

CATIE ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

The Countywide Approach To Inclusive Education (CATIE) Strategy 2023-28 set out how we will work together to improve outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities. This report measures progress and priorities for 2025-2025.

**Kent
County
Council**

1. Introduction: CATIE

Kent County Council (KCC), in conjunction with children, young people, parents, carers, educational settings, and other stakeholders, developed a Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education (CATIE)¹ which was published as a strategy in June 2023. The CATIE strategy supports the inclusion of all children and young people in Kent.

As part of the monitoring arrangements for the CATIE Strategy it was agreed an Annual Report would be produced, evidencing progress and highlighting areas of future development. This is the second CATIE Annual Report and looks back over the academic year September 2023 to July 2024.

CATIE Priorities

The CATIE Strategy groups activity under four key priorities:

- Supporting a school led system to deliver the highest quality core inclusive education,
- Providing additional intervention and support with engagement and integration,
- Inclusive Education is part of a broader, holistic, and joined-up offer of support, and
- Ensuring smooth transition between education phases.

Our Mission

Establishing our collective ambitions in the CATIE for children, young people, and their families in Kent we will make sure no child is left behind. Working together in a collaborative, sustainable system, we will ensure equity of education means all children feel they belong, are respected and valued as individuals, and are fully supported to achieve their best.

Measuring our Progress

The CATIE Strategy sets out the outcomes we aim to achieve for children, young people, and their families; for Schools (all relevant education settings); and system-wide across Kent. We have agreed Key Performance Indicators that will help us to measure our success, and professionals regularly meet within our CATIE Steering Group to review and monitor progress.

2. Priority One – Supporting a school led system to deliver the highest quality core inclusive education

This priority has a core focus on developing and delivering the highest quality of inclusive education provision for Kent's children and young people. As part of this KCC committed to strengthen leadership and collaboration in schools, develop a training offer that mainstream schools could access, look at best practice through quality first teaching, improve data to support

¹ CATIE Strategy https://www.kelsi.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/153185/Countywide-Approach-to-Inclusive-Education.pdf

decision-making, increase financial transparency and develop Special Educational Needs (SEN) Information Reports.

Kent Commissioned Inclusion Services

KCC launched three fully funded Inclusion Services in September 2021. These services were commissioned in response to priorities identified by headteachers and other key practitioners to embed, improve or enhance inclusive ethos and practice in Kent's mainstream education settings. They are:

- Kent Inclusion Leadership Programme (detailed below)
- Whole School Nurture Approach (supporting the CATIE Priority Two)
- Supported Employment

These programmes have now all ended. After three years of delivery, 276 primary and 58 secondary schools (over 59% of all eligible schools) actively participated in at least one of the above inclusion offers. This has been against a backdrop of significant pressures on schools' capacity and the ongoing impact of Covid.

In November 2023, Kent Analytics undertook a quantitative evaluation of participating schools in relation to key inclusion benchmarks, such as reduction in number of suspensions and exclusions, and a reduction in the number of Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs). It concluded that schools that have participated in one or more of the Commissioned Inclusion Services have not shown any change in indicators that could potentially measure inclusion from a quantitative perspective. It noted that some changes may not be measurable and therefore not reflect in the data used for this analysis, and recommended to repeat the same tests in November 2024, once the training and practice developed have been more fully embedded. However, qualitative data (as shown below) demonstrates that the confidence and skill set of the mainstream sector has grown so that quantitative data sets from the SEN score card show that the % of children with EHCPs who are educated in mainstream settings has risen to 41%.

Summary of Key Points: The three Inclusion Services launched by KCC in September 2021 aimed to enhance inclusive practices in Kent's mainstream education settings. Despite significant challenges, over 59% of eligible schools participated in these programs. While quantitative data did not show measurable changes in key inclusion benchmarks, qualitative data indicated an increase in the confidence and skill set of mainstream educators, with a notable rise in the percentage of children with EHCPs being educated in mainstream settings.

Implications: The qualitative improvements suggest that the Inclusion Services have positively impacted the inclusive ethos and practices within schools, even if these changes are not yet reflected in quantitative metrics. This highlights the importance of considering both qualitative and quantitative data when evaluating educational programs.

Recommendations: It is recommended to continue monitoring the impact of these programs, with a follow-up evaluation in November 2024. Additionally, ongoing support and training for educators should be maintained to ensure that the inclusive practices continue to develop and embed within the school culture.

Future Directions: Future evaluations should focus on long-term impacts and explore additional qualitative measures to capture the full scope of changes. Further research could also investigate

the specific elements of the programs that contributed most to the observed improvements in educator confidence and skills.

Conclusion: The initial outcomes of the Inclusion Services indicate promising qualitative improvements in inclusive education practices. Continued investment in these areas, along with comprehensive evaluations, will be crucial for sustaining and enhancing these gains, ultimately benefiting all students in Kent’s mainstream education settings.

Kent Inclusive Leadership Programme (KILP)

The Kent Inclusion Leadership Programme (KILP) programme was commissioned in September 2021 for a contract term of 2.5 years, which ended on 31 March 2024. The offer was available to all mainstream schools in Kent, phased across 3 cohorts.

The purpose of the KILP was to enable a school to-school support network designed to strengthen schools’ capacity to lead improvements in inclusive practice. The focus of the Programme was on middle to senior leadership of schools. The design and delivery of the Programme was led by a consortium comprising Leadership Learning South East (LLSE), NASEN and Education Development Trust (EDT).

KILP delivered structured training, workshops and a web-based library of resources (microsite) to develop knowledge, skills and capacity of leaders as well as establishing mechanisms for peer review to achieve and sustain change within schools. It facilitated developing the capacity and collaboration within schools across Kent to review and evaluate their inclusion practice and work in partnership to develop inclusion from within their own settings and within their partnership.

Across the three cohorts a total of 150 schools, 42% of the contract target of 360 mainstream schools, participated in the Programme. This represents approximately 27% of all eligible primary and 26% of eligible secondary schools that participated in the full Programme. A breakdown of cohort participation for mainstream primary and secondary schools is provided in the table below:

Cohort	Primary schools	Secondary schools	Total
1	43	9	52
2	48	11	59
3	33	6	39
TOTAL	124	26	150

Deliverables

There were four main elements, each aimed at providing the tools, capacity and framework to focus on inclusion across the partnerships, which included:

- Engaging schools with the evidence-based research around inclusion through provision of the microsite and workshops based around this research and highlighting best practice across Kent and beyond. These workshops were coproduced with leaders from across Kent.

- Delivering the peer-review methodology, centred around the Kent Inclusion Framework, providing the means to review and evaluate their current practice and future priorities and share these within a trust-based partnership.
- Increasing capacity at school and system-level through the training of peer reviewers, improvement champions and Inclusive Leaders of Education (ILEs).
- Developing collaborative leadership across Kent using partnership working and developing the role of partnership lead to increase leadership capacity

Achievements

Every participating school identified a specific area of improvement in inclusion through the self-evaluation framework and explored via peer review and training. Each review considered a topic within one or more of the following themes:

- Leadership of Inclusion
- Effective Use of Resources for Inclusion
- Monitoring, Tracking & Evaluation for Inclusion
- Inclusive working with stakeholders to develop Inclusive Expertise and Provision
- Assessment and Identification of Needs
- Developing Inclusive Teaching & Learning
- Inclusive Outcomes

The evaluation surveys at partnership, school, and participant level capture the review progress and impact from the Partnership Lead, Headteachers, and Peer Reviewers / Improvement Champions. Based on feedback to evaluation surveys, the positive changes in practice and culture that the partnerships are seeing are:

Partnership level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater honesty and openness • Shared understanding • We remain very open and honest with each other, keen to help each other and happy to share resources/good practice
Leader level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More reflective • Robust reflection • Really valued the self-evaluation and have continued with this in other areas of the school
Teacher level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More support • More direction • More empowered, having access to more information about the student and strategies they can use
Pupil level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better outcomes • Needs being met • More engaged, more time spent in lessons

The positive changes in practice and culture that some participating schools reported are:

Partnership level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved links and relationship with partner schools • Building trust, with honest and open relationships
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working together to share knowledge and resources • Shared responsibility • Working more collegiately across the area • Collaborative support • Supportive, problem solving, non-judgmental
Leader level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start of a mindset shift in that students need to be in the classroom, and stressing the need to measure impact on any interventions and keep them short and sharp in focus • Leaders in class supporting teachers with practices and initiatives within the classroom • Consideration of inclusion at higher level • Peer review fully embedded in school systems • Leaders have grown in confidence to assess and review practice positively and constructively • Measuring impact, not afraid to try new ideas, forward thinking, asking for support, devolved leadership, confidence • Opportunities for subject lead to have control of subject and work with Headteachers and Improvement Champions • Curriculum leaders input in project • Improved insight • Increased knowledge
Teacher level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff feel better equipped to take on responsibility for inclusion and share ideas and good practice, not just SENCO • Teachers aware of improvement priority • Teachers have the tools they can action • A deeper understanding of how to provide a more inclusive maths lesson • Increased participation in whole school planning • More confident, self-reflective and morale is higher than before
Pupil level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children know that inclusion is one of our priorities • Pupils are beginning to understand that we all need different things to support us when learning. Having different needs from your friends is not a bad thing • Improved attainment. Some will come off the SEND² register so will be 100% in class • All pupils are developing skills for their future, particularly those with SEND • Better relationships • Consistency across classes and clear expectations of what a maths lesson will look like • Engagement • Trusting adults, listening skills, responsive to ideas, communication improved and feel safe

² Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Sustainability

With consideration to the emerging developments in the local SEN and Inclusion landscape, there is ongoing planning and discussions to utilise the resources, knowledge and expertise embedded through this programme to support schools in continuing to apply the peer review methodology and the skills of partnership roles to navigate the future challenges.

