

Term 4 Countywide SENCO Forum 19th & 20th March 2025

Post Session Questions and Answers

Need and Provision

Question/comment	Response
Where will the document be published?	The document will sit on KELSI
Apologies-I missed the timeline on when this doc will be available. Is there a publication date?	May 2025
I have emailed Emily Bambridge & Kristina Yates to ask if I need to do the report now or after the Teams meet that Alison mentioned. Emily has been in touch and is coming to do a visit.	If Krissy is visiting the school, the Case Study will be completed with Krissy during her visit with you.
Schools have to deal with increasingly complex medical needs and activities which need to be delivered daily will this be considered in the document?	We have focused the document on SEND, rather than medical needs so far so this is not considered. Where there are children who have medical needs, the school needs to work with the appropriate health teams who will give the appropriate health advice e.g diabetes team/
As the level of need and complexity within mainstream schools increases, what training will there be for staff who have been qualified teachers for many years? Additionally, is ECT training changing to equip new teachers with the skills to meet these needs?	It is expected that SENCOs lead and/or source training needs for the staff in their schools. The Mainstream core standards addresses some of this and have facilitated training for classroom teachers and subject leaders as per the NASEN guidance. KCC has invested heavily in training for the last three years and it is anticipated that this is now filtering into mainstream classrooms. From the Continuum perspective, information and the Community of Schools Provision Map that I am developing will provide signposting to schools on where additional training can be sourced. ECT training is a national issue and it is acknowledged that there are gaps. There will need to be work in the future to link with training schools to develop this further. However, any ITT or ECT in your schools should expect training from their SENCOs as part of their in school training. SENCOs should liaise with their teacher training lead to discuss requirements
When will this be available to share with schools?	May 2025
Can we have more detail on how the Continuum of need and provision document links to funding levels?	The Continuum of Need and Provision does not link directly to funding levels. It is designed to give guidance as to what can be provided in mainstream schools.
When will this document be available for Sencos and HT's to look at?	May 2025
Do we, as sencos get access to those case studies?	Yes- definitely! They will be shared as part of the Continuum of Need and Provision document.

Communities of Schools

Question/Comment	Response
Will we be informed which yr 6 >7 children have HNF that will come with them? When will we be told this, please?	This information was sent to schools on 31 st March 2025
Is it all special schools that will be mapped, including independent ones?	For the first part it will be state funded schools. Independent schools are been worked with separately to amend their funding agreements
When will we know what the offer to Local communities will look like - If funded from designated HNF - who will have responsibility for monitoring?	This will be covered in the induction meetings at the beginning of Term 5. All information will be on KELSI
For new EHCP applications - do they have to be in the system by Dec 24 to ensure funding? I'm about to submit a new one, so if issued will we need to try to secure funding from the communities?	For the first few months, new EHCPs will need to be considered through the Communities. If the child already has HNF, then the money is already there.
What will happen for children who need a HNF renewal in August 25 but don't have an EHCP do we have to wait for community of schools to meet?	Yes, the first meetings are designed to plan for the future
Do we have to prepare anything to take to the community induction meeting? I am only asking because I notice that part of the purpose lists 'share documentation and process and get to know context.' I would like to be well prepared thank you.	This will be shared at the induction meeting. You do not have to bring anything with you to those meetings.
In Relation to Funding from September - will funding for children whose EHCP was out of County in Dec 24 continue? Also what about children entering Reception with an EHCP? Or with a draft EHCP?	
When will communities know who their link teacher is	Some information is already on KELSI
Will parents be informed of the changes to HNF, LIFT etc by KCC so it is consistent for all schools? Will external professionals be informed of the changes too as they often recommend LIFT, HNF and EHCPs?	Parents have already been informed through parents newsletters. Other professionals are also being informed.

