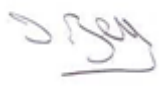



## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

LA Name	Date Report Submitted	Name & Email Address of Key Personnel	
Kent County Council	3 December 2025	CEO:	Amanda Beer
		S151 Officer:	John Betts
Signed off by S151 Officer	Signed off by Director of Children's Services	DCS:	Sarah Hammond
		Other key contacts for Safety Valve:	Christine McInnes Karen Stone Samantha Sheppard
			

Is your LA's Safety Valve plan on track?	Yes/No	Commentary
<p>Is the LA delivering appropriate support for children and young people? <i>Safety Valve agreements do not in any way release LAs from their obligation to fulfil their statutory duties to children &amp; young people with SEND.</i></p>	Yes	<p>As noted in the previous (July) return, following the OFSTED and Care and Quality Commission (CQC) revisit in 2022, Kent was issued with an Improvement Notice.</p> <p>In response to the Improvement Notice, the Council implemented an Accelerated Progress Plan (APP), identifying a total of 116 projects to address the nine areas of weakness identified in the revisit.</p> <p>Following a formal monitoring visit in April 2024, the Improvement Notice was lifted by the (then) Minister for Children and Families in August 2024.</p> <p>The fourth progress review of Kent's improvement plan took place 1 October 2025. A response has been received from DfE which is positive and recognises the ongoing progress being made. This includes the closure actions related to Area 7 which relates to weak governance.</p>
<p>Is the LA moving towards reaching an in-year balance? <i>If yes, please include the projected year</i> <i>If no, is the LA doing everything appropriate to contain costs?</i></p>	No	<p>Our forecast for 2025-26 is indicating we will have an overspend of the high needs block of around £70 million with underspends on other blocks reducing the overall DSG overspend to £68 million. This overspend is £13m higher than reported in the July monitoring and reflects actual activity from the start of the Autumn term. Our biggest area of increased spend since our last report is related to the number of children placed in the independent sector (+£8m), along with nearly £3m increase on direct payments (linked with tuition and therapies). There are also smaller increases of around £1m each across Post 16 and special schools provision.</p> <p>Our overall spending increase appears to be in line with 2024-25 at around 9% (compared to annual increases of 13%-10% in the previous 3 years). This report sets out in detail the breadth of actions taking place to achieve a more financially sustainable SEN system in the future. We identified three key areas where we expected to see a financial impact in 2025-26 is:</p>

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

1. The introduction of the community of schools to help slow ongoing cost increases in the mainstream sector without corresponding reductions in demand in specialist sector (with reduced costs). Update: Community of Schools was introduced in September 2025 and ring-fenced budgets have been introduced for schools. Early indicators suggest that this has slowed spending increases on SEN support for individual children, whilst still ensuring existing funding is available to schools to support their offer. It is recognised there will be a period of adjustment for schools whilst this is embedded.
2. Continual actions to support inclusion in mainstream schools and continual slowing of demand for specialist placements. This is in the context that Kent has recognised we place more children in these settings than the rest of the country. Update: the rise in the number of specialist placements is higher than planned (see table below). Whilst we continue to see an increase in number of children supported in mainstream settings (or SRP), we had expected to see a continual slowing of increases in specialist settings. This is in the context that our overall number of EHCPs is broadly in line with forecasts - but we also appear to be seeing a corresponding reduction in the number of “other placements” suggesting that this increase may be linked to a period of adjustment, further analysis will be undertaken to understand this further. The impact of this is reflected in the forecast overspend.
3. Individual projects to identify cost savings (such as ceasing placements where pupils do not attend). Update: impact of this is still to be confirmed.

We continue to see the overall number of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) remaining relatively in line with forecasts with the key concern being the placement of children and associated costs.

Extract of our SEN2 data return. Information for November 2025 is an interim number based on Synergy as per 27 November 2025.

	2022	2023	2024	2025	Nov 25 (Draft)
Independent Schools	1,671	1,769	1,795	1,776	2,023
State-funded Special Schools	5,534	6,018	6,222	6,427	6,545
Total	7,205	7,787	8,017	8,203	8,568
% YOY change	11%	8%	3%	2%	4%
% YOY change – National	7%	5%	7%	5%	TBC

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

\*Between 2022 and 2025, the number of independent and state-funded special school places increased by 19%, whilst in Kent it was 14%.

The main areas of challenge are:

- The ongoing historic impact of rises in mainstream top-ups prior to the introduction of community of schools (for both children with and without an EHCP) – total number and average amount.
- Independent schools – average cost.
- Impact of tribunals – we have estimated nearly 25% of placements in independent sector are made following a tribunal decision based on 2024-25 data – (see Condition 3).
- Additional requests from Specialist Resource Provisions (SRPs) and special schools for “exceptional pupil need”.
- Demand for home tuition and Education Other Than At School.
- Due to high inflation and increasing national living wage standard increases for state-funded settings (schools and post 16) were set 1% higher than originally expected in the plan in 2024-25 (impacting the ongoing costs).
- The delay in opening of new Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) need special school (from September 2024 to January 2025) due to late change in Trust leadership had a one-off impact in 2024-25.
- Other Local Authorities refusing to pay for their Looked After Children residing in Kent following the recent changes to the DfE guidance. Kent is a significant net importer of Looked After Children into the county. Looked After Children are more likely to have more significant SEN needs. The DfE changes are having a negative impact on our financial position.
- Our maintained special schools are full resulting in further use of the independent sector, this is evident in the latest activity (see above). The impact of the ongoing delays for the opening of the new special schools as part of the DfE programme is starting to really impact in 2025-26, where our original plan assumed two of the three new special schools applied for would have begun a phased opening in 2024 (on the basis of an accelerated programme) with the third a year later. These are now unlikely to open until after the original term of this plan has ended (post 2028). Which means that we now expect to continue relying more heavily on the independent sector than our original plan accommodated for, leading to higher revenue costs.

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

<p>Is the LA moving towards full eradication of the DSG deficit?  <i>If yes, please include the projected year</i>  <i>If no, is the LA doing everything appropriate to prevent excessive growth in deficits?</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The profile has been updated to reflect the updated 2025-26 forecast, leaving a residual balance around £196m by March 2028 (assuming all Council and DfE contributions are received). The medium term forecast remains continuously under review but current estimates indicate that breakeven may be achieved by 2030-31.</p> <p>The Council has, and continues to, aim for a breakeven in-year position, although the speed in which this can be achieved is being reviewed in light of our experiences over the past two years, with the expectation that the in-year deficit will start to reduce over the next few years as the accumulative impact of the actions start to take place. It is assumed the fast tracking of more SRP places will help to alleviate the current pressures on specialist placements and ensure our own special schools can continue to provide support for our most complex children. Along with continuing to work with our mainstream schools to support early intervention and avoid further escalation, and with our post 16 sector to provide suitable pathways into adulthood. This is all subject to achieving parental confidence in the County's offer for SEN support and wider Government reforms to the system to further support this, including the future role of the tribunal system.</p> <p>Our forecast assumes the high needs block will increase by 7% per year (based on 25-26 uplift) and the school block transfer of 1.2% will only continue up to 2027-28. Inflation is assumed at 2% per annum. These assumptions are subject to future DfE announcements and OBR forecasts. The forecast also includes an additional £10m contingency (from 26-27) to reflect our recent experience of additional costs along with variations in activity numbers. It assumes other blocks in the DSG continue to breakeven.</p> <p>We believe the cumulation of all our actions outlined in this report will continue to contain excessive growth in the in-year deficit.</p> <p>We are not confident the position can be recovered sufficiently by 2027-2028 to counteract the additional costs we have incurred to date, and continue to incur whilst we embed our plan. These are in addition to the costs incurred from delays in the building of two new special schools (and the rejection of the bid for a third special school) as set out in previous reports. Whilst we are enacting plans to provide some relief to our existing special schools who are over capacity, we still require these 2 new schools to ensure ongoing sustainability in localised areas within the County.</p>
<p>Is the LA delivering on all the conditions set</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The LA continues to deliver on all the conditions set out in the Safety Valve agreement. As noted in the July return,</p>

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

out in their SV agreement?  
*If no, has the workstream been updated or replaced to adapt to current circumstances?*

individual projects vary in relation to their stage of implementation, meaning that while all conditions are being delivered against, the timescales for their full implementation, and therefore the expected impact, is at different phases.

Given the projected delays in reaching an in-year balance and in full eradication of the DSG budget, work is being undertaken this quarter to link individual projects more specifically to areas of required impact.

This is resulted in a recategorisation of projects as:

- Pilots
- Targeted activity
- Enabler
- Process improvements
- Project
- Contract management / business as usual

Each condition will have projects spanning these categories, while some conditions will constitute a project in its own right.

In addition, work is being undertaken to prioritise areas of improvement work within SEN – the focus being on dedicating resources to priority areas that can be implemented to achieve the highest impact, before moving resource to support areas of lesser impact.

This approach will ensure that Safety Valve is aligned to ongoing SEN transformation and that they are perceived as inextricably connected rather than two separate areas of work.

This is likely to result in a differentiated approach to reporting from January 2026 onwards. For example, projects will continue to be reported on quarterly, whereas pilots may be reported on annually.

This reporting period the Strategic Data Dashboard has been reviewed and revised to more accurately reflect the information that Senior Leaders within the Council require in order to understand the delivery and impact of Safety Valve projects and wider SEN transformation.

Key changes from the previous version include:

- Removal of condition specific measures and a move towards system level measures, recognising that multiple projects / areas of work are contributing to individual areas of impact.
- Removal of some measures in favour of others that provide increased clarity about impact being delivered.

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

		<p>The following measures have required new reporting systems to be implemented. These have been set up and are currently being tested. Consequently the following measures will appear in the next report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building on the current measure of understanding what percentage of EHCPs were issued within 30 days, this new measure determines what percentage of EHCPs that should have been issued within a given month to meet the 30 day deadline where issued.</li> <li>Number of Annual Reviews Completed within 12 Months</li> <li>Percentage Annual Reviews Completed within 12 months</li> <li>Building on the above measure, this one seeks to understand what percentage of Annual Reviews where completed in each given month to meet the 12 month deadline.</li> </ul> <p>It is likely that the dashboard will continue to be revised to reflect the later priority and any transformation required in response to the (pending) Schools White Paper on Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) due in Spring 2026.</p>
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	Yes/No	Commentary
Is your LA's Safety Valve capital project on track?	No	<p>The original Safety Valve assumptions included new schools in Swanley and Whitstable to be delivered by the Department for Education opening from September 2024 (now unlikely to open until after 2028 at the earliest) and a further school on Isle of Sheppey to open from September 2025 (this was rejected by Department for Education). These have been delayed.</p> <p>Condition 7 sets out our progress around Special Resource Provisions (SRPs) in mainstream schools. Identification of specific projects to ensure ongoing sustainability of our special schools where they are significantly over capacity is also progressing.</p>

### Programme Headlines

This quarter, the biggest drivers of positive change have been (up to 3):

The shift in improved **collaborative relationships between the Local Authority and the education sector in Kent** noted in the previous (July 2025) report continues to develop and grow. An initial report on the Communities of School model indicates positive impacts across a range of measures with qualitative feedback suggesting that one of the most significant achievements of the model is the creation of spaces for SENCOs and school leaders to collaborate. (More detail is available in Condition 8 Summary)

During this reporting period a pilot project has been implemented to test a **proof of concept that streamlines and increases the efficiency of the 0-6 week assessment process** within the LA's SEN Service. It has been achieved by making more effective use of the Synergy

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

system, by reducing the Synergy workflow. It has also harnessed automated communication methods and a range of technologies outside of Synergy. The goal was to reduce the workloads of LA staff, increase efficiency and consistency of communication, and improve the overall experience for both parents and staff. The main changes involved:

- the introduction of automated emails to parents, settings and professionals reducing manually sent emails and creating standardised communications
- replacement of 20 letter templates with 7, standardised but personalised, emails
- Auto-population of evidence onto Sharepoint, reducing manual handling of documents
- Introduction of an online application form for schools
- Streamlined Synergy workflow, reducing the number of steps and opportunity for data entry errors

Based on a six week pilot that was delivered in North Kent SEN team and involved processing 59 requests and 14 Decision to Assess decisions, initial findings indicate that the new process decreases the time required to process one request by 51% (from 125.5 minutes to 61 minutes). It is estimated that over the course of twelve months (based on 4,308 requests received between August 2024 and August 2025) this could save 4,631 hours in SEN staff time per year. This frees up LA staff to focus on other areas of work, and the process also ensures consistent and timely communications with parents – keeping them informed of their progress through the process and outcomes of decisions.