A total of 26 ILEs were recruited, trained and supported by the Programme, and 18 ILEs remained in the role to the end of the Programme. Of these, 11 ILEs have indicated interest to continue their involvement in various support roles including involvement as part of the localities model, peer reviews, individual school support and ad-hoc individual support to schools or SENCOs as needed. Through the Programme the ILEs have enhanced their skills to support schools on their inclusion journey and will remain in the mainstream education system beyond the lifetime of the programme.

From the pool of schools that registered an interest, a significant number of senior and middle leaders were trained to be skilled Improvement Champions (ICs) and Peer Reviewers (PRs), leaving a legacy within the mainstream education system.

Looking to the future, peer review activities are expected to be part of cycle of school development and improvement under the Localities Model, essential for a self-sustaining system. In this regard, Kent headteachers and ILEs participating in the programme will play a pivotal role in supporting the proposed new Locality Model processes, in building deeper relationships between schools, sustaining continuous improvement, and embedding Inclusive Leadership practices.

Impact on pupils

Evidence collated from the case studies submitted by the Programme identifies positive impact on pupils, although this was not supported with quantitative data. Some of the feedback captured include:

"SEND Pupils are able to access learning alongside their peers in a highly inclusive way."

"Children with complex needs are included and supported more fully in mainstream classroom and making progress."

"The SEN cohort had the biggest increase in progress and attainment last year than has been seen in a long time. This was across the board in all subjects. Students stated that they felt well cared for and that there is always someone to go to when they have a difficulty."

"Our students are in the classroom more meaning they continue to build belonging through being in their known and owned environment which is purposefully set up through enabling environments to aid, scaffold and stretch learning. Where this approach has been most successful, students autonomy and independence has grown as they have an increase in sense of self achievement without waiting to be corrected at a later stage."

Summary of Key Points: The Kent Inclusion Leadership Programme (KILP) was designed to enhance inclusive practices in mainstream schools across Kent by building leadership capacity

and fostering a collaborative support network. Despite significant efforts, only 42% of the target schools participated, representing about 27% of eligible primary and 26% of eligible secondary schools.

Implications: The participation rate indicates a moderate level of engagement, suggesting that while the program was beneficial, there may have been barriers to wider adoption. The structured training and resources provided have likely contributed to improved leadership skills and inclusive practices in participating schools, but the limited reach means that many schools may not have benefited from these enhancements.

Recommendations: To maximize the impact of future initiatives, it is recommended to investigate the barriers to participation and address them in the program design. Additionally, extending the program duration or offering more flexible participation options could help increase engagement. Continued support and follow-up with participating schools will be crucial to sustain the improvements achieved.

Future Directions: Future programs should focus on increasing accessibility and engagement, possibly through more targeted outreach and support. Evaluating the long-term impact of the KILP on participating schools will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the program and inform the development of future initiatives.

Conclusion: The KILP has made a positive impact on the schools that participated, enhancing leadership capacity and inclusive practices. However, to achieve broader systemic change, future efforts must focus on increasing participation and addressing the barriers that limited engagement in this initial phase. Continued investment in leadership development and inclusive education practices will be essential for sustaining and expanding these gains across all schools in Kent.

Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS)

The STLS supports mainstream schools and settings to be inclusive of children with SEN through training, advice, and guidance. The service is delivered through 12 Service Level Agreements (SLAs) which are held by special schools across the 12 districts of Kent.

The overarching aim of the STLS is to support early years settings and schools to build their capacity and confidence in identifying the right children at the right time, in delivering high quality provision for children with SEN, in improving pupil progress and to spread best practice across educational settings.

The main aims of the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service are:

- to raise standards of high-quality Inclusive teaching in mainstream classrooms that enables children and young people with SEND who attend mainstream early years settings and schools to remain in these settings with access to quality first teaching
- to develop the targeted and specialist knowledge, skills and expertise in Kent early years settings and mainstream schools using specialist SEN support services to create a coordinated, equitable, and effective provision of additional support for children and young people with SEN to:
 - build sustainable SEND capacity in early years settings and mainstream schools to meet the needs of children in the mainstream sector through high quality evidence led advice and training
 - close attainment gaps and improve pupil SEND targets and track progress to these outcomes
 - reduce the likelihood of exclusion by ensuring staff skills and provision is right to meet the needs of vulnerable children

- reduce the need for statutory assessments (for example EHCPs) by:
 - supporting schools and education settings in meeting children’s needs through SEN support, adopting an ‘assess, plan, do, review’ approach to enable children and young people to be included
 - by building confidence in the sector and influencing inclusive cultures
 - building confidence in the totality of the local offer signposting the wealth of support available to children and families pre EHCP

KCC conducted a survey to evaluate the impact of the service at the end of the 2022 – 2023 academic year, and a further impact survey in April 2024. All mainstream schools and settings were able to respond, as well as all Kent residents.

The 2022-2023 survey had 472 respondents.

- Survey respondents were asked to rate the quality of support they received in primary settings from 1-5, with 5 the highest

82% of respondents considered the quality of support to primary to be within the top range.

- Survey respondents were asked to rate the quality of support they received in secondary settings from 1-5, with 5 the highest

100% of respondents considered the support provided to secondary to be within the top range.

- Survey respondents were asked to rate the quality of support they received in early years settings from 1-5, with 5 the highest

75% of respondents considered the quality of support provided to early years setting to be within the top range.

STLS links to all four CATIE priorities, the relevant detail is included in each priority section within this report. For Priority One:

- STLS supports the growth of the inclusive nature of mainstream schools through providing advice, modelling strategies, and delivering a programme of core and bespoke training to increase targeted and specialist need
- The Local Inclusion Forum Team (LIFT) process, which is delivered by STLS in each district, as well as facilitated SENCo meetups, support the sharing of inclusive practice and a peer support system
- The data that STLS reports on through their key performance indicators (KPIs) support the county in their understanding of elements of need and mainstream school engagement in SEN supportive initiatives
- Survey respondents were asked to rate the relevance of the support received in relation to identified needs within the school or setting

65% of respondents considered the support they received to be in the top range of relevance to identified needs within their school or setting.

The April 2024 Impact Survey had 485 respondents.

Survey respondents were asked to rate the following impact statements out of 5, with the caveat that: STLS is part of a whole system of Inclusion support available to schools:

- Your school or setting is more able to provide support to a child or a group of children with SEN without the need for an EHCP
 - Most respondents across Kent schools and settings answered positively to this question with 76% of respondents scoring 4 or above.
- Your school or setting is more able to support children with an EHCP to progress towards targets
 - 76% of respondents scored 4 or above on this measure.
- There has been a reduction in part-time timetables (If you are replying as an early years setting, this applies to children accessing their full entitlement)
 - The response to this question was more varied and reflects the fact that there are several factors impacting on a child's attendance in education. Some feedback provided has stated that a part-time timetable may indicate a positive step for a child who may not have previously been attending at all. This measure had the highest rate of "disagree" responses (14%) and the highest number of "average" responses (32%).
- There is a clearer idea of destination for a child or a group of children (by destination we mean where the child or group of children go once they leave their current education provision)
 - Although mostly positive, the responses to this question were more mixed, and there was some feedback that not all respondents understood the concept of 'destination' and this has influenced the distribution of responses.
- There has been an improvement in learning outcomes/developmental progress and/or academic attainment in children with SEN.
 - 76% respondents submitted a score of 4 or above in relation to this outcome.
- Children feel more able to be the best they can be in school or setting
 - 74% responses to this impact measure were 4 or above, although there was some feedback this is a subjective measure with many impacting factors.
- Parents are more confident in your school / setting's ability to meet the needs of their child with SEN.
 - Of the impact measures, this area of impact received the most above average scores with 79% respondents scoring four or above .

Achievements in 2023-2024

- STLS support the Council's strategic aims by delivering Autism Education Trust (AET) training and supporting the roll out of the Balanced System.
- STLS has been engaged in the pilot of the PINS project. PINS is an NHS England

- All districts have engaged in the Inclusion Working Together meetings which has led to greater partnership working with other Inclusion agencies. These meetings will be known as Professional Resource Core Group Meetings going forward.
- The service has adjusted their ways of working in response to limited and decreasing capacity of services in the following ways:
 - An approach to more group work, moving away from individual support
 - Sharing of resources across districts
 - Using the Graduated Approach in allocation of support
 - Increasing use of clinics, surgeries or in-school reviews

Summary of Key Points: The surveys conducted by KCC at the end of the 2022-2023 academic year and in April 2024 evaluated the impact of the STLS services on mainstream schools and settings in Kent. The surveys revealed high satisfaction rates with the quality of support across primary, secondary, and early years settings. Additionally, the STLS services were linked to all four CATIE priorities, supporting inclusive practices through advice, training, and peer support systems.

Implications: The high satisfaction rates indicate that the STLS services are well-received and valued by schools and settings. The positive feedback on the quality and relevance of support suggests that these services are effectively addressing the needs of schools and contributing to the growth of inclusive practices. However, the varied responses regarding part-time timetables and destination clarity highlight areas where further support and clarification may be needed.

Recommendations: To build on these positive outcomes, it is recommended to continue providing and possibly expanding the STLS services, with a focus on addressing the areas of mixed feedback. Enhancing communication and understanding around concepts like 'destination' and the factors influencing part-time timetables could improve overall satisfaction and effectiveness. Additionally, maintaining regular impact surveys will help track progress and identify areas for further improvement.

Future Directions: Future efforts should aim to increase the reach and impact of STLS services, ensuring that all schools and settings can benefit from the support provided. Continued collaboration with other inclusion agencies and adapting to the changing needs of schools will be crucial. Further research into the long-term impacts of these services on student outcomes and school practices will provide valuable insights for ongoing development.

Conclusion: The surveys demonstrate that the STLS services have made a significant positive impact on the quality of support and inclusive practices in Kent's mainstream schools and settings. Continued investment in these services, along with targeted improvements based on feedback, will be essential for sustaining and enhancing these gains, ultimately benefiting all students and educators in the region.

