



A strategy for education in Kent 2025–2030



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Foreword

Kent County Council (KCC) is committed to playing an important role in supporting the best educational opportunities for our children and young people. This strategy is focused on the three things we think are the most important for a good education: ambition, curiosity and resilience. These apply primarily to the children, young people and their families who use the education system, but also to our education providers and professionals, and to the wider system that supports it.

Peter Drucker, a consultant and writer, famously said, “Culture eats strategy for breakfast”. So why are we working on a strategy, particularly at a time of change? This strategy does more than set out a well-designed list of priorities and actions. It sets out an evidence-based way to work collaboratively and inclusively, promoting a culture of child-centred and evidence-informed working through a strong self-improving system. These are our golden threads which will support us into the future.

These threads have informed the development of the strategy, as have co-production sessions with children and young people, their families and professionals in the system, who have shared their priorities, raised their concerns and explained their aspirations. The

sessions have led to the focus and areas of work that are currently in the strategy. This has shaped the principles we are committing to, our shared priorities and the overarching approach of the strategy.

The strategy aims to provide a high-level statement of intent to guide us and our partners in delivering education over the next five years. Leaders and practitioners within the sector are key to the success of this strategy, as are our many partner organisations.

Everyone who works in education does so with a strong desire to improve the progress, outcomes and life chances of children and young people. They are guided by an unwavering moral purpose that puts the best interests of the learner at the heart of their work. In this strategy, we outline how the whole sector can come together to include and support every child and young person, no matter their circumstances, where they come from or the challenges they face.

We know that education plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of Kent and I am delighted to embark on this transformative journey with you.

Christine McInnes

Director of Education and SEND



Introduction and context

Google the question “What is the purpose of education?” and you will see people’s enormous and sometimes conflicting expectations of schools and providers. A quick glance at the media shows a lack of agreement about how best to deliver “a good education”.



The 2002 Education Act is still a helpful point of reference. The Act requires schools to provide “a balanced and broadly based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life”. **(Footnote 1)**

How these requirements are met can vary. As this document was developed, the new government launched an independent, expert-led curriculum and assessment review, which will provide an opportunity for leaders to broker an agreement about how schools and providers can better equip children and young people for adult life.

At the point of publishing, Kent is actively considering the implications of devolution planning, the possible impact of the Children’s

Wellbeing and Schools Bill. The sector awaits the outcome of the curriculum review. We are also responding to the work implications of changes such as the vision articulated in the November 2024 policy paper, “Keeping children safe, helping families thrive”.

(Footnote 2)

During this time of uncertainty and change, this education strategy aims to set out a shared ambition for our children and young people, and to describe how we intend to fulfil our responsibilities and duties to provide them with an environment that will help them flourish. Our aim is to develop a useful, accessible document that addresses the big strategic areas we need to focus on to improve. It does not and cannot address every aspect of education or our business-as-usual work. It does, however, identify the areas where we believe we can have the most impact on the education of our children

and young people. This strategy provides an updated and cohesive narrative to support the alignment of all activity in the best interests of our children and young people.

The strategy works on three levels. Firstly, it sets out what KCC can do to improve the system, the work of schools and providers, and the lives of our children and young people within the framework of our statutory duties and areas of responsibility and influence. Secondly, it reflects the input from professionals, parents, carers, children and young people, and aims to address their priorities. Thirdly, it aims to establish a strong and cohesive system, outlining the approaches we want to take to position Kent at the forefront of best educational practice.

The education sector has the tough role of preparing pupils for, in many cases, an unknown future – a role it fulfils well for many young people. Successfully managing change and financial challenges is part of school life, as is addressing the recruitment and retention of effective members of staff. We balance our accountability for government and taxpayer funding with the need for all work to have maximum impact. The nature of school and provider accountability is also evolving, with the recent withdrawal of one-word inspection outcomes. In addition, a range of Kent-specific issues includes the need to improve provision for those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), the need to build strong inclusive practices and the need to respond to outcome gaps for some groups of children and young people, particularly our most vulnerable.

This strategy builds the response to these issues around the understanding that the expertise already sits in the sector. KCC has a significant role, among its other statutory duties, in facilitating, convening and (at times) challenging. During this period of change, it also becomes more important to consider and support a local model that collaboratively



The education system in Kent is huge and diverse. This creates wonderful opportunities, but the risk of a fragmented system, where the most vulnerable children and young people can fall through the cracks, is amplified and needs to be guarded against.

brings together the sector to resolve gaps or issues affecting children and young people.

The national direction of travel over the past few years has been to embed sector leadership through school-to-school support structures. This has been via multi-academy trusts (MATs) and by establishing teaching schools and curriculum hubs. Although the Department for Education (DfE) has recently announced the establishment of new regional school improvement teams, the principle remains that the deep expertise within the sector needs to be used effectively if we are to address our issues.

The education system in Kent is huge and diverse. This creates wonderful opportunities, but the risk of a fragmented system, where the most vulnerable children and young people can fall through the cracks, is amplified and needs to be guarded against. Research has shown that leadership focused on a local area can be significantly more effective. A 2016 study into school leadership styles (**Footnote 3**) showed that an “architectural” style of leadership redesigns, transforms and builds for the

future by transforming the community. This type of leadership is future focused, embraces a place-based approach and delivers continuous improvement. We are embracing this approach and want to establish and encourage collaborative working in response to local needs within a framework of a shared commitment to all children and young people. We know there are many collaborations between schools and providers in Kent and so we want to build on this effective practice. This research also informs developments in SEND infrastructure to devolve decision making to a more local level by establishing communities of schools to match the geographical boundaries of the primary care networks.

A collaborative approach underpins this strategy. A range of education leaders, partners, families, carers, children and young people have engaged in our co-construction conversations. A big thank you to all who met with us and gave their insights. They have informed our approach and influenced the areas of focus.

We face a time of change and a range of challenges. Responding to these is dependent on effective, collaborative partnership working, building on the great practice that is already in place – so this strategy is for everyone in education.

Thank you to all who work in the sector, those who lead, those who teach and those who support, for your continuing hard work to provide a great education to all our children and young people.

Footnotes

1. [Education Act 2002, Section 78](#)
 2. [Keeping children safe, helping families thrive | Policy paper | gov.uk](#)
 3. [One type of leader who can turn around a failing school | Hill, Mellon, Laker and Goddard \(2016\)](#)
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Our Kent education mission, commitment and principles

Our partnership commitment

KCC is committed to developing strong strategic relationships with key partners and understands that this is fundamental to achieving the ambitions and aims set out in this strategy.

Our mission

Collaboratively develop and support an effective, evidence-informed system of strong leaders and staff, grounded in a clear moral purpose to respond to the local needs and aspirations of Kent's children and parents.

Place children and young people at the centre of all education by ensuring they are heard, included and supported to be ambitious, curious and resilient individuals who are well prepared for their future and empowered to achieve.

Our work sits within the wider strategic framework for children and young people in KCC, Medway Council and the National Health Service (NHS). The shared vision statement of this work is: "Support children and young people to achieve; through living healthy, safe lives in which they feel seen and included."

(Footnote 4)

Our principles

For all children and young people in Kent, we will be:

1 Ambitious

Striving for the best learning and educational progress and outcomes for all children and young people



2 Child-centred and inclusive

Promoting safe, relational approaches to understanding individual needs, joined-up services, smooth transitions and equity



3 Compassionate and principled

Seeking to balance best interests while providing appropriate challenge and making difficult decisions

4 Collaborative and place-based

Facilitating collaborative, place-based (meeting local needs) approaches to education and childcare by building strong support networks and partnerships



5 Consistent and open

Communicating effectively and consistently to build trust and stronger relationships



6 Evidence-informed

Learning and development focused, recognising evidence and seeking best practice to inform continuous improvement



7 Sector focused

Enhancing sector-based leadership, expertise and skills to ensure effective, continuous improvement

8 Sustainable

Building for a financially stable and appropriately resourced future



Why we need an education strategy

A local authority (LA) has a unique overview of the whole education system, an accountability for aspects of the system and a responsibility to act as an advocate for individual children and families. While its specific statutory responsibilities for school improvement have reduced, the LA's responsibility for supporting a healthy and equitable education system remains, for example through duties related to the commission of places, admissions and fair access.

KCC officers and members are committed to supporting an education system that provides good opportunities for all. This education strategy has been co-constructed with the sector to provide a context for work focused on sector improvement, however that is delivered. The purpose of the strategy is to create cohesion across many stakeholders, and to proactively respond to our context and specific challenges. It is built around our statutory duties and aligns our work with the national direction of travel. It also responds to the voices of our children, young people, parents, carers and educational professionals. This strategy aims to set out the case for a strong, collaborative and cohesive system that works in the best interests of all children.

A key local concern is improving the system approach to SEND inclusion, following two inspections (2019 and 2022) which identified significant areas of weakness within the SEND area (Health, Education and Care Services) and found that there needed to be a more consistent approach to SEND inclusion across all education providers. This strategy clarifies the agreed expectations of schools and providers (including early years providers as well as colleges and training providers),

with regard to universal provision, targeted support and specialist education provision. Further guidance on this SEND Continuum of Need and Provision is currently under development.

Footnotes

4. [Kent's Strategy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities 2025–2028](#)
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National direction of travel

Over the past few years, the government has accelerated the development of the self-improving, school-led system, resulting in a reduction in the responsibilities of LAs and a consequent change in funding. These changes are both a challenge and an opportunity. LAs still have key roles, however, whether fulfilling statutory responsibilities, acting as an enabler, collaborator or partner, or championing vulnerable groups.

