

Appendix A – Your voice counts

SEND Parent Communications Analysis Report May-December 2024

This report outlines the engagement with SEND communications through the newsletter and social media between 1st May and 31st December 2024.

Social Media

These figures show the reach (number of people who saw the posts) and engagement rate (percentage of people reached who then interacted with the post) for each social media channel.

Facebook (Kent County Council)

Posts	Reach	Engagement Rate
53	144,248	4.2%*

*According to [Hootsuite](#) the average engagement rate for a government page on Facebook is 3.2%

Facebook (Kent Family Hub)

Posts	Reach	Engagement Rate
62	59,014	3.2%

LinkedIn (Kent County Council)

Posts	Reach	Engagement Rate
42	33,271	3.6%*

*According to [Hootsuite](#) the average engagement rate for a government page on LinkedIn is 2%

Instagram (Kent County Council)

Posts	Reach	Engagement Rate
46	11,895	1.87%*

*According to [Hootsuite](#) the average engagement rate for a government page on Instagram is 4.2%

Most Popular Posts

These are the top five posts on each social media channel by engagement-rate. The tables below also show the type of engagement on each of these posts. It is positive to note that the engagement-rate for these top posts is well above the industry average for each channel.

Facebook (Kent County Council)

Post	Reach	Engagement Rate	Reactions	Comments	Shares	Clicks
Parent and Carer Survey	6,999	10.9%	52	1	59	654
PINS Project announcement	5,619	10.5%	51	1	20	516
School Transport	7,546	5.9%	15	9	31	391
Travel Passport	5,904	3.5%	13	2	14	175
SEND Strategy consultation	4,880	3.1%	11	0	21	121

Facebook posts with a clear call to action are most successful e.g. asking people to take a survey or apply for school transport. Facebook users are also interested in news articles, such as the announcement of the Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) project, or useful resources such as the Travel Passport, an optional document to enable transport providers to better understand a child's needs.

Facebook (Kent Family Hub)

Post	Reach	Engagement Rate	Reactions	Comments	Shares	Clicks
Halloween advice (FH)	6,501	8.5%	90	0	34	431
ADHD and Autism Handbook (FH)	4,267	8.5%	37	1	23	303
Learning Disability Week	5,832	1.6%	17	0	25	50
Speech and language development	2,573	1.4%	4	1	8	24
Travel	2,055	1.3%	1	0	8	18

Passport						
----------	--	--	--	--	--	--

Kent Family Hub followers are slightly different to those that follow Kent County Council's official page. This audience is more interested in advice, resources and activities for their family. The top posts on this channel included a poster which encouraged inclusivity and awareness of children with SEND during Halloween, asking people to be patient with children who might have additional needs. The ADHD and Autism Handbook on the SEND Information Hub was also a popular resource, promoted for ADHD awareness month.

During Learning Disability Week Kent Family Hub signposted to the SEND Information Hub for more information about types of SEND and to find support. As part of our communications for the Balanced System® Kent Family Hub has shared tips for parents to develop their pre-school child's language.

LinkedIn

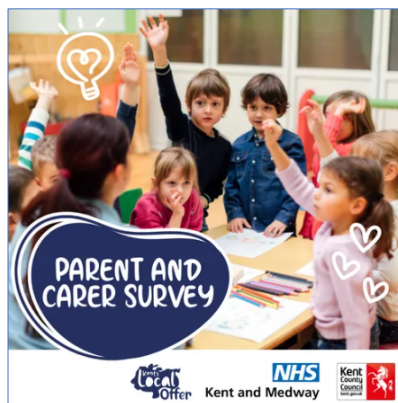
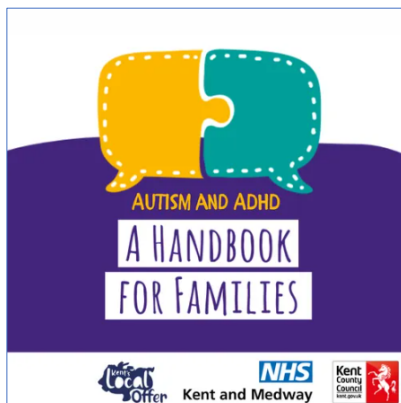
Post	Reach	Engagement Rate	Reactions	Comments	Shares	Clicks
SEND Improvement Notice Lifted (article)	5,449	7.47%	90	7	4	302
PINS project announcement (article)	4,331	6.58%	84	7	13	181
SEND Improvements continuing (article)	1,855	6.25%	30	2	8	76
STLS Consultation (survey)	1,715	5.07%	7	0	17	63
SENCO Conference (live update)	1,556	11.57%	31	1	6	142

LinkedIn is best for reaching education and health professionals with training opportunities, advice and resources, as well as latest news about SEND. News articles and surveys have performed best on LinkedIn, we have also shared information about Autism Education Trust and the roll out of the Balanced System® in Kent. At the SENCO Conference in October 2024 we also tried sharing live updates from the conference which received lots of engagement.

