

From: Beverley Fordham, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Sarah Hammond, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education

Subject: SEN Update

Background Information (September 2025)

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report provides up to date background information for Scrutiny Committee Members' awareness in relation to future substantive items on SEND for inclusion on the Committee's work programme.

This is intended to be for the Committee's information only but is published with the agenda for transparency and openness.

1. Government monitoring

1.1 Work is continuing to improve the SEND service and to make it more financially sustainable. KCC is continuing to receive Department for Education (DfE) funding contributions towards the High Needs Funding deficit under the Safety Valve programme. The KCC Safety Valve reports are published and can be seen here [Safety Valve agreement](#)

1.2 Scrutiny Committee has previously considered reports on the Safety Valve in January 2025 [Scrutiny Committee, 29 January 2025](#) agenda item C1 pg. 185 and March 2025 [Scrutiny Committee, 18 March 2025](#) agenda item C4 page 113.

1.3 The DfE and NHS England continue to monitor the delivery and impact of outstanding actions in the Accelerated Progress Plan through attendance at the SEND Partnership Board and formally through twice yearly assessments when range of written and verbal evidence is considered. The feedback letter from the last assessment is included as Appendix 1. which shows the number of projects being monitored has reduced by 65%, from 127 to 45. The letter includes the areas/projects the DfE and NHSE are still monitoring.

2. Recent reports on key issues

2.1 The reports and documents referenced and appended to this report were considered at the most recent SEND Partnership Board in July 2025.

2.2 Previously the Scrutiny Committee considered data including completion of Education, Health and Care Plans within the 20-week statutory deadline on a quarterly basis, however since the inspection there has been a parallel focus on

improving the quality of EHCPs. There are a number of strands to the Quality Assurance process, including dip sampling of plans by the DfE. Appendix 2 provides a summary of the process and outcomes of the quality assurance of EHCPs.

- 2.3 Parents and carers of children and young people with special and additional needs are important stakeholders and a number of approaches are used to support parental engagement. An overview can be seen in Appendix 3.
- 2.4 Appendix 4 Early Years Vision Impairment Spring Event- Kent Life 2025 is the report of a parental engagement event where feedback is used to inform future planning.
- 2.5 KCC is committed to engaging children and young people in the SEND statutory processes. Appendix 5 How we capture youth voice is written by the Head of the Statutory Specialist Teaching and Learning Service and provides one example of the range of work going on to shape services to meet client needs.
- 2.6 Appendix 6 is a published article outlining the rationale for one of the student councils that KCC runs 'Student voice – Why did we feel the need for a sensory student council? Which outlines the rationale' for just one of the student councils run by KCC officers.

3. Contact Details:

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Appendices Attached

Appendix 1 Kent 3rd Review DfE NHSE Feedback 03.04.25 Final

Appendix 2 Quality of EHC plans - July 2025

Appendix 3 Parental engagement

Appendix 4 Early Years Vision Impairment Spring Event- Kent Life Review

Appendix 5 STLS Sensory and Physical Development Youth Voice report

Appendix 6 Why a student council?