SEN Outcomes Analysis 2023

2023 outcomes	ALL	CIC	SENK	EHCP	Kent Average	National Average
% placed in mainstream - May 2023 Census	97.6	84.3	99.6	51.6 (* 34.0)	97.6	98.2
Number of suspensions 2021/22 (% in brackets - calculated from May 2022 Census cohort - all schools)	7716 (3.1%)	198 (14.6%)	2506 (8.7%)	890 (7.2%)	7716 (3.1%)	N/A
Number of PEX 2021/22 (% in brackets - calculated from May 2022 Census cohort - all schools)	69 (0.0%)	0	28 (0.1%)	14 (0.1%)	69 (0.0%)	N/A
Number reduced T/T - May 2023 (% in brackets - calculated from May 2023 Census cohort - all schools)	1330 (0.5%)	63 (4.7%)	622 (2.2%)	297 (2.4%)	1330 (0.5%)	N/A
% Persistent Absence - Autumn 2022 and Spring 2023 Combined	23.1	25.2	34.6	40.5	23.1	21.2
% Severe Absence - Autumn 2022 and Spring 2023 Combined	2.1	7	4.1	6.6	2.1	1.9
% KS2 expected standard 2023	59	31.4	23	8	59	60
Progress score KS2 reading 2023	-0.5	-1.5	-1.4	-6	-0.5	0
Progress score KS2 Writing 2023	0	-0.7	-1.5	-5.1	0	0
Progress score KS2 Maths 2023	-1	-2.7	-2.4	-6	-1	0
A8 KS4 Selective 2023 Provisional	66.5	55.8	60.6	54.5	66.5	N/A
A8 KS4 Non Selective 2023 Provisional	38.2	19.2	28.3	11.7	38.2	N/A
P8 KS4 Selective 2023 Provisional	0.48	-0.4	-0.01	-0.25	0.48	N/A
P8 KS4 Non Selective 2023 Provisional	-0.38	-1.48	-0.8	-1.44	-0.38	N/A

Notes:

% Placed in Mainstream - "All" is a percentage of pupils attending primary and secondary schools using the May 2023 Total Roll (all schools and pupils) as the denominator.

% Placed in Mainstream - "CIC" is a percentage of matched CIC pupils as at 31/05/23 attending primary and secondary schools. The CIC data has been matched to the May 2023 School Census by UPN.

% Placed in Mainstream - "SENK" is a percentage based on the number of SEN K pupils attending a Kent primary or secondary schools using the May 2023 Total Number of SEN Support pupils as the denominator.

% Placed in Mainstream - "EHCP" is a percentage based on the number of EHCP pupils attending a Kent primary or secondary school using the May 2023 Total Number of EHCP pupils as the denominator.

% Placed in Mainstream - "EHCP" * - this is using the whole population of EHCP pupils aged 0 to 25 which includes private provision and Kent pupils placed outside the LA. The data is from the January 2022 SEN2 return (sections 1.1 and 1.2).

% Placed in Mainstream - National - is a percentage of pupils attending primary and secondary schools using the January 2023 Total Roll (all schools and pupils) as the denominator.

Exclusions - figure in brackets for CIC is the percentage of CIC with an exclusion that uses the number of CIC as at 31/05/23 that were matched to the May 2023 School Census by UPN as the denominator.

Exclusions - no national data for 2022/23 has been published yet by the DfE.

Reduced Timetable - figure in brackets for CIC is the percentage of CIC with an RTT reported for Summer 2023 that uses the number of CIC as at 31/05/23 that were matched to the May 2023 School Census by UPN as the denominator.

Persistent Absence "All", "SENK", "EHCP", "Kent" and "National" data is DfE published and is for primary, secondary and special schools (Year 1 to 11 pupils).

Severe Absence for "All" is DfE published and is for primary, secondary and special schools (Year 1 to 11) pupils.

Severe Absence for "SENK" and "EHCP" is based on the 2022 School Census returns and is for all schools (Year 1 to 11 pupils).

Persistent and Severe Absence data for the whole 2022/23 academic year is not yet available.

Absence for CIC Pupils - CIC pupils as at 31/03/2023 have been matched to the 2023 January and May Census by UPN.

KS2 2023 "All", "SENK", "EHCP", "Kent Average" and "National Average" are DfE published (14/12/2023).

KS2 2023 "CIC" is based on matching June 2023 Kent and OLALAC pupils to the 2023 KS2 Results cohort.

KS4 2023 - "All", "SENK", "EHCP", "Kent Average" is provisional data published October 2023. The DfE do not publish data for Selective and Non Selective schools.

KS4 2023 "CIC" is based on matching June 2023 Kent and OLALAC pupils to the 2023 KS4 Results cohort (Provisional October 2023 data).

Please note that in 2024:

- Key Stage 1 has been abolished as a statutory assessment so there is no data
- There are no progress measures for Key Stage 2 for reading, writing and maths (due to Covid) and will be none going forward given KS1 has been scrapped. The 2024 KS2 results are still provisional and could change
- The 2023/24 attendance data is not available until the middle of January 2025 so the latest data we have is 2022/23
- We are awaiting a date from DfE as to when the KS4 data will be available for 2024 – likely to be the beginning of November – there will be no P8 due to Covid so the latest data we have is 2022/23

Summary of Key Points: The educational landscape in 2024 has seen significant changes, including the abolition of Key Stage 1 as a statutory assessment and the absence of progress measures for Key Stage 2 due to the impact of Covid-19. Additionally, the latest available attendance data is from the 2022/23 academic year, and the 2024 Key Stage 4 data is still pending, with no Progress 8 measures available due to Covid-19 disruptions.

Implications: These changes and delays in data availability present challenges for accurately assessing and comparing student progress and school performance. The lack of statutory assessments and progress measures means that schools and policymakers must rely on alternative methods to evaluate educational outcomes and identify areas for improvement. This situation underscores the need for flexible and adaptive assessment strategies that can accommodate such disruptions.

Recommendations: It is recommended to develop and implement alternative assessment frameworks that can provide meaningful insights into student progress and school performance in the absence of traditional measures. Schools should also focus on qualitative assessments and other forms of data to monitor and support student development. Continued communication with the Department for Education (DfE) will be crucial to stay updated on the availability of new data and any changes in assessment policies.

Future Directions: Future efforts should aim to establish robust and resilient assessment systems that can withstand disruptions and provide reliable data. Exploring innovative assessment methods, such as formative assessments and digital tools, could offer valuable alternatives. Additionally, ongoing research into the long-term impacts of these changes on student outcomes will be essential for informing future educational policies and practices.

Conclusion: The current challenges in data availability and assessment due to the abolition of Key Stage 1 and the impact of Covid-19 highlight the need for adaptive and innovative approaches to evaluating educational outcomes. By developing alternative assessment frameworks and leveraging qualitative data, schools and policymakers can continue to support student progress and improve educational practices despite these disruptions.

Core Training Offer

The Education People were commissioned to deliver a range of training during the academic year 2023/24. During this period 781 delegates from 351 schools (56 Secondary Schools and 295 Primary Schools) have benefited from the various training opportunities delivered by The Education People. A full report is available to assess the impact of the core training offer and the RAG rating is universally 'Green'.

Countywide Partnership of Local Schools – Localities Model

The Localities Model went out to public consultation between 29 November 2023 and 24 January 2024 for comments and received views from over 800 respondents. Over 1,400 individual comments or suggestions were made, and the Localities Model has been amended accordingly in light of the feedback received. Within the feedback from the Localities Model consultation there was strong representation for the language used in the proposed system to be changed, and this has resulted in the significant, collaborative work, to create a 'Continuum of Need and Provision' for Kent. Currently still at the draft stage, a fully co-produced document has been developed by school and KCC professionals. 6 workshops took place in June 2024, to seek views and begin to populate a template that will support decisions around the needs and provisions for children and young people with SEND. A gap identified by the workshops was the engagement from small and faith schools, due to capacity of releasing staff to attend. KCC have met with the dioceses and small schools separately to gain their feedback and are planning how to work alongside their schedules to garner engagement. Work is now continuing on from the area workshops, with relevant professionals adding and refining the different sections of the Continuum as a direct result of the suggestions received

Summary of Key Points: During the 2023/24 academic year, The Education People provided training to 781 delegates from 351 schools, achieving a universally 'Green' RAG rating. Additionally, the Localities Model underwent public consultation, receiving over 800 responses and 1,400 comments, leading to significant revisions and the development of a 'Continuum of Need and Provision' for Kent.

Implications: The high engagement and positive feedback from the training sessions indicate that The Education People's efforts are effectively enhancing the skills and knowledge of educators across Kent. The extensive consultation and collaborative development of the Localities Model demonstrate a strong commitment to inclusive and responsive educational planning. However, the identified gap in engagement from small and faith schools highlights the need for tailored approaches to ensure all schools can participate and benefit.

Recommendations: To build on these successes, it is recommended to continue offering and expanding training opportunities, with a focus on addressing the specific needs of small and faith schools. Ensuring that these schools can engage fully will require flexible scheduling and additional support. Further, maintaining open channels for feedback and collaboration will be crucial for the ongoing refinement of the Continuum of Need and Provision.

Future Directions: Future efforts should aim to increase the inclusivity and accessibility of training and consultation processes. This could involve more targeted outreach and support for underrepresented schools. Additionally, ongoing evaluation and adaptation of the Localities Model will be essential to meet the evolving needs of students and educators in Kent.

Conclusion: The initiatives undertaken by The Education People and the development of the Localities Model have made significant strides in improving educational practices and planning in Kent. Continued investment in training and inclusive consultation processes will be key to sustaining and enhancing these gains, ensuring that all schools and students benefit from these efforts.

3. Priority Two – Providing additional intervention and support with engagement and integration

With a focus on exploring the best ways to facilitate children and young people with SEN in Kent accessing additional inclusion support, this priority has so far explored ways KCC can implement collaborative locality working and deliver High Needs Funding (HNF) [also known as mainstream top-up] in a more sustainable way. KCC has also started to map how Kent's approach to SEMH can be improved and looked at how attendance for children and young people with SEN can be increased.