Kent is relatively unusual in that the majority of its MATs are small (fewer than 10 schools or 7,500 pupils) and homegrown rather than part of big national academy trusts. We also have a significant number of single-academy trusts (SATs). The DfE has outlined its preferred model in the 2022 white paper "Opportunity for all – Strong schools with great teachers for your child" (**Footnote 5**). Despite political change since then, the need to support this diverse system remains a key priority.

As the system develops, there is a growing understanding of the need for sector-wide collaboration to ensure that no child is left behind. Sir David Carter, previously the National Schools Commissioner, said there is "a new level of accountability. Which is how does your impact in your trust contribute to raising standards beyond your trust?" (**Footnote 6**)

In addition to the focus on statutory school-age provision, other education provision has a significant impact on education outcomes for children and young people. There is considerable evidence of the positive longer-term impacts of early childhood education and care provision for young people and adults in relation to exam performance, the labour market and other outcomes. Recognising this, KCC has led a review of the support provided to the early years sector, the recommendations of which are currently being implemented.

Post-16 education is an essential pathway to educational achievement, whether as the next stage in learning or as a support for those learners who have not attained the required standards (for example, in maths and English). To support strengthening of this part of the education sector, KCC commissioned an evidence-based review which led to the establishment of Pathways for All, a post-16 reform programme.

All this broader provision has a significant impact on the educational outcomes and needs that should be considered to ensure strategic coherence. With regard to SEND inclusion, early indications from the new government suggest a greater focus on inclusivity of the mainstream as the first step on the road to SEND reform – which is already Kent’s approach.

Footnotes

5. [Opportunity for all – Strong schools with great teachers for your child | gov.uk](#)
 6. [What works in delivering school improvement through school-to-school support | gov.uk](#)
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Statutory duties

KCC needs to meet a wide range of statutory duties in education. These are a priority, and we need to consider and plan how to fulfil them.

They can be summarised as a responsibility for:

- ensuring a sufficient supply of good education places, including early education and childcare, and sufficient local provision for pupils with SEND
- co-ordinating admissions and fair access
- commissioning home-to-school transport appropriately and efficiently (according to the law and KCC policies) to promote independence for young people
- meeting the legal requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014.

We have a broader responsibility for:

- championing the needs of vulnerable children and young people, and their families and carers, so there is an inclusive learning system which gives them the opportunity to succeed.

Local authorities also have a responsibility for:

- ensuring a strategic coherence that enables schools, settings and providers to develop purposeful partnerships that improve the quality of teaching and the learning outcomes for children and young people
- collaborating with partners to build the capacity for sector-led improvement.

Kent's state-funded education context

Introducing Education in Kent

January 2025

1,377 Early Years providers



87,500

Children aged 0-4

438

Children aged 0-4 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

33,268

Children in funded Early Years education

11 Further Education Colleges



3.4%

Young people aged 16-17 who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

1.9%

Young people aged 16-17 whose NEET status is Not Known

3,136

Young people aged 18-25 with an EHCP

588 State funded schools



460

Primary (46% academy)

103

Secondary (84% academy/31% selective)

25

Special (16% academy)

251,490

Pupils on roll

4,761

Pupils electively home educated

39,522

Children going through the co-ordinated admissions process

17,808

Pupils sitting the Kent Test

71.5%

White British

26.5%

eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)

5.3%

with an EHCP

12%

receiving SEN Support

14%

with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Our listening

Listening to the children and young people, parents and carers, leaders and professionals in the sector, and a wide range of partners, has been central to constructing this strategy. It is built on the input from six sessions involving 118 children and young people, six focus groups with parents, six co-construction sessions with sector leaders and professionals, and conversations with 16 representative organisations and partners. Their input has shaped the areas of focus and content of the strategy, and their voice is shared throughout.

Our implementation and accountability

The detail within the three areas of focus outlined in this strategy will be delivered via an action plan. Fundamental to success will be the engagement of key stakeholders, delivery partners and the education sector, as the detail of the action plan is developed and delivered. This will build on the existing positive relationships and high levels of engagement that have already significantly contributed to this work. Ongoing sector-wide collaboration and effective communication will be a central component of the work. The oversight of implementation will sit with the strategic education partnership group, which was specifically established to provide representation and support sector-led working, facilitating and empowering the sector to develop its capacity for peer-to-peer challenge and support. KCC, as a key partner, will work with this group and determine the priorities and the phasing of the implementation, and support with the detail of how the overarching areas of focus within the strategy can be translated into workable, detailed and accountable actions.

Central to constructing this strategy have been...



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...**six** focus
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...**six** co-construction sessions
with sector leaders and
professionals and...



...conversations with
16 representative
organisations
and partners.



The strategy identifies our three key areas of focus and provides a high-level summary of actions we intend to deliver to ensure the success of our children and young people over the life of the strategy. The delivery action plan will be monitored, and we will hold ourselves and others accountable in the following three ways:

1. Progress against planned actions (activity and volume metrics) such as:

- the delivery of activity in the action plan
- outputs delivered and levels of engagement.

2. Sector and children and young people's feedback (qualitative data) such as:

- children's and young people's voices
- feedback from focus groups and collaborations
- SEND outcomes framework
- annual education survey outcomes.

3. Established education data sets (quantitative) such as:

- good level of development at early years foundation stage
- take up of "Free for 2" and the new entitlement in early years
- the expected standard at Key Stage 2 (KS2)
- Attainment 8 and Progress 8 at Key Stage 4 (KS4)
- free school meals gaps at KS2 and KS4, and for looked-after children
- not in education, employment or training (NEETs) and not knowns at post-16
- Ofsted outcomes
- percentages of persistent and severe absence.

These different types of accountability data will be reported at different frequencies as they respond to and are articulated within the strategy action plan.



Our commitment to partnership working

KCC is committed to developing strong strategic relationships with key partners and understands that this is fundamental to achieving the ambitions and aims set out in this strategy. It recognises the contributions made by professional organisations, key delivery partners, DfE-funded teaching schools and curriculum hubs, wider stakeholders (such as faith groups, charities, and professional and commercial providers), as well as provider associations who are representative of parts of the sector. Partnership working brings immense value and KCC is committed to fostering strong, collaborative relationships based on mutual respect, trust and aligned objectives. The continued commitment of key stakeholders is therefore vital to ensure effective partnership working. In recognition of this, we will reach out to, and work collaboratively with, key stakeholders to develop a better partnership working agreement.



Three areas of focus

We will focus on the following three areas for our children and young people, our schools and providers and for the whole sector:



Raising ambition – we will be ambitious for all children and young people by creating firm floors that provide secure starts and long ladders to enable everyone to reach beyond expectations.



Enabling curiosity – we will enable children and young people to be ready to learn and we will support and encourage them to explore their interests and wider horizons.



Building resilience – we will build resilience for the education system by addressing barriers and encouraging effective, collaborative working.

Raising ambition

Learners said:

“I want to achieve my ambitions and live a successful life.”

“From my education, I want the ability to be independent, intellectual and be open to any opportunities which may come to me in the future.”

Parents and carers said:

“I want my children to feel safe, valued, have opportunities to be challenged and have fun, and to feel like they can make the next steps.”

“I want my child to be able to do the best that they can, and for the school to recognise this and support them to get there.”

Professionals said that raising ambition means:

“A fully inclusive education that enables every child to achieve their potential.”

“Providing the support that every child needs.”

Why ‘ambition’?

The DfE’s teachers’ standards begin with “Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils”. Being ambitious is important because it inspires excellence and can push pupils beyond their own expectations and perceived limits. In Kent, we are ambitious for all our children and young people, for all our professionals, for all our education providers and for the sector as a whole. Ambition can be raised in various ways, for example, by setting goals, identifying pathways, moving towards independence or pursuing higher education. For the sector, it may involve improving inclusion, raising progress outcomes or doing well when inspected by Ofsted. All efforts to raise ambition recognise the importance of progress and the range of different starting points, but also clearly emphasise the desire to provide an education that enables everyone to do their best. We are ambitious for every child to achieve their personal best, to make strong progress and to have good pathways.



Our work on raising ambition will focus on the following priorities:



Ambition 6:

Equality of opportunity

Ambition 5:

Meeting specific needs through inclusion and appropriate SEND provision

Ambition 4:

Great schools with strong Ofsted outcomes

Ambition 3:

Good pathways for all young people at post-16

Ambition 2:

Strong starting points

Ambition 1:

High standards and strong progression



Ambition 1: High standards and strong progression

At a county level, Kent schools and providers, as well as children and young people, do well against many of the key outcome measures. This is a testament to strong leadership and a workforce dedicated to ensuring that all children and young people are enabled to do their best. Ofsted inspections of our colleges, schools and early years settings find that a high percentage are taking effective action to raise standards. Our outcomes for statutory education are in line with national ones, but there are still improvements to make because every learner needs a great education.

Underneath the headlines, the data reveals that there are significant gaps for children from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with additional educational needs. Some children make significant progress while others do not. There are also local gaps showing that children in certain parts of Kent have a lower chance of performing well. Although our data changes year on year, this is a significant area of focus. In 2024, our Key Stage 2 reading and writing were strong, but our Year 1 phonics data and Key Stage 2 maths outcomes need to improve.

The work on high expectations, standards and good progression starts with identifying issues, exploring the evidence, making good decisions and drawing on relevant expertise. Data is vital for identifying priorities for improvement and helping us to understand what is working well. The sector has access to a range of data to support this analysis, including our District Dashboard, which brings together all our inclusion-related data. However, headline data is not the only way to identify successes or areas for improvement. Schools and other providers will use a range of data to ensure all learners are making progress and reaching their full potential.

Progression, engagement and good pathways are equally important indicators.

