

# Countywide SENCO Forum-

## 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Siobhan Price- Education Officer, Mainstream Inclusion (KCC)  
Ruth Gately- SEND Specialist Adviser (The Education People)  
Alice Gleave- Interim Assistant Director, SEN Operations (KCC)  
Kate Middleton- Deputy Head (The Judd School)  
Stephen Cartwright- Assistant Principal (The Marsh Academy)  
Cheryl Chalkley- Headteacher (Mersham Primary School)  
Elizabeth Pole and Helen Waymouth (SEND Therapies Team)  
Dr Sarah Musgrave- Senior Educational Psychologist (KCC)  
Rory Abbott- Project Lead (The Education People)

# Housekeeping

- Rory Abbott- Project Lead
- Please change your name via the Participant tab so that we can see who is present;
- You will be muted but if you have questions then please type them in the chat box using full sentences. If we can answer your question during the session we will but if not we will take a note of your question and send out a response in the Q+A document post-session;
- If there are any issues with your session within the main body of the presentation or within a breakout room, then please close the session and click on the link to start again. One of us will let you back in and get you connected back up to your session;
- If you registered for the session using CPD Online then you should have a copy of these slides, the agenda and any other materials you need for these sessions. If you cannot see the slides that we are sharing then please refer to those instead. If you haven't received the pre-session materials then please email [rory.abbott@theeducationpeople.org](mailto:rory.abbott@theeducationpeople.org) so the issue can be investigated.

# Agenda

Item	Topic	Lead/Time
1	Welcome/Housekeeping and an Introduction (Ruth Gately- Specialist SEND Adviser, TEP)	5 mins
2	An introduction to SEN Info Reports- Dyslexia (Sarah Musgrave- Senior Educational Psychologist)	15 mins
3	Countywide SEN Improvement And Localities and the HNF Review (Siobhan Price- Education Officer, Mainstream Inclusion, KCC)	20 mins
4	Transition: Joint Working (Kate Middleton- Deputy Head, The Judd School, Stephen Cartwright, Assistant Principal, The Marsh Academy, Cheryl Chalkley, Headteacher, Mersham Primary School)	10 mins
5	Balanced System- Work in the south of Kent (Elizabeth Pole and Helen Waymouth)	15 mins
6	Operational Updates (Alice Gleave, Interim Assistant Director, SEN Operations, KCC)	5 mins
7	Evaluation (Rory Abbott- Project Lead, TEP)	5 mins

**Ruth Gately**

**Specialist Lead Adviser (SEND)**

[ruth.gately@theeducationpeople.org](mailto:ruth.gately@theeducationpeople.org)

# National Professional Qualification for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (NPQ for SENCOs)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1184775/National\\_professional\\_qualification\\_for\\_special\\_educational\\_needs\\_coordinators.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1184775/National_professional_qualification_for_special_educational_needs_coordinators.pdf)

- The SENCO role is a mandatory role in mainstream schools and maintained nursery schools. NASENCO qualification will continue to be delivered until autumn 2024 – SENCOs should continue to sign up until end of academic year 2023 to 2024.
- NPQ will become the mandatory qualification for SENCOs from September 2024.
- Teaching of the national qualification for SENCOs will begin in Autumn 2024.
- SENCOs are still required to complete the training within 3 years of appointment.
- If SENCOs have already completed the existing qualification, there is no requirement to complete this further qualification.
- NPQ courses last between 12 and 18 months.
- Providers who are approved to deliver the course will determine the course structure, content and method of delivery.

NPQ for SENCOs covers:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School culture         | <input type="checkbox"/> Leading and managing     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Identification of need | <input type="checkbox"/> provision                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching               | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour              | <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation           |

# An introduction to SEN Info Reports- Dyslexia

(Sarah Musgrave- Senior Educational Psychologist)

# **Kent Guidance for Addressing Literacy Development including Severe and Persistent Literacy Difficulties (Including Dyslexia)**

Dr Sarah Musgrave  
Senior Educational Psychologist  
Kent Educational Psychology Service

## **Signposting**

### 1. Purpose of this paper

2. Process (history and to come)
3. Key changes from the old Kent Dyslexia policy to the proposed document
4. Key points from the guidance
5. An invitation

# Purpose

- Kent's Dyslexia Policy:
  - Last updated 2015
  - Attracting some negative feedback from parent forum groups, other professionals etc
  - Some inaccuracies highlighted and feedback that conveyed a lack of confidence in the training and provision in schools
  - Positioned as a 'policy' i.e. defending a certain position
  - Requests being made by KCC officers and other professionals in November 2021 for updates to the document

## Purpose (cont.)

- Need to provide a consistent narrative to improve confidence in practitioners and parents that all children experiencing difficulties with literacy development can have these needs met by mainstream schools
- Dyslexia/literacy difficulties are too prevalent in the population (some estimates are 20%) for it to not be considered a mainstream issue, especially as the remedial interventions are educational and already exist within schools
- Need to reduce escalation of issues around dyslexia due to poor communication or understanding leading to :
  - increased demand for a 'Dyslexia diagnosis',
  - demand for flexi-schooling or direct work with specialist teachers,