Kent PRU & Attendance Service – October 2024

Kent PRU and Attendance Service (KPAS) formerly known as PIAS (PRU, Inclusion and Attendance Service) aims to improve school attendance and reduce suspensions and exclusions for children and young people in Kent. The Service continues to explore and develop ways to improve attendance of all children and young people alongside implementing the Department for Education (DfE) '**Working together to improve school attendance**' guidance that became statutory in August 2024.

Over the past two years, the redesign of the service has ensured the local authority meets the demands of the statutory guidance and provides advice and guidance to all schools, including special and independent schools through designated link Attendance Officers (AO) and Exclusion Intervention Advisers (EIA).

The Attendance Working Group continues to run since its inception in Spring 2023 and includes representation from a range of KCC countywide professionals including Early Help, Social Care, Virtual School Kent (VSK), SEN, Educational Psychology and the Safeguarding Front Door. The group aims to ensure attendance is '**everyone's responsibility**' across the Children and Young People Directorate and beyond.

There has been the successful implementation of the **core responsibilities** within the 'Working together to improve school attendance' guidance. **Targeting Support Meetings** (TSM) is an example where pupils and cohorts e.g. pupils with an EHCP and at risk of poor attendance, have agreed targeted actions and access to services. Under the new statutory guidance, the local authority will hold 1200 TSMs with schools over the 2024/25 academic year.

Best Practice Meetings to share effective attendance practice are held between schools. KPAS AOs facilitate these meetings which are available to all schools to discuss the DfE attendance guidance, local processes, and resources available for schools and families. Meetings are held either in person or virtually via Microsoft Teams, and in some areas, meetings have been tailored specifically to groups together such as special schools or PRUs.

In addition, there has also been the development of practice and protocols linked to attendance for schools and other services. This includes updated **KPAS Digital Front Door Pathways** (including data returns for unauthorised absence and sickness) and updated **Support Level Guidance** linked to Safeguarding which now includes **threshold support** from Early Help for pupils/families with persistent and severe absence.

Under the new guidance, all schools are legally obliged to submit their **daily attendance data** to the DfE. The local authority is currently designing a **School Absence Report** scoresheet that identifies patterns of each school's attendance data including cohorts such as gender, SEN, FSM and social care involvement against district and national comparisons.

A new **Code of Conduct** linked to the **National Framework for Penalty Notices** was published in September 2024 which works in conjunction with the electronic payment system of penalty notices which was implemented in September 2023. During the 2023/24 academic year over 12,000 penalty notices were issued, 90% of these were for an unauthorised family holiday.

There has also been the development of practice to improve attendance within other services, including **trauma informed practices** by VSK, **EBSA training** (phase 1 and 2) by the Kent Educational Psychology Service and **intensive support guidelines** for referrals to Early Help including holding strength-based conversations with families in school meetings.

KCC remains a joint partner in a **local attendance action alliance** with Medway Council, which was formed following the creation of a national attendance action alliance led by the Secretary of State for Education.

Several **resources** have been produced for **schools and partners** which include a DfE attendance guidance checklist, attendance policy checklist, good practice guide, attendance contract templates (previously known as parenting contracts). Bitesize guides/fact sheets have also been produced for KCC family practitioners on themes such as children missing education, part time timetables and elective home education.

Possibly, the most productive resource has been the development of a **KCC School Attendance Handbook**, primarily designed for schools, which breaks down into greater detail the 'Kent way' of implementing the expectations in the DfE statutory guidance. The handbook includes reference to other related subjects such as suspensions and exclusions.

Many **training opportunities** have been accessed by over **250 family practitioners** and presentations delivered to over **400 governors** and **300 headteachers**.

Whilst attendance and persistent absence of all schools in Kent is improving, levels remain just below national average according to the most recent DfE data. However, the improvements in Kent schools are greater than those reported nationally. The impact of the work to date is displayed below when comparing 2022/23 against 2023/24 Autumn and Spring combined attendance data in Kent schools.

School Type – all pupils

	% Total Absences Autumn 2022/ Spring 2023	% Total Absences Autumn 2023/ Spring 2024	Difference Total Absences	% PA Pupils Autumn 2022/Spring 2023	% PA Pupils Autumn 2023/Spring 2024	Difference PA
Primary	6.4	5.8	-0.6	19.1	16.1	-3.0
Secondary	9.1	8.6	-0.5	26.8	24.7	-2.1
Special	14.6	14.4	-0.2	43.6	41.0	-2.6
Primary/Secondary	7.6	7.1	-0.5	22.6	20.1	-2.5

School Type - SEN provision

School Tye	SEN Provision	2022/23 Autumn and Spring Combined		2023/24 Autumn and Spring Combined		DIFF Total Absences	DIFF % PA (10%)
		% Total Absences	% PA Pupils (10%)	% Total Absences	% PA Pupils (10%)		
Pri/Sec	N	6.7	19.3	6.1	16.4	-0.6	-2.9
Pri/Sec	K	10.9	34.0	10.5	31.1	-0.4	-2.9
Pri/Sec	E	13.6	37.7	13.7	36.4	0.1	-1.3
Pri/Sec	E & K	12.0	34.7	11.1	32.1	-0.9	-2.6
Primary	N	5.7	15.9	5.0	12.8	-0.7	-3.1
Primary	K	8.8	29.1	8.2	25.5	-0.6	-3.6
Primary	E	11.3	34.7	11.1	32.1	-0.2	-2.6
Primary	E & K	9.2	30.1	8.7	26.7	-0.5	-3.4
Secondary	N	7.9	23.3	7.4	20.5	-0.5	-2.8
Secondary	K	14.0	40.6	13.8	38.7	-0.2	-1.9
Secondary	E	16.8	41.6	17.0	41.7	0.2	0.1
Secondary	E & K	14.5	40.8	14.4	39.3	-0.1	-1.5
Special	E	14.5	43.2	14.2	40.4	-0.3	-2.8

KPAS also continues its work regarding **suspensions** and **permanent exclusions**. **Common themes** are identified and **additional processes** developed to support schools to ensure all interventions are exhausted and exclusion remains a last resort as detailed in the DfE guidance on suspensions and exclusions issued in August 2024. This includes the **development of practices** such as an inclusion intervention checklist, the appropriate use of directions off-site (alternative provision) and using inclusion champions to support schools.

In addition, KPAS supports the work of **CATIE** (Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education). This includes the inclusive leadership programme, core training offer, whole school nurture approach provided by Nurture UK and Special School outreach work delivered by the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS) and Local Inclusion Forum Team (LIFT).

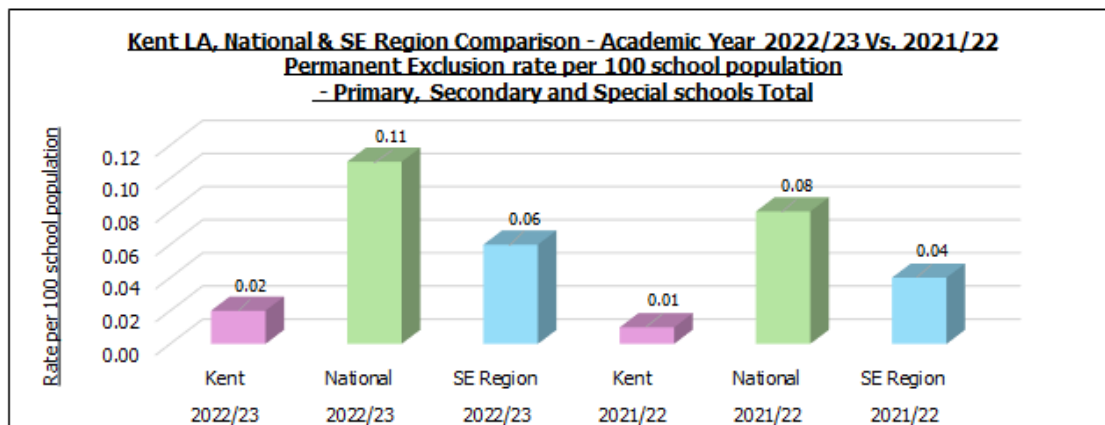
KPAS provides **regular training to governing boards and academy trustees** across the county's schools to ensure all cases of permanent exclusion are thoroughly scrutinised, as well as promote the use of timely data to address cases where suspensions are occurring on a regular basis. The link EIA support schools by:

- Providing advice on the DfE exclusion guidance and processes as well as behaviour policies.
- Sharing ideas as well as signposting to resources and services who may be able to support schools and pupils in promoting inclusion where behaviour is a concern.
- Attending meetings in schools with parents (and partner agencies where involved) about individual pupils experiencing suspensions or at risk of permanent exclusion.
- Delivering training to governors and senior leaders on responsibilities in relation to exclusions set out in the DfE guidance.

EIAs represent KPAS at a range of forums such as the Local Inclusion Forum Team (LIFT), LIFT Executive, In Year Fair Access panels and District Contextual Safeguarding Meetings.

