight of these children.

3.14 As of October 2025 the number of unregistered placements was ten, a reduction from 27 recorded in September 2024. Placement Plans are routinely updated for all children in unregistered settings.

3.15 The Government has included an amendment to the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, to disapply the intentional homelessness test for Care Leavers up to 25, meaning no Care Leavers should be found 'to blame' for their own homelessness. This could have a positive impact to these young adults by meaning that those who breach tenancy terms (anti-social behaviour/non-payment etc) would remain able to seek relief and ongoing housing duty from District and Borough Councils, which is not currently the case. Therefore, if asked to leave a service commissioned by KCC due to such breaches, they should still have an opportunity to be accommodated by a District or Borough Council with whom they have a local connection.

3.16 As part of the Stable Homes, Built on Love Strategy, Care Leavers up to 25 should not be limited as to where they can apply for housing due to the removal of the local connection requirements currently placed on them. This could allow for greater choice and opportunity for housing via the District and Borough Councils, although is likely to be limited in impact by lack of availability of housing stock and resources.

4. Voice of the Child

4.1 Children's voices are heard day to day through the Social Worker, the Independent Reviewing Officer and other professionals working with the child. Commissioning seeks the views of children when they commission services and through contract management, undertaking annual reviews of services and understanding whether there is satisfaction of services through surveys, focus groups and talking to children when visiting services

4.2 Through established networks organised by the Participation Team, a working group is underway related to Child and Family Feedback which seeks to develop a county wide strategic approach to Child and Family Feedback across KCC's Integrated Children's Services in line with the Participation Framework. This Group is looking to streamline feedback methods and ensure that the voice of children and families are fed back to improve practice and influence service design and delivery at local and county level. Any projects that are taken forward to develop sufficiency may be subject to consultation and engagement with children and families.

4.3 The Children's Outcome Analysis has been designed to give an insight into the current practice of the Integrated Children's Services teams and provides

bespoke lines of inquiry aligned to the Children's social care National Framework[4] to offer more impactful insights of areas of strength and development within those services.

4.4 Commissioned providers have continuous improvement logs to record lessons learnt and feedback from children and Children in Care Teams.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 Finding ways to manage the Councils financial pressure, whilst still maintaining good outcomes for children and young people, is an essential part of supporting the Council's financial sustainability. The Sufficiency Strategy looks at ways that we can improve sufficiency which will support the Council with managing this financial pressure and achieving the best outcomes for our children and young people.

5.2 The total net budget for citizen looked after children's placements in 2024/25 was £105m in 2024/25 and was overspent by £3m. Responding to the trend in increasing costs of placements, the Council has responded and invested further funding, increasing the budget to £117m in 2025/26, although the initial forecast is still indicating a possible overspend of £6.5m. This rise in cost is being driven by a reduction in our most cost effective placement offer (in-house foster carers) resulting in a greater reliance on more costly externally purchased alternatives, such residential care. In addition, the cost of externally commissioned placements is also rising, exacerbating this financial impact, and escalating costs.

5.3 The cost of UAS Children placements and associated support is expected to be fully funded from Central Government via the Home Office specific grants for Kent based UAS Children, former UAS Children Care Leavers and newly arrived children being temporarily supported until a permanent Local Authority is confirmed through the National Transfer Scheme. Whilst there is no direct cost to KCC, KCC still has a responsibility to secure value for money on supporting UAS Children and the placements secured. In addition, the grant for UAS Children (and former UAS Children Care Leavers) supported long-term by Kent has remained static for a number of years, therefore ensuring ongoing efficiencies to secure affordability within the grant provided is important.

5.4 The Strategy sets out a number of activities and services either being or will be undertaken to support future sufficiency. It is part of the foundations required to frame the activity needed to deliver overall savings and improve quality therefore, the Strategy itself does not constitute either a direct financial cost or saving. However, the activities undertaken to support the outcomes of the Strategy are intended to improve overall quality and cost effectiveness. The Medium Term Financial Plan agreed by County Council in February 2025, including savings totalling £3.6m over the next three years including the impact of the new Kinship service and development of in-house residential provision.

5.5 Any activity arising from the Sufficiency Strategy that constitutes a Key Decision will be subject to the Council's established governance processes.

[4] **Children's social care: national framework - GOV.UK**

6. Legal Implications

6.1 The Council has a statutory duty to provide suitable and safe accommodation with the right level of support for Children in Care (including UAS Children) in accordance with the Children's Act 1989.

6.2 The Sufficiency Duty (Section 22G of the Children Act 1989) requires Local Authorities, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure that there is sufficient accommodation to meet the needs of those children they have a Corporate Parenting responsibility for within their Local Authority area.

6.3 The Council must provide Care Leavers (including former UAS Children) with support and financial support to assist in prompting their welfare, especially in relation to maintain suitable accommodation and helping them access education, training, and employment.

6.4 The Council must comply with s.149 of the Equality Act 2010. It is an "have regard to" duty for Councils when exercising their functions, to"… eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation…advance equality of opportunity… and foster good relations…".

7. Equalities Implications

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and did not identify any negative impact on protected characteristics.

8. Data Protection Implications

8.1 There are no implications as a result of this Strategy as there is no personal data being processed.

9. Other Corporate Implications

9.1 The draft Strategic Statement "Reforming Kent 2025 to 2028" includes priorities recognising the need to work with the Home Office on the effectiveness of the National Transfer Scheme, the development of in-house Children's Homes and make representations at national level for a revised, needs-based funding formula for children's social care that recognises the burden from other Local Authorities placing so many of their Looked After Children into Kent which aligns with the Sufficiency Strategy.