▣ disputes over provision for children with persistent literacy difficulties (including dyslexia) leading to tribunal appeals and placement at independent dyslexia schools

## Process (history)

- First drafts developed with input and guidance from:
  - the UK cross county group of Principal and Senior EPs working party group on developing literacy guidance,
  - current DfE and Ofsted guidance,
  - SpLD Assessments Standards Committee Consultation Paper (April 2022),
  - KCC's inclusion and CATIE documents
- Extensive input from KEPS and cognition and learning specialist teachers with a number of rounds of peer review

- Request to present at KCC Transformation Group July 23 to request approval and agreement to move forward with the next steps

## **Process (to come)**

- Feedback and input from Kent schools at all Key Stages
- Feedback and input from parents/carers and children/young people
- Development of information and guidance for parent/carers and children/young people to supplement the SEND Information hub • Training for KCC teams

## **Difference between the old Dyslexia policy and the current paper (summary)**

This paper:

- Positions dyslexia (including severe and persistent literacy difficulties) in the context of changes in the development of teaching reading over the last 20-ish years and within the wider teaching approaches and expectations of schools, linking to the Mainstream Core Standards document and Assess, Plan, Do, Review
- Moves away from considering it as a 'policy' and positions it as 'guidance'
- Suggests a shift of focus and language away from identifying 'dyslexia' to talking about 'severe and persistent difficulties' with literacy development • Aims to offer an inclusive and holistic view where it is clear that all learner's needs are met, regardless of diagnosis
- Clarifies understanding of what is expected from schools when presented with a private diagnostic report

# Key points in the guidance

- High quality literacy teaching is the first step in responding to pupils who have, or may have, SEN
- Barriers to literacy development to be accurately identified as early as possible so the correct support can be put in place when they need it ('Response to Intervention' rather than 'Wait to Fail' model of intervention and support)
- All children and young people experiencing difficulties with their literacy development should have fair access to appropriate resources and opportunities (Literacy for All)
- Starts with an explanation of factors important in early reading development and early years education

# Key points in the guidance

- Moves on to the introduction of Structured Synthetic Systematic Phonics (SSSP) Programmes following the Rose Review (2006)
- Early identification of difficulties with literacy development and focussing on these three questions:
  - 1) **What is the nature of the literacy difficulty?**
  - 2) **What are the most suitable interventions to support an individual's particular needs relating to reading, spelling and some wider areas of literacy?**
  - 3) **What is the expected impact of the intervention and what is hoped to be achieved?**

# Key points in the guidance

- Builds on current KCC documents (e.g. Mainstream Core Standards) to clarify and provide more detail about what schools are expected to be doing specifically to meet children and young people's needs around literacy development
- Use of assess, plan, do review (APDR)
- Provides an appendix of published assessment resources and signposts evidencebased interventions
- Expectation that, within APDR:
  - assessment is used to accurately pinpoint the exact skills that need developing,
  - use targeted intervention to develop those skills,
  - monitor the impact of that intervention and review the outcome, making changes as necessary

# Key points in the guidance

- consulting with other professional expertise if the desired outcomes and progress are not seen, in line with SEND Code of Practice
- There has been little convincing new evidence from research into literacy difficulties and dyslexia to suggest that a complete change in approach is needed.
- The best way to teach literacy skills, and systematic, structured, synthetic phonics (SSSP) programmes as being the cornerstone of teaching of reading and spelling, continues to be debated between academic researchers.
- In general it advocates for a broader scope of approaches to be used.
- Ofsted make it clear that they expect to see SSSP used in programmes of teaching reading at all levels, including for struggling learners in secondary schools.

# Key points in the guidance

- Ofsted's three 'I's (Intent, Implementation and Impact) also set out how programmes should be delivered with a focus on whole school ethos and the impact of these programmes
- The British Psychological Society (BPS) definition of dyslexia continues to be widely accepted

**“Dyslexia is evident when accurate and fluent word reading and/or spelling develops very incompletely or with great difficulty. This focuses on literacy learning at the “word” level and implies that the problem is severe and persistent despite appropriate learning opportunities. It provides the basis of a staged process of assessment through teaching”**

- It is acknowledged that there may be multiple definitions of dyslexia

## Key points in the guidance

- Current debate and ongoing enquiry suggests a lack of consensus about the term 'dyslexia' meaning that the term is used in various ways
- To encompass an inclusive approach, the term 'Severe and Persistent Literacy Difficulties (SPLD)' is proposed as the preferred term for use in Kent
- Kent is not discounting the concept of 'Dyslexia' as a term which could be used to describe significant difficulties with reading or spelling in line with the BPS definition
- What matters most is that children's difficulties with literacy are identified and addressed in ways that promote progress, whether or not they are described in terms of dyslexia