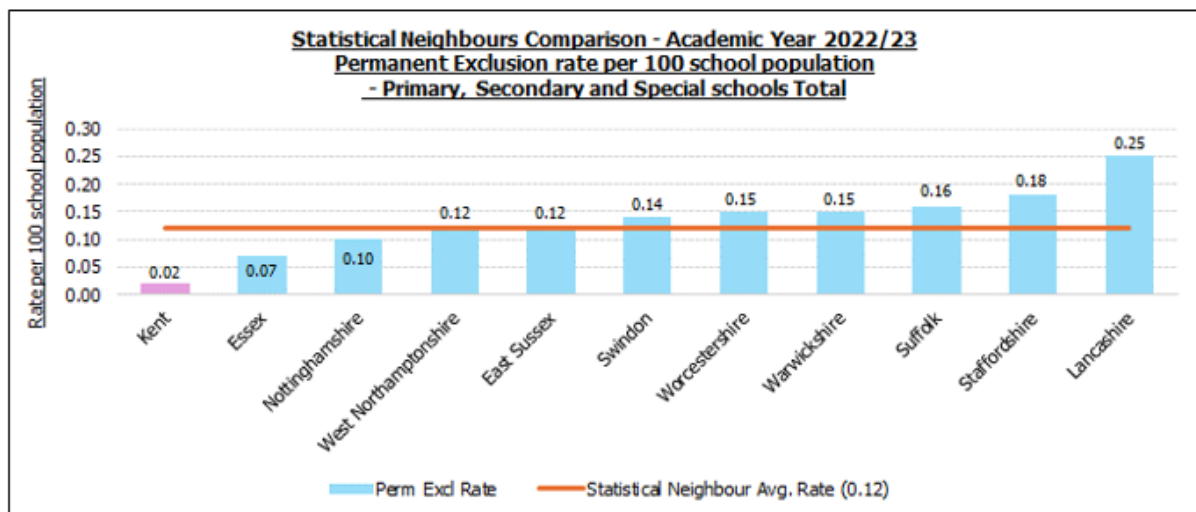
Most recent published DfE figures from 2022/23 academic year highlight that permanent exclusions and suspension rates (per 100 school population) in Kent schools remain well below equivalent levels nationally, within the South East region and in comparison to our statistical neighbours.

Permanent Exclusion 'Primary, Secondary and Special' school rate per 100 school population



Commentary:

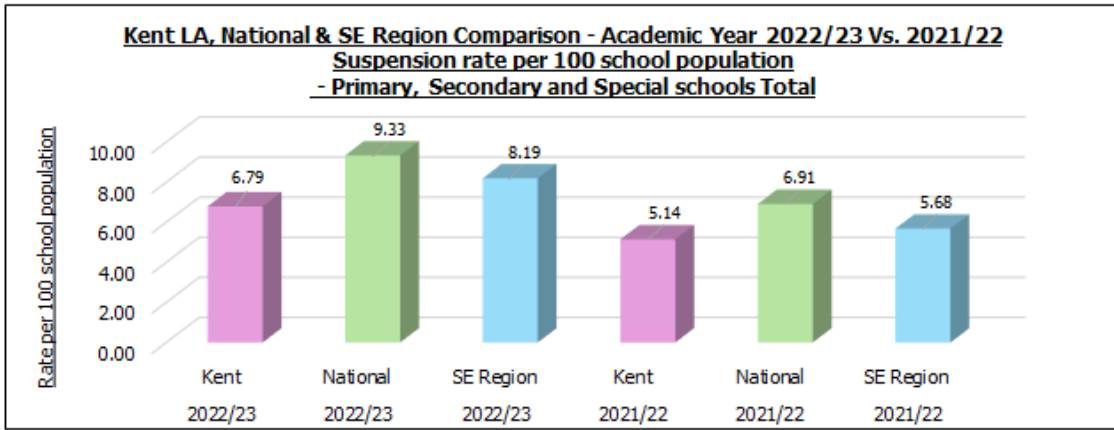
Kent below National and SE Region rates. Rate increase seen for Kent, National and SE Region on 2021/22.



Commentary:

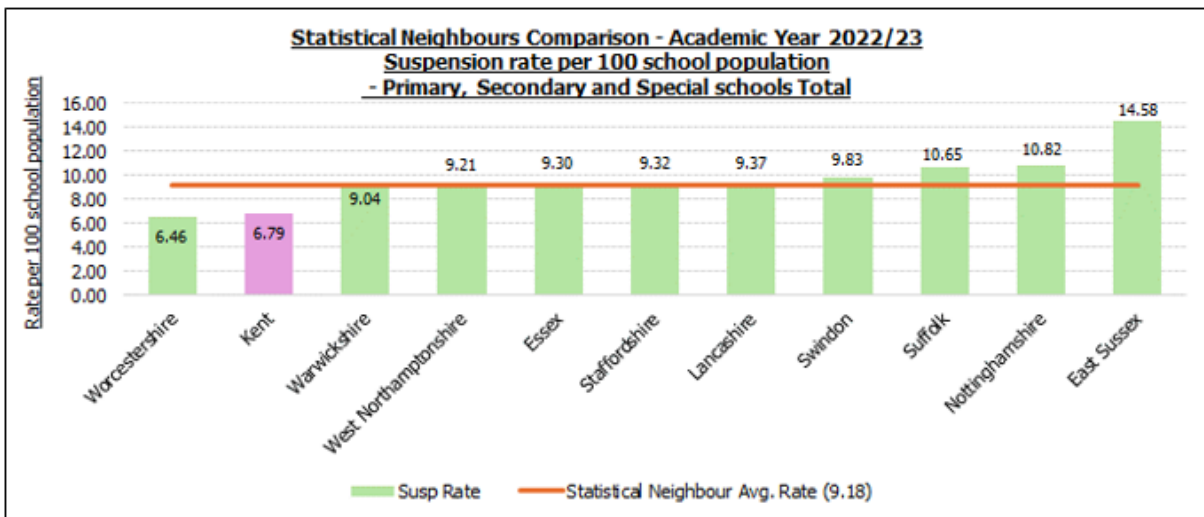
Kent rate below all Statistical Neighbour Local Authorities. Kent below 0.12 average rate.

Suspension 'Primary, Secondary and Special' school rate per 100 school population



Commentary:

Kent below National and SE Region rates. Rate increase seen for Kent, National and SE Region on 2021/22.



Commentary:

Kent ranked 2nd within Statistical Neighbour Local Authority group. Kent below 9.18 average rate.

Summary of Key Points: The Kent PRU and Attendance Service (KPAS) has been actively working to improve school attendance and reduce suspensions and exclusions in Kent. Over the past two years, the service has been redesigned to meet new statutory guidance and provide comprehensive support to all schools. Key initiatives include the implementation of Targeting Support Meetings (TSMs), Best Practice Meetings, and the development of various resources and protocols to support attendance.

Implications: The efforts of KPAS have led to significant improvements in attendance and a reduction in persistent absence, although levels remain just below the national average. The comprehensive approach, including collaboration with various professionals and the development of targeted resources, has created a robust support system for schools. However, the ongoing challenge of improving attendance to meet or exceed national averages indicates the need for continued focus and adaptation.

Recommendations: To further enhance the impact of KPAS, it is recommended to continue refining and expanding the support provided to schools. This includes increasing the frequency and reach of Best Practice Meetings, ensuring all schools can participate, and further developing

resources to address specific attendance challenges. Additionally, ongoing training and support for family practitioners, governors, and headteachers will be crucial for sustaining improvements.

Future Directions: Future efforts should focus on maintaining and building upon the current initiatives, with particular attention to schools that are still struggling with attendance issues. Exploring innovative approaches, such as digital tools and data analytics, could provide new insights and strategies for improving attendance. Continued collaboration with local and national partners will also be essential for sharing best practices and addressing systemic challenges.

Conclusion: The work of KPAS has made a significant positive impact on school attendance and the reduction of suspensions and exclusions in Kent. By continuing to refine and expand their initiatives, KPAS can help ensure that all children and young people in Kent have the opportunity to benefit from consistent and inclusive education.

Whole School Nurture Approach

Nurturing Kent Programme – As part of Kent’s county-wide approach to inclusive education

What is the programme?

Nurtureuk are recruiting schools to take part in a three-year programme across Kent County Council, embedding a whole-school nurturing approach across 300 schools. **This programme is fully funded** by schools, for schools and facilitated by Kent County Council. The aim is to promote inclusion across the county and support pupils with special educational needs to access and enjoy education.

Who is the programme for?

We’re recruiting mainstream primary and secondary schools to take part across the Kent County Council catchment area. We aim to embed a whole-school approach to nurture across 300 schools, including training in our National Nurturing Schools Programme, training and support for how to set up a Boxall Nurture Group® and how to utilise our social, emotional and mental health assessment tool, the Boxall Profile® Online.

Benefits to schools

Schools who participate in the programme will see outcomes such as, but not limited to:

- Reduced fixed term and permanent exclusions
- Improved Parent/Teacher relationships
- Improved Pupil/Teacher relationships
- Improved Pupil/Staff wellbeing and morale
- Improved understanding of pupils with Special Educational Needs
- Improved access to support for pupils with Special Educational Needs
- School budgets will be able to be spent more effectively to meet the needs of pupils
- Better networking opportunities and best practice across the county

Why Kent?

Nurtureuk have been commissioned by Kent County Council to create the country's first nurturing county, where all schools adopt a nurturing approach to teaching and learning. This approach has been adopted as a result of a countywide survey in February 2021, where Kent County Council surveyed schools and partners to explore interest in a countywide programme to embed a whole-school approach to nurture. The survey findings returned an extremely positive response, with an overwhelming majority expressing support for the proposal and many sharing valuable insights into their experiences of nurture.

Programme in detail

The National Nurturing Schools Programme Each school joining the programme will be enrolled in our **National Nurturing Schools Programme (NNSP)**. The NNSP is an 18-month journey, with regular group training and 1:1 bespoke consultancy to develop an inclusive approach that is bespoke to the schools needs and circumstances. The programme supports **Quality First Teaching and Learning** and promotes healthy outcomes for all children and young people. At the end of the programme, schools are assessed, and if successful, are awarded the nurtureuk national accreditation of a National Nurturing School, joining hundreds of schools across the UK.

The Boxall Profile® Online

Each school will also have access to our mental health assessment tool, the training for the duration of the programme, with thorough **Boxall Profile® training** to support its use across the school, so children's needs are better understood and accommodated to make the most of their education.

Boxall Nurture Groups®

Schools will also receive training in how to set up and run a **Boxall Nurture Group®**, to nurtureuk recognised, **externally evaluated** and accredited standards. All schools will have the opportunity to attend regular **networking events** to discuss best practice, and also attend **expert-led webinars** discussing topics most pertinent to the needs of Kent pupils, as voted for by schools. Schools will also receive **publications and resources** designed to support their journey and the development of their own sustainable, bespoke approach. At the end of the 18-month programme, all schools will receive **complimentary one year membership** to nurtureuk, for continued support in sustaining a nurturing approach.