10. Governance

10.1 Should the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services agree to adopt this Strategy, it will be published on www.kent.gov.uk with all previous documents removed.

10.2 A delivery plan will be developed and monitored and annual reviews will be undertaken to ensure the Strategy remains current and fit for purpose.

11. Conclusion

11.1 The Children Act 1989 requires local authorities to secure accommodation for children in their care, within local authority boundaries whenever practicable and appropriate, known as the 'sufficiency duty'. Local Authorities should publish a sufficiency strategy or statement setting out the local arrangements to meet the duty.

11.2 Whilst the sufficiency duty applies in respect of all Children in Care, it recognises the importance of earlier, preventative action to support children and families so that fewer children become looked after by targeting services to those who are on the edge of care. KCC's Kinship Service, Family Hubs and Early Help Services take action to support a child and/or their family early in the life of challenges or as soon as difficulties emerge.

11.3 Embracing the government's 2023 'Stable Homes Built on Love' and implementing the six pillars of reform will lead to greater sufficiency within Kent and have therefore chosen to use these pillars as the foundation for this strategy. This vision is underpinned by the fundamental principle of the Children Act 1989 that children's welfare is paramount.

---

12. Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **ENDORSE**, or **MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS** to the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services on the Proposed Decision as set out in Appendix A.

---

13. Background Documents

13.1 The legal requirements around every local authority's "sufficiency duty" are set out in section 22 of The Children Act 1989
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/section/22G

14. Appendices

14.1 Appendix A – PRoD

14.2 Appendix B - Sufficiency Strategy 2025 to 2028

https://sway.cloud.microsoft/He2n4tr2DpC8AKzx?ref=Link

15. Contact details

Christy Holden
Head of Children's Commissioning
03000 415356
christy.holden@kent.gov.uk

Kevin Kasaven
Director of Children's Countywide Services
03000 416334
kevin.kasaven@kent.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NUMBER:
Christine Palmer, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services	25/00093

For publication

Key decision: YES

Key decision criteria. The decision will:
Savings or expenditure of more than £1m
Affects two or more Electoral Divisions

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Kent County Council's Sufficiency Strategy – 2025 to 2028

Decision:

The Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services is asked to agree to:

a) Adopt the Sufficiency Strategy from 2025 to 2028, and
b) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education or other Officer as required by the Corporate Director to review the Sufficiency Strategy on an annual basis and make revisions to the strategy where changes do not require additional governance.

Reason(s) for decision:

The publication of the Sufficiency Strategy meets the Council's statutory duties under the Children Act 1989. Adoption of this Sufficiency Strategy allows KCC to be clear on its sufficiency duty and provide information on the service development needed for children's social care.

The Sufficiency Strategy reflects our ambition to accommodate Kent's children in care, on the edge of care and care leavers within the county in affordable accommodation.

If adopted, it will replace the Sufficiency Strategy 2022/27.

The Strategy is the result of extensive engagement with professionals across Integrated Children's Services and is informed by engagement from children who use the services.

<u>How the proposed decision supports the strategic direction of the Council</u>

The draft Strategic Statement "Reforming Kent 2025 to 2028" includes priorities recognising the need to work with the Home Office on the effectiveness of the National Transfer Scheme, the development of in-house Children's Homes and make representations at national level for a revised, needs-based funding formula for children's social care that recognises the burden from other Local Authorities placing so many of their Looked After Children into Kent which aligns with the Sufficiency Strategy.

Financial Implications:

Finding ways to manage the Councils financial pressure, whilst still maintaining good outcomes for children and young people, is an essential part of supporting the Council's financial sustainability. The Sufficiency Strategy looks at ways that we can improve sufficiency which will support the Council with managing this financial pressure and achieving the best outcomes for our children and young people.

The total net budget for citizen looked after children's placements in 2024/25 was £105m in 2024/25 and was overspent by £3m. Responding to the trend in increasing costs of placements, the Council has responded and invested further funding, increasing the budget to £117m in 2025/26, although the initial forecast is still indicating a possible overspend of £6.5m. This rise in cost is being driven by a reduction in our most cost effective placement offer (in-house foster carers) resulting in a greater reliance on more costly externally purchased alternatives, such residential care. In addition, the cost of externally commissioned placements is also rising, exacerbating this financial impact, and escalating costs.

The cost of UAS Children placements and associated support is expected to be fully funded from Central Government via the Home Office specific grants for Kent based UAS Children, former UAS Children Care Leavers and newly arrived children being temporarily supported until a permanent Local Authority is confirmed through the National Transfer Scheme. Whilst there is no direct cost to KCC, KCC still has a responsibility to secure value for money on supporting UAS Children and the placements secured. In addition, the grant for UAS Children (and former UAS Children Care Leavers) supported long-term by Kent has remained static for a number of years, therefore ensuring ongoing efficiencies to secure affordability within the grant provided is important.

The Strategy sets out a number of activities and services either being or will be undertaken to support future sufficiency. It is part of the foundations required to frame the activity needed to deliver overall savings and improve quality therefore, the Strategy itself does not constitute either a direct financial cost or saving. However, the activities undertaken to support the outcomes of the Strategy are intended to improve overall quality and cost effectiveness. The Medium Term Financial Plan agreed by County Council in February 2025, including savings totalling £3.6m over the next three years including the impact of the new Kinship service and development of in-house residential provision

Any activity arising from the Sufficiency Strategy that constitutes a Key Decision will be subject to the Council's established governance processes.

Legal Implications:

The Council has a statutory duty to provide suitable and safe accommodation with the right level of support for Children in Care (including UAS Children) in accordance with the Children's Act 1989.