# Key points in the guidance

- Gain family and child/young person view about how they would like their needs referred to (what we call it is less important than what is being done about it)
- Managing the needs of pupils with literacy difficulties beyond primary phase
- Use of technology and 'neurodiverse friendly' classrooms
- Effective Use of Teaching Assistants
- Other practitioner reports and dyslexia screeners
- Statutory assessment and provision

# Next steps

- Invite a group of SENCOs from Primary and Secondary Phase to comment on the draft guidance and address questions such as:
  - Are there any areas or topics within the paper you feel are particularly helpful, or problematic?
  - How equipped as a staff group do you feel to respond to literacy difficulties pupils may experience, and to meet the expectations of this guidance?
  - How do you envision implementation in your school? – What else do you need?

- Invite comment from parents/carers and children/young people and draft a version of the guidance that is accessible for them.

**Register your interest here...**

Kent Literacy Difficulties (inc. dyslexia) Guidance Focus Group  
Interest



# Countywide SEN Improvement And Localities and the HNF Review

(Siobhan Price- Education Officer, Mainstream Inclusion, KCC)

# High Needs Funding and Locality Model for SEN Inclusion Public consultation

Members Briefing  
Pre-Consultation - September 2023

# Local Context

- Joint Ofsted CQC inspection, 2019 and revisit in 2022, identified 9 areas of weakness in Kent County Council's (KCC) effectiveness of providing for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) developed to drive sustainable improvements across the Kent area, find the plan [here](#)
- Area 2 states Kent has “A variable quality of provision and commitment to inclusion in schools, and the lack of willingness of some schools to accommodate children and young people with SEND”

- Area 5 states “Poor standards [are] achieved, and progress made, by too many children and young people with SEND”

## National Context - SEND and AP Improvement Plan – March 2023

- *‘In many cases, the proposals set out in the green paper were welcomed. Typically, people agreed with our assessment of the current challenges in the system. There was broad support for the proposal for a new national SEND and alternative provision system that delivers timely, high-quality services and support in mainstream settings, alongside swift access to more local state specialist settings, where required’.* SEND AP Improvement Plan March 2023, which can be found [here](#) in full.
- The Improvement Plan is confirmation of a renewed focus and further emphasis of the Statutory Guidance laid out in the Code of Practice 2014, seeking a more effective and sustainable high needs system, that works for children, young people, and their families.

- ➔ Implementing will take time and Kent's position means that levelling up opportunities for children and young people should not wait and we must act now.
- ➔ [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1139561/SEND\\_and\\_alternative\\_provision\\_improvement\\_plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1139561/SEND_and_alternative_provision_improvement_plan.pdf)

## Sustainability in High Needs Systems – National Context

In June 2022 the DfE published the following document, “Sustainability in High Needs Systems”.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1084835/Local\\_authority\\_guidance\\_on\\_high\\_needs\\_sustainability.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1084835/Local_authority_guidance_on_high_needs_sustainability.pdf)

*‘This is not a cost cutting exercise – it is about improving the performance of local high needs systems and ensuring this is achieved in a sustainable way. Meeting children and young people’s needs early and appropriately is a fundamental principle for achieving this. Simply spending more money on high needs does not bring about improved outcomes for children and young people: spending money effectively to*

*meet needs early does. Equally, cuts to spending which mean children and young people's needs cannot be met risk LAs failing to deliver their statutory duties.'*

## Why Change?

- Improve standards and progress made by children with SEN.
- Improve the consistency and quality of provision for children with SEN particularly in mainstream schools.
- Improve parental confidence in the quality of SEN provision in their local schools.
- Align services to Kent's strategic direction to enable added value in the relevant areas
- Ensure collective responsibility in the local area for the provision for children with SEN.

## Development of a new model

- Following KCC's August 2022 Independent HNF review activity focused on developing an evidence-based model that would work for Kent

→ Between August 2022 and July 2023 Local Authority staff, mainstream headteachers, Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs), and other relevant professionals worked together to design principles, success factors, research models and narrow down proposals. The following meetings and forums were involved in the development process:

- Headteacher briefings and workshops

- School Funding Forum

- High Needs Subgroup meetings

- Local Inclusion Forum Team (LIFT) Executive meetings

- Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education (CATIE) Steering Group meeting

- Specialist Teaching and Learning Service workshops

- Kent Parents and Carers Together (PACT) meetings

→ The feedback gathered from these engagement activities informed the development of the proposals

# Headteacher reference group

Representatives from all school types and phases were part of the development activity, schools below formed the group recommended by the KCC HNF independent review:

- St John's Catholic Comprehensive, Gravesend
- Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys
- Endeavour Trust, Dartford
- Towers School, Ashford
- Hartsdown Academy, Margate
- Fulston Manor, Sittingbourne
- Canterbury Academy
- Hugh Christie/Tonbridge Federation
- Marsh Academy, Romney Marsh
- Valley Invicta Trust, Maidstone
- Southborough Primary School, Tunbridge Wells
- Joy Lane Primary School, Whitstable
- Two Bridges AP, Tonbridge
- Inspire Academy, Canterbury
- West Borough Primary School, Maidstone
- Our Community MAT, Swale
- Broomhill Bank, Special School, Tunbridge Wells
- Mersham Primary School, Ashford
- St Nicholas Primary School, New Romney
- Wells Free School, Tunbridge Wells
- Tymberwood Academy, Gravesend
- St Alphege's Infant School, Herne Bay

Dover Federation for the Arts ○ Holy Trinity and St John's, Margate

	<b>Mission</b>
usive success des and	Fulfil children's potential
and	Build parents' trust

need to  
their

Provide financial  
sustainability

31

## Principles of Countywide Approach To Inclusive Education

- Equitable access for all. Sufficient, appropriate, quality education provision is available for all children and young people in Kent.
- No child is left behind. All children and young people are supported to be engaged fully in their education.

- Effective collaboration. There is collaboration and multi-agency working providing a self-improving, sustainable system which supports the education of all.

## Proposal

- The proposal is to adopt the concept of **predictable** and **exceptional** needs and move the responsibility for informing the allocation of mainstream top-up funding for predictable needs to a collaborative, local schools-led model.
- Under this Model, mainstream top-up funding for predictable needs will be pooled and allocated to cohorts of pupils within local clusters of schools rather than attached to individual pupils.
- It will continue to be controlled and administered by KCC but the local headteachers, rather than an individual KCC Case Worker, will inform the use of their cluster's allocation of pooled funding.

- Transparency and the building of trust between schools, and between KCC, schools and parents/carers, will be central to the effective implementation of the Localities Model.
- With regard to exceptional needs, those which are significant or complex, the proposal is that mainstream top-up funding will continue to be managed and administered centrally by KCC, together with the issuing of EHCPs, and in line with new, agreed thresholds and the legislative framework.

# Financial Context High Needs Funding Review, August 2022

## DEFINITION:

High Needs Funding (HNF) supports provision for pupils and students with SEND who require additional resources to participate in education and learning, from their early years to age 25 in schools and colleges (excluding students aged 19 to 25 who do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or students who are over the age of 25) and pre-16 pupils in Alternative Provision (AP) who, because of exclusion, illness, or other reasons, cannot receive their education in mainstream schools.

HNF is provided to KCC through the high needs block of the Designated Schools Grant.

### **KCC's Independent HNF review reported:**

*“Kent’s financial situation presents a major challenge for all involved\* and will require strong leadership and active partnership / dialogue to move forward. The Department for Education (DfE) has now included KCC in its Safety Valve programme, which provides financial and advisory support along with a greater level of monitoring and accountability”*

Spend on this additional funding in Kent has risen sharply over the last 3 years, the out-turn figure for 2018-19 was £17.6m, by August 2022 this had almost doubled; continuing overspends are unsustainable.

*\* KCC staff, schools, settings, parents, carers, and other stakeholders*

## **Membership**

- Within the new Localities Model, schools will be organised into geographical clusters of between 8-14 schools, and will establish a cluster panel of headteachers, SENCos and other school leadership

representatives of the mainstream primary and secondary schools and special schools within their defined area.

- The members of the cluster panel will all have direct experience and expertise in organising and providing support in schools to children and young people with SEN. This means they will be well placed to advise on how the children and young people's needs can be met in the most effective way.

## Support Services

- The cluster panels will each be supported by a KCC SEN Inclusion Advisor and other SEN and Education professionals already in the system.
- Clusters will be aligned to the NHS Primary Care Network boundaries, demonstrating KCC's commitment to joint working with the NHS and the benefits this alignment will bring to the provision of SEN local services.

# Critical Success Factors

The new model will:

- Support improved outcomes for children and young people with SEND by
  - Providing equitable access for children and young people
  - Educating more children and young people in mainstream settings
  - Encouraging curriculum flexibility
  - Support in closing the education gap with their peers
- Provide clear governance structures and instil transparent decision-making by
  - Supporting an effective HNF system
  - Providing clear processes
  - Implementing meaningful bureaucracy, clearly defined roles and accountability structures

# Critical Success Factors

- Embed a system where Schools, Clusters / Districts, and the LA are held accountable for:
  - Embedding and maintaining Mainstream Core Standards
  - Expenditure
  - CATIE / inclusion outcomes
- Provide information on available resources (wraparound services / professional input), ensuring they are:
  - Mapped
  - Promoted / Publicised
  - Utilised (monitoring and evaluation)
- Avoid perverse incentives
- All schools are at the table