We will achieve strong outcomes and good progress for all children and young people, and respond to trends, locality gaps, attainment gaps and cohort needs, particularly for those who are disadvantaged and have SEND. We will do this in the following ways:

- Advocating for detailed data analysis to identify, develop and promote programmes and interventions that respond to Kent-specific issues, trends, progress and attainment gaps, and the needs of different cohorts. Most MATs have school improvement functions or staff who will be doing this work. KCC's school improvement service, The Education People (TEP), supports maintained schools by effectively using data to develop and promote a broad training and consultancy offer that responds to specific national, local, Key Stage and school-level priorities.
- Developing and promoting appropriate data dashboards so schools and providers have access to a range of data to support the analysis of inclusion for those with special needs. Individual institutions can interrogate the data sets to understand how they compare to groups of similar schools. It is also the key tool for supporting robust decision making by communities of schools (once the system is fully rolled out) to ensure high needs funding and other resources are improving outcomes for those with special needs.
- Providing support to early years sector providers to ensure high-quality, inclusive provision that supports all children to reach their full potential, as measured by the early years foundation stage (EYFS) profile and any indicators agreed as part of the Early Years Review.

- Utilising the expertise of the full range of delivery partners, including the government-funded teaching schools and curriculum hubs, the local and national leaders of education and the newly established DfE school improvement teams, alongside our local providers such as TEP and Kent Association of Leaders in Education (KALE). These partners support schools and providers to identify and address attainment gaps linked to cohort needs, specifically the attainment gaps for groups such as disadvantaged pupils and subject gaps such as maths, through targeted, evidence-informed interventions and support.
- Working with maintained schools to identify patterns of underachievement, targeting schools with the greatest need for improvement support and guidance, and signposting the most appropriate evidence-based approaches, including a range of traded interventions and school-to-school support.
- Working through Governor Services to ensure governors have access to training that responds to identified knowledge gaps, particularly around the curriculum, so that schools have strong, well-informed governors who understand how to hold school leaders to account for the outcomes, standards and needs of their school.



Ambition 2: Strong starting points



A child's first 1,000 days, or the period from conception to age two, are the most crucial for the development of their body, brain, metabolism and immune system. Positive early experiences shape the brain, support children to be school ready and help bridge

disadvantage gaps. Our ambition for early years education and childcare in Kent is that it is an exciting, vibrant, diverse, sufficient and sustainable sector of outstanding quality, achieves excellent outcomes and progress for all young children and is available, affordable and inclusive for all families. Early education and childcare within Kent is available through a large, diverse and constantly shifting market of maintained schools, and private, voluntary and independent providers (including childminders). Although our Ofsted outcomes in the early years sector are overwhelmingly positive and above national outcomes, providing the quantity of places needed to meet the government's new free entitlements agenda may be challenging, as is the early identification of needs and supporting parents. Beyond the sector, we want babies, very young children and their parents to have opportunities to engage in creative play.

We will achieve strong starting points and therefore better life chances from the very beginning of education in the following ways:

- Working with partners, particularly public health agencies, health visitors and other health professionals, to exchange data to ensure there is a cross-sectoral understanding of the cohort and their families to inform the strategic planning of services.
- Ensuring our youngest children are able to fully access their early years entitlement(s) by aiming for a sufficient, sustained early years and childcare market and by providing information and advice to parents about their child's entitlement(s) and where and how these might be accessed.
- Encouraging and enabling parents and families to be involved in their children's learning from the earliest age via support

offered by Family Hubs and other early years and childcare provision.

- Identifying early on the needs of young children vulnerable to underachievement and quickly responding to this need by implementing the recommendations of the Early Years Review.
- Supporting the sector to improve staff recruitment and retention in early years. We will respond to the sector's feedback by promoting the use of TEP's recruitment hub (**Footnote 7**) and encouraging use of its recruitment toolkit.
- Offering the early years sector advice, support and training (via commissioned and traded services) to continue to support inclusive, high-quality provision, as measured by Ofsted inspections and assessment of Early Learning Goals.
- Continuing to involve early years and childcare providers in the ongoing development of the market in Kent through strong, collaborative engagement, such as with the Early Years and Childcare Provider Association, early years collaborations, and termly briefing and networking sessions.
- Continuing to drive up quality and inclusivity in the early years and childcare sector through the provision of commissioned and traded advice, and support and training that targets and responds to sector need. This will also continue to be supported through the early years collaboration networks, which are well established to provide effective peer-to-peer support.
- Implementing the findings of the Early Years Review to improve our universal offer in early years education and provide a simpler, streamlined approach to the way targeted and specialist services are accessed and used to support children

from birth to five, particularly those with additional needs. We will ensure children have their needs identified accurately and are assessed in a timely and effective way, so they receive the right support in the right place at the right time. This will be delivered through a robust offer of support at universal, targeted and specialist levels from September 2025, with a focus on professionals working alongside early years practitioners and using a coaching/mentoring approach to build confidence and capacity. It will include Dingley's Promise, which offers flexible training for early years children with SEND. This revised approach will be underpinned and embedded by developing and delivering a core training offer by September 2025.

- Responding to feedback from the Early Years Review, which identified the need to streamline bureaucratic processes and instead rely on the strong skills, knowledge and professionalism within the sector. This new approach will be underpinned and embedded by developing and delivering a core training offer by September 2025.
- Continuing to support and grow the work of Playground, an innovative programme empowering the creativity of babies, young children and their families. Playground aims to promote and provide evidence for the positive impact of creativity, which is vital both for healthy development and building young children's mental resilience. Playground is a National Portfolio Organisation (**Footnote 8**) funded by Arts Council England. The next stage is to secure investment for research and evaluation to evidence the powerful and transformational impact the programme has on families with babies and young children with additional needs. Playground's ambition is to work with families, teachers, artists and strategic

partners to create a scalable model of practice to trigger significant positive change in the quality of creative learning and engagement opportunities for all young children with additional needs.



Ambition 3: Good pathways for all young people at post-16



Kent has a large and diverse post-16 sector, with range of selective and non-selective sixth forms, three large and successful college groups, and an array of training providers. A review of the sector, (**Footnote 9**) published in 2022, and our own data, shows that students working at or below Level 2 have fewer options, and are not always able to progress to good next steps. Between 2022/23 and 2023/24, there was a decline in the number of courses available at Level 2 and below. This is one of the key areas to be addressed by Pathways for All. There has also been a lack of flexible provision for young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) delivered outside of school or college, which will be addressed by working alongside the DfE. There are not enough apprenticeships to meet demand, nor is there the appropriate scope of offer. We also know that specific support for young people with SEND is needed to help them move into employment opportunities through supported internships, apprenticeships and paid employment. This is reliant on consistent access to high-quality careers information, advice and guidance about the labour market and an increase in qualifications at Level 3 and above.

We will ensure better pathways for all young people at post-16 in the following ways:

- Working with our delivery partners, TEP, providers and the DfE. This will involve

using the DfE's gap-filling process to attract training providers to Kent and create additional places over the next few academic years. In turn, this will start rebuilding NEET and vulnerable learner provision in the county. Data trends indicate that more will be needed as reduced provision has led to a gradual increase in NEET numbers. The post-16 cohort is growing considerably for the next few years, which will also place pressure on this provision. We will continue to work with the DfE to fill the identified gaps over coming years. This will also be addressed through the Pathways for All work. Over time, this should lead to a stabilisation of NEET numbers and an increase in the options for post-16 young people.

- Ensuring we have the data to understand the challenges faced by young people and the sector. We will continue to produce valuable reports, such as the NEET Deep Dive and the Provision Gap Analysis to support the sector's development. As well as using sources such as the KentChoices system and existing services to support the sector-led local collaborative partnership areas (LCPAs) and providers to develop provision for all young people.
- Working with other partners (TEP, Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge, Careers and Enterprise Company, Medway Council, Kent Association of Training Organisations and Apprenticeship Ambassadors) to develop an apprenticeship strategy across Kent and Medway which will ensure that the number and range of apprenticeships can increase and meet the various needs of our young people. The planned government drive to facilitate more apprenticeships from entry level to higher level will provide more sustainable careers pathways.

- Working with providers and the TEP Supported Employment Service to embed the Supported Employment Education Framework. This will ensure that those with special needs have good pathways to employment and, where possible, can be independent. This will lead to an increase in the number of young people with SEND progressing into paid employment, in line with our planned Safety Valve Programme outcomes.
- Supporting the sector across the county to use a standardised approach to careers, providing good information and raising aspirations. We will work with a Pathways for All special interest group which is piloting a new framework, as well as with our partners at TEP, who will further develop the careers section on KentChoices. This will ensure that the county's young people have access to information to help them make good decisions about their future. Alongside this, the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) currently supports schools to embed good practice as they work towards the Gatsby Benchmark and raise the aspirations of the young people they work with. This will streamline and support transition into post-16 choices, and lead to good decision making and educational progression.

Ambition 4: Great schools with strong Ofsted outcomes

Kent currently exceeds the national average for the percentage of schools with a positive Ofsted outcome but we are not complacent and know that maintaining strong, effective schools requires a continuous focus. All children and young people should be able to access a great education and be enabled to make the best of their one chance at school.

We will support schools to deliver an excellent education and achieve strong inspection outcomes by ensuring they understand what is required of them and that they are evidence informed. We will also support them in recruiting the right staff with access to the right training.

