

## Appendix B

### SEND Newsletter “You Said We Did”

#### What is “you said we did”?

Every SEND newsletter includes a “Your Voice Counts” section which is used to promote current surveys and consultations, asking parents to share their views on SEND and education services. A key principle of the SEND Communications and Engagement Strategy is openness and transparency, so each newsletter has a “You Said We Did” section in which outline the survey results and our next steps. This section of the newsletter can also be used to answer questions and provide information around common themes that have come up in in surveys and focus groups.

#### Examples of “you said we did”

In our March 2024 newsletter we asked subscribers to respond to our Parent and Carer Survey and share their experiences of SEND services in Kent.

In the next edition, in May 2024, we summarised some of the common themes in the responses and provided examples of what Kent County Council is doing to improve



#### Parent and Carer Survey 2024 - your feedback

Thank you for sharing your views in the Parent and Carer Survey. We had 430 responses, so thanks to all of you who took part. We'll be running the survey three times a year so keep an eye out in this newsletter and on social media (links at the end of this email) to take part and continue sharing your feedback. These were some of the comments we received, and what we've been doing to improve our services.

**You said:** Your response rates are too long.

**We did:** We have introduced an initiative called Talk Tuesdays where our SEND team dedicate time to respond to parents by email or phone (it isn't only Tuesdays!). We are continuously updating [Kent's Local Offer](#) so that useful information is readily available, and the SEND Enquiries Hub are there to help parents with their queries.

services.

**You said:** We want more opportunities to feedback on the service.

**We did:** We have introduced the new parent/carer survey which we'll be running each time (three times a year) where you can share your feedback. We're always keen to hear your views and suggestions and regularly run surveys and consultations about different topics. You can [find out more about this on our website](#). We also work closely with Kent PACT to listen to the feedback they share with us from parents and carers. We also share your feedback through this newsletter and social media channels.

**You said:** Incorrect information is being shared across SEND teams.

**We did:** All our teams are now working closely together to make sure information is recorded and shared consistently.

**You said:** We do not provide enough information.

**We did:** We are always working on our SEND Information Hub (Local Offer) website to make sure information is correct. When we send letters/emails to parents, we signpost to the relevant pages of the website and provide contact details if more support is required.

**You said:** There is a lack of training for staff.

**We did:** We are constantly updating our available training for staff and schools. We provide them with feedback opportunities to understand their needs and base new and refreshed training around this. We are also developing a training directory for schools which will give them full access to training and resources. We have invested £3m in training over the last three years and our core teams are now 95% filled by permanent staff. This has reduced our reliance on temporary staff, and the newly trained skills are therefore retained within the workforce.

**You said:** We do not share good news stories.

**We did:** We are reaching out to young people, parents and staff, asking them to share any successes or good news they have so we can understand where we are doing well and where we can improve. We are also starting termly parent and school surveys to gather more information that can help us make improvements. Our surveys and good news stories will be shared in feature articles, newsletters and on our social media channels.

In our July 2024 newsletter we included the results of a survey of parents at 38 schools which are part of the Autism Education Trust (AET) training programme. The results came from 140 responses and were included to demonstrate the positive impact of AET training in these schools.

You said...

...we did.

## 71% of parents say their autistic child is happy at school

Kent is one of 6 local authorities trialing the National Autism Education Trust (AET) Parental Online Questionnaire which follows up on AET training after several weeks. The following data is taken from 140 responses from parents of autistic children across 38 schools in Kent.

- 71% of parents stated that their child is happy at school.
- 75% of parents felt educational staff listened to what they had to say about their child and valued their opinions.
- 69% of parents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they felt their child had achievable goals important to them.
- 79% agreed or strongly agreed that their child was included in all activities.
- Anxiety-based absence is still a concern with 29% of parents saying their child had been absent for this reason in the last 12 months

Data from the National Autistic Society Schools Report 2023 suggests that nationally only 26% of autistic pupils feel happy at school. This shows the positive impact of [Autism Education Trust training](#) in Kent schools. The training focuses on creating supportive and understanding environments for autistic children in school.

In October 2024 we fed back on the results of our Speech Language and Communication Parent Survey, which had 129 responses, mostly from parents at mainstream primary schools using the Balanced System® framework. We also used this article to invite parents and carers to join the SLCN Parent Engagement Group to input their views on the rollout of the Balanced System®.

In the same edition we also thanked parents for their views on the Early Years Support Model and outlined the next steps for implementing this revised model.

You said...

...we did.

## Speech language and communication parent survey



Thank you to everyone who responded to our survey on support for speech, language, and communication in schools. We received 129 responses, mostly from parents of children at mainstream primary schools using the Balanced System® framework.

Parents in these schools were more confident that their child's needs were being met, with only 12% lacking confidence compared with 41% in schools without the Balanced System®.

Speaking with school staff and having in-person conversations with a speech therapist were the most helpful forms of support. The Balanced System® rollout will make this support more accessible as more schools will have a link speech and language therapist.

More than half the parents who responded did not know if their school had a link therapist. We will work with schools to share more information about this role.

We will continue to seek parent views through our SLCN Parent Engagement Group, next session on 20th November. If you are interested in joining, please [fill out the form](#).

For more information about [the Balanced System® and the role of a link therapist](#), visit the SEND Information Hub.

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## Early Years support model



In March 2024, Kent County Council undertook an 8-week public consultation on our proposals to improve the model of support for children in early years settings (including childminders) across the county. The revised model aims to ensure that the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children have their needs identified accurately and assessed in a more timely and effective way, so they receive the right support, in the right place and at the right time.

Following Children Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 9 July 2024, the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills agreed the implementation of a revised model of Early Years Education in Kent, including a revised process to apply for Special Education Needs Inclusion Funding (SENIF).

An implementation plan has been developed and we are working with stakeholders to develop more detail around how the model will work in practical terms.

Early Years Childcare and Education providers can expect to see new ways of working being introduced from Term 5 (April 2025) and the revised model embedded by Term 1 of next academic year (September 2025). Regular communication on the progress will be shared to those directly impacted by any changes.

The December 2024 newsletter included feedback on next steps for the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service and the Special Schools Review consultations, which had been promoted in earlier newsletters.



## **Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS)**

Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond to our consultation regarding the role of Specialist Teaching and Learning Services within the ongoing transformation of SEND services.

Your views and experiences will help us shape the future of STLS. A decision on next steps will be taken in January 2025. Look out for an update in our next newsletter!



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## **Special schools review**

We have published details of its proposed next steps following a Special Schools Review public consultation, which was discussed at the Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 21st November.

Read the [full article about our next steps](#) or read our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document.



In December, we also sought parents views in another Parent Carer Survey.

Following feedback from parents asking to see the results of the survey, we plan to publish the survey results as well as the key themes arising and what we are doing as a result of their feedback on a new, dedicated SEND engagement section (currently in development) on the SEND Information Hub.