- Provide financial sustainability
- Consistent thresholds

## Consultation activity

- Consultation opens on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023.
- Consultation closes 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024.
- SIAB meeting – November 2023 tbc – APP Governance
- DfE Improvement Notice meeting – 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023
- Transformation Operation Group 2 – 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023 - Safety Valve Governance

- Schools Funding Forum – 24<sup>th</sup> November 2023.
- High Needs Funding sub group – 5<sup>th</sup> October and 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023.
- SEND Transformation Board and SRP Board - TBC
- Public /parents - meetings TBC

# Transition: Joint Working

(Kate Middleton- Deputy Head, The Judd School, Stephen Cartwright, Assistant Principal, The Marsh Academy, Cheryl Chalkley, Headteacher, Mersham Primary School)

<b>Key Dates</b>	<b>Activity for Early Years to Reception, Year 2, and Year 6 Transfers</b>
<b>Terms 1 &amp; 2 Sep to Dec 2023</b>	Opportunities for parents and young people to attend open days, meet the SENCO, transition lead, FLO.
<b>Term 1 By 11 Sep 2023</b>	LA SEN Teams formally consult with schools for phase transfer parental preferences
<b>Term 2 Nov to Dec 2023</b>	Admissions decision-making meetings held between schools and LA staff
<b>Term 2 11 Dec 2023</b>	School deadline for their response to LAs consultation on parental preference

<b>Term 3</b> <b>31 Jan 2024</b>	Amended final EHC plans naming the school for September 2024 are sent to parents and schools by LA
<b>Half term</b> <b>15 Feb 2024</b>	National statutory deadline for naming school placements on the child's EHC plans for those in phase transfer

<b>Key Dates</b>	<b>Activity</b> <b>Post 16 Transfers</b>
<b>Year 11, Term 1</b> <b>1 Sep 2023</b>	Parent/young person email sent out by the LA, requesting setting preference. Communication includes detailed process guidance and important information
<b>Year 11, Term 1</b> <b>13 Oct 2023</b>	Parent/young person deadline for returning their setting preference to LA
<b>Year 11, Term 1</b> <b>After 13 Oct 2023</b>	LA SEN Teams formally consult with settings for phase transfer parental preferences

Year 11, Term 2 11 Dec 2023	Post 16 settings' deadline for their response to LAs consultation on parental preference
Year 11, Term 3 Jan 2024	Admission decision-making meetings held between settings and LA staff
Year 11, Term 3 OR 4 31 Jan or 6 Mar 2024	Amended final EHC plans naming the setting for September 2024 sent to parent/young person and setting by LA (Schools would prefer as early as poss to aid transition activities)
Term 3 31 March 2024	National statutory deadline for naming setting placement on the young person's EHC plan for those in phase transfers

## Phased Transition Process

- Inclusion Advisers (previously PEOs), STLS and Educational

Psychologists working together within Districts to devise a transition plan to support schools with the process

- Inclusion Advisers can support SENCOs and schools with developing whole school practice and individual cases if needed
- STLS working with individual children to support with preparing for transition.

## Role of Schools

- Nasen (2015) “Work with parents/carers. Remember, transition can also be a stressful time for the parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. Working closely with parents will help them to feel confident that they have the right information and are well

prepared for the process. Good communication and a consistent approach between home and school will help support children and young people through transition.”

- 44.5% of pupils with ECHPs are educated in mainstream settings nationally.
- In Kent, it is only 33%



# The Balanced System<sup>®</sup> SLCN Transformation Update for Countywide SENCo forum

**Elizabeth Pole** [Elizabeth.pole@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Elizabeth.pole@kent.gov.uk)

Kent Professional Lead Speech & Language Therapist for the Balanced System<sup>®</sup>