We will continue to support schools to be effective in the following ways:

- Ensuring schools have access to the most up-to-date information about inspection frameworks by sharing expertise, experiences, identified patterns and areas of focus. Using this intelligence and embedding Ofsted expertise into the work of school improvement will help schools to understand what is expected of them and support them in delivering a great education.
- Providing support for the accountability of maintained schools, ensuring they are effective and provide a great education for all children and young people. This includes integrating the use of the core standards and the graduated approach for those children and young people who, for whatever reason, are struggling. Access to a range of commissioned and traded services and interventions will support schools to meet their accountability frameworks and their responsibility to their local community, and help KCC to fulfil its own duties, as outlined in the statutory "Support and intervention in schools" guidance. **(Footnote 10)**
- Offering support for recruitment and retention to ensure the best staff are working in Kent schools. Where possible, we and our partners will network and share recruitment information to ensure schools and strong candidates are appropriately linked up. We will continue to support staff retention via signposting and by providing a range of training and support opportunities to develop our own

high-quality staff for all the roles within the sector. This includes providing support and induction for new headteachers, and working alongside our partners, teaching schools and curriculum hubs as they deliver national professional qualifications, SEND inclusion and curriculum-focused training as part of evidence-informed professional development.

- Working alongside our sector partner, KALE, to continue to embed the legacy of the EEfective Kent Project, a partnership with the Education Endowment Foundation that focused on building strong evidence-informed practice across the sector to enable all pupils to do their best in school. The KEE Hub (Kent Education Evidence Hub) (**Footnote 11**) is the sector-led group, hosted and organised by KALE, which works with EEF research schools and KCC to facilitate access to, and champion, quality evidence-informed practice at all levels within the sector.



A small number of children are born with significant and complex needs, some of whom will require support for life. Many children and young people have additional needs at some point in their education journey, and comprehensive universal education provision or some additional help will get them back on track. Some children and young people fall somewhere on that continuum between a high, ongoing need and a low, temporary need.

Since 2020, KCC has been working with the education sector to better develop universal education provision and targeted support, and to develop staff knowledge and skills to meet the range of needs we know are present in the pupil population. The approach is described in “A Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education” (CATIE) (**Footnote 12**) and has been supported by a range of well-attended training and development programmes. The work on strengthening SEND inclusion education provision is multifaceted and includes clarifying expectations of individual schools’ offers as well as how the system functions – comprising mainstream schools, mainstream plus (specialist resource provision and alternative provision) and special schools.

We will meet need through inclusion and appropriate SEND provision in the following ways:

- Continuing to deliver the actions described in CATIE, which sets out the strategic direction for inclusive education across Kent for 2024–2028. CATIE sets out four priorities:
 1. Supporting a school-led system to deliver the highest quality core inclusive education.
 2. Providing additional intervention and support with engagement and integration.
 3. Inclusive education is part of a broader, holistic and joined-up offer of support.
 4. Ensuring smooth transition between education phases.

This strategic work was co-produced and seeks to support all education providers in providing the best education for the full range of the needs of our children and young people.

- Setting up communities of schools to ensure appropriate resourcing and support for all children and young people with special needs in mainstream schools. The work requires establishing groups of schools that are able to collectively agree on the type of additional support they need. This is informed by the data drawn from the District Dashboard, among other sources, and appropriate resourcing needs to be considered. This work will establish strong partnership working based around local needs, focusing on evidence-informed practices to ensure all children and young people with SEND in mainstream schools are appropriately supported to achieve to their full potential in education and beyond.
- Developing a sustainable SEND education system that provides for the full continuum of SEND need. Work has been underway for several years to reform the education system in Kent with a particular focus on the capacity of mainstream schools and providers, strengthening the provision of SEND support and embedding the graduated approach. Specialist resource provision (SRP) supplies more intensive support in a mainstream setting and a review was carried out

to ensure a consistent offer for pupils across the county. This has resulted in a consistent service-level agreement being put in place and proposals to expand, assisting in identifying the added value of attending an SRP. The final strand of this work focuses on Kent's special schools and supports the sector to evolve and meet the needs of the pupils with the most complex needs, as identified through our SEND Sufficiency Plan. The Locality Model for School Inclusion, SRP and the Special Schools Review all focus on developing a rich, full and appropriate continuum of provision for need. Together, these areas form a cohesive continuum of education provision and ensure all parts of the sector are enabled to appropriately support and deliver education for children and young people with SEND.

- Developing and delivering a new strategic pathway to support neurodiverse (ND) young people and their families, to ensure the best possible outcomes. With the aim of providing earlier support for this growing type of need, health, education and social care colleagues have been working together to explore alternatives. Informed by the evaluation of the very successful



“This is Me” (a programme of early identification and school-based intervention), work has been underway to develop a new ND pathway. Following a successful bid for DfE funding, we will deliver one of the national pilots of Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (**Footnote 13**) (known as PINS). This strategically planned project further strengthens the working relationships between health and education services. The strategy is based on whole-school educational approaches and develops environments where neurodiverse pupils can flourish and succeed. A menu of support, bespoke to individual schools, will be delivered using professional resource networks. Links between peer schools ensure a consistency of understanding and improve the quality of delivery. The approach will be evaluated and rolled out across the county over time.

- Developing a strategic approach to all children and young people who are in education other than at school. In line with the government’s alternative provision (AP) roadmap, we plan to develop a Kent AP system to ensure all pupils receive a suitable education.

- Delivering, with our partners, the Kent SEND Strategy, 2025–2028, which aligns with the vision of the Integrated Care Framework to “support children and young people to achieve through living healthy, safe lives in which they feel seen and included”. This means that all children and young people should feel valued and supported, that our work should be centred on inclusivity and care, and that all our actions should align with helping children reach their full potential. The strategy sets out five key ambitions:

1. Improve the lived experience of children and young people and their families.
2. Provide access to the right support at the right time in the right place.
3. Achieve the best outcomes through inclusion and participation.
4. Work together with children and young people with SEND and their families.
5. Prepare for a successful future at the earliest opportunity.

The SEND Strategy will deliver against the Kent Children’s and Young People’s Outcomes Framework, and is a joint commitment to the goal of providing every child with the support they need to succeed.





Ambition 6: Equality of opportunity

Kent values and supports all its young people and is eager to ensure that barriers to education are addressed. As a public body, we have a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality of opportunity, to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to support diversity. In education, we have a duty to champion the needs of vulnerable children and young people so they that have every opportunity to succeed. We need to ensure that every child and young person has an equal opportunity to make the most of their education and to succeed. We therefore work to remove barriers, make necessary adjustments and support every child and young person to be successful. This ranges from ensuring access to good school places, promoting and supporting school attendance, working with the most vulnerable children and young people through Virtual School Kent (VSK), the local adoption partnership, and supporting our schools to be accessible.

We will improve equality of opportunity for children and young people in Kent in the following ways:

- Commissioning the right places for education provision in Kent (**Footnote 14**). The plan sets out the council's approach to commissioning school places. Good commissioning supports delivery of the council's duty to ensure every child can access a nursery/school place, promotes and champions parental preference, and raises standards of education in the county. It is shaped by, and responds to, the ambitions of this education strategy and its policy directions.
- Providing fair access to nursery and school places by supporting those who are most vulnerable. Kent's annual

admissions scheme sets out how we fulfil our statutory duty to offer new school places and support families that move within the school year. We work with all Kent's schools to set reasonable entry criteria to increase opportunities for vulnerable groups, such as priority entry to Kent's grammar schools for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. These access principles are applied to Kent's centralised grammar-testing arrangements, ensuring adjustments are made to give all pupils the opportunity to take part to the best of their ability.

- Reducing absence and improving attendance by offering providers advice, guidance and training in line with statutory guidance. This includes investigating cases of children missing out on education, supporting enforcement activities, working to ensure children in entertainment and employment are safeguarded, and acting in support of children and young people in pupil referral units (PRUs) to ensure they are able to access a good education.
- Supporting the education workforce to be aware of inequalities, understand policy and build stronger practices. Through traded specialist consultancy, support, training, advice, coaching and mentoring, the TEP Equalities Adviser can support schools and providers in promoting equality and diversity in their organisation, and providing equal opportunities for all pupils. This work aims to uphold equality, promote inclusion, ensure equality of opportunity through a needs-led approach, eliminate discrimination and harassment, and promote recognition of, and respect for, diversity.
- Improving the educational experiences and achievements of adopted children by directly and indirectly ensuring teachers and those working in education settings are trauma informed, understand the

challenges of adoption, and are provided with appropriate tools and strategies to support adopted children and their parents. Greater awareness and better support will be achieved through better communication, workshops, training, education planning meetings and mediation in some situations.

- Advocating and being ambitious for those children and young people open to or within youth justice and adolescent early help. We aim to provide a suitable educational offer, including progression to full-time timetables, by promoting attendance. This includes implementing education risk management and/or recovery plans through sector collaboration. Plans and assessments will be shared between the Youth Justice Team and schools or settings to jointly manage the risks. It will also involve celebrating their successes and taking every opportunity to accredit children's
- Improving access to education for disabled pupils and discharging KCC's duty under the Equality Act 2010. An education accessibility strategy will set out how KCC and its maintained schools are improving disabled pupils' access to the curriculum, the physical environment of schools and the information which is readily accessible to non-disabled pupils.
- Exploring ways of building stronger partnership working arrangements across KCC directorates and other relevant organisations, to support Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) children and young people's access to equality in education.

Youth Justice activities through the AQA framework. In our wider partnerships, we will support schools in understanding and participating in multi-agency contextual safeguarding approaches. This work will help vulnerable children to remain in suitable education, so that they have secure a starting point.



GRT Resident Service and parts of the Education Directorate have different roles and provide different types of information but there is no clear channel or process for sharing this. Finding better ways to facilitate joined-up working could improve support and lead to better engagement in education and better services for the GRT community. Establishing a task-and-finish group to explore and establish a systematic approach would support the delivery of equal opportunities for this group of children and young people.