What is nurture?

Contrary to belief by some, a nurturing approach is not 'just tea and toast, nor can it be accurately described as 'soft and fluffy'. The concept of nurture is rooted in Attachment Theory and Neuroscience of the developing brain. It highlights the importance of social environments and its significant influence on social emotional skills, wellbeing and behaviour. A nurturing ethos in an education environment is empathetic, structured and fair for all. At nurtureuk, we have spent 50 years building our evidence-based approach and today we have an reputation for delivering expert nurturing practice in schools. Everything we do is guided best practice in the classroom through the Six Principles of Nurture:

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base
3. The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
4. Language is a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. The importance of transition in children's lives

What is the impact and evidence for a nurturing approach?

The whole-school approach to nurture was born out of research into the effectiveness of nurture groups, which saw the value of the six principles of nurture to be utilised across whole schools (Sloan, Winter, Lynn, Gildea, & Connolly, 2016). There are hundreds of nurtureuk commissioned and independent studies that have been conducted over the years to evidence the impact and effectiveness of nurture groups:

- They are proven to **improve social emotional skills** (Cooper and Whitebread 2007), **school attendance** (Estyn 2014; Sanders 2007), academic attainment (Sanders 2007; Reynolds, MacKay, and Kearney 2009; Seth-Smith et al. 2010), **including language and literacy skills** (Hosie 2013)
- They also **improve behaviour** (Sloan et al. 2016) and **reduce exclusions** (Ofsted 2009; March and Kearney 2017). They **improve parent-child relationships** (Pyle 2015), with children being more **affectionate and communicative** at home, and **parents feeling more confident** in being able to help their children (Ofsted 2011).
- It is well understood that nurture groups help develop **affective bonds between teachers and pupils** and help create a **whole school nurturing ethos** (Binnie and Allen 2008; Cooper 2001).

Why adopt a nurturing approach?

We know how important and effective a nurturing approach is at supporting children and young people to be the best they can be. We understand that **social, emotional and mental health issues are not transient issues that pupils will grow out of**. Children with these issues and other socio-economic issues may act in different ways:

- **Externalising behaviours** such as being aggressive, fighting and violating rules may lead to persistent difficulties, including conduct disorders, that can have negative consequences both in childhood and later in life (Moffitt 2006). Children and young people experiencing persistent externalising behaviours are at risk of:
 - Academic difficulties (low grades, truancy and exclusion)
 - Social rejection
 - Antisocial behaviour and substance abuse
- **Internalising behaviours** such as anxiety and depression can lead to:
 - Difficulties forming and maintaining relationships
 - Poor school performance
 - Suicidal behaviours

Children and young people who have experienced depression are also more likely to have recurrent episodes later in adulthood (Rao 2006).

- **Vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils** are at high risk of personal and school failure:
 - Young people who are persistently disadvantaged are up to two years behind on their learning compared to their peers (Andrews, Robinson, and Hutchinson 2017).
 - Poorer young people are four times more likely to be excluded than their wealthier peers (Gill, Quilter-Pinner, and Swift 2017).

Summary of Key Points: Nutureuk is launching a three-year programme in collaboration with Kent County Council to embed a whole-school nurturing approach across 300 schools. This initiative aims to promote inclusion and support pupils with special educational needs (SEN) through comprehensive training and resources.

Implications: The programme's focus on nurturing and inclusion is expected to have far-reaching positive effects on school environments. By reducing exclusions and improving relationships among parents, teachers, and pupils, the programme can create a more supportive and inclusive atmosphere. Enhanced understanding and access to support for SEN pupils will likely lead to better educational outcomes and overall wellbeing.

Recommendations: Schools should actively participate in this programme to leverage the benefits of improved relationships, wellbeing, and effective budget use. Engaging fully with the training and resources provided will be crucial for maximizing the impact of the programme. Additionally, schools should share their experiences and best practices to foster a collaborative network across the county.

Future Directions: Future efforts should focus on monitoring the programme's impact and making necessary adjustments to ensure its success. Collecting and analysing data on key outcomes, such as exclusion rates and pupil wellbeing, will help in refining the approach. Expanding the programme to include more schools and continuous professional development for staff will further enhance its effectiveness.

Conclusion: The Nurtureuk programme represents a significant opportunity for schools in Kent to enhance their inclusive practices and support for SEN pupils. By participating in this initiative, schools can create a more nurturing and effective educational environment, benefiting all members of the school community. Continued commitment and collaboration will be essential for sustaining these positive changes.

4. Priority Three – Inclusive Education is part of a broader holistic and joined up offer of support

The need for integrated approaches is at the heart of the Children and Families Act 2014 and reflected in the SEND Code of Practice, KCC will work with all relevant local partners to ensure services are joined-up and accessible to children and young people with SEND and their families.

We are working with our partners and other additional SEN, health, and education professionals to produce a joined-up offer for schools and create an equitable offer for all mainstream schools to improve the offer for children with SEN support and those with EHCPs. The effectiveness of these services will be assessed through the District Dashboard and Local Inclusion Plans as they are developed.

Following development of a proposed Locality Model for SEN inclusion, we will continue developing these structures to inform how we prioritise resources which support the additional needs of SEN children. Implementation should begin in Spring 2025.

Work continues with the special school sector to define and deliver a continuum of support to deliver better outcomes for children with SEN in a financially sustainable manner.

Special School Review

The Special Schools Review consultation sets out proposals regarding the future designations of special schools, the supporting admission guidance and a school-to-school model of support. These changes have been proposed to assist implementation of the wider changes for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) across mainstream schools and Special Resource Provisions (SRPs).

Of Kent's twenty-four state-funded special schools, the proposed changes outlined in this consultation would affect seven schools' designation and admission guidance whilst an additional two schools would be affected by the proposed admission guidance only. In total, nine state-funded special schools would be affected by the proposed changes to designation and admission guidance; seven of these are maintained special schools and two are part of an Academy Trust. KCC would like the proposed school-to-school support model to be adopted by all Kent special

schools as the approach to providing expertise and guidance for children with SEND in mainstream schools.

Professional Resource Groups – As a key part of the Localities Model, work began in April 2024 to align services and to support the development of a Professional Resource Core Group based on a Link Practitioner model which is endorsed by the Balance System. This is intended to support schools having access to support and interventions in a timely, less bureaucratic manner.

Summary of Key Points: The Special Schools Review consultation proposes changes to the designations and admission guidance of nine state-funded special schools in Kent, aiming to enhance the support for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The consultation also introduces a school-to-school support model to be adopted by all Kent special schools, facilitating expertise sharing and guidance for mainstream schools.

Implications: These proposed changes are significant as they aim to streamline and improve the support system for SEND students across Kent. By redefining school designations and admission guidance, the consultation seeks to ensure that special schools are better equipped to meet the diverse needs of their students. The school-to-school support model promotes collaboration and resource sharing, which can lead to more effective and inclusive educational practices in mainstream schools.

Recommendations: It is recommended that stakeholders, including school administrators, teachers, and parents, actively engage with the consultation process to provide feedback and ensure that the proposed changes meet the needs of all students. Additionally, implementing the school-to-school support model will require careful planning and ongoing support to ensure its success.

Future Directions: Future efforts should focus on monitoring the implementation of these changes and assessing their impact on student outcomes. Continued collaboration between special and mainstream schools will be essential to foster an inclusive educational environment. Further development of the Professional Resource Core Group will also be crucial to provide timely and effective support to schools.

Conclusion: The Special Schools Review consultation represents a proactive step towards enhancing the support system for SEND students in Kent. By adopting the proposed changes and fostering a collaborative support model, Kent can improve the educational experiences and outcomes for all students with special educational needs. Continued engagement and evaluation will be key to the success of these initiatives.

5. Priority Four – Ensuring smooth transition between education phases

This priority aims to develop collaborative approaches between settings to achieve successful and sustained transitions for CYP at key phases and times of transition in their lives.

CATIE Annual Report 2023-24 Update: Supported Employment

The details of the Supported Employment in Schools programme are outlined in the last iteration of the CATIE Annual Report 2022-23, including the recognition of the low level of engagement with

schools and subsequent plans to mitigate. The Service Level Agreement for the Supported Employment in Schools programme came to an end on 31 August 2024 and an end of contract meeting with the provider was held on 6 September 2024. See Appendix X for the providers end of contract report.

During Year Two of delivery, performance monitoring of the contract identified that the service was not value for money as it was not delivering the required outcomes due to a range of factors as detailed below:

- The Programme launched at a time when Covid-19 cases were still at high levels with staff absences in schools frequently occurring, limiting their capacity to focus on other priorities. Some schools were also carrying out remote learning.
- The programme was commissioned and launched simultaneously with two other big scale training programmes aimed at mainstream schools funded from the Inclusion budget. Although this service is only open to secondary schools, all three involves a separate time commitment of 18 months from schools to participate in each programme, making it a challenge to participate in more than one service simultaneously.
- After 17 months of delivery, the programme continued to face challenges in engaging schools, although all secondary schools have been made aware of the programme via multiple and repeated communication, including direct phone calls to targeted schools, uptake remained low in relation to targets set. Whilst the other two Inclusion commissioned services had a target of enrolling a proportion of mainstream schools in Kent, the Supported Employment programme had an ambitious target of enrolling 100% of all mainstream secondary schools in Kent.

Feedback provided by The Education People indicated that the programme was well received by participating schools and that the schools that they approached to participate understood the value of the Supported Employment programme and how it could impact on students with SEND (and other disadvantaged students). However, schools indicated that that there were significant barriers to their ability to commit to the programme, including staffing capacity and resource to undertake new initiatives balanced with ongoing priorities within schools.

With the agreement of Children, Young People and Education's Directorate Management Team, an alternative delivery model was agreed for the final year delivery, in recognition that the model delivered for Years One and Two were not addressing the capacity issues and enabling schools to participate.