<p>What will happen to HNF in September for children without an EHCP? Will we not receive any funding until after our first community meeting, if funding is agreed? We have children who currently receive HNF and are due to be renewed in August 2025. They don't have an EHCP. Should we plan therefore that funding for these children will cease?</p>	<p>Some protections have been given for the academic year 2025- 2026. This information has been sent to schools. Schools should plan to work with their notional budget.</p>
<p>Regarding high needs funding for new Year R pupils with draft EHCPs. Can we secure funding in advance? A pupil with significant medical needs wanting to start in September and requires a 1:1 as stated in draft Plan. Is there a way to secure funding for this pupil now to ensure school is able to meet need as parents request? What happens with regard to funding for the children that don't have an EHCP?</p>	<p>The first thing is for schools to look at what their notional budget is being spent on. Then, schools can consider what else is necessary. Some protections have been put into place for 2025-2026.</p>
<p>How will we receive funding for children that would (under the old system) be accessing over £6000 HNF with emerging needs and/or that are new to the school?</p>	
<p>What happens if a child joins our school with complex needs after 31.3? What if current HNF expires on 31.3, do we need to reapply?</p>	<p>Protections are being allocated to schools for 2025 – 2026.</p>
<p>For children who have funding THEN got an EHCP, will their funding be automatic?</p>	<p>If they already have HNF, then the money is already in the communities pot.</p>
<p>Please do "bore us with the details" as there is very little detail at the moment. How can funding be requested for very high needs children coming into primary schools in September?</p>	<p>Through the communities of schools</p>
<p>What happens if funding ran out before 31/3/25 and was renewed. Will this be processed? When will we be able to plan for September for students with HNF who do not have EHCPs?</p>	<p>Some protected funding has already been allocated to schools.</p>
<p>We need to know sooner about the funding</p>	<p>Some protected funding has already been allocated to schools</p>

<p>situation as we can't make arrangements to fully support our children without this. Will they still get the same money as now? How can we make sensible arrangements for our children without knowing the funding that will be involved.</p>	
<p>What will happen to children without an EHCP (in the processing of applying) but with HNF after August? Am I missing something on Kelsi (which is likely!) as I cannot find updated information on the funding decision</p>	<p>Some protected funding has already been allocated to schools. This is all on KELSI</p>
<p>HNF - what are the implications for those people employed via HNF? Do we have to in effect 'let them go' at the end of August?</p>	<p>Staffing decisions are for the school SLT and governors</p>
<p>Why is the South meeting (for Ashford schools) in Sandwich? This is a long way for all the HTs and Sencos of Ashford to have to go when we have already met as a group at a recent meeting.</p>	<p>This is an appropriate space. South covers Ashford, Dover, Deal, Sandwich and Folkestone and Hythe.</p>
<p>Is funding will continue for children who had EHCPs before Dec24 but not after how are we supposed to support children with very complex needs who have been issued EHCPs since January and are unable to cope without 1:1 in a mainstream setting?</p>	<p>Some protected funding has already been allocated to schools.</p>
<p>How are all of the changes, around funding especially, being communicated to parents??</p>	<p>Parents have been informed via newsletters.</p>
<p>Can we go to a Community meeting in a different area or will this be a problem? How will all of the changes, especially around funding, be shared with parents? Will an indirect consequence of changing HNF lead to a rise in Parent EHCP applications and also Tribunals?</p>	<p>You can only access funding through the community you have been allocated. Parents are being informed via newsletters There will be many unintended consequences and this will be reviewed regularly</p>
<p>How will all of the changes be shared with parents? Lots of them know about the surgery and LIFT process as we have discussed this. Will there be an information event and leaflet/presentation for them?</p>	<p>Parents are being informed via newsletters</p>
<p>What happens to top up funding for those students that do not have an EHCP?</p>	<p>It goes into the communities pot. Some protected funding has already been allocated to schools</p>
<p>Is the communities of schools meeting for</p>	<p>SENCOs or another senior leader who has decision making authority</p>