- Promoting equality of opportunity for service children. Through the role of the Civilian-Military Liaison Adviser, the service children cohort is fully included and effectively integrated into school life by celebrating diversity, supporting effective liaison and through advocacy. This is in line with the Armed Forces Act 2021, which stipulates that service children should not be disadvantaged due to their parents' service.
- Advocating for the educational outcomes and progress of children and young people who are in care, those who have been in care or who have been supported by Social Services, and those who are living in kinship care. This ongoing work is delivered by the VSK. It includes:
 - advocating for trauma-informed practices to support children and young people who have experienced adverse childhood experiences
 - championing the support these children and young people need to do well in school
 - ensuring relevant agencies have a joined-up approach with the school to ensure that these children make good progress, achieve good educational outcomes and have improved life chances comparable to their peers.
- Ensuring the education programme has the capacity to meet the demand for delivering a suitable, high-quality education, on behalf of KCC under Section 19 of the 1996 Education Act, for those who would otherwise be missing education. This covers children who have been permanently excluded from primary school, secondary-aged pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and pupils with an EHCP who are awaiting a permanent placement. This service is tailored to each pupil's individual needs and prepares them for reintegration into school. By ensuring that the offer is engaging, enjoyable, effective, individual and safe, children and young people who might otherwise have been disenfranchised are supported to stay in education.

- Identifying and supporting children who are missing education and undertaking education other than at school. Under the Education Act 1996, KCC has the duty to identify children who are not receiving a suitable education. We will collaborate closely with schools, alternative provisions and relevant stakeholders to gather comprehensive data on registered pupils, maintain an accurate and up-to-date database of all children in Kent, and actively engage with families to emphasise the importance of education and suitable options. Where parents are home-educating their children, we will ensure that they understand their responsibilities and provide them with necessary support and signposting.

Footnotes

7. [Recruitment hub | The Education People](#)
 8. [National Portfolio 2023–26 | Arts Council England](#)
 9. [Pathways for All – Kent 16 to 19 review | Kelsi](#)
 10. [Support and intervention in schools | DfE, Nov 2024 \(previously the ‘Schools causing concern guidance’\)](#)
 11. [KEE Hub | Kent Education Evidence](#)
 12. [A countywide approach to inclusive education | Kent County Council \(2024\)](#)
 13. [Learning disability and autism: Children and young people | NHS England](#)
 14. [Commissioning plan for education provision in Kent 2026–2030 | Kent County Council](#)
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Enabling curiosity



Learners said:

“I value the extra-curricular activities available at my school.”

“[I like] to learn about the wider world – our past, present and future and to be able to enjoy it.”

Parents and carers said:

“[Education is] encouraging and supporting enquiring minds, understanding how and why, where to look for answers.”

“[Education is] giving children exciting opportunities to listen to, to see and to get involved in new experiences.”

Professionals said:

“I want to feel that everyone working with my school wants my school to flourish, and as a result my children flourish.”

Why ‘enabling curiosity’?

Curiosity is a powerful driver in the learning process for children and young people. It ignites interests and passions, develops creativity and uncovers hidden talents. Curiosity encourages learners to delve deeper into areas of interest and fosters a love for discovery and knowledge. Enabling curiosity involves creating an environment where children and young people feel secure about learning and enabled to think creatively and to explore. Although good Key Stage 2 and GCSE outcomes open up a range of opportunities, there are other skills and experiences that broaden horizons and set children and young people up for a good future.

By enabling curiosity, we support young learners to become enthusiastic, lifelong learners who are eager to pursue their interests and talents. We work with parents, schools and a wide range of other providers, including the NHS and charities, to provide a breadth of opportunities and to ensure children and young people are able to actively participate in learning.

In schools, a focus on the wider curriculum ensures that a variety of subjects and learning experiences are available to learners. All children and young people need access to a diverse and balanced curriculum, both within and beyond school, to support their overall development.

Our work on enabling curiosity will focus on the following priorities:

Curiosity 1:

Effective pastoral care that supports positive attitudes to education

Curiosity 2:

Great teaching and learning that fosters curiosity

Curiosity 3:

Good health that enables good participation in education

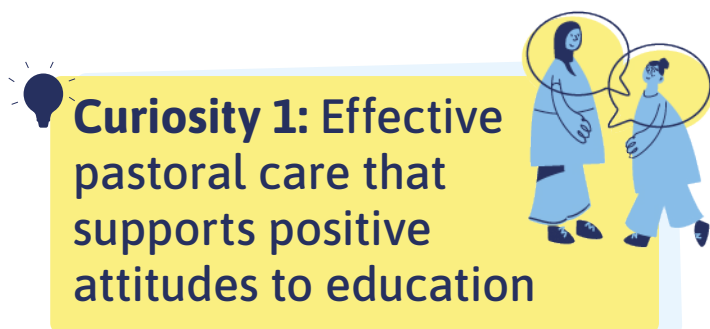
Curiosity 5:

Rich opportunities to develop passions and talents within and beyond the classroom for creativity, the arts, culture and music

Curiosity 4:

Good physical fitness that enables participation in education





Curiosity 1: Effective pastoral care that supports positive attitudes to education

Good pastoral care supports the wider wellbeing of children and young people by creating a nurturing, supportive environment where learners can thrive both academically and personally. It helps children and young people to feel safe, supported and happy in education. Promoting a strong pastoral culture in schools and providers across the county places the child at the centre of the policy and practice of the organisation, often through maintaining strong relationships. By focusing on these relational approaches, professionals and the sector can better understand and meet needs.

We will develop strong pastoral support for children and young people and their families in the following ways:

- Championing the role of pastoral care and encouraging schools and providers to be brave in their personal development strategy. We are championing a whole-school approach to nurture by developing data sets to support schools' self-evaluation and allowing schools, through the community of schools' model, to discuss whole-school and cohort-level strategies to include all children. This will support our ambition to strengthen independence and for all children to live fulfilled lives.
- Developing stronger approaches to transition at the key points in a child's and young person's education. We will explore ways of improving the experience for education providers and for children and young people and their families. We will explore building this

into our communities of schools work. In practice, this will involve sharing experiences and skills better to jointly improve the experience of children and young people, leading to a more uniform approach to transition across the different phases and between different types of schools.

- Embedding and supporting the delivery of the Nurturing Kent Programme, by rolling out the National Nurturing Schools Programme to 300 Kent schools over three years. The programme is tailored to each setting and supports quality-first teaching and learning to embed a nurturing culture. It celebrates what schools already do well, while championing areas to improve through regular guidance and support. It promotes healthy outcomes for children and young people by focusing on developing their social and emotional wellbeing alongside academic learning.
- Supporting parents and schools with a range of learning opportunities through Community Learning and Skills (**Footnote 15**) to better understand issues such as autism and ADHD, managing children's behaviour and understanding teenagers. We will support positive relationships with education providers as all parties come together to support the pastoral needs of the children and young people.



Curiosity 2: Great teaching and learning that fosters curiosity



The delivery of learning and the decisions around the wider curriculum provide opportunities for schools and providers to generate and embed curiosity. Developing curiosity and responding to interests in the classroom are powerful driving forces which can support pupils to learn more effectively.

It can significantly improve academic performance as children and young people's brains are receptive to learning and retaining information. Importantly, it makes learning more effective and enjoyable.

Through traded and commissioned services for Kent schools and providers, we will cultivate curiosity in the following ways:

- Promoting, as part of school improvement work, a range of approaches that support schools, providers and their staff to develop and deliver a curriculum built around curiosity. This will be through:
 - professional development: providing teachers with training in innovative teaching methods that encourage inquiry-based learning
 - resource allocation: ensuring schools have access to diverse and engaging educational materials that spark students' interest
 - collaborative learning: promoting collaborative projects and group activities that stimulate curiosity and peer learning
 - supportive environments: creating a supportive atmosphere where students feel safe to ask questions and explore new ideas
 - customised programmes: offering tailored programmes that cater to the unique interests and needs of each student, encouraging them to pursue their passions.
- Supporting schools and providers to make good decisions about the wider curriculum as part of school improvement and in response to Ofsted's focus on personal development. This includes supporting schools to effectively

deliver curriculum subjects such as citizenship, religious education (RE), and personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and topics, such as age-appropriate relationships and sex education, that contribute to pupils' personal development. This will ensure that all students have access to a diverse and balanced curriculum that supports good engagement.

Curiosity 3: Good health that enables good participation in education



Physical health and wellbeing directly impact education. A child's ability to learn and thrive in education is dependent on them being able to attend consistently and engage with learning. This focus aligns with the Kent and Medway Integrated Care Strategy (**Footnote 16**), which also has an objective regarding Best Start in Life and a focus on helping preschool and school-age children and young people achieve their full potential. Kent and Medway's integrated care system involves a wide range of partners, including NHS Kent and Medway and KCC, to plan and deliver joined-up health and care services to improve residents' lives. By supporting the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of all children and young people in Kent, we will help to ensure better overall outcomes and support their engagement in education.

In partnership with Public Health and the NHS, we will improve the health of children and young people in Kent in the following ways:

- Promoting the understanding and value of a trauma-informed approach (**Footnote 17**) in schools via e-learning,

briefings, Family Hubs and the work of safeguarding leads. This will increase the number of trauma-informed schools across the county, improving the emotional health, wellbeing, behaviours and attendance of learners, and therefore improve the outcomes for schools.

- Supporting schools and providers, via effective communication and sharing approaches, to embrace the opportunities that the curriculum provides to develop children's understanding of how to keep their minds and bodies healthy. In addition, we will use all available tools to support families.
- Embedding the Asthma Friendly Schools programme by encouraging schools to take up free online training (**Footnote 18**). This, along with a guide, templates and checklists, will support the implementation of asthma-focused policies and procedures to improve asthma awareness and management in schools. This will help schools become asthma friendly and improve outcomes for pupils with asthma in primary, secondary and special needs schools in Kent. The programme will ensure schools:
 - develop a management plan for each child with asthma
 - identify a named individual responsible for asthma in each school
 - develop a policy for inhaler techniques and care of children with asthma
 - develop a policy for emergency treatment
 - provide asthma training and education for staff
 - develop a system for identifying children who are missing school or who are not taking part in sports or other activities because of their asthma.