Next steps involve expanding the 0-6 week process to the three remaining area teams, then applying the 0-6 week process to 6-20 weeks phase, testing in North Kent and then extending to the rest of the teams in the county. The process will then be considered for other areas such as Annual Review.

Kent's reforms of its **Phase Transfer** duties continue to embed and refine, resulting in 65% of decisions for 2026 having already been organised ahead of the 15<sup>th</sup> February 2026 deadline. This organised approach has resulted in stronger decision making, making better use of available school resources. While the final position will not be known until closer to the deadline, analysis has been undertaken to compare LA view and parental requests. Post 16 Phase Transfer analysis is ongoing and will be available at a future date, given the later statutory timeframes (More information is available in Condition 6 Summary)

This quarter, the biggest barrier(s) to successful implementation of the Safety Valve plan have been (up to 3):

Whilst the local authority welcomes the announcement by Government to take over deficits in 2029, without further details on how this will be actioned and any associated requirements on Local Authorities and the wider sector (now and in future years) leaves plans in limbo at a critical point in the year when initiatives for 2026-27 are being finalised and agreed. Along with the announced **delay in the DfE publication of its Schools White Paper on SEND** reform and the subsequent delay in LA's receiving confirmation of their schools budgets, creates a level of uncertainty and ability to plan ahead, in the worst case scenario creating delays to key activity whilst waiting for clarification of what the future brings.

During the quarter, analysis has been undertaken to understand the real impact that **tribunal decisions** are having on the LA's ability to meet Safety Valve objectives, especially in relation to

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

the number of children and young people being placed in independent and non-maintained special schools. This has required a period of improving data quality and putting systems in place to keep information current. More information is provided in Condition 3, but an initial assessment of independent placements made between 1 September 2024 and 31 August 2025 suggests that the cost to the LA of placements made in independent settings, compared to mainstream, as a consequence of a tribunal decision was approximately £6m in total. This cost, of course, continues through subsequent years of the placement.

**Market drivers and inflation** are increasing the costs of tuition and INMSS. Inflationary increases in cost means that spend continues to rise in these areas even while the number of placements is evening out. High demand also limits our ability to effectively negotiate. This creates an additional challenge in reducing spend in these areas, as the reduction in the number of children accessing these settings will increase higher than projected to compensate for the increasing costs of existing places. It also creates a reticence with state-funded school sector where we apply a standard minimum increase and actions to contain spending increases, whilst their perceive external providers getting whatever they want. As an example, for the academic year 2025 – 26:

- fee increase requests for existing placements were received from 42 INMSS providers. This equates to 30% of the total market. The total cost of existing placements with these providers for 2024-2025 is £50.4m. Unnegotiated fees increases would have increased this cost to £53.4m for 2025-26. However, negotiated costs will increase the costs of existing placements with these providers to £52.4. A cost avoidance of approximately £1m on the costs of existing placements.
- Requests for fee increases are generally in relation to increasing staff costs (this is the highest contributor) including teacher pay increases, increases in National and Living Wage and increases to the employer contribution of Teachers Pension Scheme. Higher employer contributions to National Insurance contributions and non-pay costs, such as rising insurance premiums, escalating energy and utility costs, building maintenance and compliance with environmental standards.

This quarter, the best examples of stakeholder engagement around the Safety Valve plan have been (up to 3):

Education colleagues within mainstream schools, SRPs and maintained special schools are being instrumental in developing the revised **SEN Funding model** for Kent. Colleagues in mainstream and special schools across the county are working collaboratively with LA officers to map children and young people with EHC Plans against funding descriptors to help understand and inform decisions about this proposed model. In doing so, schools are able to directly influence the process. (More information can be found in Condition 8 summary)

Engagement of mainstream schools through the **Communities of Schools** model continues to demonstrate engagement with education colleagues in the process of transforming SEN provision across the county. A recent report summarises the outcomes of Communities of Schools between September 2025 – October 2025. Out of 106 expected meetings, records were received for 70 meetings occurring in these two months. Of the meetings that occurred in September 2025, where records were received, 444 (97%) out of 460 expected to attend did so, and for October 2025 of the 408 schools expected to attend, 379 (93%) did so. Mapping of schools attendance indicates that five schools out of 560 mainstream schools in Kent did not attend a meeting in either month. While the information is based on two months of implementation, initial findings are positive, especially in relation to the experience of collaboration that participating schools report. (More information can be found in Condition 8 summary)

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Through this reporting period, work has been completed on **stakeholder engagement to inform the new framework contract for Independent Non-Maintained Special Schools (INMSS)**. As part of this process, Children's Commissioning officers engaged with SEN officers, parents and carers and children and young people attending INMSS settings. A survey was distributed to INMSS settings to gather their feedback, and market engagement events held.

- Five parents engaged in two focus groups, and three parents were interviewed individually. Although these numbers were small, the feedback provided was detailed and insightful.
- 31 children and young people participated in focus groups held at two schools, Small Haven School (Ramsgate) and Meadows School (Tunbridge Wells). The discussions explored their experiences of school life, challenges, EHCP processes, and their vision for ideal education settings.
- In total 22 schools responded to the survey which ran between 11 June 2025 and 9 July 2025.

More detail can be found via this link [Agenda for Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on Tuesday, 18th November, 2025, 10.00 am](#) (Item 10 Appendices 2 and 3)

Feedback provided has been included within the Service Specification for the contract and outlines the outcomes that INMSS settings are expected to deliver.

*Alongside your Safety Valve financial and narrative monitoring reports, please share with us the latest strategic data dashboard utilised by your governance oversight board for Safety Valve.*

***NB** This should not be something created for the DfE Safety Valve monitoring process; if you do not have a strategic data dashboard, just let us know.*

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Monthly Indicators													Latest Month
	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25
Number of EHCNAs Requested	381	426	367	383	386	427	323	376	432	436	148	302	372
% EHCPs Issued Within 20 weeks (inc Exceptions)	77.1%	78.1%	68.5%	53.8%	89.9%	81.7%	85.3%	60.2%	53.9%	51.9%	41.5%	44.3%	50.6%
% Young People Aged 0-25 with EHCP in Kent:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Age under 5	2.4%	2.3%	2.1%	1.9%	1.9%	2.0%	2.2%	2.2%	2.2%	2.3%	2.2%		2.1%
Age 5-10	29.9%	30.0%	29.9%	29.9%	29.9%	29.6%	29.4%	29.1%	29.0%	28.8%	29.0%		29.5%
Age 11-15	39.2%	39.1%	39.1%	39.1%	38.9%	38.9%	38.6%	38.6%	38.4%	38.3%	38.8%		39.2%
Age 16-19	23.9%	23.7%	23.8%	23.7%	23.7%	23.7%	23.7%	23.7%	23.8%	23.7%	23.4%		22.7%
Age 20-25	4.6%	4.9%	5.1%	5.4%	5.6%	5.8%	6.1%	6.4%	6.7%	6.9%	6.6%		6.5%
% Statutory School Age CYP with EHCP who are in Mainstream Settings	46.4%	46.8%	46.7%	46.6%	46.5%	46.7%	46.9%	46.7%	46.6%	46.3%	45.1%		45.6%
% CYP with an EHCP who are in Maintained Special School Settings (To do: Per - head, per 1000 rather than overall %)								1.31%	1.31%	1.30%	1.33%		1.38%
% CYP with an EHCP who are in Non-Maintained Special School Settings (To do: Per - head, per 1000 rather than overall %)								0.40%	0.41%	0.41%	0.39%		0.41%
Number of EHCPs Discontinued at Annual Review	72	92	66	95	75	77	36	62	84	92	165	181	272
% Annual Reviews Outstanding	34.1%	34.3%	35.2%	37.4%	36.2%	35.1%	35.6%	36.1%	36.5%	37.0%	35.1%	33.4%	34.6%
How many new placements at Special Maintained and Non Maintained this Quarter	-	-	199	-	-	296	-	-	298	-	-	1955	-
How many have exited Special Maintained and Non Maintained this Quarter	-	-	202	-	-	210	-	-	185	-	-	1338	-
Number of statutory school age CYP with an EHCP with no school placement (or suitable alternative placement)	373	344	342	332	328	338	330	280	273	395	293	215	224
% of statutory school age CYP with an EHCP with no school placement (or suitable alternative placement)	2.5%	2.3%	2.3%	2.2%	2.1%	2.2%	2.1%	1.8%	1.7%	2.5%	2.0%	1.4%	1.5%



## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream	Assurance Level	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
<p><b>Condition 1:</b> Implement a countywide approach to 'Inclusion Education,' to further build capacity in mainstream schools to support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), thus increasing the proportion of children successfully supported in mainstream education and reducing dependence on specialist provision.</p>	Update 1 (April)	<p>As noted in the July 2025 report, the majority of projects supporting the delivery of this Condition have been completed.</p> <p>The <b>Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS)</b> was successfully transferred into Kent County Council as of 1 September 2025. After a period of service consolidation, school age STLS will support children and young people in mainstream schools through a Link Practitioner model. The service will be accessed through the Professional Resource Group implemented as part of the Communities of Schools (Condition 8) while early years STLS will support children in Year R (Condition 2) seeking to address the issues that young children with SEND experience when transitioning from early years provision into school age education settings.</p> <p>A review of all areas of work referenced within the CATIE scheduled for November 2025 will now be completed for early 2026, in order to prioritise the Communities of Schools report. (Condition 8)</p> <p>Projects to accelerate capital spend in schools and specialist post-16 provisions are being developed with a view to increasing accessibility on education sites, removing the physical barriers that can result in schools being unable to meet the needs of some children and young people with SEND.</p> <p>For post-16, the current focus is on making small adaptations, for example, installation of hoists, into Specialist Provision (SPIs) that will make these post-16 provisions more accessible. The use of Section 106 monies has been agreed to support this. This will impact on September 2026 cohort of young people.</p> <p>Work to broaden the curriculum offer in Kent SPIs is also underway. For example, discussions are underway with Kite College Outreach Programme to support a small cohort of learners who have bail conditions and are not allowed in certain areas, enabling them to attend an SPI rather than funding expensive tuition packages.</p>
	G	
	Update 2 (July)	
	G	
	Update 3 (December )	
	G	
<p><b>Condition 2:</b> Introduce a robust Special Educational Need (SEN) offer for early years, following a review, which explores alternatives to</p>	Update 1 (April)	<p>The <b>revised model of support for early years settings</b> has now been fully implemented. Whilst the majority of service changes were implemented from April 2025, all specialist nursery interventions moved to the outreach intervention model from 1 September 2025.</p>
	G	
	Update 2 (July)	
	G	
	Update 3 (December )	