Headteachers only or for SENCo?	
Have the community groups been shared? Some local schools know theirs, but we have heard nothing?	All community groups are on KELSI
What about children who are due to be renewed 31st August 2025 who don't have an EHCP? Will we have to wait for funding to be agreed by the community?	Some protected funding has already been allocated to schools. All other funding will go through the communities
There are only 3 community of school meetings - how do we get support without waiting for these meetings?	There are 8 meetings over the academic year
Can we go to a Community meeting in a different area or will this be a problem?	You can only access funding through the community you have been allocated
Nurseries aren't part of the school communities so how will they access specialist teacher support? The specialist teacher as a link between nurseries and schools for the September intake is really important.	Specialist teacher support are accessed through the Link Practitioners
How will Specialist Teachers be allocated as they have specialisms? This is what is so helpful now - we can request to speak to a certain teacher about a pupil.	Specialist teacher support are accessed through the Link Practitioners
How can funding be requested for very high needs children coming into primary schools in September?	Schools are expected to use their SEN notional budget and then apply for new children via the communities of schools
What is the provision has changed in the last year? so the funding may be very different?	Protected funding is based on 75% historic spend. It is expected that schools use group applications.
Who is informing parents that their child will not be getting any funding?	It is incorrect that children will not get funding. Protected funding has already been allocated to schools and
Even if the HNF expires on 31.03?	Yes, until August 2025
If renewals finish on 31st March will these also carry over?	Yes, until August 2025
How do we request funding for the pupils starting with us in September, who have complex needs - with or without an EHCP?	Some protected funding has already been allocated to schools. Anything else must be accessed via communities of schools
What happens if we have a child with complex needs join from outside of local area after 31st March?	Some decisions are still to be made re children from other LAs
What about pupils with HNF but not an EHCP. Will funding continue after August 25?	This money is already in the communities pot.
What about staff that are currently employed to support children with HNF but no EHCP	Any staffing decisions are for SLT and governing bodies
So will professionals such as EP, SALT, EH and	No. All professionals can be accessed via the link practitioner model

STLS be attending the communities of schools meetings? How will we then access additional support?	
Are Learning surgeries continuing?	SEN IAs will continue to offer surgeries
Can we be told when the FAQs gets published on KELSI as it is easy to miss messages at a time when things are changing so fast. Thank you	FAQs are on KELSI and are updated weekly.
For HNF claims due to be reviewed in March 25, do we need to submit an application renewal, or will this be ported over automatically?	Some protected funding has already been allocated to schools. Anything else will be accessed via the communities of schools
Are we going to find out our chair's name before we attend our meeting with them as we didn't have one assigned a week ago.	We expect to.
We are being told that these documents are produced to ensure 'consistency' for us. Will there be a statement from Kent for us to use with families to ensure that there is a consistent message about future funding for children? If not, this will change/vary from school to school.	Inclusion champions are working on a text to support schools with conversations with parents
What about children who are due to be renewed 31st August 2025 who don't have an EHCP? Will we have to wait for funding to be agreed by the community?	Some protected funding has already been allocated. Anything else must be accessed via communities
Does this count for children moving from an infant school to a junior school with HNF?	Yes.
What will happen to funding for children who receive HNF but do not currently have and EHCP?	Their money will be in the communities pot
If they are a child with high level of funding due to very complex needs but don't have EHCP, will they still continue to have funding or is it only children with EHCP? E.g. children in FS/Year 1 who have high level of needs, high levels of funding but no EHCP yet - will they continue to get funding as above £6k?	Some protected funding has already been allocated to schools. Anything else must be accessed via communities of schools
In regards to High Needs Funding - What about new children with EHCPs & significant medical needs coming into Year R in September 2025? Are we able to secure funding in advance?	Some decisions re Year R are still to be made.
The two documents to be in place using new pro-forma were new send policy and?	SEN Information Report
Will external professionals be informed about changes, as they often recommend LIFT, High Needs Funding, EHCPs?	Professionals have been informed.
What if the child had a draft EHCP by Dec 24 but final not yet issued?	If the child already has HNF then the money is already in the pot
Will parents be informed of all of these	Parents have been informed via parents newsletter

changes by KCC?	
We recently had a parent saying the paediatrician couldn't believe they did not already have an EHCP and they HAVE to have a specialist place (not seen any report yet, but we are already querying if this has actually been said.	It is always wise to query
happens a lot with early help workers too, they will often suggest an EHCP application	
Last week the Rainbow centre told a parent they should be pushing for HNF and EHCP.	This is not correct information and schools can challenge this