Curiosity 4: Good physical fitness that enables participation in education



The Chief Medical Officer recommends (**Footnote 19**) that, to improve their health and wellbeing, children and young people do at least 60 minutes a day of moderate-intensity physical activity, or 20 minutes a day for disabled children and young people. In addition to the physical benefits, evidence shows that being active also builds confidence and social skills, improves concentration and learning, creates a sense of achievement, reduces stress and helps maintain a healthy weight. Schools who embed physical activity (**Footnote 20**) into the school day have seen improved attendance, attainment, behaviour, concentration and engagement of pupils, and better links with families and the local community. In Kent, only 45.5% of children aged 5 to 16 years are active enough (**Footnote 21**) (the national average is 47%). Girls with a disability, from the least affluent families and from culturally diverse communities, are the least likely to be active. Although there is a wide range of opportunities for children and young people to be active, they are not accessible to all, which is why schools play a vital role. Active Kent and Medway works with trusted partners to support schools to provide positive experiences for all students to increase their levels of participation and improve their health and wellbeing.

Through the work of Active Kent and Medway, schools will be able to encourage more children and young people to develop a lifelong habit of physical activity in the following ways:

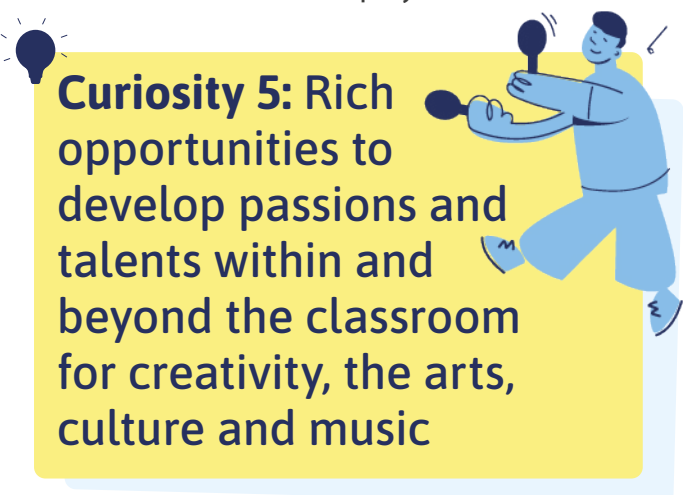
- Taking a data and insight-led approach to prioritising our support to schools to

reduce the inequalities gap in access to physical activity, for example by helping them to complete the Sport England Active Lives survey so that they can receive a bespoke report to help to identify strengths and opportunities which will lead to improvement. Sharing information and good practice will provide practical examples of how schools can increase students' levels of physical activity, particularly of their less-active students.

- Taking a whole-school approach to school improvement through physical activity via our Everyday Active Schools programme for primary schools. This includes upskilling all staff and providing resources to deliver active lessons, breaks and clubs. We will deliver the programme through trusted partners such as School Games organisers and develop the programme for SEND and secondary schools. We will also collaborate with Schools Health to identify opportunities to link with weight management interventions.
- Working with partners, including School Games organisers, to deliver the School Games programme for less-active students. This will deliver inspirational events and festivals to encourage students to be curious and willing to engage in new opportunities to be active. We will monitor and evaluate the impact to inform future planning and share the learning to help schools provide new activities and increase engagement in sport and PE.
- Providing advice and guidance to secondary schools to engage with less-active students through consultation, using youth voices to co-design different types of activity. We will support targeted projects, including activity programmes for students with mental health challenges to build their confidence and resilience. It will be vital to create links between schools and trusted providers of sport

and physical activity who are skilled in breaking down the barriers and providing a positive experience. We will provide advice on the development of school sports facilities and opening them to the local clubs and groups. This will improve links with the local community and generate income to cover the costs.

- Collaborating with trusted partners to develop a workforce who are highly skilled in improving the physical literacy of all students. We will do this by identifying gaps in knowledge and skills, and providing training for school staff and local providers. In addition, we will develop the future workforce by co-ordinating training for young leaders to enable them to volunteer in schools and in the community, developing their confidence and creating a sense of achievement. It will be essential to support the training of students in Key Stage 4 and post-16 to achieve coaching qualifications which can lead to employment.



Curiosity 5: Rich opportunities to develop passions and talents within and beyond the classroom for creativity, the arts, culture and music

Kent's children and young people benefit from many established arts organisations with excellent learning programmes, as well as a community of practitioners with strong reputations for their excellent work with children and young people both in and out of formal education. Cultural education plays a key role in bringing school communities together and strengthening

parental engagement which, in turn, has a large and positive impact on children's learning. Evidence (**Footnote 22**) shows that creative and cultural activity can enhance pupils' aspirations, ambitions, discipline and confidence, leading to a positive impact on future employability, life skills, health and wellbeing.

Evidence published by the Cultural Learning Alliance in 2017 (**Footnote 23**) demonstrates that engagement in arts and cultural activity will improve a range of educational outcomes, develop skills and behaviours, and support good health. These include a 17% increase in cognitive ability, better achievements in core subjects such as maths and English, and higher long-term employability.

We know there is scope to enhance creative learning opportunities for more children and young people, to provide more opportunities for work experience and to be clearer in signposting pathways to careers in the creative and cultural industries. The challenges include those faced in previous cultural learning programmes, where creative cultural organisations found it difficult to establish links and develop ongoing relationships with schools.

Family learning also plays a crucial role in children's education. Research (**Footnote 24**) shows that effective parental engagement can positively impact on academic success and lead to learning gains. Parents and carers are the first teachers of young children and can foster curiosity and joy in learning through everyday experiences.

We will create opportunities to develop passions and talents within and beyond the classroom through creativity, culture, arts and music in the following ways:

- Delivering the "Kent Cultural Strategy: Inspirational creativity: Transforming lives every day", (**Footnote 25**) which aims to:

- ensure that all children and young people in Kent have access to high-quality culture from an early age and on their own terms
- promote cultural learning with improved careers guidance and vocational learning opportunities to develop employability, social and creative skills
- enable children and young people to become respected as commissioners, curators and producers of culture as much as they are audiences and participants.
- Promoting and broadening access for all children and young people in Kent to a variety of high-quality creative activities within education and beyond. Working with creative partners, we will develop a plan to promote and deliver these in schools, breaking down barriers to engagement, and testing the outcomes of cultural engagement across a range of art forms. We will establish a strategic methodology for delivering structured creative learning outcomes as part of everyday education in our schools to broaden children's horizons, empowering them to reach their full potential.
- Continuing to deliver programmes such as Culture Camps, which offer young people an opportunity to be creative, work directly with professional artists and performers, have high-quality cultural experiences and develop new and transferable skills for the workplace.
- Ensuring "The power of music to change lives: A national plan for music education" (**Footnote 26**) is available, promoted, supported and delivered throughout schools in Kent. It sets out the government's expectations for music in schools to ensure that music is delivered as a statutory curriculum subject in key stages 1, 2 and 3 and that schools

provide opportunities for children and young people to learn to play musical instruments, to sing and to play in groups. The Kent & Medway Music Hub (**Footnote 27**), led by Kent Music, has been established to promote and support great music teaching in schools through support, guidance and advice. It aims to increase the quality of the offer and the breadth of take up.

- Working to promote and integrate excellent music teaching to support educational progress and outcomes. Evidence shows that, where music is integrated into the life of a school, the whole-school benefits. Having excellent music provision in education will enhance attainment overall and lead to improved educational progress and outcomes.
- Developing and offering a wide range of creative family learning opportunities. Community Learning and Skills (**Footnote 28**) provides a wide range of fun family-learning courses that develop creativity and an excitement about learning that children can share with parents and carers. These include a wide range of interests from art to science, technology, engineering and maths. Through shared interactive learning experiences, children are supported to understand that curiosity is valuable and that learning is fun.



Footnotes

15. [Community Learning and Skills | Kent County Council](#)
 16. [Kent and Medway Integrated Care Strategy | NHS Kent and Medway, Kent County Council and Medway Council \(2024\)](#)
 17. [Trauma-informed resources | Kent County Council](#)
 18. [Asthma Friendly Schools programme | NHS Kent and Medway \(2024\)](#)
 19. [Physical activity guidelines: UK Chief Medical Officers' report | gov.uk \(2020\)](#)
 20. [Key facts about school-related benefits of sport and physical activity | Youth Sport Trust](#)
 21. [Children's activity levels hold firm but significant challenges remain | Sport England \(2023\)](#)
 22. [Key Research Findings: the value of cultural learning | Culture Learning Alliance](#)
 23. [Key Research Findings: the value of cultural learning | Culture Learning Alliance](#)
 24. [Working with parents to support children's learning | The Education Endowment Foundation](#)
 25. [Kent Cultural Strategy: Inspirational creativity: Transforming lives every day](#)
 26. [The power of music to change lives | A national plan for music education | gov.uk \(2022\)](#)
 27. [Kent & Medway Music Hub | Kent Music](#)
 28. [Community Learning and Skills | Kent County Council](#)
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Building resilience



Learners said:

“[I want school] to support, reassure and understand me.”

“[I want] teachers that like teaching and want to be there.”

Parents and carers said:

“It’s okay to get things wrong, it’s all learning.”

“[I want] my child to be happy to go to school, to be able to access learning, to be able to make friendships, be resilient.”

Professionals said:

“[I want] alignment and transparency to allow schools to work together in a landscape where all children belong to all of us.”