The Sufficiency Duty (Section 22G of the Children Act 1989) requires Local Authorities, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure that there is sufficient accommodation to meet the needs of those children they have a Corporate Parenting responsibility for within their Local Authority area.

The Council must provide Care Leavers (including former UAS Children) with support and financial support to assist in prompting their welfare, especially in relation to maintain suitable accommodation and helping them access education, training, and employment.

The Council must comply with s.149 of the Equality Act 2010. It is an "have regard to" duty for Councils when exercising their functions, to"… eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation…advance equality of opportunity… and foster good relations…"

Equalities Implications:

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and did not identify any negative impact on protected characteristics.

Data Protection Implications:

There are no implications as a result of this Strategy as there is no personal data being processed.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Do nothing
There is an explicit expectation under the Children Act 1989 and Ofsted inspection regimes to meet the sufficiency duty and to set out how Kent County Council intend to meet needs for children and families. If we do not have an up to date sufficiency statement this can form part of the basis for a limiting judgement.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

....
signed date

This page is intentionally left blank

From:	Christine Palmer – Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education (Integrated Children's Services) Beverley Fordham – Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education (Education and Skills) Christine McInnes – Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education
To:	Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet – 18 November 2025
Subject:	**COMPLAINTS AND REPRESENTATIONS 2024-25**
Classification:	Unrestricted
Previous Pathway of Paper:	None
Future Pathway of Paper:	None
Electoral Division:	All

Summary: This report provides information about the operation of the Children Act 1989 Complaints and Representations Procedure in 2024/25 as required by the Statutory regulations. It also provides information about the 'non-statutory' social care complaints and complaints received about Education Services.

Recommendation: The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **COMMENT** on the contents of this report.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report provides detailed information about complaints and other representations received across the whole of the Children Young People and Education Directorate (CYPE).

1.2 There is a statutory requirement on the directorate to operate a robust complaints procedure for children, and those who are eligible to make a complaint on their behalf, about the social care services they receive. The statutory complaints procedure is designed to ensure the rights and needs of the child are at the heart of the process and that young people's voices are heard. Children in Care in Kent are advised how to make a complaint and are informed of their right to access the advocacy service.

1.3 The statutory requirement to produce an annual complaints report in respect of children's social care services is included in the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006. The Regulations are specific about the type of information which must be included in this annual report.

1.4 Complaints about children's social care services that meet published criteria are considered under the Children Act statutory complaints procedure. However, complaints which meet the eligibility criteria but cannot be progressed formally because of concurrent legal proceedings (in family and/or criminal court), active child and family assessment, or an active child protection enquiry, are progressed as an informal 'representation'. A 'representation' ensures that the concerns of the eligible child, parent or carer can be taken into consideration by the social care team without a risk of being prejudicial to the relevant concurrent proceedings. All informal representations are recorded on the complaints database, and where appropriate, on the child's social care record.

1.5 Functions excluded from the complaint procedure include multi-agency child protection decisions and decisions made in a court of law. Complainants are advised of the alternative routes available for challenging such decisions. Complaints which fall outside of the scope of the statutory complaints' procedure are considered under the KCC corporate complaints procedure, these include complaints about SEN and other non-social care services. All complainants, and those making representations, are routinely advised of their right to challenge the decision of the Council via the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).

1.6 Complaints which do not fall within the scope of either the corporate complaints procedure or the statutory Children Act procedure are handled as 'Enquiries' and customers are advised of alternative routes to progress their concerns, for example appeals processes, safeguarding referrals and school complaints.

1.7 Issues raised by Members of Parliament (MP) and Elected Members on behalf of constituents are registered and responded to as 'Member Enquiries'. However, if there is an active complaint, or the most appropriate way to address the concerns would be to progress them as a formal complaint, then the elected representative is advised of this course of action and subsequently provided with a copy of the complaint response when it is provided to the constituent/complainant.

2 Representations received

Table 1 - Representations received for CYPE Directorate

Type of Record	2021-22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Direction of travel from 2023/24
Children Act complaint	57	30	26	63	123%
Corporate complaint	981	1210	1159	1210	4%
Representation(1)	10	0	0	0	n/a
Member Enquiry	524	739	636	578	-8%
Enquiry	227	288	907	595	-108%
Comment	42	36	21	40	53%
Compliment	90	39	40	33	-18%
Total complaints	**1038**	**1240**	**1185**	**1273**	7%
Total all representations	**1931**	**2342**	**2789**	**2519**	-12%

(1) 'Representation' – until 2018 this category was used for all complaints not eligible to progress through the formal complaint process. Complaints not eligible for progression are now rejected at the assessment stage, and this category is only used for cases that are eligible, but legal or statutory processes prevent them being progressed as formal complaints under the Children Act.

2.1 The total number of representations received decreased by 12% in the year 2024/25, although formal complaints increased by 4% through the corporate process and by 123% through the Children Act Process. This represents a significant increase in the complexity of issues being raised, as fewer are being handled as initial enquiries that can be resolved easily. The above table does not include rejected or withdrawn complaints, of which there were an additional 573 cases in 2024-25.

2.2 The volume of Member Enquiries has reduced slightly, down 8% from the previous year. This year included a National Election which traditionally means we see a decrease in MP enquiries due to pre-election period. A proportion of customers have continued to pursue several different routes to seek resolution to their issues and concerns.

2.3 Whilst it is important to record the volume of complaints received, performance cannot be measured against this figure. Anybody who receives a service from KCC has a right to submit a complaint if they are dissatisfied with that service. However, performance can be measured by the percentage of those complaints subsequently upheld, either in full or part. Section 4 of this report provides an analysis of complaints received, with Tables 8 to 11 focusing on the key themes raised and the proportion of those that were upheld either in full or part.