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream	Assurance Level	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>															
special school admission before Key Stage 2 (KS2), SEN redesign and implementation of County Approaches to Inclusive Education (CAtIE) to support consistent mainstream offer, including leadership development programmes, peer review and core training offer.	<b>G</b>	<p>Early Years and Childcare Quality Team and are now working differently to proactively support the universal offer for all children.</p> <p>As of 31 October 2025, 97% early years settings in Kent have booked to have an initial Professional Conversation with their advisor. Of the 3% that have not yet booked this meeting, 74% are settings in maintained or academy mainstream schools. Overall, 90% of settings have had this discussion.</p> <p>In addition to these meetings, 54% providers have had face to face contact with their advisor to discuss issues relevant to their setting or to discuss referrals to the early years Professional Resource Group (PRG).</p> <p>Anecdotal feedback is that when meeting to discuss children that settings think they need additional support for via the PRG process, Early Years and Childcare Quality Advisors are able to support them in embedding robust universal measures that reduces this number of referrals made.</p> <p>A dashboard has been set up to monitor activity through the early years PRG. The dashboard collates information at a district level regarding the number of referrals received from nursery providers and the outcome of those referrals. The chart below shows the number of referrals (submissions) received. Referrals can be made for individual or cohorts of children.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Term</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Number of submissions</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Number of children</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024-2025 Term 6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">92</td> <td style="text-align: center;">136</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025-2026 Term 1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">117</td> <td style="text-align: center;">181</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025-2026 Term 2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">74</td> <td style="text-align: center;">100</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>284</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>417</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Of these, 70.3% children referred were male and 28.9% female. The primary need at referrals was Communication and Interaction (82%) and the most common national curriculum year group was -1 (73%).</p> <p>The chart below illustrates the outcomes of the discussions at EY PRG as of 10 November 2025, with the majority of children (57%) being referred to the Early Years Support and Inclusion Practitioners (SIPS) service for targeted support.</p>	Term	Number of submissions	Number of children	2024-2025 Term 6	92	136	2025-2026 Term 1	117	181	2025-2026 Term 2	74	100	<b>Total</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>417</b>
Term	Number of submissions	Number of children															
2024-2025 Term 6	92	136															
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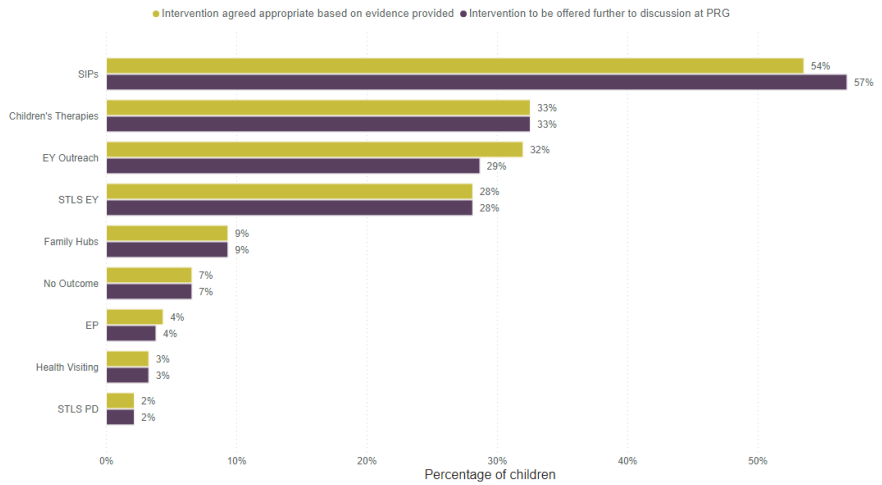
# SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream

Assurance Level

Progress Update from this Quarter  
Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts

Interventions agreed appropriate and interventions offered



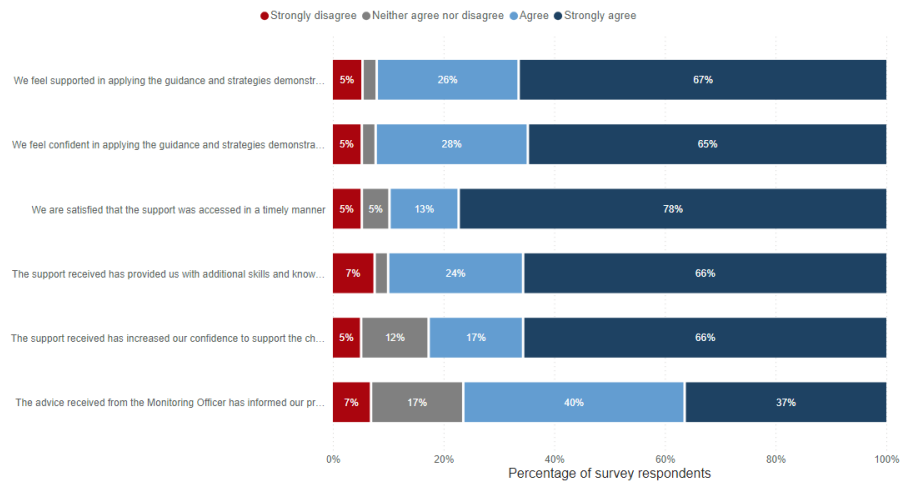
A post-intervention survey has also been implemented for completion by early years providers. This provides a live stream of feedback from settings about the support that they have received from services within the revised model of support.

All feedback below is accurate as of 10 November 2025.

This feedback from this survey can be analysed at both service and district level. It asks for feedback on several measures including:

- Level of support providers received
- Level of confidence in applying strategies demonstrated
- Timeliness of support
- Level of confidence in supporting referred child or children

"To what extent do you agree with the following statements:"



The survey also seeks feedback on the following impact measures:

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

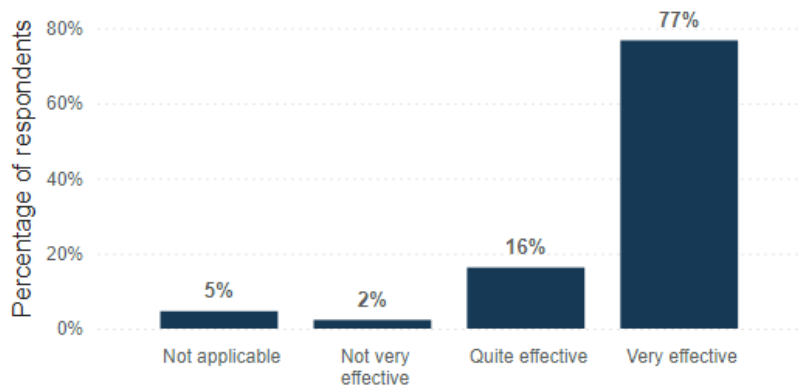
Condition /  
Workstream

Assurance  
Level

Progress Update from this Quarter  
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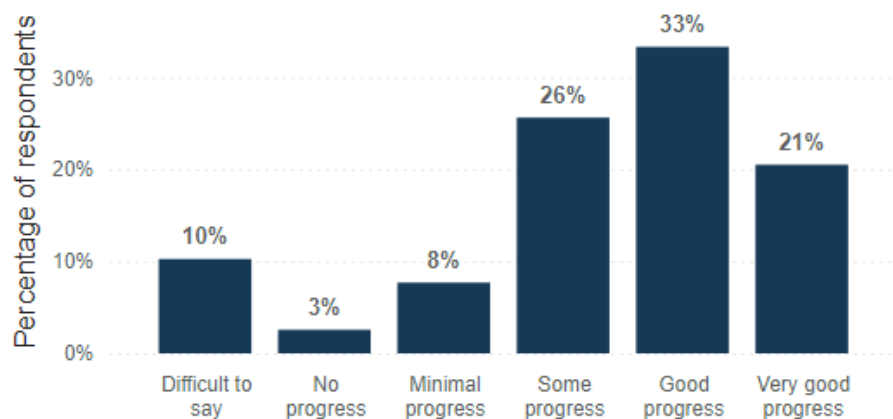
- Overall effectiveness of the support received. This is illustrated in the chart below. Effectiveness refers to a range of areas including increasing staff confidence in supporting children and does not specifically relate directly to the process of individual children.

How would you rate the overall effectiveness of the s...



- Progress of children or children since the intervention was implemented. This is illustrated in the chart below. It is worth noting that the majority of interventions are short time and there are inherent challenges in measuring progress over a short term intervention. Therefore, the LA would expect children to continue making progress after the intervention ends and when strategies are embedded and delivered by nursery staff.

Overall, how would you rate the progress the child o...



## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

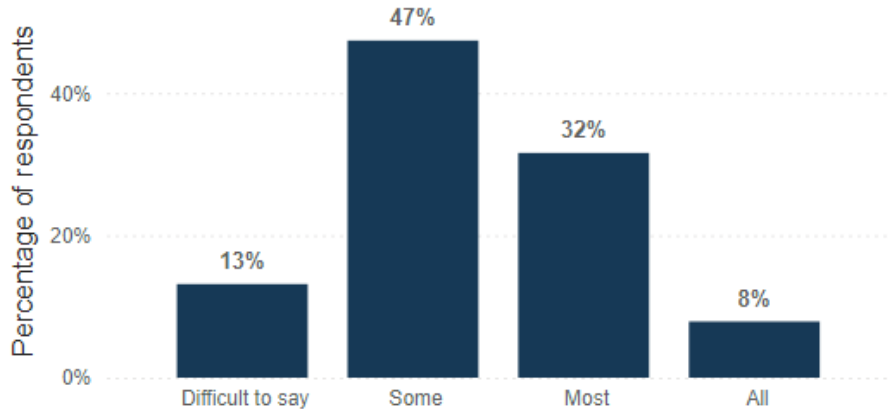
Condition /  
Workstream

Assurance  
Level

Progress Update from this Quarter  
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- Degree to which progress was a result of the intervention. This is illustrated in the chart below.

How much of the progress was made as a result of t...



Initial indicators are that the revised model is achieving its intended aim of building confidence within early years providers to support children with SEND and more complex needs. The expectation is that over time, this will lead to increased inclusion in mainstream and a reduction in requests to assess for EHCP in young children.

Additional work is underway to determine the degree to which interventions increase the amount of free childcare entitlement that children with SEND are taking up and how data collated from children during the early years of education can be used more effectively to plan for those children entering into mainstream school.

This quarter Starting Strong was published. This document, created with Catherine McLeod, Chief Executive of Dingley's Promise, and through stakeholder engagement, is Kent's guide to ordinarily available provision for early years. [Early Years Ordinarily Available Provision](#)

Seven workshops have been scheduled to provide training and awareness raising of the document to early years settings. As of 12 November 2025, 251 places have been booked.

The work to understand how **HNF is currently spent in Year R**, what resources are available, how these are being used and the impact that they are having has been put on hold through this reporting period due to LA officer capacity. Work is planned to recommence in January 2026.