Year Three Delivery (Final Year)

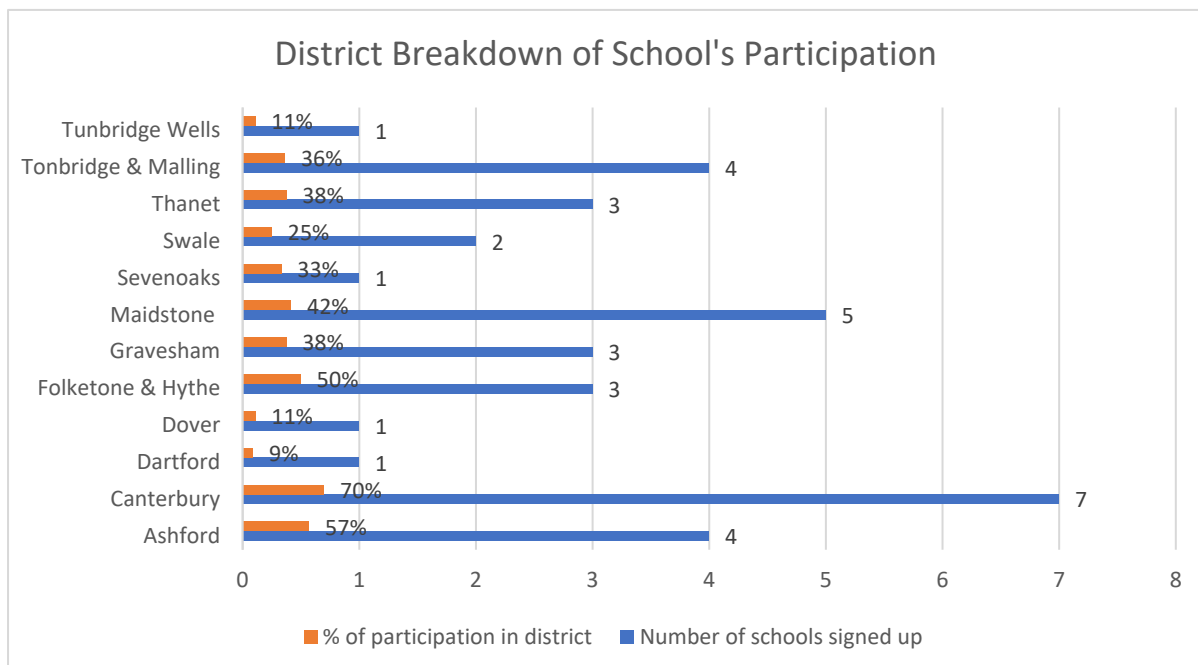
Year Three of the programme ensured those schools already signed up could work through the framework and embed the principles into their school as per the programme when they enrolled. Schools who had not yet signed up to the programme would be able to access a comprehensive 'pick and mix' selection of training, guidance and consultancy to meet their needs.

The revised delivery model was designed to ensure that there was a programme legacy in place for Kent, and the programme was broken down into smaller modules and encompassed specific topics, most of which were made available electronically as downloadable documents, E-learning and pre-recorded webinars, making the training more flexible and accessible for delegates.

Despite the change in the delivery model in the final year, engagement from schools remained low. At the end of the contract, seven additional schools signed up to the programme for its final year. The following details what has been achieved in relation to the contract's Key Performance Indicators:

Stage 1. Engagement

- No. of initial meetings with schools to introduce the programme = 60 out of 101 (60%)
- No. of Mainstream Secondary Schools signing up to programme with identified lead = 35 out of 60 (35%). Below table is a district breakdown of school's participation in the programme, at the end of the contract:



Stage 2. Training

- No. of participating Mainstream Secondary Schools that have undertaken Stage 2 training = 29 out of 35 (82.8%)
- Participating schools provided positive feedback (Good / Excellent) on the quality of training and support received = 21 out of 29 (73%)

Stage 3. Implementation

- No. of participating schools progressed to the Initiating or Emerging stage = 18 out of 35 (51.4%)
- No. of participating schools achieved the minimum level of progress to Established or Embedded = 13 out of 35 (37.1%). Below table breaks down how many schools in each district this includes:

District	Number of Schools at Established or Embedded stage of the Supported Employment model
Ashford	1
Canterbury	1
Dover	1
Folkestone and Hythe	2
Gravesham	3
Maidstone	2
Thanet	1
Tonbridge and Malling	2

- Total No. Of participating schools to have shown progression through the Implementation Stages = 31 out of 35 (88.5%)
- No. of participating schools who have implemented Vocational Profiling (VP) with young people with SEN = 22 out of 35 (62.8%)

Vocational Profiles (VP) have been implemented and embedded into 22 schools (as noted above) across several year groups from year 9, with schools focusing on a small group of students to start to fully understand the VP and how this tool impacts and can enhance career conversations for students with SEND already in place.

The VP has been used for some schools in conjunction with career systems (e.g. Unifrog) and uploaded to allow for regular student updates/milestones (as per the Supported Employment Model). Conversations with schools using the VP have stated they have rolled the use of the VP to additional year groups.

Legacy

As part of the programme's legacy, schools who have not enrolled onto the service are able to access the tools, resources (e.g. vocational profile, employer engagement information, job coach checklist) and recorded webinars that have been used to embed The Supported Employment Model into the school careers strategy.

To provide context of the Supported Employment in schools programme, The Education People delivered a series of live webinars via MS Teams in Term 6 2023/2024. The webinars provided an opportunity for schools to:

- Gain an overview of the Supported Employment Model - the five stages and core values
- Hear about the benefits of embedding the model within the careers strategy
- Learn about the impact of the programme to date, including feedback from schools who have participated
- Learn about the tools and resources (e.g. vocational profile, employer engagement information) and how these will be shared
- Learn about the training webinar titles and how to access through the TEP training site.

The webinars were also recorded with information and programme links accessible on the Kelsi directory and will be made available on KCC's SEN Inclusion Directory as a resource for Mainstream Secondary Schools in Kent.

The Supported Employment Service (within The Education People) was appointed to work with all Kent mainstream schools to embed the Supported Employment (SE) Model <https://www.base-uk.org/what-supported-employment> between 2021 – 2024. This Supported Employment in Schools Programme (SEiS) programme was commissioned following the Ofsted and CQC Joint Inspection with the Kent County Council SEND Service in 2019.

This report will detail:

- Programme Delivery – communication with schools and delivery
- Programme Data – school and student information (please see the School Information spreadsheet attached)
- Programme Legacy – Recorded Webinars and Resources available to all Kent mainstream schools
- Challenges
- Programme Outcomes.

Programme Delivery:

The aim of the SEiS programme was to add value and aspirational support by strengthening the existing careers information, advice, and guidance programme for students with SEND within Kent mainstream Schools.

Programme delivery was Three stages – Consultancy, Training and Mentoring with Implementation of the SE Model into the school across four stages: Initiating, Emerging, Established and Embedded. To show the progression of embedding the SE Model it was agreed a school needed to progress 2x stages e.g. starting at Initiating and moving through emerging to established.

To ensure the SE Model would support within the school setting and student cohort the model was adapted to include these changes: client engagement to student engagement and job matching to career & job matching experience and included an additional stage to support with the understanding the world of work.

A Toolkit was created to support schools to evidence the progression through the Implementation Stages (Initiating - Embedded) that linked directly to the SE Model and with the addition of the Supported Employment underpinning Core Values (named The Core Standards of Supported Employment in schools within the Toolkit) and the Gatsby Benchmarks

<https://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-career-guidance> . The SEiS programme linked directly to three of the eight Gatsby Benchmarks

3.) Addressing the needs of each pupil 5.) Encounters with employers and employees 6.) Experiences of workplaces.

Communication with Schools:

Marketing the programme was a key priority and commenced from term 6 (academic year 2020/21) with notification to all Kent mainstream schools via a variety of ways including email communications, attending meetings, training/overview sessions and with service/teams within The Education People – Skills & Employability/Careers Hub and Secondary School Improvement. Attendance at careers and SENCO meetings where possible with TEP colleagues provided a TEP/whole school approach which supported with joining services and reduced time resource for school staff which was a challenge. A promotional video was recorded and shared

<https://youtu.be/tIK6GP5YStE#>

Communication with schools continued during the three years in terms of marketing the programme, initial meetings, programme sign up, delivery (three stages), review and next steps.

Three Stage Delivery - Consultancy, Training and Mentoring:

The programme was designed to be delivered with the three stages of consultancy, training and mentoring to embed the SE Model into the careers plans that will be differentiated for students with SEND (this including those with/without an Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP)) and as the model was communicated to schools it was clear that the school would use this model of support with different cohorts of students (e.g. looked after children) after working through the programme.

Rationale for this delivery format:

- Consultancy: Understanding what is already in place within the schools, valuing this and giving awareness of the SE Model to the SLT & Governors
 - Training: Train staff in the programme and SE Model
 - Mentoring: To support the front-line staff to embed the SE Model.
1. **Consultancy** – Meeting with school staff to introduce the programme, SE Model, discuss current careers plans/practice across the school for students with SEND (as per the Preparing for Adulthood guidance <https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/preparing-for-adulthood-all-tools-resources/pfa-employment-resources> the focus was for students from yr. 9), view the Toolkit to capture evidence and show progression across the Implementation Stages (Initiating - Embedded), discuss the training and introduce the Employment Support Officer Mentor who will support as per the third stage to implement the SE Model.
 2. **Training** – Training modules directly linked to the SEiS programme and SE Model delivered via MS Teams to groups of school staff who were to work on the delivery of the programme and to ensure the most impact for staff (and students) the modules were allocated to key roles and responsibilities e.g. Vocational Profiling (VP) undertaken by the person meeting the student for these VP sessions (careers), Employer Engagement undertaken by the person who talks to employers for work experience (WE co-ordinator). The training modules were reduced timewise to support with time constraints within the school during years 1 & 2 and changes were made in year 3 to recorded webinars that ensured flexibility for school staff to view the webinars in their time and view the courses they felt were the priority for them/the school. Changes to the third year of the programme were agreed and implemented from September 2023 with the changes to the training.