Table 2 - Representations received by type and service/division

Type of record	Integrated Children's Services	Education	SEN & Disabled Children	Corporate Directors Office	Commissioning	Early Help and Preventative Services	Total
Children Act complaint	50	0	13	0	0	0	63
Corporate complaint	402	150	636	18	2	2	1210
Member Enquiry	81	125	364	7	1	0	578
Enquiry	337	58	193	2	5	0	595
Comment	6	34	0	0	0	0	40
Compliment	16	1	15	0	1	0	33
Total complaints	453	150	650	18	2	2	1273
Total representations	**892**	**368**	**1221**	**27**	**9**	**2**	2519
% complaints received	**51%**	**41%**	**53%**	**67%**	**22%**	**100%**	**51%**

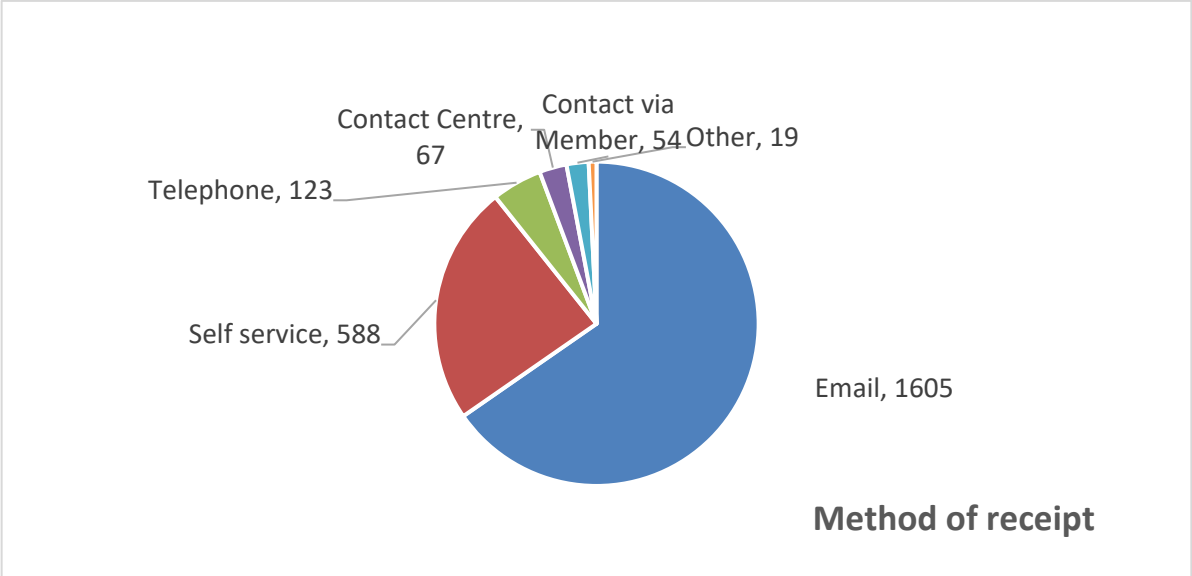
*Corporate Director's Office, and Commissioning

2.4 In 2024/25 there were an additional 573 complaints/enquiries received but not progressed. Of these, 522 were rejected at assessment stage, for the reasons identified below, and 51 were subsequently withdrawn by the customer.

Table 3 – Rejected complaints

Reason for complaint rejection	Number	% of total
Duplicate complaint	131	23%
Complaint subject to legal proceedings	111	19%
Complaint not for this organisation	56	10%
Representative not authorised to act on behalf of client	50	9%
Ongoing Assessment	39	7%
Other	38	7%
Customer declined to provide sufficient information to be able to investigate	36	6%
Appeal not a complaint - Housing, Parking, School Admissions, Social Care etc	21	4%
Complaint about an issue more than 12 months old	16	3%
Signposted to Ombudsman	10	2%
Service Request not a complaint	7	1%
Customer refused to provide a name or address	2	0%
Not our organisation	2	0%
Complaint about personnel matters	1	0%
Insufficient information provided by customer	1	0%
Same complaint already dealt with at all stages of the procedure	1	0%
No. of complaints rejected	**522**	

Table 4 - Method of receipt – all representations



*Other incs post, face to face.

3 Consideration of complaints

3.1 Dependent on what is being complained about, there is a legal requirement to handle complaints from Looked After Children and Children in Need, or those eligible to make a complaint on their behalf, through the three-stage procedure specified in the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.

3.2 The three stages for the statutory Children Act complaints procedure are:

- Stage 1 - Local Resolution (up to 20 working days)
- Stage 2 - Independent Investigation (up to 65 working days)
- Stage 3 - Independent Review Panel (30 working days)

3.3 The KCC complaints procedure consists of two stages:

- Step 1 – Local Resolution (up to 20 working days)
- Step 2 – Director Review (up to 20 working days)

The final stage for both procedures is escalation to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

3.4 The following table shows the number of Children Act complaints dealt with at each stage.

Table 5 – Children Act complaints requested and accepted at each stage

Stage	2021/22	2022 /23	2023/24	2024/25
Stage 1 – Local Resolution	57	32	21	63
Stage 2 – Independent Investigation	9	5	8	13
Stage 3 – Independent Review Panel	10	3	0	1

3.5 The number of complaints accepted and handled through the statutory Children Act complaints procedure has increased from the previous year from 21 to 63 cases. In 2023/24 additional training was given to advisors in the customer feedback team to triage and assess cases, ensuring that those that are eligible, are progressed through the Children Act Complaints Procedure. We are also seeing more cases where the LGSCO are directing Councils to carry out investigations under this procedure.