**Hester Mackay** - [Hester.Mackay@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Hester.Mackay@kent.gov.uk)

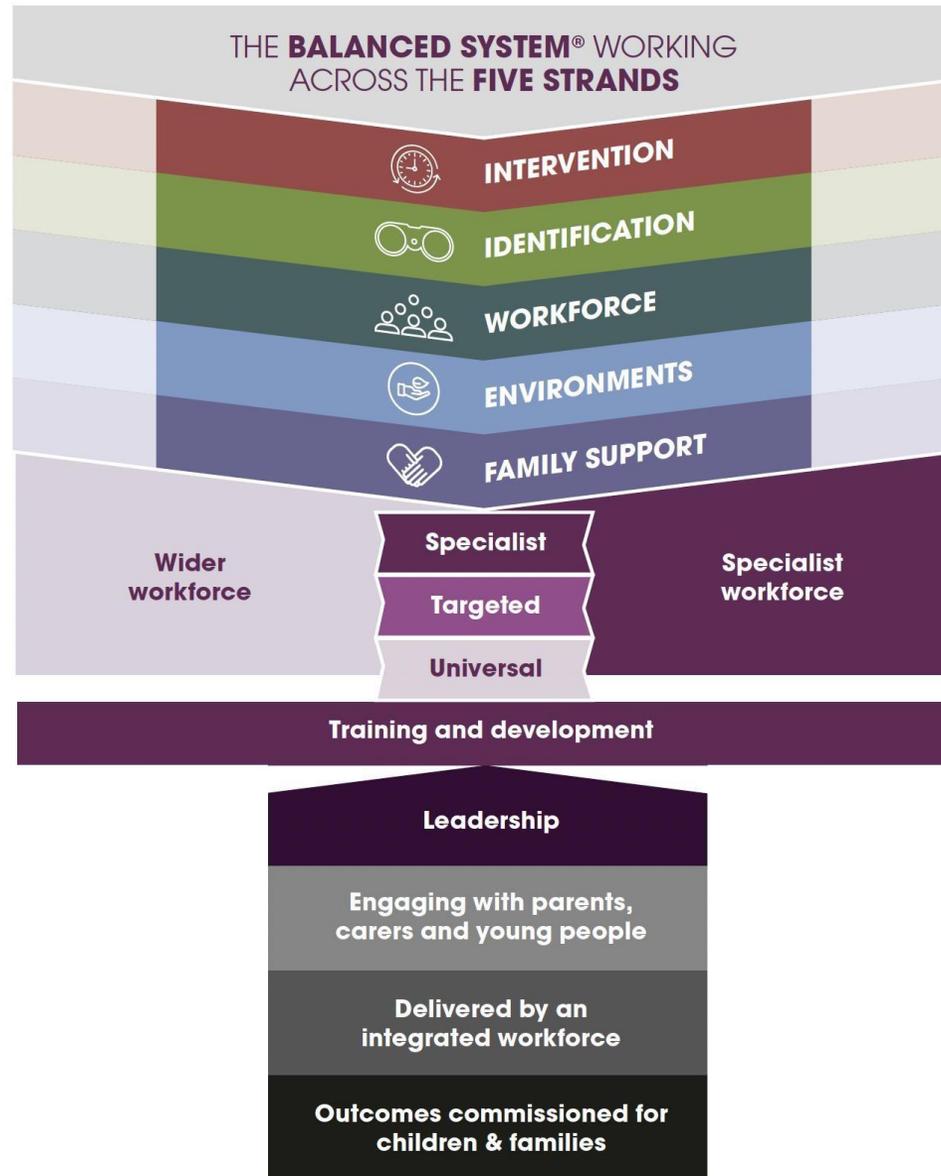
SEND Therapies Lead Teacher

---

**Helen Waymouth** – [helen.waymouth@nhs.net](mailto:helen.waymouth@nhs.net)

Head of Community Child Health and CYP Therapies EKHUFT

Quick pol



**How confident are you in your understanding of the Balanced System<sup>®</sup> model for speech, language and communication needs?**

1 = it's new to me

5 = very confident

# The Balanced System<sup>®</sup> in Kent

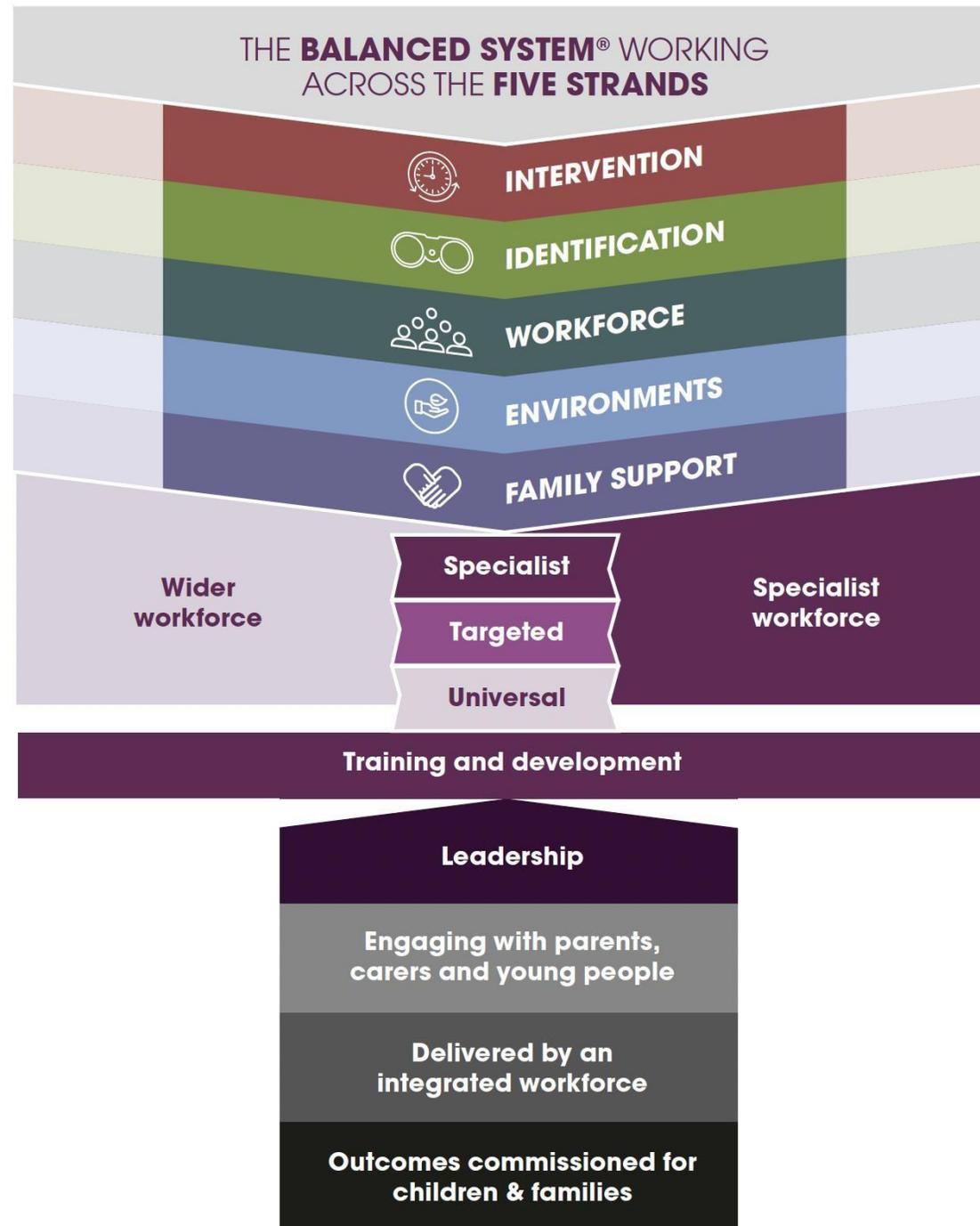
- To make sure that the **right provisions** are available for **parents, carers** and **professionals** to help children and young people develop their **speech, language and communication**
- We work together as a **whole system** which includes parents/carers, health visitors, early years settings, schools, specialist teaching services (among others) as well as speech and language therapy services.



