

# 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.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>'. 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);

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<sup>1</sup> [Solving the SEND Crisis - Committees - UK Parliament](#)

<sup>2</sup> [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)<sup>3</sup> 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	<b>Varied from:</b> 3.1 miles in Tonbridge and Malling to 9.2 miles in Sevenoaks.	<b>Varied from:</b> A low of 29.4% in Tunbridge Wells to a high of 100% in Tonbridge and Malling.
Secondary Age	<b>Varied from:</b> 3.5 miles in Dartford to 14.4 miles in Thanet.	<b>Varied from:</b> A low of 10.3% in Sevenoaks to a high of 93.5% in Tonbridge and Malling.

<sup>3</sup> [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**

	<b>Average distance - pupil's home to their maintained special school</b>	<b>Proportion of pupils attending a maintained special school in their home district</b>
Primary Age	<b>Varied from:</b> 3.9 miles in Thanet to 11.0 miles in Dover.	<b>Varied from:</b> a low of 3.6% in Dartford to a high of 93.4% in Thanet.
Secondary Age	<b>Varied from:</b> 4.5 miles in Thanet to 13.9 miles in Swale.	<b>Varied from:</b> 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 <sup>4</sup>. 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%.

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<sup>4</sup> [Education, health and care plans, Reporting year 2025 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)

**Figure 2b: EHCPs by Age Group and Need Type**

<b>SEN Type 2025</b>	<b>Under 5</b>	<b>Aged 5-10</b>	<b>Aged 11-15</b>	<b>Aged 16-19</b>	<b>Aged 20-25</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Kent %</b>	<b>England %</b>
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%
<b>Kent Total</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>6,392</b>	<b>8,174</b>	<b>4,633</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>20,635</b>		

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®<sup>5</sup>, 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](#).

<sup>5</sup> [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	
<b>Phase Total</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>738</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,436</b>			<b>1,589</b>		

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
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,394</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>6,284</b>	<b>5,482</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>6,432</b>

\*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**

<b>Kent Area/District</b>	<b>Pupil Referral Unit</b>
Thanet and Dover	Enterprise Learning Alliance
West Kent, Tunbridge Wells	Two Bridges School
Folkestone and Hythe	Birchwood School
Dartford and Gravesham	North West Kent Alternative Provision:
Swale	Estuary Academy North and Estuary Academy Island
Maidstone and Malling	Maidstone and Malling Alternative Provision
Canterbury	Canterbury Inclusion Service
<b>Kent Area/District</b>	<b>Alternative Provision</b>
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
<b>Total</b>	<b>396</b>

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.<sup>6</sup> 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.

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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<sup>7</sup>. 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

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<sup>7</sup> [\(Public Pack\)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<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> 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.

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<sup>8</sup> [Strategy for children with special educational needs and disabilities](#)

<sup>9</sup> [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
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,635</b>	<b>21,270</b>	<b>21,593</b>	<b>21,818</b>	<b>21,960</b>	<b>21,974</b>

## 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
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,635</b>	<b>21,270</b>	<b>21,593</b>	<b>21,818</b>	<b>21,960</b>	<b>21,974</b>

### 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
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,856</b>	<b>5,877</b>	<b>5,870</b>	<b>5,848</b>	<b>5,766</b>	<b>5,704</b>

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
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,026</b>	<b>1,940</b>	<b>1,914</b>	<b>1,905</b>	<b>1,879</b>	<b>1,858</b>

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
<b>Total</b>	<b>1635</b>	<b>1753</b>	<b>1823</b>	<b>1868</b>	<b>1888</b>	<b>1891</b>

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
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,454</b>	<b>1,567</b>	<b>1,602</b>	<b>1,698</b>	<b>1,802</b>	<b>1,897</b>

A breakdown of the forecast ASD and SLCN cohort for SRPs is 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
<b>Total</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>891</b>	<b>931</b>	<b>1,006</b>	<b>1,095</b>	<b>1,167</b>

**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
<b>Total</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>429</b>

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
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,434</b>	<b>6,554</b>	<b>6,640</b>	<b>6,629</b>	<b>6,675</b>	<b>6,707</b>

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
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,222</b>	<b>3,249</b>	<b>3,257</b>	<b>3,187</b>	<b>3,161</b>	<b>3,114</b>

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
<b>Total</b>	<b>736</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>936</b>	<b>977</b>

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 4I.

**Figure 4I: 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
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,772</b>	<b>1,809</b>	<b>1,678</b>	<b>1,484</b>	<b>1,164</b>	<b>917</b>

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<sup>10</sup>.

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 6<sup>th</sup> 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
<b>Total</b>	<b>374</b>

**Source: SEN2 Return 2025**

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<sup>10</sup> [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
<b>Total</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>156</b>

**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
<b>Total</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>430</b>

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
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,985</b>	<b>3,383</b>	<b>3,961</b>	<b>4,567</b>	<b>5,043</b>	<b>5,282</b>

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
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,985</b>	<b>3,383</b>	<b>3,961</b>	<b>4,567</b>	<b>5,043</b>	<b>5,282</b>

*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<sup>11</sup> 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.<sup>12</sup>

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.

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<sup>11</sup> [Pathways for All three year strategy](#)

<sup>12</sup> [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 6 <sup>th</sup> 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
<b>Total planned special school places</b>				<b>664</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>130</b>

### 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
<b>Total primary planned SRP places</b>				<b>140</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>
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
<b>Total secondary planned SRP places</b>				<b>200</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total planned SRP places</b>				<b>340</b>					

**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
<b>Total primary planned SRP places</b>				<b>85</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
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
<b>Total secondary planned SRP places</b>				<b>85</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total planned SRP places</b>				<b>170</b>					

**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
<b>Total primary planned SRP places</b>				<b>80</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>
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
<b>Total secondary planned SRP places</b>				<b>125</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total planned SRP places</b>				<b>205</b>					

**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
<b>Total primary planned SRP places</b>				<b>84</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
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
<b>Total secondary planned SRP places</b>				<b>90</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total planned SRP places</b>				<b>174</b>					

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
<b>Total planned places</b>				<b>0</b>	

### 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
<b>Total Planned Alternative Provision Places</b>				<b>70</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>



## 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.