3.6 Triaging new cases involves giving consideration to who is making the complaint, the type of issues being raised, and when the issue being complained about occurred. Complaints which do not relate to an alleged injustice to an eligible child or young person are progressed through the corporate complaints' procedure.

3.7 Complainants are encouraged to allow the local social care team an opportunity to resolve their concerns before requesting progression as a formal complaint. This is particularly the case where it appears that services have not been afforded an opportunity to address matters locally before being raised as a formal complaint. Such cases are recorded as 'enquiries', and most are resolved successfully without the need to then progress as a formal complaint.

3.8 Of the 13 cases investigated at Stage 2, the reasons given for the requested escalations were - 6 because the customer disagreed with the outcome of Stage 1, 3 cases were because the customer did not feel they had been given an adequate response or explanation, 1 failed to address all issues, and 3 by-passed stage 1 and were accepted by the council at stage 2.

3.9 One Stage 3 Review Panel was requested in the reporting period for 2024/25

3.10 Customers who approach the LGSCO without first completing all stages of the complaints process are usually referred back to the Council by the Ombudsman. As a matter of course, customers are advised how they can escalate their complaint if they are dissatisfied with the outcome at each stage of the process.

4 Analysis of complaints

4.1 Integrated Children's Services and Disabled Children's Service

Table 6 - Complaints received by service

Service	No. received	% of total complaints	Snapshot of relative service caseload as of 31/3/25	% of complaints as a proportion of service caseload
Children's Social Work	268	60%	5736	5%
Children with Disabilities	46	10%	1464	3%
Children in Care	38	8%	1652	2%
Front Door	26	6%	47110	0%
Early Help	19	4%	2265	1%
Adolescents and Open Access	13	3%	233	6%
18+ and Leaving Care	11	2%	1846	1%
UASC	9	2%	173	5%
Fostering	6	1%	612	1%
Safeguarding & QA	6	1%	3019	0%
Adoption	2	0%	59	3%
CART (Children's Allowance Review Team)	2	0%	n/a**	n/a
Attendance and Inclusion	1	0%	n/a**	n/a
VSK	1	0%	2186	0%
Total number complaints received	**448**			

*number of contacts made to Front Door Service (includes Out of Hours Service)
** Unable to provide figures, not case holding teams

Table 7 - Complaints received by customer type

Customer	Total	% of total complaints
Parent	367	81%
Other customer (incl. providers/professionals)	40	12%
Child in care	13	3%
Foster carer	12	3%
Family member	9	2%
Carer (grandparent/special guardian)	7	2%
Care leaver/leaving care	2	>1%
Adoptive parent/prospective adoptive parent	1	>1%
Total number of complaints received	**451**	

4.2 The following table shows the volume of cases closed in the reporting year April 24 to March 25. This volume is different to the number of cases received, as cases can be received up to 31st March 2025, but will close in the following reporting period.

Table 8 – Complaints closed by service

Division	Total	%
Children's Social Work	281	59%
Children with Disabilities	53	11%
Children in Care	39	8%
Front Door	28	6%
Early Help	17	4%
Adolescents and Open Access	13	3%
UASC	12	3%
18+ and Leaving Care	12	3%
Fostering	8	2%
Safeguarding & QA	6	1%
Adoption	3	1%
CART (Children's Allowance Review Team)	2	0%
Attendance and Inclusion	2	0%
VSK	1	0%
Total	**477**	

Table 9 - Key themes and outcomes from complaints closed

	No. closed	No. Upheld/ part upheld	% upheld/part upheld
Communication issues *(e.g. delays or failure to communicate, quality of communications, incorrect information/advice given)*	77	38	49%
Equalities and regulatory issues *(e.g. discrimination, data protection issues, health and safety)*	47	17	36%
Issues with service *(e.g. delays or failure to do something, quality of service, cancellation or withdrawal of a service)*	203	62	31%
Policy and procedure issues *(e.g. procedures not followed, disagree with policy or procedure, disagree with decision)*	81	21	26%
Staff conduct	112	35	31%
Total number of issues raised	**520**	**173**	**33%**

4.3 More than one theme can be logged against each complaint, which is why there can be a higher volume of reasons than closed cases.

4.4 There is no direct correlation between the number of complaints received and the number of services or issues being complained about. This is due to the multi-faceted and often complex nature of some complaints which can span multiple services.

4.5 Overall, 33% of complaints received against Integrated Children's Services and Disabled Children's Services were either upheld in full or part. This is a decrease from 42% in the previous year.

4.6 The majority of complaints received and progressed through the statutory Children Act complaints procedure were in relation to the Children in Care service. The majority of these cited quality of service delivered as the main reason for complaint.

4.7 15 complaints were received from children and young people who are either in care, transitioning from care, or who have already left the care of KCC.