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream	Assurance Level	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
		<p>Following the transfer of STLS into the LA (Condition 1), early years specialist teachers will now focus on supporting transition from early years settings into Year R of mainstream school, the focus being on maintaining mainstream placements of young children. The support will focus on children going through the Phased Transfer process, although they will continue to support children referred to them through the PRG process (this number is expected to be very small). The team will focus on understanding and supporting trauma informed approaches and delivery of the Autism Education Trust training to early years settings.</p>
<p><b>Condition 3:</b> Review the system of Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessments and annual reviews to ensure robustness, transparency, and consistency, through use of consistent criteria and practice framework.</p>	Update 1 (April)	<p>Progress made towards this Condition remains consistent. Overall, number of requests for EHCP over the quarter has continued to follow seasonal variations and the distribution of children and young people with EHCPs across five age groups monitored remains consistent (see dashboard) with the exception of 20-25 year olds where the percentage of overall EHCPs awarded to this cohort has increased from 4.6% in October 2024 to 6.5% in October 2025.</p> <p>A recent (October 2025) comparison of Kent performance to national averages indicates that although the percentage of the population with an EHCP is consistently increasing in Kent and England:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kent's rate remains higher than the national average but the gap is continuing to narrow.</li> <li>• The percentage increase in the number of EHCPs between 2022/23 and 2024/25 in Kent was lower than the increase reported in England.</li> <li>• Kent accounted for 3.23% of England's EHCPs in 2024/25, down from a peak of 3.7% in 2021/22.</li> <li>• The number of EHCPs requested per 1,000 of 0-25 population in 2024/25 in Kent was lower than the national average. Compared to 2020 and 2021 when the number of requests for EHCP's per 1,000 in 0-25 population was significantly higher than the national average.</li> <li>• The approval rate of ECHP rates in Kent has been lower than England, South East and Statistical Neighbours over the last 3 years. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over the last two years Kent has had a higher rate of EHCP plans cease compared to the national average. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2023 this was 10.5% compared to 6.8% nationally.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	Update 2 (July)	
	G	
Update 3 (December )	G	

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream

Assurance Level

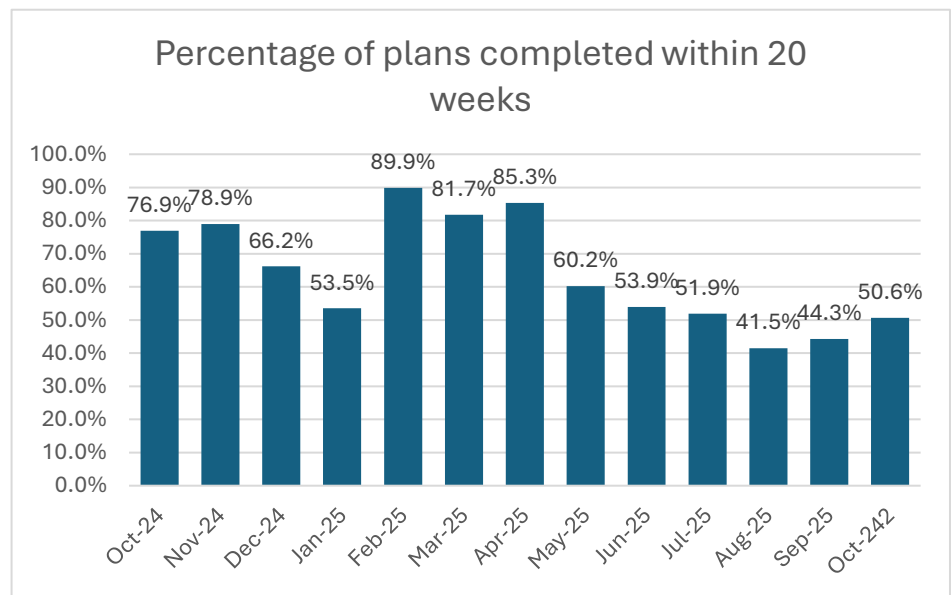
Progress Update from this Quarter  
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Condition 3 remains a significant area of work in enabling the LA to achieve the impact of reaching an in-year balance and fully eradicating the DSG budget. Whilst the work undertaken reflects positive outcomes in relation to national trends the LA continues to face challenges in relation to the percentage of plans completed within 20 weeks and the number of decisions taken that are overturned at appeal.

As noted in the July 2025 report significant work has been undertaken to improve the quality of EHCPs, and this work continues.

The graph below illustrates that the number plans completed with 20 weeks has seen a drop since April 2025. With a slight rise over September and October, meaning that in October, Kent's 20 week percentage was above the national average of 46.6%.

As noted in the previous report, the capacity of Kent Education Psychology Service (KEPS) is a significant contributing factor to this position. KEPS continue to work to address this issue.



In terms of the oldest cases remaining open, this has remained consistent over the last quarter and remains less than at this time 2024.

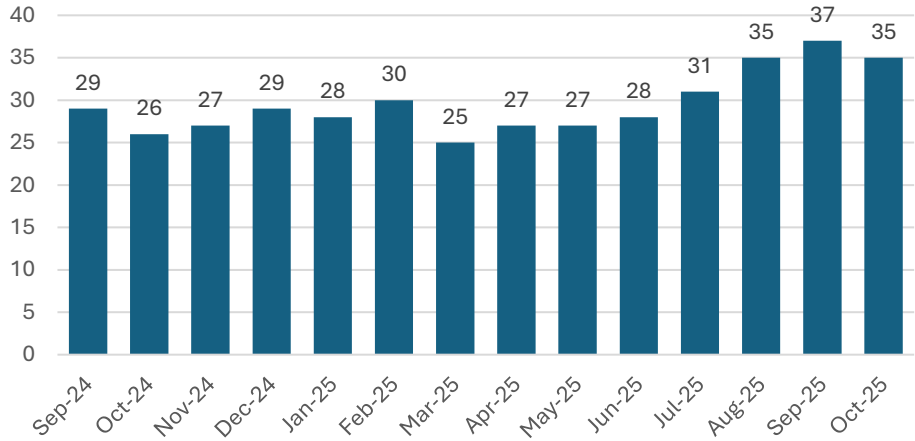
## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream

Assurance Level

Progress Update from this Quarter  
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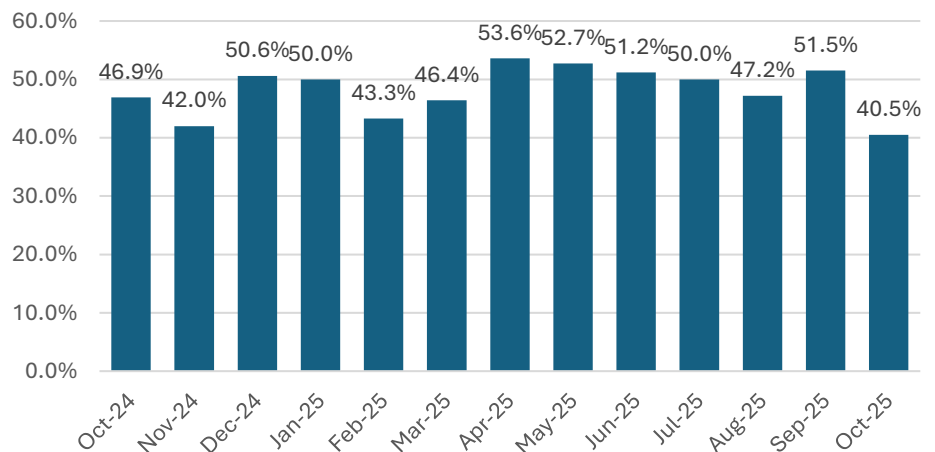
**Oldest Cases Remaining Open (Weeks)**



There are currently a total of 248 plans running late out of the 1231 currently going through the process. None of the plans running over 20 weeks have received an EP report on time.

Percentage of decisions to assess has remained relatively consistent within this quarter, as illustrated in the graph below.

**Percentage of Decisions to Assess**



The Chart below illustrates the outcomes of No to Assess decisions and indicates that the majority of LA decisions remain in place.

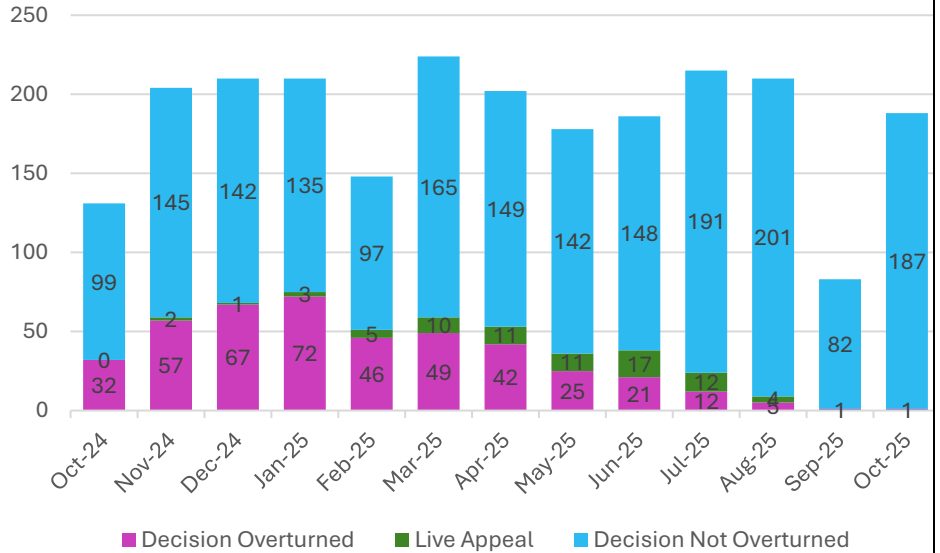
## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream

Assurance Level

Progress Update from this Quarter  
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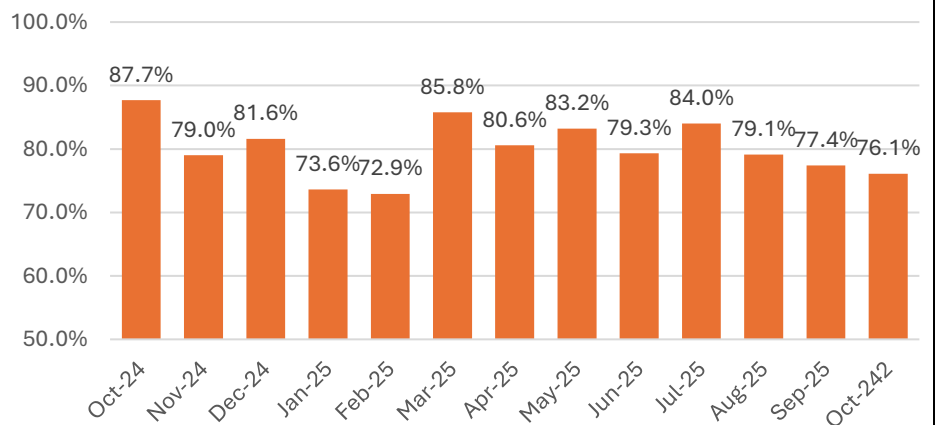
**Outcome of No to Assess Decisions made each Month**



On average tribunal appeals are received and recorded about four months after the “No to Assess” decision. The low number of appeals in recent months 2025 is reflective of this, rather than a reduction in the number of appeals made. For example, appeals for 2025 continue to be received and recorded, but as of October 2025 circa 32% of “No to Assess” decisions made in Q1 (Jan, Feb and March) 2025 have been overturned or have an on-going appeal.

The graph below illustrates the percentage of decisions to issue. Although there remains fluctuation through the year, this percentage also remains relatively consistent.

**Percentage of Decisions to Issue**



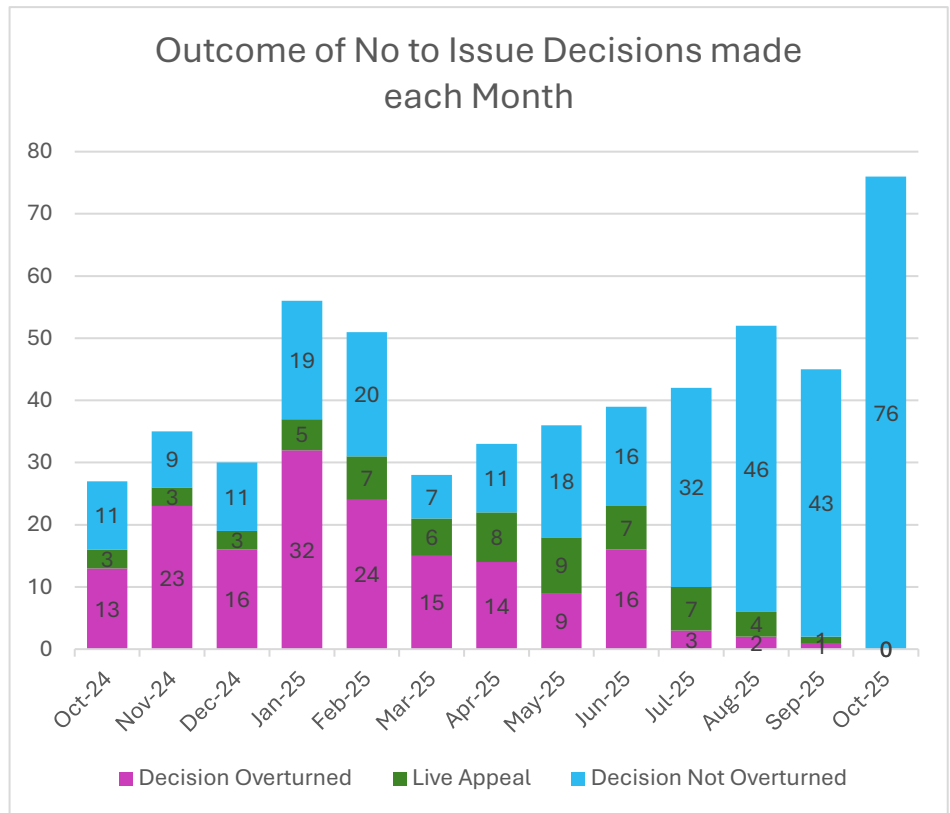
## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition /  
Workstream

Assurance  
Level

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The outcomes of No to Issue Decisions is illustrated below.