“[We need] facilitation and support of true cross phase/cross service collaboration.”

Why ‘building resilience’?

Resilience is vital for our children and young people, our schools and education providers, and for the wider system.

Increasing mental health needs, the Covid legacy and the ever-changing shape of the future mean that resilience is vital for our children and young people. It is also vital for our schools and providers in the face of political change, financial challenges and the changing frameworks under which they provide education.

Resilience is similarly vital for KCC, as we face similar financial and regulatory challenges as schools and providers. The statutory responsibility for maintained schools, as set out in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (**Footnote 29**) and in guidance, needs to be balanced with a wider responsibility for pupil place planning, championing the needs of those who are vulnerable, and the need to create cohesion across a diverse range of sectors.



Our work on building resilience for children and young people, providers and the system will focus on the following priorities:

Resilience 1:

Strong, well-integrated safeguarding to ensure children and young people are safe

Resilience 2:

Good mental wellbeing that supports children and young people to be resilient and do well in education and in life

Resilience 3:

Enhance system-wide cohesion through convening

Resilience 4:

Strengthen and support the self-improving system

Resilience 5:

Future proof the system



Resilience 1: Strong, well-integrated safeguarding to ensure children and young people are safe



Safeguarding is at the core of all work in education. It keeps children and young people safe and supports resilience. Kent's safeguarding practice was rated 'Outstanding' in 2022, a position confirmed during the Ofsted-focused visit in January 2024. Building on our success, a key priority is ensuring that our outstanding safeguarding practice is evident across the multi-agency safeguarding partnership. The updated Working Together Statutory Guidance (2023) (**Footnote 30**) and the Children's Social Care National Framework (**Footnote 31**) affirm that successful outcomes for children rely on education (schools, colleges, early years and childcare settings) working together across the whole system of help, support, and protection for children and their families, taking a systemic, relational and collaborative approach to service delivery.

We will ensure the strong and successful delivery of well-integrated, multi-agency safeguarding arrangements to keep children and young people safe in education, and develop the life skills to keep them safe in a challenging world. We will do this in the following ways:

- Delivering a multi-agency Kent Practice Framework for working with children and their families. By focusing on the priorities laid out in the national framework, including the role of advocacy, we will ensure that the voices of children and families are at the centre of everything we do via an increased focus on social connections, inclusion, family solutions

and resources, all from a strengths-based perspective. There will be an e-learning practice framework curriculum supporting the knowledge and skills required for the role of lead practitioner.

- Delivering and promoting the DfE practice direction. This empowers education providers through direct representation, information sharing, and reflection and learning within both the operational and managerial side of safeguarding work.
- Integrating the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Education Safeguarding Service to increase capacity, and share data and intelligence. This will provide more direct outreach support for education settings, particularly to those in need of safeguarding support. We will increase designated safeguarding lead (DSL) catchups, subsidised training and safeguarding reviews with a purposeful focus on early years settings.
- Establishing Family Hubs across Kent as a delivery system for local authorities and their partners to provide family help. These hubs will offer multi-agency professional and community resources and networks to enhance and support children's resilience and their ability to achieve positive educational progress and outcomes.

Resilience 2: Good mental wellbeing that supports children and young people to be resilient and do well in education and in life



Good mental wellbeing is crucial for engaging in learning, achieving academic success and building resilience. Some children and young

people are more likely to experience poor mental wellbeing than others, particularly those with adverse childhood experiences. Schools and providers play an important role in identifying mental health needs at an early stage and by referring children and young people to the appropriate support. It is vital that children and young people and their families get the most appropriate response to meet their needs. To do this, Kent will base the children and young people mental wellbeing system on the national THRIVE Framework (**Footnote 32**). Mental health support teams (MHSTs) are a nationally funded programme to provide some schools with additional expertise and support. There is an aspiration in Kent to develop an offer of support for those schools not supported by a MHST.

We will support children and young people's mental wellbeing to develop resilience and ensure they are ready to engage in education in the following ways:

- Supporting schools in embedding a whole-school approach to emotional wellbeing and mental health. We will promote the take up of senior mental health lead training, implementing a robust PSHE curriculum and provide mental health pastoral support to help schools have a significant impact on the wellbeing of pupils. By March 2026, MHSTs will operate in many Kent schools, and other Kent schools will be provided with additional capacity when resources are available.
- Promoting the use of the full range of NHS and DfE guidance (**Footnote 33**) to support education settings as they work to sustain the good mental health and resilience of children and young people and work with their families. This will be supported by regular communications sent directly to mental health leads and senior leaders.

The guidance includes:

- principles of a whole-school or college approach
- senior mental health lead (SMHL) training
- resources for planning and implementing a whole-school or college approach
- mental health and wellbeing resources for pupils, parents and teachers
- MHSTs.
- Embedding i-THRIVE as the model to support the collaboration of system partners and services. i-THRIVE is an integrated, person-centred framework of support and services which enables young people, their families and professionals to jointly identify and agree needs and an appropriate response. This will be rolled out to all education settings so that young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health needs can be met in a timely and appropriate way.
- Increasing engagement and building confidence levels among the education workforce around promoting and supporting wellbeing by facilitating regular workshops and events to share the most up-to-date information.
- Strengthening the resilience of children and young people by developing and implementing an approach to social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) in partnership with school leaders, pupil referral unit leaders and other specialist services. We are working to include this in our provision for the full continuum of need, informing every part of the strategy, and by creating professional resource groups so that children and young people and their schools and providers can access support to meet their needs. Including SEMH in our sufficiency planning strategy with outreach and early intervention at the core will support integrated and effective delivery.



Resilience 3: Enhance system-wide cohesion through convening

The role of the LA in education has changed significantly over the past few years. Creating cohesion and convening across a complex system is an important part of KCC's work. This is in the context of an increasingly academised system, growing school autonomy, the pivot towards a self-improving system built on school-to-school support and the removal of government school improvement funding to LAs.

In this context, it is vital that strategic coherence enables schools and settings to develop purposeful partnerships that improve the quality of teaching and learning, as well as outcomes and progress for learners. Local Government Association research (**Footnote 34**) highlights the pivotal role of the LA, particularly in developing strong relationships that respond to local needs and align with a clear vision.

Against this backdrop, KCC has the responsibility to ensure strategic coherence and enable system-wide collaborations and strong partnership working. It is also necessary to maintain our statutory responsibilities for accountability (**Footnote 35**). KCC is uniquely placed to support the wider system by convening and facilitating across the entire sector to ensure it works effectively for everyone.

We will enhance system-wide cohesion in the following ways:

- Establishing an oversight group or board of senior education leaders and partners to lead strategic partnership working that drives improvement. This will bring together representatives from key education stakeholders to develop a fully rounded understanding of the issues and possible responses. It will work collectively and transparently to produce solutions to the complex challenges affecting the quality of education. Bringing this high-level cohesion into the system will improve system-wide relationships and awareness, enabling everyone to play their part in responding to evolving education challenges, and ensuring all children and young people can thrive.
- Jointly planning, establishing and embedding a school-to-school support model. Over time, this localised school improvement partnership model should be the main mechanism for delivering support for school improvement. These groups will use the expertise and partnership working structures from the communities of schools. TEP will be a valuable partner in this work, helping to ensure that schools, particularly maintained schools, have the support and resources they need, or are entitled to. As the system becomes more established, leaders may choose to strategically share or pool between schools their school improvement resources and expertise to address agreed local priorities, and to access a potentially wider range of funded, traded and school-to-school support. This aims to create and support a self-improving system (**Footnote 36**) that makes full use of the rich expertise within the sector to ensure that all schools continue to thrive, and to improve progress and outcomes for children and young people.
- Embedding and enhancing the sector-led post-16 collaboration, Pathways for All, to respond to the post-16 issues identified in the 2022 report (**Footnote 37**). The eight recommendations remain a focus, and have been supplemented by a sector-written strategy called "No Child Left Behind". The initial focus is mapping cold spots to enable the development of provision to meet

the needs of all young people. Eight LCPAs have been established, based on travel-to-learn patterns, to respond to the recommendations and other local issues for young people at post-16. The strategic board will focus on enhancing leadership and collaboration to support sector cohesion.

Resilience 4: Strengthen and support the self-improving system



Empowering school-to-school improvement with the right tools and appropriate support is fundamental to success. Harnessing the breadth of expertise in the system requires strong leadership, a commitment to continuous improvement, good professional development and evidence-based working. Parts of the sector are already using the model effectively, but others have less experience of this way of working. It is vital to harness the wealth of expertise in the sector and this should be supported according to need.

We will support the self-improving system in the following ways:

- Supporting the development of the skills needed to identify, develop and deliver high-quality school improvement within the school-to-school support model. We will support procedures for identifying, accessing and developing expertise from both within and from outside the families of schools, so that schools can learn from the most effective practices, which are demonstrated by the evidence of success. This responds to our duty to support collaboration, to promote an inclusive system that meets the needs of the most vulnerable, and to deliver a good education for the children and young people of Kent. This will be delivered through both commissioned and traded work by our school improvement partners, and will focus on:
 - facilitating collaboration and knowledge sharing through building networks, organising collaborative projects and supporting knowledge transfer
 - providing expert support and guidance through school improvement consultancy, leadership development, and data analysis and interpretation
 - identifying, developing and delivering high-quality continuous professional development through tailored professional development and collaborative working
 - promoting a culture of improvement by developing leaders, engaging with staff and celebrating success.
- Encouraging and supporting the analysis of the data to understand the needs of specific local cohorts of children and young people. KCC is committed to supporting, where it can, the provision mapping data needs of the Pathways for All LCPAs and the work of CATIE. As the school-to-school model is developed, we will explore appropriate ways of supporting the families of schools so that they have the data they need so that they, and key partners, can identify clear improvement priorities, develop an action plan, and evaluate and fulfil their primary responsibility to provide high-quality education.
- Improving communication to support joined-up, effective working across the sector. Stakeholders have told us that Kelsi, KCC's main medium for communicating with the sector, is not currently delivering the information they need. In collaboration with the sector and internal partners, we will gather feedback and explore the needs of the sector so that

we can plan and deliver a new website with the right information. We will also establish a communications protocol with sector leaders to ensure clear and consistent channels of communication that are accessible to all schools and providers, to ensure leaders feel neither bombarded or isolated.