4.8 The following are key themes were raised in complaints from children and young people who are currently in or leaving the care of KCC:

Contact arrangements – 1 received (1 not upheld)
Disagreement with decision – 2 received (1 upheld, 1 not upheld)
Delay in doing something – 3 received (2 upheld, 1 partly upheld)
Failure to do something – 2 received (1 partly upheld, 1 not upheld)
Quality of Service – 2 received (1 party upheld, 1 not upheld)
Staff conduct – 1 received (1 upheld)

4.9 Education Planning & Access, and SEN

Table 10 - Complaints received by service

Service	No. received	% of total complaints	Snapshot of relative service caseload as of 31/3/25	% of complaints as a proportion of service caseload
Special Educational Needs (SEN)	584	80%	22,293	2.6%
Home to School Transport	26	4%	15,085	0.2%
Community Learning & Skills	65	9%	16,948	0.4%
Fair Access	55	7%	15,766	0.3%
Area Education Officers	4	0%	613	0.7%
Total no. complaints received	**734**			

Table 10 – Complaints closed by service

4.10 The following table shows the volume of cases closed in the reporting year April 24 to March 25.

Division	Total	%
Area Education Officers	3	2%
Community Learning & Skills	65	42%
Fair Access	53	34%
Transport (Education)	35	22%
Total	156	

Table 11 - Key themes and outcomes from complaints closed

	No. closed	No. Upheld/ part upheld	% upheld/part upheld
Communication issues *(e.g. delays or failure to communicate, quality of communications, incorrect information/advice given)*	37	24	65%
Equalities and regulatory issues *(e.g. discrimination, data protection issues, health and safety)*	7	3	43%
Issues with service *(e.g. delays or failure to do something, quality of service, cancellation or withdrawal of a service)*	67	33	49%
Policy and procedure issues *(e.g. procedures not followed, disagree with policy or procedure, disagree with decision)*	29	3	10%
Staff conduct	11	8	73%
Value for money	7	4	57%
Total number of issues raised	**158**	**75**	**47%**

4.11 More than once theme can be logged against each complaint, which is why there can be a higher volume of reasons than closed cases.

Table 12 - Key themes and outcomes from complaints closed – SEN

	No. closed	No. Upheld/ part upheld	% upheld/part upheld
Communication issues *(e.g. delays or failure to communicate, quality of communications, incorrect information/advice given)*	189	173	92%
Equalities and regulatory issues *(e.g. discrimination, data protection issues, health and safety)*	7	5	71%
Issues with service *(e.g. delays or failure to do something, quality of service, cancellation or withdrawal of a service)*	532	433	81%
Policy and procedure issues *(e.g. procedures not followed, disagree with policy or procedure, disagree with decision)*	64	32	50%
Staff conduct	2	2	100%
Total number of issues raised	**794**	**645**	**81%**

4.11 Table showing a top 5 issues raised against the SEN service.

Table 13

Classification	SEN	SEN Assessment and Placement	SEN Casework	SEN Casework 16+	Total
Delay in doing something	176	9	23	23	231
Failure to do something	129	11	23	29	192
Quality of service delivered	74	11	14	18	117
Failure to communicate	72	5	7	18	102
Disagreement with decision	25	12	13	4	54

4.12 Complaints about schools are managed within each school's own complaints procedure and some disagreements, for example, disputes relating to Education Health and Care Plans, are considered through the appropriate appeals route, including statutory tribunal.

4.9 In 2024/25, there were 150 Education complaints received and progressed, a 4% increase from 145 in 2023/24.

4.10 In comparison, 584 complaints were received and logged under one of the four service categories for Special Education Needs (SEN), an 11% increase

from 2023/24. Since 2021/22 the service has seen an increase of 51% in complaint volumes.

5 Complaints considered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

5.1 The number of complaints heard at Ombudsman level increased for the directorate in 2024/25 by 5%

5.2 A total of 195 complaints were received by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman in 2024/25 relating to services provided by the Children, Young People and Education directorate. Of these, 57 resulted in further detailed investigation by the Ombudsman, 88% of those being investigated were upheld against Kent County Council, in improvement on the directorate's performance of 90% the previous year. Nationally 91% of cases in this area are upheld by the LGSCO.

5.3 The Ombudsman has noted that the way in which they choose which complaints they will investigate has changed, leading to a higher number of complaints being upheld vs not upheld. The below is the Ombudsman's explanation of the change.

5.4 "…We are less likely to carry out investigations on 'borderline' issues, so we are naturally finding a higher proportion of fault overall. Our average uphold rate for all investigations has increased this year and you may find that your organisation's uphold rate is higher than in previous years. This means that comparing uphold rates with previous years carries a note of caution. Therefore, we recommend comparing your authority's uphold rate with that of similar organisations, rather than previous years, to better understand performance."

Table 12 – Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman involvement

	Detailed investigation				
	Upheld	Not upheld	Closed: out of jurisdiction/ no further action or withdrawn	Premature/ incomplete	Total
Children Social Work Services	6	1	30	9	46
Kent Test/School Admission appeals	0	1	5	0	6
Home to School Transport/Free School Meals	3	1	4	0	8
Special Educational Needs	41	4	19	37	101
The Education People	0	0	0	1	1
Community Learning and Skills	0	0	0	0	0
Closed by LGSCO – not sent to KCC	0	0	2	27	29
Closed under CYPE by LGSCO but not CYPE services	0	0	4	0	4
Total	50	7	64	74	195

5.5 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman found fault with 50 complaints relating to the Children Young People and Education directorate in 2024/25 (down 11% on previous year where 56 were upheld). The Ombudsman findings can be found at the following link for Children Social Care decisions SearchResult - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and here for education decisions SearchResult - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

6 Advocacy services provided under these arrangements

6.1 The Council has a statutory obligation to offer independent advocacy services to any eligible child or young person wishing to make a complaint under the Children Act complaints procedure.

6.2 A change was made to Kent's advocacy arrangements on 1 April 2015 so there is one point of contact for independent advocacy for all children and young people in Kent wishing to make a complaint, irrespective of their status as Children in Need, Children in Care, subject to a Child Protection Plan, or as Care Leavers. The advocacy service in Kent is provided by the Young Lives Foundation and has been since 1 April 2015.

6.3 In 2024-25 a total of 28 complaints were received from young people. It is a positive point to note that 14 young people made a complaint without the support of an independent advocate, this would indicate that they felt empowered and confident about raising their concerns. Whilst it is right that children and young people have access to the support of advocates, in recent

years there has been an emphasis on advocates supporting young people in trying to resolve their concerns rather than going direct to the complaint's procedure.