While appeals for 2025 continue to be received and recorded, at time of reporting circa 66% of “No to Issue” decisions made in Q1 2025 have been overturned or have an on-going appeal and in Quarter 3 (July – September) 2025, 66 decisions were changed from “No” to “Yes to Issue”, 58 as a result of an tribunal appeal.

The overturning of LA decisions at appeal has a resultant impact on our ability to reduce the number of children in specialist provision, specifically, non-maintained independent school placements.

An analysis has been undertaken to provide insight into the impact of appeals and the tribunal system on the number of placements made within independent settings. This included placements made in non-maintained special schools, other independent special schools, other independent schools and other Local Authority Specialist Post 16 Institutions.

Whilst subject to data quality risks associated with manually input data, this analysis suggests that 29% (169) of 585 placements recorded within the SEN Finance dataset with a start date within the period 01/04/2024 to 31/03/2025 were made following

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream	Assurance Level	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
		<p>appeal. Of the 169 appeals, the LA View was Mainstream in 134 (79%) of cases.</p> <p>If an assumption is made that where no appeal is recorded relating to an Independent placement, the LA View is Specialist, of the 585 Independent placements that started within the period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LA View was Mainstream in 134 (23%) cases</li> <li>• LA View was Specialist in 447 (76%) cases</li> </ul> <p>Based on an average cost of £54,460 per year for independent non-maintained special school place (if the school is on the DPS) and allowing a cost of £10,000 per year per pupil for a mainstream school placement, then cost of 134 independent rather than mainstream placements is equivalent to £5,957,640 per year in cost to the LA.</p> <p>Of 130 independent placements starting in Year 7, 46 (35%) were made following appeal. Placements starting in Year 7 account for 22% of all Independent placements and 27% of all placements made following appeal.</p>
Condition 4: Implement models of reintegration of children from special/independent schools to mainstream where needs have been met.	Update 1 (April)	<p>During this reporting period (July – September 2025), 1955 new placements have been made at special school (maintained and non-maintained) compared to 1338 pupils who have exited that provision.</p> <p>Work to develop clear processes for LA placement and casework teams to ensure consistency of approach and compliance to reduce future liability for fees where parents have placed their children in independent mainstream settings has been placed on hold due to allocated resource transferring to the SEN Funding model project (see Condition 8).</p> <p>The <b>review of independent post-16 placements in other Local Authorities</b> continues to yield positive outcomes. This quarter work has focused on strengthening the Kent offer, through work to broaden the curriculum on offer in SPIs and the use of developer contributions to install hoists, making SPI settings more accessible.</p> <p>This quarter there has been a focus on attending Annual Reviews to plan onward pathways for young people, and ceasing EHCPs for some at the end of the academic year.</p> <p>Conversations with providers aim to reclaim fees for non-attenders and reduce fees for individual students.</p>
	A	
	Update 2 (July)	
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	Update 3 (December)	
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## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream	Assurance Level	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
		<p>Work is ongoing as part of the phase transfer process to place young people in Kent based provision rather than using OLA provisions.</p> <p>Pilot projects that seek to establish new pathways for children and young people from special into mainstream settings are continuing, although progress over this reporting period has been impacting by school holidays.</p> <p>Pilot to support a phased transition from full time attendance Goldwyn Special School to attendance at East Kent College is continuing with a new cohort of young people identified to start in Term 1 of 2025-26 academic year.</p> <p>In practical terms, as part of the <b>Inclusion Programme</b> pupils move from being on Goldwyn's roll full time but receiving their education in an EKC class supported by Goldwyn staff (Pathway 1), to moving to EKC's roll but with support remaining from Goldwyn as necessary (Pathway 2) to being fully on EKC roll.</p> <p>Of 14 students on Pathway 1 during 2024-25 academic year, nine are continuing at EKC in 2025-26, five have moved on to employment or alternative provision and both students on Pathway 2 have continued at EKC.</p> <p>The number of students accessing the Inclusion Programme, across the two pathways and three campuses, has nearly doubled for 2025 – 26 academic year, with twenty-eight students enrolled on courses in Engineering, Hairdressing, Early Years, Digital Technology, Health &amp; Social Care, Music, Creative Media Production and Technology, Plumbing, Catering and Automotive.</p> <p>Preparatory work with both students and parents means that half of the Pathway 1 students and all of the Pathway 2 students are travelling independently from September 2025, a significant increase from 2024-25. Travel training will form part of the Goldwyn offer for the remaining Pathway 1 students throughout the academic year.</p> <p>Academically,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% of Pathway 1 students achieved a Level 2 equivalent in English prior to transferring to EKC.</li> <li>• 43% of Pathway 1 students achieved a Level 2 equivalent in Maths prior to transferring to EKC.</li> <li>• 65% of Pathway 1 students had made progress towards achieving a Level 2 equivalent in English prior to transferring to EKC.</li> </ul>

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% of Pathway 1 students had made progress towards achieving a Level 2 equivalent in Maths prior to transferring to EKC.</li> </ul> <p>Local discussions are commencing as to how the model could be extended to the pre-16 age groups, working in conjunction with mainstream schools.</p> <p>In addition, the <b>Ashford Bridge Project</b> focuses in on maintaining mainstream placements by supporting a successful secondary transfer for pupils who are at high risk of exclusion from their new secondary school. The Nurture Hub will initially support up to six pupils for a maximum of 12 weeks which will enable a rolling intake.</p> <p>To date, premises and funding have been secured, schools leaders are supporting and staff recruitment is underway. Identification of pupils and engagement with families will take place Terms 1 and 2 with an open event happening on 7 October 2025.</p> <p>The <b>Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) pilot</b> being delivered by Simon Langton Girls Grammar School with the support of LA officers. This reporting period eligibility criteria has been developed and agreed, funding implications have been modelled by the school, the involvement of Kent Education Psychology Service has been mapped and staff are being sought from with the school as a secondment opportunity.</p> <p>Over the coming months, work will focus on securing staffing and beginning research into the evidence base on relation to EBSA provision.</p> <p>In addition, a new project has been initiated this reporting period. The focus is <b>a thematic review of children and young people, not in schools to identify pathways for re-integration into education and preparation for adulthood.</b></p> <p>The review will seek to address several issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Develop an understanding of the reasons for the increase in the number of pre and post 16 pupils accessing tuition and education packages. The outcomes of the project are to enable young people back into education and to tighten systems and decision making for the agreement of alternative provision and EOTAS packages.</li> <li>2) Ensure that data quality is good and that there is active oversight of the children and young people on these packages so that where return to school is appropriate, this</li> </ol>

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream	Assurance Level	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
		<p>happens; ensure effective quality assurance of children not in a school placement and is also essential to ensuring effective oversight of safeguarding processes.</p> <p>3) Look in detail and those children in year 10/11 who are not in school placement and identify where improvements may be made to enable those children to attend a local school or college at phase transfer rather than independent or EOTAS packages.</p> <p>4) Develop an action / work plan which can inform sufficiency planning, pathway development and tuition arrangements</p> <p>5) develop a methodology that can be replicated across other similar areas of work (for example, analysis of NEET, etc).</p> <p>6) inform an overarching Alternative Provision Plan and an EOTIS policy.</p>
<p><b>Condition 5:</b> Develop a robust Post16 offer across the county with clear pathways to independence for children with SEN, through increased Post-16 opportunities for preparing for adulthood.</p>	Update 1 (April)	<p>The <b>post-16 coordination group</b> continue to focus on several areas of work.</p> <p>Work in developing the future planning tool to capture young people's views about their aims and aspirations regarding their education has been put on hold. Other avenues to gather this information are being explored, that can more accurately capture this information and reflect that this may change over time.</p> <p>The coordination group will also be refreshed to focus on strategic oversight of the post-16 sector and lead on developing a clear strategy.</p> <p>Review of support and services available to young people post-16 services is being initiated. This review will take an approach comparable to the one used for the review of early years and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying the available services</li> <li>• Understanding impact / performance</li> <li>• Understanding who (which organisation) is responsible for the delivery and any contractual / commissioning arrangements in place</li> <li>• Who is funding the services and the value of that funding</li> <li>• How everything fits together</li> <li>• Recommendations for next steps</li> </ul> <p>Phase One of this process (a desktop review of all services) has commenced with initial findings and recommendations to be produced by early spring.</p>
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	Update 2 (July)	
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	Update 3 (December )	
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<p><b>Condition 6:</b> Develop the Transition Charter</p>	Update 1 (April)	<p>In relation to <b>Phased Transfer 2025</b>, activity has focused on resolving any outstanding cases where no setting has been</p>
	G	

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream	Assurance Level	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
<p>to increase parental confidence in Kent's provision. This involves working with schools to enable them to articulate the provision pathways for parents clearly and provide support to both children and parents at key transition points.</p>	<p>Update 2 (July)</p> <p style="color: green; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">G</p>	<p>named. This is has involved reviewing consultation responses and holding further discussions with settings as appropriate and ensuring referrals are made for tuition to be in place if settings had not been named. Weekly monitoring is in place for cases where no setting has been named to secure a placement.</p> <p>The following data is for cases which had not been actioned as part of phased transfer 2025 and have been carried over into this academic year for completion. It is based on a compilation of information from manual spreadsheets and therefore is subject to data errors associated with manual collation and analysis of data.</p> <p>As of 17 November 2025, from the outstanding Year 11 (now Year 12 cohort) there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 25 children with ceased EHCPs</li> <li>- 4 with EOTIS</li> <li>- 50 in tuition</li> <li>- 40 with a named placement</li> <li>- 11 referred to NEET and named type</li> </ul> <p>For Year 14 (now year 15 cohort):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 232 EHC plans ceased</li> <li>• 46 EHC plans amended (one to name tuition)</li> <li>• 92 EHC plans maintained (one was a continuation of tuition for 6 months)</li> </ul> <p>In terms of final outcomes for the 2025 Phased Transfer cohort, reports will be run in December 2025 when there is greater assurance that records on Synergy are all up to date.</p> <p>In relation to <b>Phased Transfer 2026</b>, focus continues to be on completion of processes within statutory timeframes. To this end, Amendment Notices and / or consultation packs have been distributed for children in Primary, Junior, Secondary and post 16 settings. As of November 2025, 65% of decisions for 2026 having already been organised ahead of the 15<sup>th</sup> February 2026 deadline.</p> <p>In addition, work has been undertaken in relation to the Secondary Cohort for Phase Transfer 2026 comparing LA View, Parental Preference and Current Placement Types.</p> <p>As of 26 September 2025, there are 1,280 Year 6 Pupils with an EHCP. This is 25 fewer than at 27 September 2025.</p> <p>The following information is accurate as of 20 November 2025 and summarised an overview of LA View and Parental Preference for these pupils for September 2026. It has been</p>
	<p>Update 3 (December )</p> <p style="color: green; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">G</p>	

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

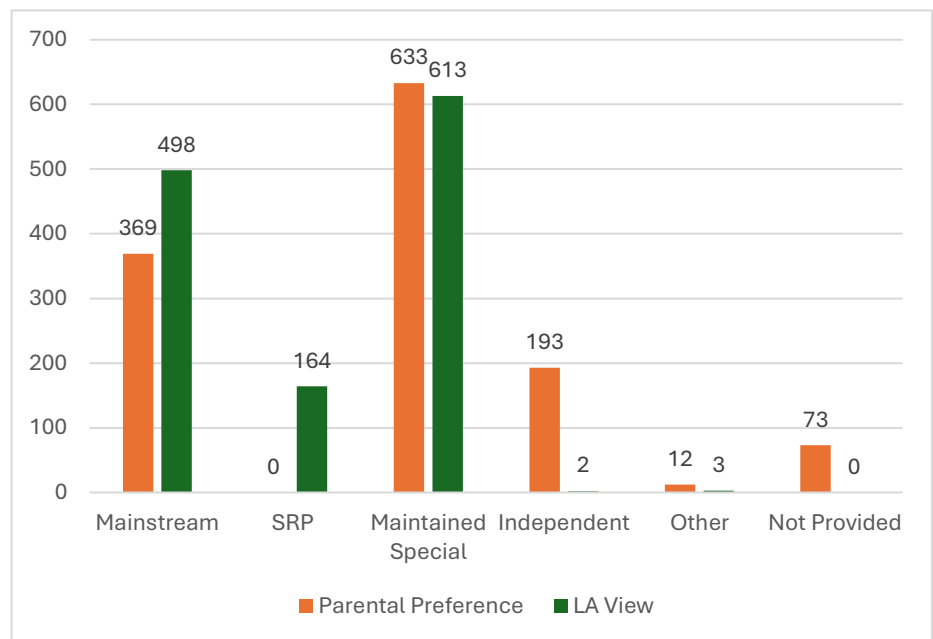
Condition /  
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based on manual spreadsheets and is subject to the margin of error associated with manual records.

