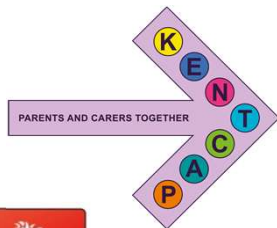


SEND Improvement Programme

September 2021



SEND Improvement Programme



The SEND Improvement programme continues to work at pace

- The Written Statement of Action work is progressing, with the team preparing for an OFSTED/ CQC revisit due at any time
- In preparation for the revisit –
 - Over 170 evidence files prepared for submission
 - Research with other authorities who have recently had a revisit
 - Introduction presentation drafted for inspectors
 - Detailed positioning statement across all areas of weakness prepared.
 - Written statement of action tracker developed, with RAG status for each milestone.

SEND Improvement Programme



- New recruitment into senior posts across SEN and EPS, creating further capacity to enable further service design.
- Alignment with the SEND Change programme to ensure a service structure fit for purpose

Workstream update



Workstream	Key activities
A – Parental engagement & co-production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong strategic relationship with Kent PACT – MOU and funding in place, providing advice and guidance, shared decision making, co production and audit team members for EHCPs • Vastly improved Local offer – SEND Information hub – extensive content and functionality • Full time dedicated team in place – family engagement and local offer development
B – Inclusive Practice and the Outcomes, Progress and Attainment of CYP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream Core standards, parents guide, Kent Inclusion Statement and County Approach to Inclusive Education published with support training available • Training offer to schools extended to include – County Approach to Nurture programme, Leadership support programme and Supported Employment programmes rolling out from September 21. • Extended support to SENCOs through county wide briefings and newsletters
C – Quality of Education, Health and Care Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised EHCP templates aligned to SEND Code of Practice • New EHCP quality assurance process and tool implemented with audits taking place across stakeholders including health, social care and parents • IPSEA training across SEN teams • Annual review plan initiated
D – Joint commissioning and governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint commissioning framework developed and joint governance in place across the programme • Joint SLA and funding of IASK • Health co-ordinators working alongside SEN teams • Joint strategic working including suicide strategy, ACE awareness and SCLN development
E – Service Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ND pathway programme • Integrated review at 2 rolled out across the county • Consistently met the 92% target for Wheelchairs since October 19 • SCLN programme in progress working across schools in Kent

Programme Impacts



- parental satisfaction with the SEND Information Hub website has gone from 19% in 2019 to approximately 60% in Spring 2021
- percentage of parents that agree or strongly agree with the confidence statements within the parental survey – 62% (December 20) up from a baseline of 30.4% in the 2019 parent survey
- EHCP plans QA'd in March 2020 showed 70% required improvement and only 20% were good. An audit of plans in March 2021 showed 25% required improvement and 75% rated as good.
- Children in Kent who require special school nursing provision experience better quality, more equitable, and more resilient provision.

Programme Impacts



- School website compliance continues to rise, with 88.3% of the sample (60 schools) compliant with SEND. This has risen from 78.3% in October 2020
- 92% of schools strongly agreeing or agreeing that the MCS supports their understanding of the legal duties of schools, academies and Pupil Referral Units in relation to provision for and inclusion of pupils with SEND.
- 89% of schools and settings agreed that the Kent Inclusion statement reflects our collective understanding of inclusivity.
- EHCP within timeframe now at or above 45% for last 3 months and 6 out of the last 7 months.

Programme feedback



“[The PEO] has been outstanding. Her openness, integrity, flexibility, and commitment to support [child] and the school as a whole have been exceptional. [The PEO] is working extraordinarily hard to ensure [child] and other children with SEND are supported in Ethelbert Road. We are incredibly grateful for her help and have every hope that the school will be in a position to adopt best practice when caring for children with SEND. Her involvement has made me and [child] Mum much more confident about sending [child] to school. In due course, we'll be writing to the MIT Manager to make clear our belief that the service is exceptionally important for children with SEND in Kent.” [feedback from parent]

“It was good to hear that PACT is involved and helping more voices to be heard and hopefully helping a positive change”