Instagram

Post	Reach	Engagement Rate	Reactions
SEND Improvement Notice Lifted	699	2.29%	13
SEND Strategy Consultation	467	2.14%	9
Autism Central resources for families	329	2.74%	8
School Transport	583	1.58%	7
Returning to school after Christmas	240	3.4%	8

Instagram users are interested in news and advice for parents and children with SEND. The top post is the article announcing that the SEND Improvement Notice has been lifted, followed by the SEND Strategy consultation. The other posts include information and advice for families. Kent County Council's organic reach on Instagram is limited due to the style of content. Video performs best on Instagram, and we are creating some short informative videos about Kent's Local Offer.



Social Media Sentiment

Sentiment towards SEND posts on KCC's Facebook page between May-December 2024 has been mixed, leaning towards negative. Negative reactions are common on other posts on this main channel as seen through detailed analysis.

Over summer 2024 followers on Facebook were displeased by the news that the SEND Improvement Notice had been lifted, feeling that they had not seen the evidence of improvements.

There was also a negative reaction to the Special School Review consultation due to misunderstandings about the proposed changes, as some parents believed that children currently in special schools could lose their placements. We have addressed

those concerns in our following communications about next steps for the Special School Review.

Consultations and surveys receive the most comments on Kent County Council's Facebook page as people want to share their views. Fewer people respond to articles and resources, although we have had some positive comments about our newsletter.

On the Kent Family Hub Facebook page, we do not get many comments but people do tag their friends in posts with useful information and resources, such as the travel passport, ADHD and Autism Handbook, or local activities. Reactions are positive and there have been no negative comments on the Family Hub page since it launched in May 2024, even when sharing news and surveys from KCC.

Similarly, on KCC's LinkedIn SEND posts do not receive many comments. When people do comment sentiment is often mixed. LinkedIn followers are happy to hear about SEND improvements and projects, but often feel that not enough has been done or want to know in more detail about proposed changes.

Next Steps

Surveys and consultations generate a lot of engagement as well as often receiving negative sentiment, so going forward we will be more open and transparent about the actions following feedback on surveys and consultations. A summary of results and actions will be published in a new dedicated area on the SEND Information Hub (currently in development) and shared on our social media channels and in the SEND parent newsletter.

An annual content calendar is used to promote useful information, advice and guidance, as well as important updates from the system. It includes key education dates, awareness days and key messages to promote throughout the year. Partners in health and education and Kent PACT have the opportunity to feed into this content calendar, so that we can continue to coordinate and align our communications.

A series of short videos explaining the Balanced System®, Mainstream Core Standards and the SEND Information Hub are currently in production. Video content performs well across all social media channels, and could boost engagement on Instagram. There are plans for more video content.

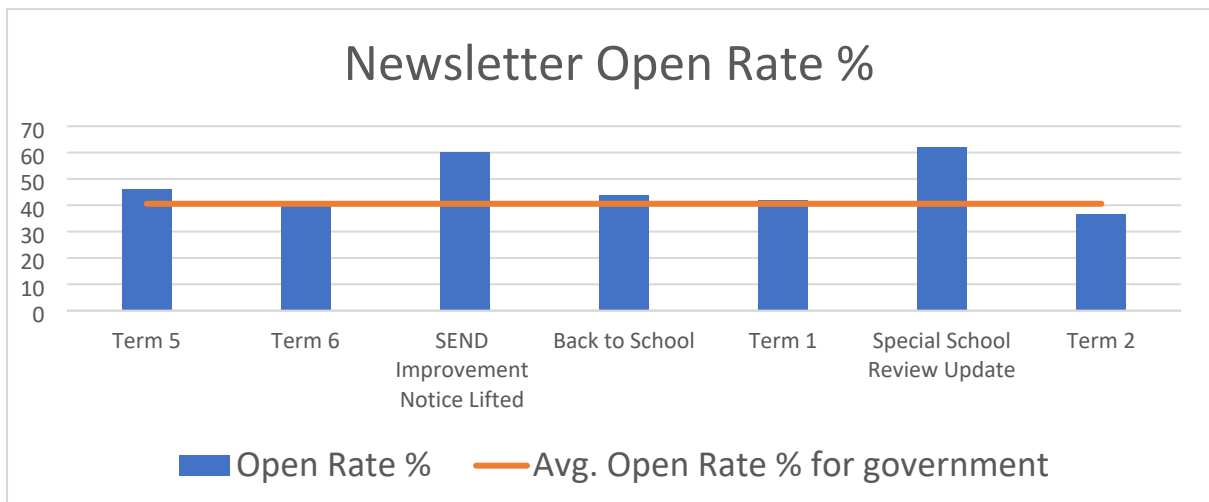
Communications for early years support, post-16 support and preparing for adulthood, positive stories about SEND and the benefits of inclusive mainstream schools are priorities for the coming year. Following positive feedback from parents and carers, the Autism and ADHD Handbook is also being updated and developed into web content for the SEND Information Hub which will work alongside the NHS information webpages for neurodiversity.