The chart below illustrates the difference between Parental Preference and LA View for secondary cohort.



\*parents are not able to select SRP as parental preference as it is named within section F of the EHCP as part of the provision as opposed to Section I as the placement name.

In the above graph, while Parental Preference and LA view for Maintained Special schools are broadly similar, further analysis shows that the LA View and Parental Preference aligns in 71% of cases. For the remaining 29% of cases:

- for 185 pupils where Parental Preference is Maintained Special, LA View is Mainstream or SRP
- for 107 pupils where Parental Preference is Independent and LA View is Maintained Special
- for 41 pupils where Parental Preference is not provided, LA View is Maintained Special

Of note, in relation to challenges that the LA faces in achieving Safety Valve conditions is the discrepancy between parental preference and LA view in relation to placements in mainstream and independent special school. With parents expressing less preference for mainstream placements, and more preference for independent placements than the LA.

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

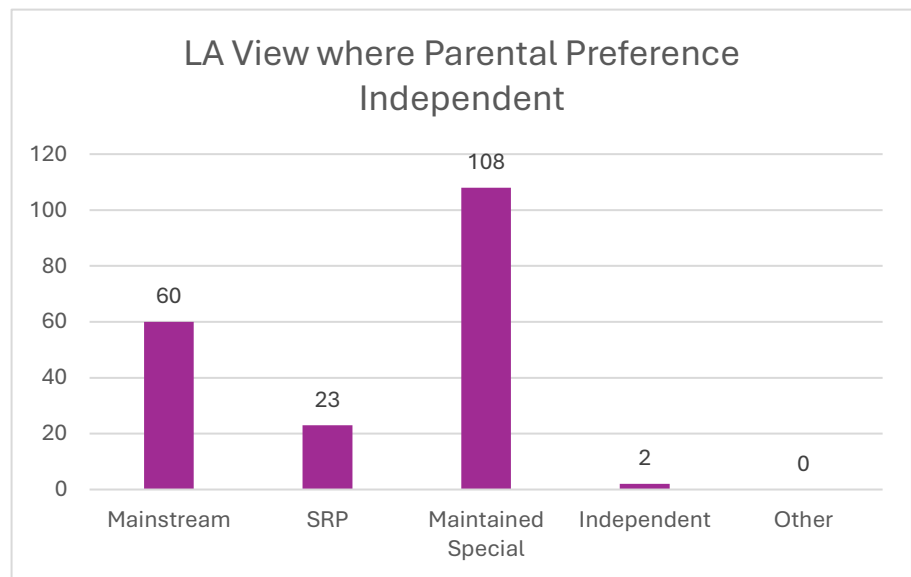
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A further challenge is the fact that where the LA view is for maintained special school this does not mean that there are sufficient places within maintained special schools for children to be placed there. Outcomes in relation to actual destinations will not be available until 2026.

In relation to the children for whom Parental Preference was independent, the graph below illustrates the breakdown of LA View.



Further, in relation to the 193 children where parental preference is independent,

- 43% of pupils currently attend an Independent setting (LA View is Maintained Special in 85% of these cases and Mainstream in 14%)
- 48% currently attend a Mainstream or SRP setting
- 7% currently attend a Maintained Special setting

In crude financial terms, and based on the average annual cost of an independent placement through the LA's current framework contract (£54,460), the cost of 191 children whose parents expressed a preference for independent settings where the LA view was different, to attend that setting per year is approximately £10.4m, and if they all remain in that setting for five years between Year 7 and 11, the cost to the high needs budget would be approximately £52m. (This figure does not take into account the relative cost of a placement in a maintained special school, SRP or mainstream setting).

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream	Assurance Level	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
<p><b>Condition 7:</b> Ensure there is sufficient and consistent capacity across the county to support children with severe and complex needs in their local area where possible. This includes recruitment of temporary posts to support sufficiency planning, reviewing the use of Specialist Resource Provision (SRP) and reviewing the specialist continuum to ensure only the most severe and complex needs are supported in special schools.</p>	Update 1 (April)	<p>Over this reporting period, several strands of interdependent work have progressed in relation to the development of <b>Specialist Resource Provision (SRP)</b> across Kent.</p> <p>A review of the existing number and distribution of SRPs across Kent. It found that access to SRPs across districts is not equitable, and that there a pathway gaps (i.e. SRP provision in primary but not secondary phases) and demand gaps (i.e. where demand exceeds capacity) that can result in children and young people being placed in higher cost placements in independent and non-maintained special schools.</p> <p>There are also district level gaps in relation to specific need-type. In some circumstances, children with specific needs types (for example Visual Impairment) are being supported across a range of provision and therefore, SRPs specific to that need type are underutilised. For other need types, such as Social, Emotional and Mental health, experience has demonstrated that SRPs are not the best suited to support these children to continue in mainstream education.</p> <p>In addition, in some instances there is a gap between the number of places that the LA commissions and the level of occupation, with some SRPs have very low numbers and struggling to be viable and others are over the number of places agreed. For example, the position as of June 2025, is that there are 177 commissioned places unfilled, and 83 children placed in SRPs above their commissioned number – incurring additional costs.</p> <p>Consequently, the Commissioning Plan for Education in Kent 2026-30 has set out proposals to address the SRP place gaps and to expand the overall amount of provision (Tables 8c to 8f). <a href="#">Agenda for Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on Tuesday, 18th November, 2025, 10.00 am</a> (item 11)</p> <p>Officers attended the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 18 November 2025 to seek decisions in relation that plan and the following proposals in relation to SRPs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing the model of support to children and young people with Vision Impairment from SRP provision, to being supported by the KCC Specialist team in their local mainstream school.</li> <li>• Adopting a policy position not to commission places in SRPs with a designation of Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH).</li> <li>• Confirming the policy position, that Secondary SRP places are commissioned for Years 7-11 only, with exceptions being considered on a case by case basis.</li> </ul>
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	Update 2 (July)	
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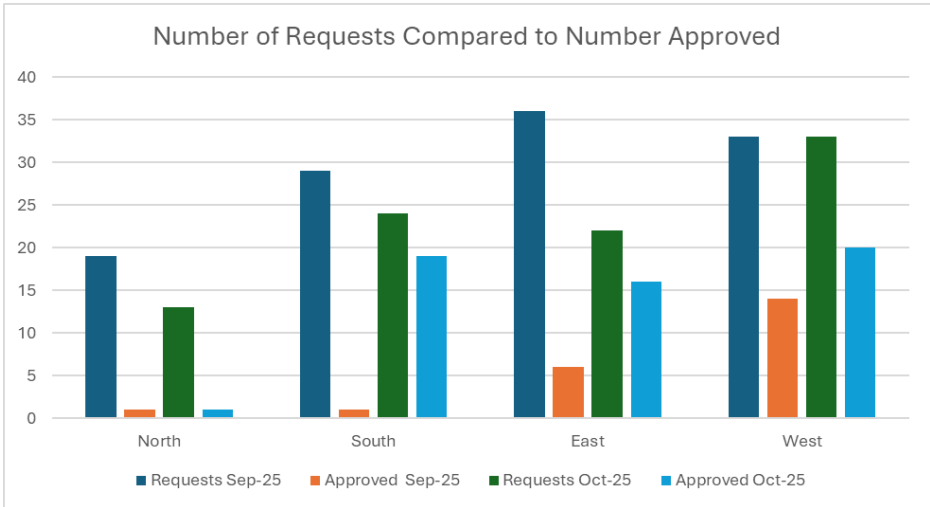
## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream	Assurance Level	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadening the designation of a number of existing and new SRPs to provide ASD, SLCN and HI (where appropriate).</li> </ul> <p>Financially, the proposal is to allocate £20m of the High Needs Capital Grant to enable the delivery of an increase in commissioned SRP places. There is recognition that increasing the number of commissioned SRP will increase the revenue costs, but that this will be compensated for through savings associated with reducing the number of unfilled commissioned placed, reduction in use of specialist placements and avoiding placements in independent non-maintained settings.</p> <p>More information can be found via this link: <a href="#">Agenda for Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on Tuesday, 18th November, 2025, 10.00 am</a> (Item 13)</p> <p>Current contracts and SLAs for SRPs in Kent end 31 August 2026. Work continues on the recommissioning of these with a focus on updating the current Service Specification, simplifying the current terms and conditions and building on experience to review Key Performance Indicators to reflect a more proportionate approach.</p> <p>Officers will attend Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee in January 2026 to seek a decision in relation to these arrangements.</p> <p><b>Implementation of changes to maintained special schools</b> in Kent is progressing. In Phase One, officers are working with special schools by need type to explore and resolve the issues to ensure that moving forward the schools can support the most complex children and young people. They will also consider local area need and the pathways available for pupils requiring special school place, planning for cohorts of children rather than individuals. This work is being supported by an independent consultant with a view that an overarching strategy and work plan. The plan will address feasibility, direction and funding required to implement change over the next three years. The plan will also use evidence and data to prioritise change.</p> <p>Once finalised the plan will support the roll out of Phase Two of the work with will focus on individual consultation with schools to change some admissions criteria to allow more complex children to attend.</p> <p>In the interim, Local Area Provision meetings, planned for February 2026, will be used to enable problem solving</p>

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream	Assurance Level	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
		<p>conversations with SRPs and maintained special schools in relation to the placement of individual children.</p> <p>The current Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) <b>contract for Non-maintained and Independent Special Schools (NMIS)</b> will end 31 August 2026.</p> <p>Work to engage stakeholders has been completed with the feedback directly influencing the development of the service specification.</p> <p>Engagement included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• INMSS school survey 11 June – 9 July. 22 responses received</li> <li>• Five parents / carers participated in focus groups July 2025</li> <li>• 13 young people aged 8 – 17 participated in focus groups held at two INMSS settings.</li> </ul> <p>The proposed new contract will be an open framework procured under the Procurement Act 2023. It will seek to improve transparency in relation to the INMSS provision, including transparency in relation to costs, and increase quality of provision, thereby increasing overall value for money. The aim is for more INMSS providers to join the new framework compared to the number on the current Dynamic Purchasing System. This will give the LA greater assurance in relation to the schools that are supporting Kent children and young people.</p> <p>In the proposed contract, there will be two quality lots. The top Lot will be for strategic partners, and will have a quality threshold higher than the current DPS. The LA will consider block contracting with these providers, delivering increased value for money. Lot second will be for lower quality providers. The minimum threshold for this lot has been reduced. This will enable lower quality providers to join the framework, and whilst this appears counter-intuitive, it enables the LA to work with and hold these providers to greater account through the Terms and Conditions of the contract.</p> <p>This item was also discussed at Children’s, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 18 November 2025. More information can be found via this link: <a href="#">Agenda for Children’s, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on Tuesday, 18th November, 2025, 10.00 am</a> (Item 10)</p> <p>Next steps include a further Market Engagement Event on 3 December 2025, with a view that the tendering process will go live 9 January 2026.</p>