© M.T.Gascoigne, 2022

## Core Delivery

1. Focus on **outcomes** and
2. Simple and **easy** information, support
3. **Place based** most functionally relevant place

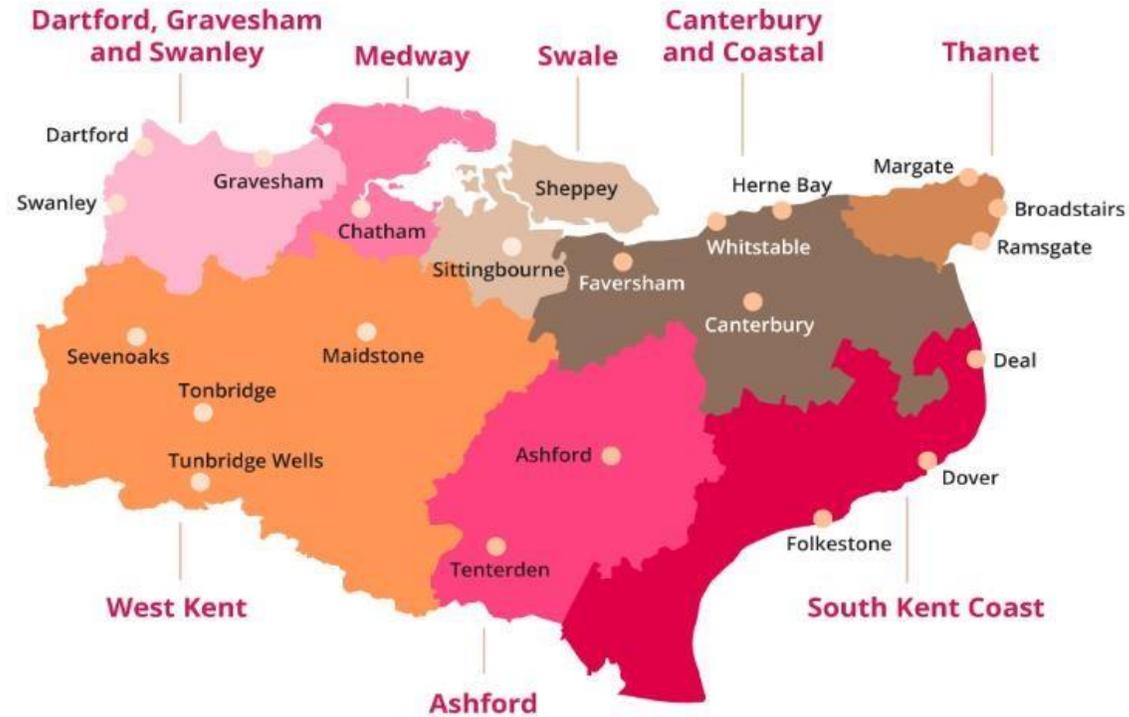


## Principles

**functional**  
measures of **impact**  
**access** to the right  
assessment and  
**support** – in the  
appropriate and