7 Compliance with timescales

Table 13 – Response performance – Integrated Children's Services

Procedure/stage	No. of responses made	No. of responses in timescale	% of responses provided within timescale	Previous Year %
Statutory complaint (Stage 1) (standard timescale)	48	20	42%	33%
Statutory complaint (Stage 1) (extended timescale)	48	41	85%	58%
Statutory complaint (Stage 2)	4	4	100%	0%
Statutory complaint (Stage 3)	0	0	n/a	n/a
Corporate complaint (Stage 1)	424	257	61%	48%
Corporate complaint (Stage 2)	100	55	55%	50%
Member Enquiry	89	62	70%	52%

**includes those complaints responded to within 10 working days*

Table 14 – Response performance – Disabled Children's Service

Procedure/stage	No. of responses made	No. of responses in timescale	% of responses provided within timescale	Previous Year %
Statutory complaint (Stage 1) (standard timescale)	12	2	16%	10%
Statutory complaint (Stage 1) (maximum timescale)	12	8	67%*	30%
Statutory complaint (Stage 2)	6	3	50%	29%
Statutory complaint (Stage 3)	2	1	50%	100%
Corporate complaint (Stage 1)	53	25	47%	23%
Corporate complaint (Stage 2)	18	7	39%	13%
Member Enquiry	23	10	43%	22%

**also includes those complaints responded to within 10 working days*

7.1 Response targets are based on cases closed with the reporting year.

7.2 The maximum timescale of 20 working days for Stage 1 Children Act complaints was achieved in 85% of complaint responses from Integrated Children's Services, and 67% for Disabled Children's Services. An increase in performance from 58% the previous year for Integrated Children's Services, and an increase in performance from 30% the previous year for Disabled Children's Services. The standard timescale for responding to Children Act Stage 1 responses is 10 working days, which can be extended up to 20 working days if required.

7.3 Integrated Children's Service responded to 100% of Stage 2 complaints within the 65-day timescale, with SEN and Disabled Children responding to 50% within timescale.

Table 15 – Response performance – Education

Procedure/stage	No. of responses made	No. of responses in timescale	% of responses provided within timescale	Previous Year %
Corporate complaint (Stage 1)	156	112	72%	75%
Corporate complaint (Stage 2)	12	9	75%	33%
Member Enquiries	109	25	23%	37%

Table 16 – Response performance - SEN

Procedure/stage	No. of responses made	No. of responses in timescale	% of responses provided within timescale	Previous Year %
Corporate complaint (Stage 1)	675	57	8%	7%
Corporate complaint (Stage 2)	165	8	5%	15%
Member Enquiries	405	40	10%	4%

7.4 Almost all areas of the directorate saw an improvement in complaint performance for 2024/25. The only exceptions to this were responses within Education and SEN divisions.

7.5 Work is continuing within the SEND service to ensure the handling of complaints is effective and parents feel more confident that their concerns are being heard.

8 Learning the lessons from complaints

8.1 Several complaints received in 2024/25 informed wider service development:

Area for development	Identified Actions
Assessment SEN	• Robust quality assurance measures are now in place and the LA remains committed to ensure that decisions are made fairly and in accordance with the legal framework. The LA is keen to ensure that it fully considers expert recommendations, where this is possible, in the future. • X will receive appropriate monitoring of their educational progress and further referrals for professionals can be made, if significant changes in his special educational needs have been identified. This can be requested via the annual review process. • The LA remains committed to providing a high-quality assessment process and continuously strives to enhance its service. It is currently focused on meeting the statutory timescales, without compromising the quality of assessments.
Communication	Staff reminded of: • At the next team meeting, workers will be reminded of the importance of transparent communication in building trust and understanding between families and professionals, to fully explain processes related to child protection concerns to avoid causing anxiety and distress. • Workers will be reminded at the next team meeting to be mindful of the challenges families face when a child lacks educational provision for an extended period. To recognise when extra support may be needed during such times and the importance of clarifying this support is not

Area for development	Identified Actions
	due to parenting concerns. • When parents express concerns about social services' views on their parenting, it is beneficial to involve relevant professionals to provide direct feedback and reassurance. This helps alleviate worries and provides clarity. This will be discussed at the next team meeting. • When assessing the level of support required based on the current situation, and if there if there are no parenting concerns, the team manager will consider allocating a Social Work Assistant instead of a Social Worker to provide the appropriate level of support.
Communication	• The service to take forward lessons learned following a complaint as they continue to work on the retention of social workers and the smooth transition of work should it be necessary to change a child's social worker during the course of an intervention.
Communication	• That Team Managers must ensure that when workers are absent from the team appropriate steps are taken to ensure families are aware. • That all families need to be provided with the team duty number at the outset of our involvement with them, in order that there is an alternative means of contacting the team when they cannot get hold of the allocated worker.

9 Review of the effectiveness of the complaint's procedure

9.1 Management of the children's complaints team transferred over to form part of a wider centralised KCC customer care and complaints function in April 2023. Social care complaints are required to remain detached from the delivery of those services being complained about. Having a centrally managed service has helped facilitate delivery of an impartial complaints process. Additional resources from the wider centralised customer care service have also been

utilised during what has been a challenging year for CYPE customer feedback. The ability to draw on centralised resources has been key in supporting the progression of overdue cases for SEN, and in ensuring that the handling of customer feedback for CYPE has been able to continue despite the challenges.