Clara Green

Question/Comment	Response
Will slides from the webinar be available if I can't attend. Thursday is my day off.	Yes. We will send on the slides but are also looking into having the webinar recorded so anyone who cannot attend can view this at a later date.
Will the sessions be recorded and shared on Kelsi?	Yes. We plan to have the sessions recorded and made available to SENCOs following the delivery.
are you expecting attendance at both webinars or just one? Is the material in them repeated or is it separate information in each?	SENCOs only need to attend one of the webinars. Both webinars will be the same and cover the same content. There are just two opportunities to attend.
I missed this session but would like to know more about how the changes in the other services will impact decision making around assessment over time. I would also like to know how and who we can contact when we have queries and do not want to go through the enquiries hub as it may be about a specific case officer. Can the training sessions coming up be varied (day and time). Many SENCOs work part time - I already attend the forum on a Thursday on my day off?	SENCOs only need to attend one of the webinars. The dates and times of the webinars will be down to who is covering the content and their availability. We will try to cover different days and times where possible. We are also looking into having the webinar recorded so anyone who cannot attend can view this at a later date.

Tribunal

Question/ comment	Response
<p>So pleased that we are getting a guide and some proformas. It has improved a lot over the last year. Thank you.</p>	<p>Thank you, we will ensure this happens as quickly as possible.</p>
<p>I am about a recent experience whereby a tribunals officer claimed that no evidence had been sent in by the school when it had been sent in 4 times ahead of the deadline, by the fact that a parent was asked to complete a working document for an EHCP which was ignored and the original copy was erroneously sent in to the pre-hearing and also by the rather cavalier manner in which I have been treated in all of this when there was an attempt to question my professional integrity with a parent which seemed to me to be highly unprofessional. I also feel that if KCC made the correct placement decisions for young people, then a lot of these issues would diminish and would no longer be issues. I have dealt with really complex cases, which have involved a lot of work and a lot of advocacy when in fact if the correct decision and provision had been found in Year 7 none of these issues would have arisen and this has now highlighted the deep flaws in the system and this is a massive cause for concern currently since it feels that there are systemic issues within this system which are not student centred or student focused.</p>	<p>We are aware there were issues within the team, which have been addressed and new procedures implemented as well as further training provided. We hope that you do not experience similar practice in the future. If you do have concerns in the future, please do contact me directly.</p> <p>We have also made vast improvements to our placement team and always look to consider all possibilities when considering placement. We would benefit from all mainstream schools working with us in order that those most in need of specialist placement have access to the spaces available.</p>
<p>If we are at a tribunal for change of provision and agree with parents that we can't meet need and the child would be better at a different provision, I don't feel comfortable that we are representing KCC. In this case I would be presenting facts that support that we can't meet need. Is this allowed? We can't be asked to present facts that don't support our professional opinion. This is also the case for EHCPs. If we believe the child needs one and KCC are refusing to issue, our job as professionals is to show the reasons why the child needs an EHCP. Again, this would be against KCC.</p>	<p>We totally understand and to reiterate you do not need to agree with KCC, you should purely present facts not opinions. Whilst you are called as a witness for KCC you need should always present facts and not feel you need to say anything that is untrue.</p>