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream	Assurance Level	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>																									
<b>Condition 8:</b> Develop a school/related approach to commissioning of SEN support services (Locality Based Resources), to better respond to the needs of children and young people with SEND	Update 1 (April)	<p>Implementation of the Locality Based Resources model continues with the project being separated into two distinct but interdependent areas of work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities of Schools</li> <li>• SEN Funding Model</li> </ul> <p>In relation to <b>Communities of Schools</b>, a the first draft Progress Report has recently been prepared. This report provides an early assessment of engagement, SEND support, inclusion and the resource used across the Communities of Schools model between 1 September 2025 and 31 October 2025.</p> <p>Data shows that of 106 meetings held, records have been received for 70 and that, of the meetings recorded, 96% schools attended in September and 93% in October. A comparison of schools not attending, shows that several of the same schools did not attend either meeting.</p> <p>Financial monitoring focuses on the financial requests submitted versus the monies agreed, the top financial themes and an assessment of efficiency and value for money.</p> <p>There were 209 requests for financial support. The total amount of funding requested from 1 September 2025 to 31 October 2025 was £2,333,525.17, with the total amount agreed for the same period being £465,258.97, which is 20%.</p> <p>The graph below illustrates the number of requests for funding in relation to the number of requests approved, including full and partial agreements across each area.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <table border="1" style="margin: 0 auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <caption>Number of Requests Compared to Number Approved</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Region</th> <th>Requests Sep-25</th> <th>Approved Sep-25</th> <th>Requests Oct-25</th> <th>Approved Oct-25</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>North</td> <td>19</td> <td>1</td> <td>13</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>South</td> <td>29</td> <td>1</td> <td>24</td> <td>19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>East</td> <td>36</td> <td>6</td> <td>22</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>West</td> <td>33</td> <td>14</td> <td>33</td> <td>20</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div>	Region	Requests Sep-25	Approved Sep-25	Requests Oct-25	Approved Oct-25	North	19	1	13	1	South	29	1	24	19	East	36	6	22	16	West	33	14	33	20
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West	33	14	33	20																							

This is an early indication of how the model is working, but is caveated by the fact that communities would not have had

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition /  
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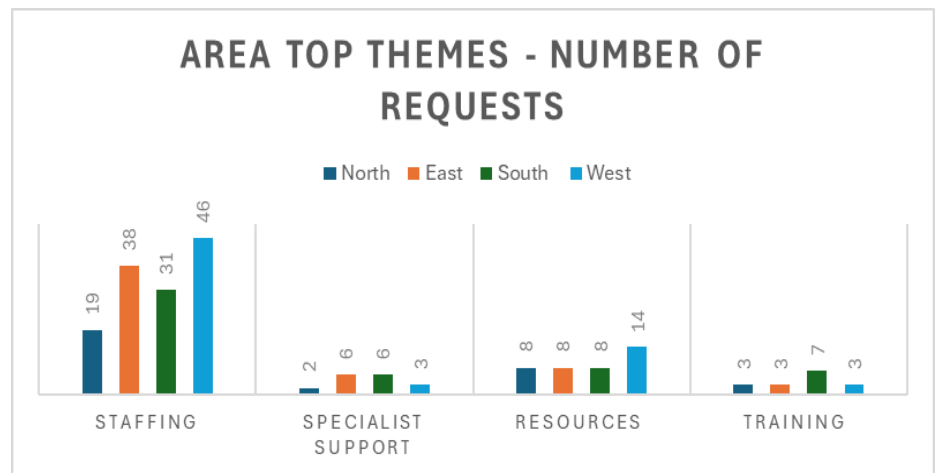
Progress Update from this Quarter  
*Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts*

opportunity to discuss all requests and therefore there is a lag between funding requested and funding agreed.

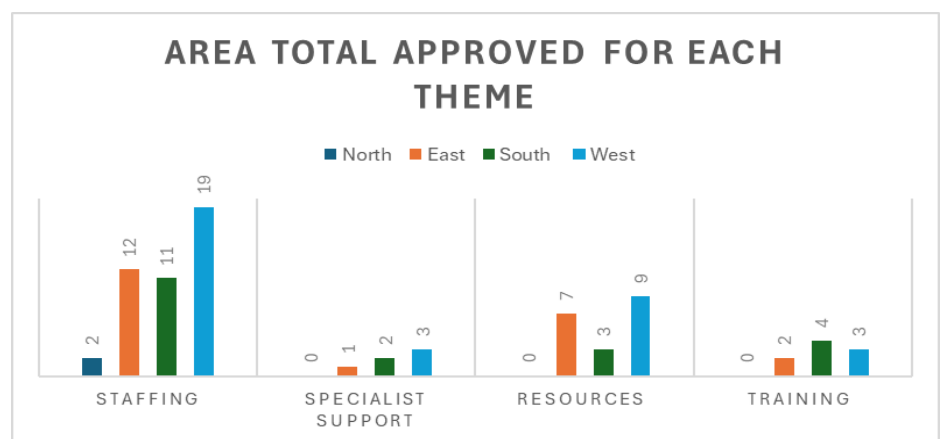
Top themes for funding requests are:

- Staffing costs (this being the majority of requests)
- Resources (ICT equipment and programmes and sensory equipment)
- Special support
- Training

The number of these requests is illustrated in the graph below:



And the number agreed in the graph below:



Key qualitative feedback today indicates that the Communities of Schools model has created new opportunities for schools to collaborate locally, but stakeholders agree that clearer communication would strengthen its impact. The model has successfully brought schools together for joint problem-solving and resource sharing with SENCOs valuing the networking opportunities, and clerks report strong engagement in meetings. Chairs acknowledge that improvements are needed in governance and escalation routes, but the foundations for

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

Condition / Workstream	Assurance Level	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
		<p>collaborative decision-making are in place. Leadership within groups has been a key strength, with chairs praised for professionalism and fairness. Although the full impact of the model is still emerging, early signs of collaboration—such as shared training and resource pooling—are promising.</p> <p>In relation to <b>SEN Funding Model</b>, as noted in the previous (July 2025) report a revised model of SEND funding is being implemented over the academic year 2025–2026 to distribute high needs funding for children with SEN Support or an EHCP.</p> <p>The current system has not been reviewed since 2010 and is based on need types and average rates which has led to inconsistencies and challenges. The new proposed model will allocate funding based on level of support required rather than need type. It will move from three different funding approaches for mainstream, SRP and special schools to one overarching model where all children with an EHCP are mapped against a banding system using descriptors to determine the funding source and rates.</p> <p>Funding for children with SEN Support will continue through the Communities of Schools.</p> <p>Over this quarter work has continued on a modelling exercise to map cohorts of children against the proposed funding descriptors. This will enable the LA to estimate costs based on the proposed banding, evaluate the impact at individual and countywide school level and help inform planning for future implementation.</p> <p>Modelling is based on a statistically valid, randomised methodology where settings map the sample of children against the descriptors and then this mapping is moderated through a joint setting and LA discussion.</p> <p>To date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 special schools have been involved, with 919 children and young people mapped. This has been achieved through joint meetings with LA officers and schools staff.</li> <li>• 31 SRPs are been involved with 372 children and young people mapped. This is being achieved through SRPs independently mapping children and then a sub-sample being moderated with LA officers.</li> <li>• Estimates are that to sample within mainstream in an equitable fashion would require approximately 800 children to be mapped. Due to timing and capacity issues, a more targeted approach to mapping in mainstream settings will be required.</li> </ul>

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

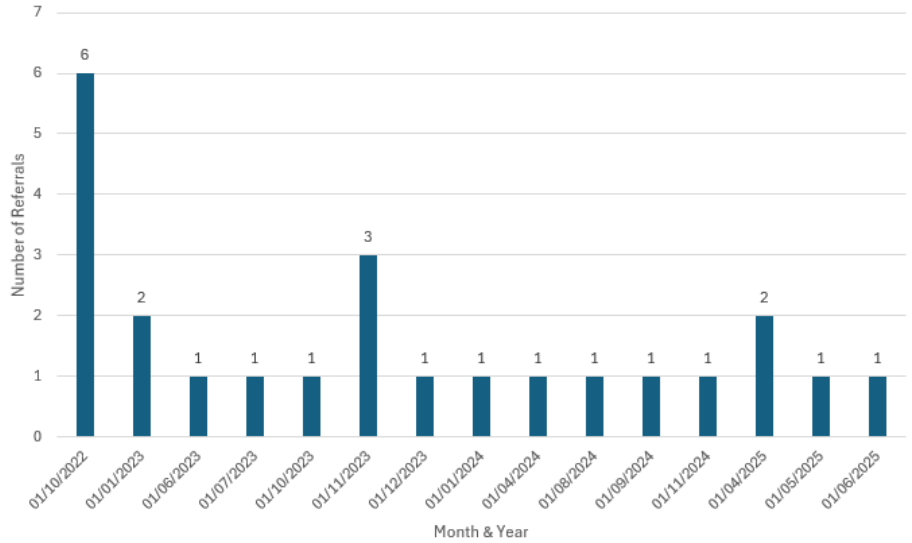
Condition / Workstream	Assurance Level	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>																																																								
		<p>Following the mapping process, results will be analysed and used to assess the financial impact, if the model were to be implemented. The analysis will also consider the financial impact on schools at an individual and countywide level.</p> <p>Officers will attend the Children’s, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee in January 2026 for a decision regarding the principles for setting funding rates which will impact across all sectors.</p> <p>Schools will need to be informed of future funding decisions in February 2026.</p>																																																								
<p><b>Condition 9:</b> Continue working closely with NHS Kent and Medway to ensure a common understanding of SEND needs, including the drivers behind increases in need, ensuring clarity of clinical assessment and the subsequent funding associated.</p>	Update 1 (April)	<p>In relation to <b>Joint Funded Placement, Services and Packages process</b> on Special Education Needs (SEN) funding.</p> <p>All information presented below is accurate as of the time of reporting (19 November 2025).</p> <p>The graph below illustrates the number of Joint Funding requests submitted by Health and Social Care requesting a SEN financial contribution. The figures below include requests for both placements and services / packages of care costs.</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="margin: 0 auto;"> <caption>Number of Referrals by Month &amp; Year</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Month &amp; Year</th> <th>Number of Referrals</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>01/10/2022</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>01/01/2023</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>01/05/2023</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>01/06/2023</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>01/07/2023</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>01/08/2023</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>01/09/2023</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>01/10/2023</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>01/11/2023</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>01/12/2023</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>01/01/2024</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>01/03/2024</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>01/04/2024</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>01/06/2024</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>01/09/2024</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>01/10/2024</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>01/11/2024</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>01/01/2025</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>01/02/2025</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>01/03/2025</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>01/04/2025</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>01/05/2025</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>01/06/2025</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>01/07/2025</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>01/08/2025</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>01/09/2025</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>01/11/2025</td><td>6</td></tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <p>The graph below illustrates the number of requests that have been agreed by SEN. In terms of this reporting, the outcome of SEN decisions regarding the request are recorded when the request was received, rather than when the decision was received. The graph shows goes up until June 2025, which is timeframe of the most recent date a request was agreed for.</p>	Month & Year	Number of Referrals	01/10/2022	6	01/01/2023	3	01/05/2023	1	01/06/2023	1	01/07/2023	1	01/08/2023	1	01/09/2023	1	01/10/2023	1	01/11/2023	4	01/12/2023	2	01/01/2024	2	01/03/2024	2	01/04/2024	1	01/06/2024	3	01/09/2024	2	01/10/2024	5	01/11/2024	6	01/01/2025	5	01/02/2025	2	01/03/2025	1	01/04/2025	11	01/05/2025	3	01/06/2025	4	01/07/2025	3	01/08/2025	3	01/09/2025	8	01/11/2025	6
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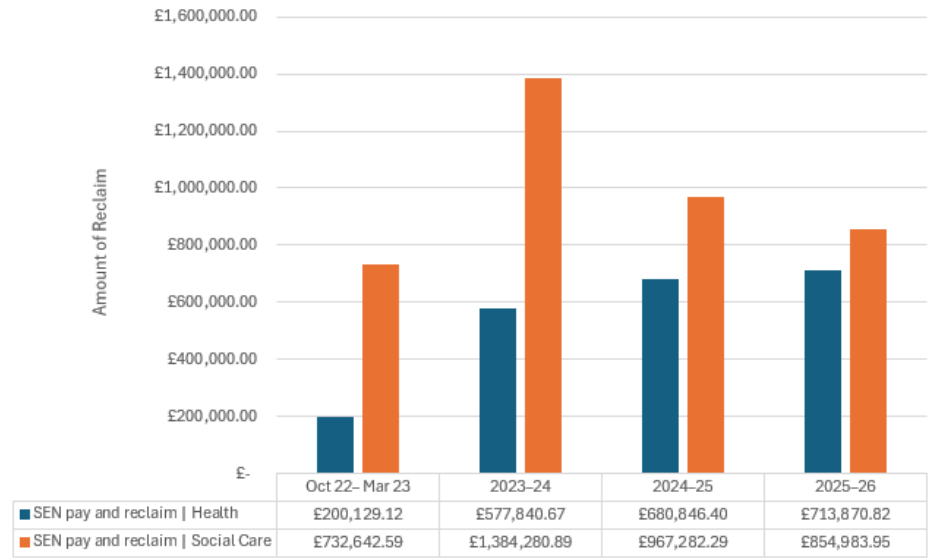
Condition / Workstream