4. Strong universal and **targeted** provision is key to facilitating access to specialist support as and when needed for a finite time
5. High quality, accessible and consistent **information**

# NHS Therapy Providers in Kent



**EKHUFT** = South Kent Coast & Ashford

**KCHFT** = Canterbury & Coastal / Thanet / West Kent / Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley

**MCH** = Medway / Swale

# Implementation from NHS perspective

- Areas covered by EKHUFT (Ashford, Folkestone & Hythe, Dover/Deal)
- have changed the infrastructure of their service to enable full delivery of a Balanced System<sup>®</sup> approach
- includes Link Therapist for all schools
  
- Other areas of Kent:
- 'Tests for Change' to model this approach as a pre-cursor to widespread adoption
- Other changes in the pipeline such as increased consistency of SaLT at LIFT

# Link Therapist – Guidance for schools

- Guidance document to support implementation of place-based approach in schools
- Information about link therapist role and what to expect
- Information about **tools** to **self-evaluate** school's SLCN provision to **inform planning**
- Outlines responsibilities of school and link therapist

## FAQs - SCHOOLS

Question	Answer
----------	--------

Do I still need to make referrals?	No, you can discuss any children you are concerned about in Link Therapist meetings and jointly agree next steps. If specialist support is required, the therapist will be able to action this. We will no longer hold a waiting list - you will work with the therapist to agree priorities.
How are parents involved in accessing support?	The principle of 'easy access' is key – parents need to be able to access support should they have a concern – each school needs to consider how they enable this e.g. drop ins with link therapist; opportunity to discuss concerns with SENCo.
How often will we see our link therapist?	We are using a Balanced System tool to support us to allocate therapist time according to need. There are several factors which influence this including size of the school, levels of social deprivation and levels of SEN. Your link therapist will discuss and agree with you when they will visit.

Just a quick mention...

## Secondary Provisions

- [Secondary Language Link](#) – 2 week free trial, identification tool and group interventions Years 7-9.
- Speech & Language UK **‘Talk for Work’**
- Targeted intervention for age 14+, 13 sessions plus an ‘employer’s workshop’
- Training 20<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023 at Laleham Gap School, Ramsgate, now funded by Speech and Language UK! Send 2-3 participants ideally SENCo and TA(s) who will deliver.
- Contact [tiss@lgs.kent.sch.uk](mailto:tiss@lgs.kent.sch.uk) to book a place, or if any questions [Elizabeth.Pole@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Elizabeth.Pole@kent.gov.uk) / [Bromwyn.Kuotola@lgs.kent.sch.uk](mailto:Bromwyn.Kuotola@lgs.kent.sch.uk)

# Any Questions?

## About the framework : The Balanced System Pathway

# SEN Operational updates

Alice Gleave

Interim Assistant Director SEN Operations

---



## Tribunals, Assessment and Placement Team

- New permanent manager has started – Georgette Williams
- Assessment team now fully staffed, as is Placement team. Currently reviewing these teams to improve processes to prevent 'bottle necks'

- Seeking to tackle backlogs of assessment and annual reviews using dedicated teams
- Invitation to Sencos to join sessions to learn more about how annual reviews are processed
- Challenges around placement of children at phase transfer are being worked through but due to lack of spaces this is taking time. Many schools are working hard with us to provide support for these children – thank you

## Consultations

This year some of you and your headteachers may have received consultations over the summer holiday period. Some schools have reasonably indicated that it's not possible to respond to consultations that are being sent late in July after the end of term.

We understand that consulting schools for Yr R placements during the summer holidays is not ideal and/or what we expect in terms of our approach in future years, bar exceptional cases.

## Consultations

New processes within the Assessment and Placement teams should negate the need to do this in the vast majority of cases next year. However, we have been advised that the 15 day consultation period does not pause during this time and as such we must fulfil our statutory duties.

We are working in partnership with schools to ensure that next year any consultations are sent well in advance of the holidays.

# Annual review forms

- New Annual Review forms on Kelsi and can be found here:

[Annual Review of Education Health Care Plans -  
KELSI](#)

How does the Local Authority process Annual Reviews?

We will be holding some drop in sessions for Sencos that may interested in how the local authority processes annual reviews and amends plans using the information received. Dates to follow.

# Session Feedback and Evaluation

- Please take the time to complete the evaluation-  
the link is below  
<https://forms.office.com/e/B1aVYksJ44>
- The link for the evaluation will be posted in the  
chat by either Rory Abbott or Ruth Gately. Please  
click on it now or scan the QR Code and give us  
your feedback.



**Thank You for listening and  
taking part**

**If you have any questions then please email  
[rory.abbott@theeducationpeople.org](mailto:rory.abbott@theeducationpeople.org) with the  
subject title of Countywide SENCO Forum  
Query**