SEND Parent Newsletter

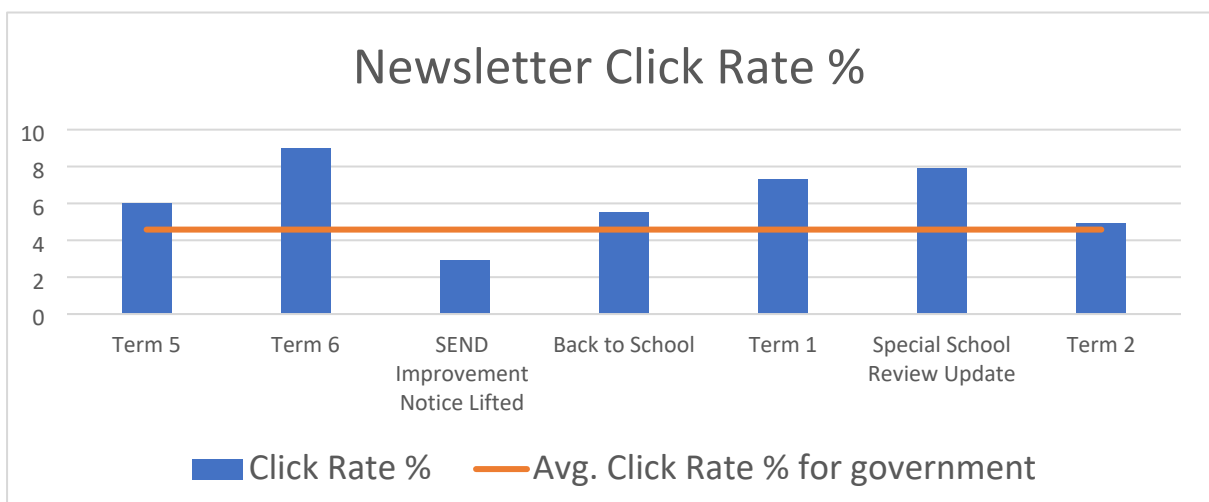
Edition/Date	Reach	Open Rate	Opened on social media	Click-rate	Unsubscribed	New subscribers
Term 5 (23 rd May)	13,764	46.2%	82	6%	16	198
Term 6 (24 th July)	13,815	41%	195	9%	15	67
SEND Improvement Notice Lifted (8 th August)	13,704	60.3%	-	2.9%	14	19
Back to School (20 th August)	13,667	43.8%	189	5.5%	24	6
Term 1 (24 th October)	13,712	42.1%	63	7.3%	18	69
Special School Review Update	13,723	61.9%	-	7.9%	30	29
Term 2 (20 th December)	13,720	36.8%	11	4.6%	24	27

The above figures show the number of people who are receiving, opening and engaging with our SEND parent newsletter. The mailing list of 13,720 subscribers consists mostly of parents of children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), which we are looking to expand to include those who have requested an Education Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) as well.

The latest data from Mailchimp shows that the average open rate for a government organisation is 40.56%. All of the SEND newsletters, except for the December 2024 term 2 edition, have exceeded this average.



The average click rate for a government organisation on Mailchimp is 4.48%. All of our SEND newsletters, except for the announcement of the SEND Improvement Notice being lifted, have exceeded this average. That issue may not have generated as many clicks, because the news article was in the text of the newsletter, not requiring people to click a link for more information.



The average unsubscribe rate for a government organisation is 0.22%, and the average across these 7 editions of our SEND newsletter is 0.14%. This low rate of subscription suggests that our content is interesting and relevant to our subscribers.

Most Popular Links

Link	Clicks	Edition
Autism and ADHD Handbook	304	Term 1
Improvements to SEND services in Kent continuing	150	Term 6
PINS Project announcement	144	Term 1
National Autistic Society online training for teenagers	140	Term 5
Ready, steady, school! A mum of three children with	130	Back to

SEND shares some tips on school readiness		School
Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) resource pack for parents	127	Back to school
KCC Travel Saver bus pass	124	Back to school
Travel Passport for children with free school transport	106	Back to school
Kent Family Hub home page	104	Term 5
Activities in Family Hubs	103	Term 6

The most-clicked links in each newsletter are often in the first section (Latest News) which might show that fewer people are scrolling further down to the Your Voice Counts and Events and Activities section. Contents with links are included at the top of the newsletter so parents can see what is included further down and skip to the sections they want to read. We aim to keep articles as short as possible linked to further information on websites or the KCC News and Features page.

The most-clicked links are either news articles with important updates about SEND services in Kent, or resources for parents, carers and young people. Almost half of the most-clicked links were in the Back to School newsletter in August 2024, suggesting that this information was well-timed and informative for parents preparing their children to return to school.

Next Steps

In the next edition of the SEND newsletter there will be a survey asking parents to feedback on the content and quality of the newsletter. We would like to know if the information is useful to them, what kind of articles and information they would like to see in future newsletters, and if they are happy with the frequency and length of the newsletter.

Kent Educational Psychologists have offered to provide regular content for the newsletter, so some insight into what parents want to know about throughout the year will help shape their contribution. The annual content plan and monthly SEND Communications Planning group will also help coordinate messaging with out partners.

More examples of “you said, we did” are needed from SEND service providers. While we can show improvements through data such as reduced waiting times, we would like more personal stories from parents, carers and young people who have experienced improved support from our SEND services.