Assurance Level

Progress Update from this Quarter  
Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts



The graph below shows the projected value of funding reclaim by SEN from Health and Social Care across the current and three preceding financial years.



In comparison to the July 2025 report, the above graph indicates an increase in the projected SEN reclaim from Health (from £640,219.39 to £713,870.82) and a decrease in the projected SEN reclaim from Social care (from £859,953.03 to £854,983.95). This is because the above are projected financial reclaim values based at a point in time. If the costs being reclaimed change retrospectively then the projections are recalculated, accounting for either an increase or decrease.

In relation to overall joint funding requests for 2025, there are a total of 72 outstanding referrals awaiting an outcome. Of these,

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

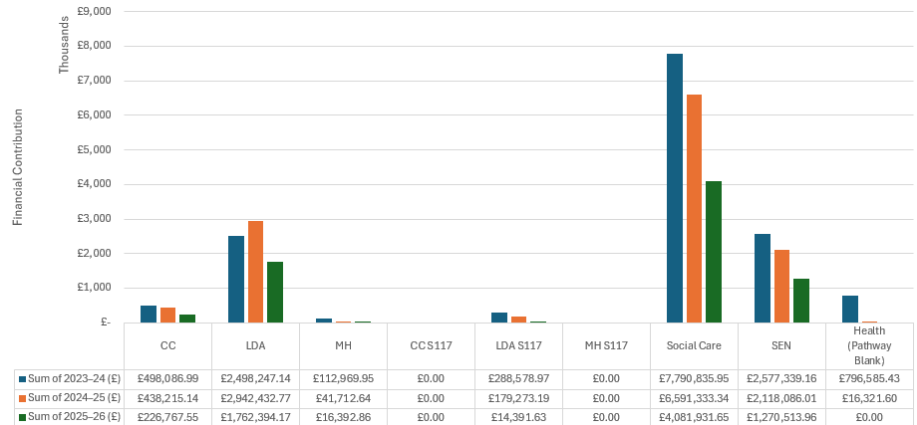
Condition /  
Workstream

Assurance  
Level

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69 are awaiting an outcome from health, 69 from social care and 11 from SEN.

Social care continue to bear the majority of the costs for placements, although the level of funding is reducing year on year from 2023-24. SEN contribute a smaller amount of funding to placements, which is also reducing year on year. As is illustrated in the graph below:



SEN pay a minimal contribution to services and packages with social care funding the majority of these placements.

Both the LA and Kent and Medway NHS fund health providers to deliver **commissioned therapy services**. This quarter, significant work has been undertaken regarding contracts for commissioned therapy services, and alignment of NHS and LA funding in this arena.

KCC Delivering Inclusion in the Curriculum of Education (DICE) contract for speech and language therapy has been awarded to KCHFT, to provide approximately 20% of Speech and Language Therapy workforce provision in Kent, aligned with the NHS contract (80%) as part of the Community Services Review.

An SLA between Integrated Children's Service and SEND and Education Division in KCC for the provision of Occupational Health support has been developed using funding that was withdrawn from the NHS Communities Contract.

The embedding of the **Balanced System® model** for Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) continues to progress this quarter.

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME DETAILED UPDATE

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		<p>The Scheme for Schools and Settings Launch introduced a new cohort of 11 schools to the model via an Understand Phase workshop.</p> <p>Work to extend the Balanced System® to Swale continues. A project plan for Swale has been developed but timescales still not agreed due to ongoing concerns about whether the system can be implemented by Medway Community Health Trust if it is only done in Swale rather than across their whole geographic footprint.</p> <p>Additional work has been undertaken to improve SLCN support for children who do not attend school by applying the Balanced System principles through workshop delivery, a resource pack for minimally speaking pupils has been completed and is ready to share with schools and team have developed a social media pack for schools to share strategies to support SLCN with parents.</p> <p>Ensure that through the <b>EHC process</b> that we understand and able to utilise resources for best use from speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy in order to ensure high quality advice and support is available to officer, such as tribunal and assessment, casework.</p> <p>This area of work focuses on quality assurance that will demonstrate consistency in the therapy advice included in EHC plans with an aim of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improving tribunal outcomes regarding levels of therapy</li> <li>• avoiding high cost over provision.</li> <li>• Ensuring that physical and sensory, language and communication needs are being met within available resources and within a timely manner.</li> </ul> <p>It has been ongoing since September 2024 and is moving towards being well embedded. The aims will be achieved by ensuring that teams are confident on what to enter onto EHC plans, that there is a widespread understanding within the SEN service of local resources available to meet needs of CYP with speech and language and physical and IT needs, that officers understand how local services deliver therapy and can interpret complex advice from independent therapists.</p> <p>To date there is in place:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Embedded system of support for assessment officers.</li> <li>2. Data collection is mapped in order to ascertain impact and relate to spend</li> </ol>

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		<p>3. Data informs changes and developments, and this mechanism is used to inform individual and area practice.</p> <p>4. Links with other systems and services are mapped and clear.</p>

RAG	Definition
	Savings/cost avoidance and/or workstream(s) complete
	Savings/cost avoidance and/or workstream(s) remains on target
	Savings/cost avoidance and/or workstream(s) are currently off target, with plans to mitigate
	Savings/cost avoidance and/or workstream(s) are off target

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME RISK REGISTER

Risk	Assurance Level	Mitigation	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
Risk 1: Inability of the Council to meet the financial targets agreed within the Safety Valve Agreement, due to external factors outside the control of the Local Authority.	Update 1 (April) <b>R</b>	Minimal mitigation available due to elements of the risk being outside the control of the Council and dependent on external factors.	<p>Risks to the Safety Valve Programme remain relatively unchanged this reporting period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delays to the building of two new special schools continues to contribute to the projected financial deficit and accounts for the continuing forecast of £20 – £30m remaining accumulated deficit at the end of March 2028. The total lost saving from the delays between 2024-2025 and 2027-2028 is approximately £23m in total and means that the LA is less able to reduce the number of children and young people being educated in private independent schools in accordance with forecasts. This delay was questioned by members of the Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2025 in relation to the impact on children and young people and the financial impact on the LA.</li> <li>• LA decision making is not always upheld when challenged at tribunal. This can result in the LA having to place children in higher cost, non-maintained independent school provisions and undermine the efforts of the Local Authority to successfully implement the changes needed to achieve Safety Valve objectives. Mitigating actions include: increasing capacity to participate in mediations, strong communication with SENCO's in mainstream schools to develop their understanding of the process and ability to be a strong a witness, ensuring that legal advice regarding current position and practice is clear and compliant, improving monitoring and data quality of tribunals and outcomes of tribunal decisions.</li> <li>• We continue to see an increase in other local authorities refusing to fund their looked after children who have been</li> </ul>
	Update 2 (July) <b>R</b>		
	Update 3 (December) <b>R</b>		
	<b>R</b>		

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME RISK REGISTER

Risk	Assurance Level	Mitigation	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
			<p>placed in Kent. Mitigating action is to raise concerns with DfE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Budget funding for mainstream schools was lower than inflation and increased efficiencies expected from schools to fund teachers' pay increases from September 2025. Mitigating actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KCC currently commission a "schools in deficit" team to support maintained schools.</li> <li>• Schools Funding Forum have agreed to continue to fund full access to support services for primary schools (our most vulnerable group of schools).</li> <li>• Access School Resource Management Advisor (SMRA) service where applicable.</li> <li>• Review position following submission of three-year financial plans for maintained schools (due 31 May 2025)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Risk 2: Inability of the Council to meet the financial targets agreed within the Safety Valve Agreement, due to increased demand for services, alongside increased inflation, national living wages, teachers pay and changes to VAT.</p>	Update 1 (April)	<p>Increasing demand for support will be addressed through system recalibration and maintenance of robust decision making.</p> <p>Implementation of robust processes for fee increase requests.</p>	<p>Grant funding is not adjusted to reflect inflation forecasts meaning that overall the funding available to meet increased costs is insufficient to do so. This continues to impact on the financial stability of state-funded schools and creating anxiety within the state-funded sector.</p> <p>This also have an impact on the non-maintained, independent sector. This reporting period work has begun on the fee uplift process for 2026-2027 academic year. Providers have received communications to inform them of the process. Additionally, the implementation of the new framework contract for INMSS will provide greater clarity against costs associated with placements.</p>
	A		
	Update 2 (July)		
	A		
	Update 3 (December)		
	A		

## SAFETY VALVE PROGRAMME RISK REGISTER

Risk	Assurance Level	Mitigation	Progress Update from this Quarter <i>Please include/refer to relevant data and evidence to support your rating and explain the scale of any impacts</i>
Risk 3: Lack of stakeholder confidence and engagement in changes being implemented	Update 1 (April) <b>A</b>	Increased regular and ongoing stakeholder engagement, alongside clear and transparent information sharing.	Mitigating actions in relation to this risk are beginning to have impact. Examples of stakeholder engagement referenced earlier in this report is resulting in greater engagement with transformation projects, increased understanding and support for the changes being implemented.
	Update 2 (July) <b>A</b>		
	Update 3 (December) <b>G</b>		
	<b>G</b>		
Risk 4: New administration within the LA and upcoming publication of the government SEND White Paper may require changes to local policy and direction of travel underpinning Safety Valve plans	Update 1 (April) N/A	Engage with new administration and specifically Cabinet Members to ensure full understanding of Safety Valve programme.  Engage in national and local forums to understand, anticipate and plan for future direction of travel.	LA Officers continue to meet regularly with elected members to share information about the Safety Valve. However, the delay to the SEND White Paper continues to create uncertainty for both officers and elected officials.
	Update 2 (July) <b>A</b>		
	Update 3 (December) <b>A</b>		
	<b>A</b>		