- Strengthening engagement with the sector via an annual education survey. This aims to ensure that KCC has a regular, direct opportunity to listen to views of the wider sector. It will support our ability to evaluate the impact of our work, deepen our understanding of the issues and challenges being faced, inform decision making and ensure stronger communication.
- Celebrating and promoting the best evidence-informed practice. We will explore working with external partners to raise the profile of evidence-informed educational practice across the profession. We aim to do this through establishing a festival of education, so that Kent educationalists are at the forefront of best practice and are inspired by sector experts.



Resilience 5: Future proof the system



The future of education is poised to undergo significant change. The impact of new technologies, the response to climate change, the growing financial pressures that all parts of the sector face, and the impact of political and legislative change all need to be considered as we proactively plan for the future. Fundamentally, the future belongs to children and young people so we are responsible for providing them with the skills and experiences they need to adapt to the future. The challenges are significant but so are the opportunities.

We will future proof the system in the following ways:

- Working with the sector to jointly explore the threats and opportunities posed by artificial intelligence (AI) in the context of education. This will be achieved by establishing a working group that will draw on existing expertise to develop an understanding of the issues and establish guiding principles to support educators as they navigate the key issues.
- Supporting the green agenda and the drive towards net zero. Under the previous government, the DfE set out its Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy (**Footnote 38**), which included the key ambition of “excellence in education and skills for a changing world: preparing all young people for a world impacted by climate change through learning and practical experience”. KCC will support this aim by providing advice and guidance to school leaders, along with directing schools and providers to various initiatives and resources which can be embedded within the curriculum. While raising children’s and young people’s awareness of the effects of climate change and the need to maintain a clean and safe environment, this work will also bring direct benefits to Kent, with schools and providers actively engaging in initiatives that can reduce the county’s carbon footprint and improve air quality.
- Supporting schools’ resilience and emergency planning. Schools can only operate effectively if they are safe and secure, and agile enough to respond appropriately to any event or incident that could have an adverse impact on their ability to continue to provide education to their students. The DfE expects all education, childcare and children’s social care settings to have emergency plans in place. Additionally, under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, specific

responsibilities are placed on the LA to respond to major emergencies and incidents. Schools will occasionally be required to support the council's response. For this reason, KCC Education, in conjunction with KCC Emergency Planners and the Kent Resilience Forum, ensure that schools have access to appropriate resources and advice to enable them to produce their emergency and business continuity plans. This work is led by the Assistant Directors Education, who should be a first point of contact for schools when incidents or situations arise.

- Supporting schools, particularly those heading towards financial difficulty, to manage increasing staff and resource costs in the current tighter financial framework. By increasing awareness of the issues, and by offering training specifically focused on avoiding financial deficits, as well as through early interventions, we aim to ensure school budgets are well planned and schools can continue to securely deliver a good education.
- Securing financial sustainability via a review of the services for schools. This involves assessing the funding and delivery of the services KCC provides to schools, particularly our maintained schools. In light of the government's withdrawal of the School Improvement Grant, and as the national context changes, it is important that KCC systematically reviews its support for schools. The process seeks to provide clarity and equity across the different parts of the sector and to ensure compliance with funding and grant sources. This also ensures that the services continue to be relevant, effective, efficient, fair and, importantly, enable schools to move forward with the autonomy and decision making expected by the current and future regulatory frameworks.
- Interpreting and influencing the national agenda. As the government enacts

policy and statutory change, KCC has a role to play in supporting the sector in understanding the full implications and ramifications of any change – ensuring there is information, expertise and support, via a range of means such as newsletters, briefings or training. As the largest LA by population in England – with over 600 schools, three large colleges and more than 900 early years providers – our collective voice is based on a deep contextual understanding of the sector and the impact a policy may have. By responding to consultations and proactively communicating, our voice aims to both represent and advocate for the sector.

Footnotes

29. [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
 30. [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 | Statutory guidance | gov.uk](#)
 31. [Children's Social Care National Framework | DfE \(2023\)](#)
 32. [THRIVE Framework for system change | Wolpert et al. \(2019\)](#)
 33. [Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges | DfE \(2021/2025\)](#)
 34. [Enabling School Improvement | Local Government Association](#)
 35. [Support and intervention in schools | Statutory guidance | DfE](#)
 36. [A self-improving system: Towards maturity | DH Hargreaves, National College for School Leadership](#)
 37. [Pathways For All: Summary: Review of education and training provision for young people aged 16–19 in Kent | Kent County Council](#)
 38. [Sustainability and climate change: a strategy for the education and children's services systems | Policy paper | gov.uk \(2023\)](#)
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Stakeholder and partner engagement

This strategy was co-constructed with our key stakeholders, both those in the sector and KCC colleagues, all of whom are deeply committed to providing the best education for all the children and young people of Kent. This took place in one-to-one discussions, small focus groups and wider stakeholder sessions. Our early years providers, schools and colleges shared their challenges and areas of focus.

We listened carefully to our children and young people during six engagement sessions, with a total of 118 children and young people telling us they want an education that engages them, helps them progress and gives them good opportunities. We ran six focus groups with parents and carers who wanted their children to be happy, safe and have good next steps.



Many of our partners are referred to in this strategy or have worked closely with KCC throughout the co-construction process. This includes but is not limited to:

- TEP
- Kent's teaching schools and curriculum hubs
- provider associations, specifically KALE, Early Years Provider Association (EYPA) and KEE Hub, as well as representatives from Kent Special Educational Needs Trust (KsENT), Kent & Medway Grammar Schools Association (KMGSa), Kent Further Education (KFE)
- Canterbury, Rochester and Southwark Diocese
- a range of professional providers, including Leadership Learning Securing Excellence (LLSE), Association of Education Advisers (AoEA) and Kent & Medway Progression Federation (KMPF)
- Adoption Partnership South East, NHS and Active Kent and Medway and Public Health.

A range of other KCC services support education, including Human Resources, Finance, Public Health and Early Help. All have provided valuable insights and feedback to shape this strategy.

Thank you to everyone who has engaged with us, and for your ongoing work to ensure that all children and young people in Kent have a brilliant education

The wider strategic framework

The following strategic work sits alongside and informs the work of this strategy.

[A Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education \(CATIE\) 2023–2028](#)

[Children and Young People’s Emotional Wellbeing Support](#)

[Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2026–2030](#)

[Education Accessibility Strategy 2025–2028](#)

[School Access Initiative Policy](#)

[Framing Kent’s Future – Our Council Strategy 2022–2026](#)

[Inspirational Creativity: Transforming Lives Everyday – our cultural ambition for Kent](#)

[KCC Net Zero action plan](#)

[Kent and Medway Integrated Care Strategy](#)

[Kent SEND Strategy 2025–2028](#)

[Pathways for All – Kent 16 to 19 Review](#)

[Relational Approaches to support School Belonging and Attendance: A Guide and Toolkit 2025](#)

[SEND Sufficiency Plan 2025](#)

[Special Schools Review: proposed changes to designations and admissions guidance](#)

Glossary

ADHD	attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder
AoEA	Association of Education Advisers
AP	alternative provision
CATIE	A Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education strategy
CEC	Careers and Enterprise Company
CME	Children Missing Education
DfE	Department for Education
DSL	designated safeguarding lead education professionals –everyone who works in education, including teachers, teaching assistants, all levels of leadership and governors.
EEF	Education Endowment Foundation
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
EYFS	early years foundation stage (EYFS)
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GRT	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller
KALE	Kent Association of Leaders in Education
KCC	Kent County Council
KS	Key Stages – <u>The national curriculum</u> is organised into blocks of years called key stages
KEE Hub	Kent Education Evidence Hub
KFE	Kent Further Education
KMGSA	Kent & Medway Grammar Schools Association
KMPF	Kent & Medway Progression Federation
KSENT	Kent Special Educational Needs Trust
LA	local authority
LAC	looked-after children

Glossary

LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
LCPA	Local Collaborative Partnership Area
LLSE	Leadership Learning Securing Excellence
MAT	multi-academy trust
MHST	mental health support team
ND	neurodiverse
NHS	National Health Service
NEET	not in education, employment or training
PE	physical education
PINS	Partnership of Inclusion of Neurodiverse Children in Schools
PRU	pupil referral unit providers – refers to all the parts of the sector who provide education, from early years settings and childminders to post-16 colleges and training providers
PSHE	personal, social, health and economic education
RE	religious education
Safety Valve Programme	a Department of Education programme to support local authorities
SAT	single-academy trust
SEND	Special educational needs and disabilities
SENIF	Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund
SEMH	social, emotional and mental health
SMHL	Senior mental health lead
SRP	specialist resource provision
TEP	The Education People
VSK	Virtual School Kent

Appendix 1: Kent Children and Young People's Outcomes Framework

The framework is an essential part of our approach to supporting children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and has been developed with input from young people themselves.





Alternative formats

If you require any of the documents in any other alternative formats or language, please contact:

Email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk

Call **03000 42 15 53**

Text relay service number: **18001 03000 42 15 53**.

This number goes to an answering machine which is monitored during office hours.

www.kent.gov.uk