9.2 The effectiveness of the complaint's procedure depends on the wider organisational culture and the tendency to learn the lessons where the service has not been to the required standard. The Children's Complaints and Customer Care Team continue to receive support from Senior Management for the prioritisation of complaints, and in ensuring the availability of Independent Investigators where a Stage 2 investigation is required.

9.3 On receipt of new representations, the Children's Complaints and Customer Care Team assess each case, paying attention to complaints with regards who is making the complaint, what is being complained about, when the alleged injustice occurred, and whether there are any concurrent investigations or legal proceedings taking place. This assessment informs the decision-making process for determining which process is most appropriate for addressing each element of customer feedback. Many of the complaints can be complex and require sensitive handling.

9.4 The Children's Complaints and Customer Care Team has continued to experience further significant challenges during 2024/25. The volume and complexity of complaints and managing customer expectations continue to be one of the more challenging areas of work for the team. An increase in requests for support with the management of challenging behaviours from customers indicates that this is not limited to the handling of complaints, but instead a shift in behaviours from the public towards KCC staff.

9.6 **Training** – capacity within the complaints service continues to impact the delivery of complaints training for staff. Sessions are provided on demand for those services requiring awareness raising for staff, or for individuals tasked with undertaking independent investigations.

9.7 **Young Lives Foundation** - The Young Lives Foundation is an independent organisation which provides an Advocacy Service and the Independent Persons for the Stage 2 complaints. The reports produced by the Independent Persons have generally been to a good standard and delivered within the required timescales. The Advocacy Service has also been proactive in supporting and representing children and young people to make their views known. Regular contract monitoring meetings take place between the Young Lives Foundation, KCC's Commissioning Service, with the Children's Complaints and Customer Care Manager also participating.

10 Compliments

The Customer Feedback Team also record and share compliments received about staff and services. In 2024/25, the number of compliments formally received and logged decreased from the previous year. We will work on encouraging staff to share any compliments they receive; it is important we use positive feedback to help drive improvements as well as use them to celebrate achievements and good practice.

Theme	Total
Customer care	12
Delivery	1
Good Staff Attitude	7
Politeness	2
Prompt response	2
Quality of service	6
Quality of communication	3
Grand Total	**33**

10.1 Set out below are a few examples of the compliments received in 2024/25 across the directorate:

Feedback from parent: “I just wanted to say how helpful, supportive and kind …, EHC Assessment Officer, has been in regard to the EHCP process for my daughter. She has gone out of her way to keep me updated, to make really complicated information accessible to me and to make sure I have all relevant information to help me. She has taken the time to explain things and been patient. This hasn't gone unnoticed and I just wanted to say a huge thank you and show how much I appreciate her efforts.**”**

Feedback from a parent: “I had to email to say that today we had the pleasure of meeting the lovely lady who supports families from children's services … I would to tell her manager what a huge credit she is to your team & how amazing she is in her role & as a person in general.

… we immediately felt comfortable & at ease with, understanding, supportive, intelligent, caring, honest, helpful & professional & feel this has to be noted & she should be appraised highly as this is rare & your team are blessed to have her working with you.”

Feedback from external charity: “I want to take this time to share how caring, personal-centred, and solution-focused … was. From her agenda to managing the meeting, her presence and focus on the trauma this also had played to those involved. As a safeguard lead and looking at quality within the charity, I want to thank her for what she does, and I will look at it in my approach to ensure I am at the same standard.”

Feedback from a parent: "…has really changed our perception of social workers he is kind, caring & really wants to help. He has had such a positive impact on our family unit as a whole."

11 Objectives for 2024/25

Objectives for 2024/25 include:

- Focus on improving the quality of data entered on the customer feedback system to ensure accurate and informative performance and learning data is captured. Including the capture of those compliments received by services.
- Continue to ensure the operation of the complaints procedures in line with statutory requirements and monitor performance standards.
- Increase the provision of training for staff across the CYPE directorate on the effective handling of complaints.
- Focus on developing the skills of the customer feedback team to ensure effective and good quality handling of customer feedback.
- Continue to work with all services, particularly SEN, in improving response times for customer feedback.

12 Recommendations

Recommendation: The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **COMMENT** on the contents of this report.

13 Report Author

Pascale Blackburn-Clarke
Customer Relationship and Experience Manager
03000 417025
Pascale.blackburn-clarke@kent.gov.uk

Lead Director

Christine McInnes
Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education
03000 416991
Christine.mcinnes@kent.gov.uk

Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee
2025/26 Work Programme

20 JANUARY 2026		
• Verbal Updates by Cabinet Members	Standing Item	**Beverley Fordham and Chris Palmer**
• Draft Revenue Budget 2025-26 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	Regular Item	**John Betts and Dave Shipton**
• Performance Monitoring	Standing Item	**Katherine Atkinson**
School Expansions/Alterations:		
• Dartford Grammar School Expansion	Key Decision	**Ian Watts**
• Short Breaks	Key Decision	**Christy Holden**
• School Funding Model	Key Decision	**Karen Stone**
• Best Start Family Hubs	Key Decision	
• Work Programme	Standing Item	**Georgia Humphreys**

17 MARCH 2026		
• Verbal Updates by Cabinet Members	Standing Item	**Beverley Fordham and Chris Palmer**
• Draft Revenue Budget 2025-26 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) update	Regular Item	**John Betts and Dave Shipton**

• Performance Monitoring	Standing Item	**Katherine Atkinson**
School Expansions/Alterations:		
• Ebbsfleet Green Primary School Expansion	Key Decision	**Ian Watts**
• Admission Scheme and Amendments	Annual Key Decision	**Craig Chapman**
• Work Programme	Standing Item	**Georgia Humphreys**