(Parent attending focus sessions)

“I feel much more informed and prepared now after reading the information on the website regarding my needs. Many thanks.” [feedback on local offer]

“Thank you for the MCS as this will be very helpful for us to enable comprehensive whole school practice, it provides very clear strategies for us to be able to try, test and implement. We hope that the LEGAL DUTIES will always be kept up to date as well as this will be such a useful checklist, it is very clear and precise”

Ongoing focus – current issues



Levels of complaints in SEN remain high

- The number of new complaints relating to the SEN service has dramatically increased since March 2021, with an unprecedented number being received in March (46), and a similar number received again in June (45).
- ‘Disagreement with decision’, and ‘failure to communicate’, have both moved into the top 5 themes arising from SEN complaints over the last 12 months. They replace ‘issues with the assessment process’, and ‘SEN needs not met’, for the same period in 2019/20.
- We are introducing a small specialist team of staff who can contact parents and field calls for SEN colleagues. This is expected to free up valuable time for SEN staff to focus on delivering EHC plans and reviews within timescale.
- Mandatory training workshops, focusing specifically on customer care, were held for all SEN staff between September 2020 and April 2021.

Our experience of increased complaints is reflected across other county councils across the South of England, with all reporting increased SEN complaints since May 2020. This has been linked to increased parental anxiety following home education during lockdown and uncertainty of SEN provision following lockdown.

Ongoing focus – current issues



Timeliness of EHCPs

- The number of EHCPs delivered outside of the 20 week statutory timescale remains higher than we had anticipated.
- Significant investment in resource for both the EP service and the SEN service has seen numbers improve over the last 3 months with a trajectory continuing to improve.
- The volume of requests has continued to be well above the expected numbers, eroding the ability to tackle backlogs.

Ongoing focus – current issues



Current numbers (1 – 30th August 2021)

- Kent currently has 17088 EHCPs
- There are currently 208 cases that are over the 20 weeks statutory timeframe (down from over 600 in March 2021)
- In August, 115 requests for assessments were made. August is a typically low month, but it usually is under 100. Significant volume is expected on the return to schools in September.
- In August, 293 plans were issued, 42% of which were within 20 weeks.

It has recently been reported that Essex have also seen an unprecedented rise in requests for assessment with over 13% increase since 2019, and are tackling this by bolstering the SEN team capacity



Articulating Impact

- The majority of the actions outlined in the WSOA have now been actioned, however the ability to measure and evidence impact remains challenging
- Our inclusion work includes a number of large programmes with 3- year roll out plans across the county (including Nurture, leadership development and Supported Employment), with longer term impact developed into the KPIs for each programme. These programmes aim to shift culture and will have long term goals to ensure sustainable change in Kent.
- With the interrupted academic years, and the cancellation of assessment over the last 2 years, measuring impact in terms of attainment remains a challenge.
- The programme continues to survey and engage with parents and young people in an attempt to assess impact where possible.



The programme will continue post Ofsted revisit with many activities ongoing including:

- Working strategically with parents will continue as part of business as usual across the local area activities. Working relationships with Kent PACT continue to strengthen and whilst feedback has been positive, more work is required to ensure that families receiving service from the SEN teams have a positive experience. This will be supported by:
 - Continuing improvement through service training
 - New complaints triage team
- Implementing the Kent PACT plan including:
 - Development of a parent engagement award for Kent schools – designed, implemented and endorsed by Kent PACT
 - Aligning Kent PACT with Kent Association of Headteachers – bringing parents and schools closer together

Still to come



- Continued focus on quality assurance on EHCPs, and the continuous improvement cycle.
- STLS revised SLA, providing a consistent quality support service for schools
- Locality based approach to support varying requirements across schools and settings
- High Needs Funding review – piloting recommendations from the review in collaboration with schools
- Publication and adoption of a transitions charter across Kent

Still to come



- Roll out of provision mapping and EduKey software across all schools in Kent
- Development and implementation of a directory of support for Kent
- ND Pathway implementation and SCLN programme implementation
- Integrated dashboards aligning SEND and health data into a single reporting mechanism