Year 3. Recorded Webinars

Overview of Supported Employment	Employer Engagement
The Supported Employment Toolkit	Travel Training Students
Supported Employment and The Gatsby Benchmarks	Introduction to Job Coaching & Work Experience
Vocational Profiling	Fading Support in a Classroom Setting
Training in Systematic Instruction - An Overview of the Training Method	Progression Pathways for Students with SEND

3. **Mentoring** – An allocated Mentor for each school signed up to the SEiS Programme and introduced at the consultation stage to key school staff working through the programme. The mentor started with the creation and implementation of the Vocational Profile (VP) (following the VP training – stage 2) for

the school in conjunction with allocated staff member/s (in the main the careers lead and teaching assistants). It was imperative that the VP created with the school met the needs of the school and the student cohort (differentiations where needed and having several VP's e.g. dependent on student age). Support provided to the school to embed the SE Model was bespoke and required the mentor to be flexible in their approach. Reviewing the Toolkit to show progression (adding evidence) across the model and implementation stages provided an opportunity for reflection for school staff as there was excellent practice already in place and having the Toolkit to add information showed where the SE Model complemented this practice and gaps in Supported Employment knowledge and delivery were required. The mentors on the programme have formed professional relationships during the time they have supported the school staff, and the added value has been invitations to student mock interviews, attending careers fairs, parent/carer sessions and join student meetings to discuss progression routes including Supported Internships and referral to The Support Employment Service – this supporting to reduce students becoming NEET (not in employment, education or training).

Programme Data:

Information has been provided for the duration of the programme on the attached excel spreadsheet and relates to the three stages of the programme.

Information provided includes:

Stage 1. Engagement

- No. of initial meetings with schools to introduce the programme = 60 out of 101 (59.4%)
- No. of Mainstream Secondary Schools signing up to programme with identified lead = 35 out of 60 (58.3%)

Stage 2. Training

- No. of Mainstream Secondary Schools that have undertaken Stage 2 training = 29 out of 35 (82.8%)
- Participating schools provided positive feedback (Good / Excellent) on the quality of training and support received = 21 out of 29 (73%)
- School Roles: Undertaking Training/viewed Recorded Webinars

Stage 3. Implementation

- No. of schools progressed to the Initiating or Emerging stage = 18 out of 35 (51.4%)
- No. of schools achieved the minimum level of progress to Established or Embedded = 13 out of 35 (37.1%)
- Total No. of schools to have shown progression through the Implementation Stages = 31 out of 35 (88.5%)
- No. of participating schools who have implemented Vocational Profiling (VP) with young people with SEN = 22 out of 35 (62.8%)
- VP's breakdown by year groups (9-13)

Vocational Profiles (VP) have been implemented and embedded into 22 schools (as noted) across a number of year groups from year 9 with schools focusing on a small group of students to start to fully understand the VP and how this tool impacts and can enhance career conversations for students with SEND already in place. The VP has been used for some schools in conjunction with career systems (e.g. Unifrog) and uploaded to allow for regular student updates/milestones (as per the SE Model). Conversations with schools using the VP have stated they have rolled the use of the VP to additional year groups.

Programme Legacy:

The SEiS programme formally ended in August 2024 with schools finishing the 23/24 academic year in July. As a legacy of this Supported Employment in Schools programme work has taken place during the latter stages of the programme to ensure all Kent mainstream schools can access the recorded webinars and tools/resources that have been delivered and utilised to embed the SE Model into the schools. To promote this legacy 3x dates/times (June 24) were circulated to schools to invite staff to view a webinar. The link to the webinar is enclosed <https://youtu.be/WtVMVGddNNI>

Kent mainstream schools will have access to:

Pre-recorded Webinars	Resources
Overview of Supported Employment	Supported Employment in Schools Overview and Toolkit
The Supported Employment Toolkit	Selection of Vocational Profiles
Vocational Profiling	Autism Communication Passport
Employer Engagement	Disability Passport
Travel Training Students	Fading Support Plan - Checklist
Introduction to Job Coaching and Work Experience	Work Experience and Job Coaching
Training in Systematic Instruction – An Overview of the Training Method	Job (Work Experience Placement) Analysis
Fading Support in a Classroom Setting	Employer Engagement Process
Supported Employment and The Gatsby Benchmarks	Reverse Jobs Fair (Rowhill School link)
Progression Pathways for Students with SEND	

Challenges through the duration of the programme:

The programme proved challenging with (the majority of) schools communicating that although they could see the value of the having the SE Model within the careers plans and how this would directly support students with SEND for the school, they did not have the time and staff resource to allocate to the programme and that with other school mandatory priorities this programme would not be something the school could sign up to.

Communication with schools (as noted above) was a constant priority during the programme to engage with schools to sign up and reengage where needed. The Covid Pandemic impacted on engagement and sign up at one point due to staffing capacity and delivery.

There were a number of schools that did sign up, although did not commence or dropped off during the duration of the programme.

A selection of the challenges has been listed:

- Schools communicated other priorities within schools that resulted in delays to meetings/sign up/starts to the programme. Schools have started that they see the value of the programme as noted yet are not able to move forward with the programme.
- Schools communicated recruitment issues – changing staff roles, staff new to post, staff with multiple roles (impact on capacity) all impacting on sign up.
- school colleagues cancelling meetings with mentors and the need to encourage staff to view webinars as capacity issues remain at times
- Careers colleagues communicated that they have many different roles and careers time is minimal – this is similar with SENCOs communicating not having time to be involved with the programme
- Schools communicated they needed support to have the staffing capacity to start the programme.
- Staffing capacity to attend training in years 1&2 – changes to training delivery (as noted in year. 3)
- Careers & SEND colleagues not collaborating within the schools – this impacting on meetings, programme delivery and communication.

Programme Outcomes:

- 35 Kent mainstream schools have been supported to understand and implement aspects of The Supported Employment Model with 13x schools either at an established or embedded stage within careers provision for students with SEND
- All schools having support from a mentor have evidenced progressing from the initiating

stage of the programme

- A range of school professionals including Governors have undertaken Supported Employment training
- Students with SEND have a Vocational Profile (VP) from Yr.9
- Better quality of work experience placement for students with SEND
- Quality Job Coaching support for students on placement/s
- Creative and innovative ways in which schools engage with employers
- Students are better prepared and equipped for leaving education and entering work.

The Supported Employment Service have been proud to deliver the first Supported Employment in Schools Programme in Kent and within the country. With initial conversations to pilot this programme with a Special School in the county to very quickly rolling out this delivery to all Kent mainstream schools as part of the KCC Written Statement of Action has provided an opportunity to work with the schools to show how quality supported employment methods can impact on careers delivery for students with SEND.

Summary of Key Points: The Supported Employment in Schools programme, detailed in the CATIE Annual Report 2022-23, faced significant challenges in engagement and value for money. Despite efforts to mitigate these issues, including a revised delivery model in the final year, the programme struggled to meet its ambitious targets, with low participation from secondary schools.

Implications: The low engagement levels highlight the difficulties schools face in committing to additional programmes, especially during periods of high staff absences and competing priorities. This underscores the need for more flexible and accessible programme designs that can accommodate the varying capacities of schools. The feedback from participating schools, however, indicates that the programme was valued and had potential benefits for students with SEND and other disadvantaged students.

Recommendations: Future programmes should consider the capacity constraints of schools and offer more flexible participation options. This could include shorter, more modular training sessions and increased use of digital resources. Additionally, setting more realistic targets and ensuring better alignment with other ongoing initiatives could improve engagement and outcomes.

Future Directions: Continued efforts should focus on understanding and addressing the barriers to school participation. Exploring alternative delivery models and leveraging technology to provide more accessible training and support will be crucial. Ongoing evaluation and feedback from schools will help refine these approaches and ensure they meet the needs of both educators and students.

Conclusion: While the Supported Employment in Schools programme faced significant challenges, the positive feedback from participating schools suggests that there is value in such initiatives. By adopting more flexible and realistic approaches, future programmes can better support schools in providing valuable opportunities for students with SEND and other disadvantaged groups. Continued commitment to understanding and addressing the needs of schools will be key to the success of these efforts.

6. Summary

Progress is being made in all areas but there is still need to have a more data driven approach to planning and evaluation in all Priority areas. The challenges of funding remain and the strategy is to ensure that all activity is designed to make the best use of all available resources and have financial sustainability and outcomes for children at the forefront of how all activity is planned.

Priority one – the focus for 2024/2025 is to develop the following;

- fully establish the Community of Schools model which will form a secure partnership network for school improvement with Inclusion at it's core.
- The Mainstream Core Standards training will become part of the core offer for school improvement
- The Continuum of Need and Provision document will support building the capacity of mainstream settings.
- Review the effectiveness of the District Dashboard and make the appropriate improvements
- Review how STLS service is delivered and how it needs to be reformed to meet the changing needs of the sector to meet objectives.

Priority two - the focus for 2024/2025 is to develop the following;

- establish a Community of Schools funding stream which will allow the re distribution of resources to provide additional intervention and support with engagement and integration into mainstream schools.
- provide the Communities of Schools with the structures to contribute to local inclusion plans and pathways
- continue to make improvements with attendance
- develop the Continuum of Need and Provision so that it is the key tool to ensure equity and support consistency across all Communities of Schools.

Priority three – the focus for 2024/2025 is to develop the following;

- agree the outcomes of the Special School review so that peer to peer and school to school support structures are strengthened.
- Fully establish the link practitioner model for the Professional Resource Core group to support a broad and holistic offer of support.
- Begin the work with ICB to support improved Joint Commissioning arrangements in the future.

Priority four – the focus for 2024/2025 is to develop the following;

- Learn from the successful transition processes from primary to secondary and make further improvements, particularly in relation to parental confidence.

- Use said learning to review transition to Post 16 with a focus on supporting YP to transition into mainstream pathways.
- Ensure post 16 transition work is aligned with Pathways for All strategy.