<p>Are there any training courses we could access in this area?</p>	<p>IPSEA deliver training. SEND law training from IPSEA</p>
<p>When the LA requests an information bundle, is it possible for schools to suggest further evidence that they feel would be relevant to the case that the LA have not requested, or is this inappropriate?</p>	<p>Yes absolutely, your officer would always be open to updates and extra information- a lot can change during the appeal window as it is a long process.</p>
<p>If a child has not been in school for two years is it appropriate not to contribute to the tribunal?</p> <p>How do we effectively evidence how it will harm the education of others - please give us specific detail of what evidence will be accepted to support this statement. Do you need rates of progress of all children in the class compared to other classes?</p> <p>I have had e.g.s of recommendations for EHCP from medical professionals recently and will send these on. These include those from organisations making ASD /ADHD diagnoses via right to choose.</p>	<p>It depends on the basis of the appeal. If it was a decision to assess, your evidence is likely to not be up to date, however there may be some times when we need evidence as you are the most recent school. Your officer will advise you.</p> <p>To evidence the 'efficient education of others' you need to carefully consider the law. This is explained really well on the IPSEA website: The right to a mainstream education (IPSEA) Independent Provider of Special Education Advice</p> <p>Great thank you- this is outside of their professional remit</p>
<p>Paediatricians at Canterbury assessment centre are still advising parents to apply for an EHCP when the child receives a diagnosis of ASC. This completely undermines the local authority systems and the school trying to give the same message as the LA. Parents frequently take a doctors opinion above schools.</p>	<p>Great thank you- this is outside of their professional remit- we will raise it with their head of service.</p>
<p>Could I please clarify meaning when you say you do not consult with Non-Section 41 schools? We receive consultation requests from KCC, which we welcome, however we are a non-section 41 setting and do receive consultations?</p>	<p>Please email me directly to respond to this question.</p>
<p>We have regular recommendations from Health (school health, paediatricians and other professionals) and Early Help for inappropriate EHCPs</p>	<p>Great thank you- this is outside of their professional remit- we will raise it with their head of service.</p>
<p>What is the legal timeframe that schools</p>	<p>It is usually a minimum of a week, we try to inform you as soon as we are</p>

<p>need to be notified by if they are being called for tribunal? Last week we were phoned on the day by the team to attend a tribunal we knew nothing about, We were also contacted yesterday by the tribunal team to attend a hearing next week - again we knew nothing prior to this. There is lots of preparation that goes into schools attending a hearing and we need adequate preparation time, are we within our remit to say no?</p>	<p>made aware of an appeal. However, if SENDIST tell us at the last minute then we have no choice to let you know last minute. It's equally as frustrating for us. You can say no to attend but we would really appreciate working with you to try and make it possible for you to attend. If you are unable to attend, the courts would still expect you to submit a detailed report. Sometimes parents change their preference of school at the last minute and therefore we know very late what their choice of school is.</p>
<p>I have a tribunal date that has been brought forward but I have not been asked to submit evidence?</p>	<p>Please email me directly and we will investigate what has happened.</p>

SEND

Question/comment	Response
<p>If in a Trust and the Trust want us to use theirs do we have to have both Trust and LA?</p>	<p>No. It is your decision which you use.</p>
<p>A comment rather than a question. If and when changes are made to the policy template, it would be very helpful to have those changes very clearly indicated so that we can easily amend our policy. Thank you for all your work on this. Very helpful.</p>	<p>Noted. Thank you</p>
<p>Is the Policy Template STATUTORY? Is the SEN Info Report STATUTORY? Do we HAVE to use both these documents or can we stick to our own template? What about if we are in an academy trust with our own templates?</p>	<p>The policy is statutory. The content in the SEN Info report is also statutory. It is advised to use both. The policy is for SLT and governors. The SEN info report is designed for parents and is a pre Ofsted check.</p>
<p>Is this Policy template available for us to use now?</p>	<p>Yes. It is on KELSI</p>
<p>Is it a directive to have this SEN Policy for Academies also? When do we get the Template sent to us?</p>	<p>Academies can choose which template they wish to have. The template is on KELSI</p>
<p>Can the templates be dated? They are already on KELSI, but I have no idea whether they are the up to date one spoken about as it was suggested they weren't on there yet.</p>	<p>Noted. Thank you</p>
<p>Is this a compulsory change?</p>	<p>It is compulsory to review your policy annually in line with local and national changes.</p>

To clarify the 2 templates that are to be used to create these documents by June to be approved by governors?	Yes
Is there still the expectation that parents are consulted as part of the SEN Info Report and Policy writing or are we just sharing it after we have written it?	It is good practice to ensure parents know and understand the content. It is your decision how you do it.
My academy has a template for SEND report and SEND policy. What is the expectation for us as an academy school? Should we use the template or our academy (which is expected) or the Kent one?	That is a decision for you and your trust.
Will this template be available before September?	It is available now on KELSI
when is the expectation that this will need to be published by?	The end of the academic year.
When is the new SEND policy going to be shared for schools to adopt?	It is already on KELSI