

Kent County Council, as the local authority, has a statutory duty to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet present and future demand for early years, primary, secondary, and special school places.

The majority of pressures on places for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN), including those with Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs), have been met over the last ten years by using existing accommodation within special schools and through some small scale projects to put in place specialist new facilities at both special school and mainstream school sites. We have also benefitted from the opening of some new special schools through the Academy Wave programmes. Alongside the increase in the population, we are also seeing increases in the proportion of pupils identified as requiring a specialist placement to meet their SEN. The figures for the total number of children with EHCPs and those in special schools is already significantly higher than national and regional figures. Over time we would expect to see this pressure reduce as more children are educated in local mainstream schools and any surplus capacity in special schools could provide placements for children whose needs are currently met in the independent sector.

Our policy is to provide for most children and young people in their local mainstream schools. This approach is reflected in Kent's Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education (CATIE) <https://www.kelsi.org.uk/special-education-needs/inclusion/countywide-approach-to-inclusive-education> .

We know most children, including those with SEN, can achieve good outcomes in their local mainstream school within their community alongside their peers. While our provision of special school places is well above the national average, we recognise that additional provision will be required to respond to these growing pressures.

In recognition of the growing pressures within Special Schools, we are developing a strategy for place planning for SEN pupils and the development of a Sufficiency Strategy is crucial to enabling more children and young people with complex SEND to be met as close as possible to their home and local community.

We are looking for two Area School Organisation Officers (SEND Sufficiency Plan) to join the Area Education teams in the Children, Young People and Education Directorate (Education Planning and Access). Both posts will be temporary posts for one year as Kent's SEND service is being redesigned and we will need to review our requirements following the implementation of the new SEND structure.

The main focus of these roles will be to produce the SEND Sufficiency Strategy, working with the Area Education Officer and Area Schools Organisation Officer (East Kent). The role will require liaison with colleagues in SEND, Management Information, Business Analytics, Strategic Commissioning, The Education People, and the wider Provision Planning Team as well as schools and other partner agencies. One of the two posts will have a focus on Post 16 SEND sufficiency.

You will be able to demonstrate higher level thinking skills, in order to think through issues, make connections and establish solutions and the ability to work independently and proactively. You will also have experience of data analysis and interpretation as well as in writing formal reports for committee and well-developed project management skills, including the ability to produce and monitor project plans in order to achieve major projects on time and within budget.