To all parents of children and young people with SEN Statements, and students with LDA S139a

Education & Young People’s Service
Sessions House
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1 September 2014

Dear Parents and Carers

Changing Special Educational Needs (SEN) Statements

On 1st September 2014 the SEN system will be changing and new Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) will gradually replace SEN Statements and LDAs. You are receiving this letter because Kent is planning to change your son/daughter’s existing Statement or LDA to the new Education Health and Care Plan.

Although the changes will be introduced gradually over the next 4 years, where schools are able to transfer more children to the new system more quickly, we have asked them to talk directly to parents and explain the new process. The school will talk to you about this to make sure you are kept fully informed. When a date is agreed the school will notify the area SEN office and the SEN office will issue the formal notice of the transfer review.

The transfer of existing Statements to EHC Plans will happen through the Annual Review process which is already in place. If your son/daughter has had an annual review before, you will know that the review meeting is an opportunity for everyone to look at your child’s progress. Kent Schools have been asked to complete a draft version of the new EHC Plan with you at the annual review meeting, instead of the annual review report. We want these meetings to discuss the longer term goals for your child and agree what we are going to do to help them in the future and what difference it will make to their learning if everyone who is involved with you and their school (e.g. from education and if your child has other needs, professionals from health and social care) is working together.

Although schools are assisting us in the change process, your child’s special educational needs will remain the responsibility of Kent County Council. This means that after the meeting you will have time to think about what was said and you will be given a further opportunity to comment. There are legal rules
that mean we must check the draft received from schools and then send you a
copy to comment on before anything is finalised.

We will be prioritising school leavers and those in our mainstream schools
who need to change school, for example moving where it is necessary for a
pupil to move from a mainstream school into a special school so some
Statements will change quite quickly (by February 2015).

We have been working with a few families in each area of the County to see
how the changes can give parents more say on the help their son or daughter
needs through ‘face to face’ discussion instead of always relying on letters
and written notices and we want to avoid parents feeling that they tell the story
over and over again to different professionals. We are also working with the
Kent Parent Carer Forum and the parent led charities so that they have the
right information and can support families who would like to know more.

We will be publishing information on our website about all of the changes and
the contact details for people within the SEN Department who can give you
advice and support will be available on www.Kent.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Patrick Leeson
Corporate Director
Education and Young People’s Service